

Doc. 300.1.1

Date: Date.

External Evaluation Report (Conventional-face-to-face programme of study)

- **Higher Education Institution:** C.D.A. College (Larnaca)
- **Town:** Larnaca
- **School/Faculty (if applicable):** School/Faculty
- **Department/ Sector:** Department/Sector
- **Programme of study- Name (Duration, ECTS, Cycle)**

In Greek:

Γραμματειακές Σπουδές (1 ακαδημαϊκό έτος, 60 ECTS, Πιστοποιητικό)

In English:

Secretarial Studies (1 academic year, 60 ECTS, Certificate)

- **Language(s) of instruction:** Greek
- **Programme's status:** Currently Operating
- **Concentrations (if any):** N/A



The present document has been prepared within the framework of the authority and competencies of the Cyprus Agency of Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Higher Education, according to the provisions of the “Quality Assurance and Accreditation of Higher Education and the Establishment and Operation of an Agency on Related Matters Laws” of 2015 to 2021 [L.136(I)/2015 – L.132(I)/2021].

In Greek: Concentrations

In English: Concentrations

A. Introduction

This part includes basic information regarding the onsite visit.

The External Evaluation Committee (EEC) visited the premises of the C.D.A. College in Larnaca on Monday 17th of June 2024. During the visit, the EEC had the opportunity to meet with the Head of the Institution, the Director of Academic Affairs, the Internal Evaluation Committee, the Coordinator of the programme, the teaching staff, the administrative staff and students from the program under evaluation.

The visit started with an introductory presentation about the College as a whole and the offered curriculum, from the Head of the Institution, as well as a brief presentation of the branch of Larnaca from Chairman of the Internal Evaluation Committee.

The visit continued with a meeting with the coordinator of the programme where the programme's goals and objectives, students' evaluations, teaching and learning pedagogical methods and the effective management of the programme were discussed.

The ECC then met with members of the teaching staff to discuss the teaching staff's employment conditions, learning outcomes, approach to teaching, as well as the content and assessment of each course.

A meeting with members of the administrative staff followed. Questions were raised about student care, administration services, advancement opportunities, working environment, and the wider support of educational services.

Afterwards, a meeting with the College's students was held. EEC questions mainly concerned students' employment opportunities and professional rehabilitation, the mechanism for expressing observations and complaints, college's environment, evaluations, and infrastructure services (e.g., library, laboratories).

Finally, the visit was concluded with a tour to the Larnaca's College facilities. In particular the EEC visited classrooms, computer-based teaching laboratories, the library and study areas, teaching and administrative staff offices, and recreational areas (e.g., cafeteria).

A final exit meeting took place between the members of the EEC and the leadership team and program director; the EEC summed-up its findings and offered the opportunity for clarifications. The EEC acknowledges the cooperation of College in the process.

B. External Evaluation Committee (EEC)

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>University</i>
Antonios Georgopoulos	Professor	University of Patras
Alexandros Sahinidis	Professor	University of West Attica
Simos Chari	Professor	University of Manchester (Alliance Manchester Business School)
Petros Louca	Student	University of Cyprus
Name	Position	University
Name	Position	University

C. Guidelines on content and structure of the report

- *The external evaluation report follows the structure of assessment areas.*
- *At the beginning of each assessment area there is a box presenting:*
 - (a) *sub-areas*
 - (b) *standards which are relevant to the European Standards and Guidelines (ESG)*
 - (c) *some questions that EEC may find useful.*
- *The questions aim at facilitating the understanding of each assessment area and at illustrating the range of topics covered by the standards.*
- *Under each assessment area, it is important to provide information regarding the compliance with the requirements of each sub-area. In particular, the following must be included:*

Findings

A short description of the situation in the Higher Education Institution (HEI), based on elements from the application for external evaluation and on findings from the onsite visit.

Strengths

A list of strengths, e.g. examples of good practices, achievements, innovative solutions etc.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

A list of problem areas to be dealt with, followed by or linked to the recommendations of how to improve the situation.

- *The EEC should state the compliance for each sub-area (Non-compliant, Partially compliant, Compliant), which must be in agreement with everything stated in the report. It is pointed out that, in the case of standards that cannot be applied due to the status of the HEI and/or of the programme of study, N/A (= Not Applicable) should be noted.*
- *The EEC should state the conclusions and final remarks regarding the programme of study as a whole.*
- *The report may also address other issues which the EEC finds relevant.*

1. Study programme and study programme's design and development (ESG 1.1, 1.2, 1.7, 1.8, 1.9)

Sub-areas

- 1.1 Policy for quality assurance**
- 1.2 Design, approval, on-going monitoring and review**
- 1.3 Public information**
- 1.4 Information management**

1.1 Policy for quality assurance

Standards

- *Policy for quality assurance of the programme of study:*
 - *has a formal status and is publicly available*
 - *supports the organisation of the quality assurance system through appropriate structures, regulations and processes*
 - *supports teaching, administrative staff and students to take on their responsibilities in quality assurance*
 - *ensures academic integrity and freedom and is vigilant against academic fraud*
 - *guards against intolerance of any kind or discrimination against the students or staff*
 - *supports the involvement of external stakeholders*

1.2 Design, approval, on-going monitoring and review

Standards

- *The programme of study:*
 - *is designed with overall programme objectives that are in line with the institutional strategy and have explicit intended learning outcomes*
 - *is designed by involving students and other stakeholders*
 - *benefits from external expertise*
 - *reflects the four purposes of higher education of the Council of Europe (preparation for sustainable employment, personal development, preparation for life as active citizens in democratic societies, the development and maintenance, through teaching, learning and research, of a broad, advanced knowledge base)*
 - *is designed so that it enables smooth student progression*
 - *is designed so that the exams' and assignments' content corresponds to the level of the programme and the number of ECTS*
 - *defines the expected student workload in ECTS*
 - *includes well-structured placement opportunities where appropriate*

- *is subject to a formal institutional approval process*
- *results in a qualification that is clearly specified and communicated, and refers to the correct level of the National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education and, consequently, to the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area*
- *is regularly monitored in the light of the latest research in the given discipline, thus ensuring that the programme is up-to-date*
- *is periodically reviewed so that it takes into account the changing needs of society, the students' workload, progression and completion, the effectiveness of procedures for assessment of students, student expectations, needs and satisfaction in relation to the programme*
- *is reviewed and revised regularly involving students and other stakeholders*

1.3 Public information

Standards

- *Regarding the programme of study, clear, accurate, up-to date and readily accessible information is published about:*
 - *selection criteria*
 - *intended learning outcomes*
 - *qualification awarded*
 - *teaching, learning and assessment procedures*
 - *pass rates*
 - *learning opportunities available to the students*
 - *graduate employment information*

1.4 Information management

Standards

- *Information for the effective management of the programme of study is collected, monitored and analysed:*
 - *key performance indicators*
 - *profile of the student population*
 - *student progression, success and drop-out rates*
 - *students' satisfaction with their programmes*
 - *learning resources and student support available*
 - *career paths of graduates*
- *Students and staff are involved in providing and analysing information and planning follow-up activities.*

You may also consider the following questions:

- *What is the procedure for quality assurance of the programme and who is involved?*

- *Who is involved in the study programme's design and development (launching, changing, internal evaluation) and what is taken into account (strategies, the needs of society, etc.)?*
- *How/to what extent are students themselves involved in the development of the content of their studies?*
- *Please evaluate a) whether the study programme remains current and consistent with developments in society (labour market, digital technologies, etc.), and b) whether the content and objectives of the study programme are in accordance with each other?*
- *Do the content and the delivery of the programme correspond to the European Qualifications Framework (EQF)?*
- *How is coherence of the study programme ensured, i.e., logical sequence and coherence of courses? How are substantial overlaps between courses avoided? How is it ensured that the teaching staff is aware of the content and outputs of their colleagues' work within the same study programme?*
- *How does the study programme support development of the learners' general competencies (including digital literacy, foreign language skills, entrepreneurship, communication and teamwork skills)?*
- *What are the scope and objectives of the foundation courses in the study programme (where appropriate)? What are the pass rates?*
- *How long does it take a student on average to graduate? Is the graduation rate for the study programme analogous to other European programmes with similar content? What is the pass rate per course/semester?*
- ***How is it ensured that the actual student workload is in accordance with the workload expressed by ECTS?***
- *What are the opportunities for international students to participate in the study programme (courses/modules taught in a foreign language)?*
- *Is information related to the programme of study publicly available?*
- *How is the HEI evaluating the success of its graduates in the labor market? What is the feedback from graduates of the study programme on their employment and/or continuation of studies?*
- *Have the results of student feedback been analysed and taken into account, and how (e.g., when planning in-service training for the teaching staff)?*
- *What are the reasons for dropping out (voluntary withdrawal)? What has been done to reduce the number of such students?*

Findings

A short description of the situation in the Higher Education Institution (HEI), based on elements from the application for external evaluation and on findings from the onsite visit.

The programme of Secretarial Studies (1-year) is a conventional program that has been accredited by the CYQAA in 2020; the EEC is evaluating a new proposed version of the running program. The program and its intended learning outcomes provide the necessary disciplinary knowledge and practical skills needed for professionals in the area of Secretarial Studies. The qualification awarded by C.D.A. College (across all branches – Larnaca, Limassol, Paphos and Nicosia) meets the National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education and at the same time industry's expectations.

The EEC has observed that C.D.A. College (across all branches) has several policies in place for quality assurance purposes. These support the institutions through appropriate structures, regulations and processes and ensure academic quality and integrity. The EEC has observed that such policies apply to both the development and implementation of the program; for instance, C.D.A. College, across all branches, collaborates with external stakeholders and seeks the advice of practitioners (e.g., lawyers) to ensure that the programme is industry relevant and up to date. It was also evident, that changes to the existing programme go through internal processes/policies as well. There are mechanisms in place, in all branches, such as the student course unit feedback and the staff self-evaluation report that are used to shape future policies. The leadership and management teams across all branches, responds to students' and staff's recommendations and suggestions and make program or unit level improvements when they deem it necessary. These improvements cover areas such as curriculum development, assessment policies, student progression, and ECTS credits.

Regarding the programme of study, important information such as its selection criteria, intended learning outcomes, student progression, learning opportunities and graduate employment, is publicly available on the College's website and promotional material (i.e., brochure). The EEC also observed that all the branches of the C.D.A College collect information about key performance indicators (e.g., student progression, success rates, student satisfaction etc) and these allow them to effectively manage the program and ensure homogeneity across all branches.

Strengths

A list of strengths, e.g. examples of good practices, achievements, innovative solutions etc.

1. There is an established program in place which can be used as the foundation for the 2-year and full programme (3 years) of Secretarial Studies.
2. The leadership and the management teams, and the teaching staff of all branches have the experience and qualifications in delivering this programme successfully.
3. The supportive staff across all branches appears to be well qualified.
4. The units offered during the 2 semesters are aligned to the aims and the intended learning outcomes of the program.

5. There are relatively small cohorts, across all branches, which lead to a good ratio of instructors and students and create a more customized experience.
6. The teaching approach used in classes, across all branches, is more or less student-centered (in some branches this needs further improvement).
7. There are several internal policies in place that support all the branches and ensure the smooth implementation of the program.
8. There are synergies and collaboration with external stakeholders and other institutions.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

A list of problem areas to be dealt with, followed by or linked to the recommendations of how to improve the situation.

The EEC encourages the college to:

1. All the branches should create an overarching document that demonstrates how each unit on the program contributes to the intended learning outcomes of the overall program. This is a requirement of CYQAA.
2. The leadership and the program directors across all branches need to reassess the structure of the program and consider the following changes / suggestions. The ECC strongly believes that these will significantly improve the program:
 - a) Considering its practical nature and importance, the unit “Office Automation” should be a core unit and not an elective. The EEC recommends that these should be merged with the unit of “Intro to Computers”.
 - b) Considering that the graduates of the program need to have a holistic understanding of how a business is run (hence, the introductory units on Accounting and Marketing) the unit of “Intro to Management / Business” is missing from the core units of the program.
 - c) Considering the niche/specialized nature of the unit “Intro to Logistics”, this could be an elective and not core unit. The EEC suggests that the basic theory of supply chain and (inbound and outbound) logistics is covered with the units of “Intro to Management” and “Intro to Marketing.”
 - d) Finally, the EEC suggests incorporating basic theory of consumer psychology in the unit of “Customer Service” and rename the unit “Customer Psychology and Service Excellence”
3. Analyze whether students are being over assessed as it appears that every course in the same semester, across all branches, has the same assessment methods.
4. EEC also encourages some differentiation in terms of assessment methods so that students are exposed to different assessments and their combinations. It will be useful to map assessment against courses and learning outcomes (similar to the course mapping against learning outcomes). This will help the programme team, across all branches, to formulate a coherent assessment strategy.



Please select what is appropriate for each of the following sub-areas:

Sub-area		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>
1.1	Policy for quality assurance	Compliant
1.2	Design, approval, on-going monitoring and review	Compliant
1.3	Public information	Compliant
1.4	Information management	Compliant

2. Student – centred learning, teaching and assessment (ESG 1.3)

Sub-areas

2.1 Process of teaching and learning and student-centred teaching methodology

2.2 Practical training

2.3 Student assessment

2.1 Process of teaching and learning and student-centred teaching methodology

Standards

- *The process of teaching and learning supports students' individual and social development.*
- *The process of teaching and learning is flexible, considers different modes of delivery, where appropriate, uses a variety of pedagogical methods and facilitates the achievement of planned learning outcomes.*
- *Students are encouraged to take an active role in creating the learning process.*
- *The implementation of student-centered learning and teaching encourages a sense of autonomy in the learner, while ensuring adequate guidance and support from the teacher.*
- *Teaching methods, tools and material used in teaching are modern, effective, support the use of modern educational technologies and are regularly updated.*
- *Mutual respect within the learner-teacher relationship is promoted.*
- *The implementation of student-centred learning and teaching respects and attends to the diversity of students and their needs, enabling flexible learning paths.*
- *Appropriate procedures for dealing with students' complaints regarding the process of teaching and learning are set.*

2.2 Practical training

Standards

- *Practical and theoretical studies are interconnected.*
- *The organisation and the content of practical training, if applicable, support achievement of planned learning outcomes and meet the needs of the stakeholders.*

2.3 Student assessment

Standards

- *Assessment is consistent, fairly applied to all students and carried out in accordance with the stated procedures.*

- *Assessment is appropriate, transparent, objective and supports the development of the learner.*
- *The criteria for the method of assessment, as well as criteria for marking, are published in advance.*
- *Assessment allows students to demonstrate the extent to which the intended learning outcomes have been achieved. Students are given feedback, which, if necessary, is linked to advice on the learning process.*
- *Assessment, where possible, is carried out by more than one examiner.*
- *A formal procedure for student appeals is in place.*
- *Assessors are familiar with existing testing and examination methods and receive support in developing their own skills in this field.*
- *The regulations for assessment take into account mitigating circumstances.*

You may also consider the following questions:

- *How is it monitored that the teaching staff base their teaching and assessment methods on objectives and intended learning outcomes? Provide samples of examination papers (if available).*
 - *How are students' different abilities, learning needs and learning opportunities taken into consideration when conducting educational activities?*
 - *How is the development of students' general competencies (including digital skills) supported in educational activities?*
 - *How is it ensured that innovative teaching methods, learning environments and learning aids that support learning are diverse and used in educational activities?*
 - *Is the teaching staff using new technology in order to make the teaching process more effective?*
 - *How is it ensured that theory and practice are interconnected in teaching and learning?*
 - *How is practical training organised (finding practical training positions, guidelines for practical training, supervision, reporting, feedback, etc.)? What role does practical training have in achieving the objectives of the study programme? What is student feedback on the content and arrangement of practical training?*
 - ***Are students actively involved in research? How is student involvement in research set up?***
 - *How is supervision of student research papers (seminar papers, projects, theses, etc.) organised?*
 - ***Do students' assessments correspond to the European Qualifications Framework (EQF)?***
 - *How are the assessment methods chosen and to what extent do students get supportive feedback on their academic progress during their studies?*
- 3. *How is the objectivity and relevance of student assessment ensured (assessment of the degree of achievement of the intended learning outcomes)?***

Findings

A short description of the situation in the Higher Education Institution (HEI), based on elements from the application for external evaluation and on findings from the onsite visit.

Please see below the outcomes and conclusions of the EEC regarding “*student learning, teaching and assessment*” as observed at the Larnaca branch of the C.D.A College:

The teaching process at the Larnaka branch is similar to that of the other three branches (i.e., Limassol, Paphos and Nicosia). The EEC, after discussing with the teaching staff at the Larnaca branch, has found teaching to be to some extent student-led / centred. Even though the teaching staff was aware of the student-centred learning approach, the EEC feels that the practices of this pedagogy have not been implemented to its full potential. The EEC encourages to actively involve students in the discovery and delivery of knowledge as this method encourages a sense of autonomy in the learner. Regardless, the teaching staff at the Larnaca branch apply flexible modes of delivery and these facilitate not just the intended leaning outcome of each unit but also the overall intended learning outcomes of the program. The EEC has also concluded that the teaching tools, and material used are modern (apart from some cases like ‘Shorthand’ and ‘Typography’), effective, and are updated whenever is possible (with some exceptions). C.D.A College Larnaca has in place appropriate policies and procedures for dealing with students’ teaching- and learning-related complaints.

The ECC would like to acknowledge that all the branches are making significant efforts in making the program of Secretarial Studies as practical and relevant to industry as possible. The management and academic teams have made several attempts (e.g., industry visits, guest talks, internships, job fairs etc.) to link theory with practice.

The types of assessment used across the units of the program are appropriate and transparent. Each unit on the program is assessed with a continuous assessment and a final exam; the continuous assessment accounts for 40% of the mark while the final exam the remainder 60%. The EEC observed that the assessments used across all units support the development and can help the learner to develop various soft and hard skills. The criteria for the method of assessment and marking, are publicised to the students of the program in advance. What the EEC observed is that all teaching staff applies for the continuous side of assessment the same proforma of mid-term exam, assignment, and quizzes. This runs the risk of having minimum 14 assessments for each semester (2 assessments for 7 units each semester). This results to the over-assessment of students and to significant workload throughout each semester. Finally, the EEC identified that at the C.D.A College of Larnaca there are formal procedures for student appeals and regulations in place for assessment consider mitigating circumstances.

Strengths

A list of strengths, e.g. examples of good practices, achievements, innovative solutions etc.

Regarding *the process of teaching and learning and student-centred teaching methodology*, the following strengths have been observed at the Larnaca Branch of C.D.A College:

1. The Larnaca branch is run by a strong management team which is supported by a capable and experienced administrative staff.
2. The EEC have identified that the teaching staff is qualified, knowledgeable, and experienced in delivering the program of Secretarial Studies. The program is fully managed by the academics in place.
3. The EEC has identified that the teaching methods, tools, material used in delivering the program are along the expectations set by modern practices.
4. Appropriate pedagogical methods are employed for facilitating the intended learning outcomes of each unit on the program.
5. There is a dedicated quality assurance committee that assembles regularly and takes actions to ensure that the program meets recommended standards.
6. The college has in place different policies and processes that facilitate the smooth operation of the college and the delivery of the program (e.g., dealing with students' complaints, diversity, and mitigating circumstances).
7. The students interviewed by the EEC highlighted that are quite satisfied with the quality of teaching and by the friendly, flexible, and personalized approach they receive.
8. The staff interviewed pointed that that the working environment is ideal; they pointed the how collegial, friendly the working environment is.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

A list of problem areas to be dealt with, followed by or linked to the recommendations of how to improve the situation.

The EEC feels that the following recommendations should be considered for the Larnaca branch of C.D.A College:

1. The college needs to ensure that the students that only complete the first year of the program have a holistic understanding of how a business is run and more specialised knowledge on secretarial-related subject areas. The college needs to detach the first year of the program from those of Year 2 and 3; even though the foundation year is the stepping stone for Year 2 and 3 it needs to be treated as an interdependent program.
2. The EEC finds the suggested structure of the program to be adequate; however, the EEC made some strong recommendations regarding core and elective units and how these can be restructured to ensure the competitiveness and future viability of the program. In Section 1, find a detailed list of the EEC's recommendations.
3. The college needs to follow the requirements of the CYQAA and conduct a mapping exercise that demonstrates how each unit taught on the curriculum contributes to the intended outcomes of the overall program. This exercise should be performed by the teaching staff and the program director at the Larnaca College.
4. The EEC suggests that the teaching staff at the Larnaca College to fully embrace the student-centred learning approach and incorporate the learner in the discovery and delivery of knowledge. To this extent, the EEC suggests collaborations between the teaching teams of the different branches. Teaching staff from different colleges on a 'teaching-away day' could share best practices and effective pedagogical approaches that encourage a student-centred

- approach to teaching. Also, the EEC suggests that experienced staff is paired with junior staff in a mentorship program.
5. Even though there is evidence of links to local businesses/ market, the college should strive to improve this engagement even more in the very near future.
 6. The EEC also recommends that the all the branches of the C.D.A College set-up an advisory board with external stakeholders to ensure the continuous update and development of the program.
 7. The teaching staff should reconsider the way the students are assessed on this program and ensure: (a) that they are not over assessed; and (b) various assessment methods are applied for building various soft and hard skills.

Please select what is appropriate for each of the following sub-areas:

Sub-area		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>
2.1	Process of teaching and learning and student-centred teaching methodology	Compliant
2.2	Practical training	Compliant
2.3	Student assessment	Compliant

3. Teaching staff (ESG 1.5)

Sub-areas

- 3.1 Teaching staff recruitment and development**
- 3.2 Teaching staff number and status**
- 3.3 Synergies of teaching and research**

3.1 Teaching staff recruitment and development

Standards

- *Institutions ensure the competence of their teaching staff.*
- *Fair, transparent and clear processes for the recruitment and development of the teaching staff are set up.*
- *Teaching staff qualifications are adequate to achieve the objectives and planned learning outcomes of the study programme, and to ensure quality and sustainability of the teaching and learning.*
- *The teaching staff is regularly engaged in professional and teaching-skills training and development.*
- *Promotion of the teaching staff takes into account the quality of their teaching, their research activity, the development of their teaching skills and their mobility.*
- *Innovation in teaching methods and the use of new technologies is encouraged.*
- *Conditions of employment that recognise the importance of teaching are followed.*
- *Recognised visiting teaching staff participates in teaching the study programme.*

3.2 Teaching staff number and status

Standards

- *The number of the teaching staff is adequate to support the programme of study.*
- *The teaching staff status (rank, full/part time) is appropriate to offer a quality programme of study.*
- *Visiting staff number does not exceed the number of the permanent staff.*

3.3 Synergies of teaching and research

Standards

- *The teaching staff collaborate in the fields of teaching and research within the HEI and with partners outside (practitioners in their fields, employers, and staff members at other HEIs in Cyprus or abroad).*
- *Scholarly activity to strengthen the link between education and research is encouraged.*
- *The teaching staff publications are within the discipline.*

- *Teaching staff studies and publications are closely related to the programme's courses.*
- *The allocation of teaching hours compared to the time for research activity is appropriate.*

You may also consider the following questions:

- *How are the members of the teaching staff supported with regard to the development of their teaching skills? How is feedback given to members of the teaching staff regarding their teaching results and teaching skills?*
- *How is the teaching performance assessed? How does their teaching performance affect their remuneration, evaluation and/or selection?*
- *Is teaching connected with research?*
- *Does the HEI involve visiting teaching staff from other HEIs in Cyprus and abroad?*
- *What is the number, workload, qualifications and status of the teaching staff (rank, full/part timers)?*
- *Is student evaluation conducted on the teaching staff? If yes, have the results of student feedback been analysed and taken into account, and how (e.g., when planning in-service training for the teaching staff)?*

Findings

A short description of the situation in the Higher Education Institution (HEI), based on elements from the application for external evaluation and on findings from the onsite visit.

The EEC visited C.D.A college at Larnaca and after discussing with the management team, the teaching staff, students and administrative staff reached the following conclusions:

The teaching staff are well-qualified professionals, with considerable experience in most cases, and holding at least a bachelor's degree. There are seven academics on the program, all at the lecturer level, five of them full-time one part-time and one as special teaching staff. The curriculum of the Certificate is comprised of 14 courses, 13 compulsory and one elective. Out of the 13 compulsory courses five are taught by one lecturer.

There is a recruitment mechanism in place for the hiring teaching staff, involving the academic director and the General manager of the college. The Academic director notes the needs for new teaching staff, after discussions with the teaching staff and students and other stakeholders, makes a request for a new hire. The management of the college then sets the recruitment process in motion, advertises the position and invites candidates for interviewing.

The teaching staff expressed their satisfaction with the management policy on staff development. They are encouraged to participate in workshops seminars and conferences, with fees paid by the college. In addition to that, the college has the policy to offer the opportunity to its staff to pursue their educational goals, within the college at no cost. Some of the staff took advantage of that offer and received their MBA from C.D.A. Teaching staff uses new technologies to achieve the course's objectives with new computer systems in place.

The student /teacher ratio is low with a class of four students. Research activity among the teaching staff is scant, since the program is vocational, and the outcomes are linked to the profession of secretary. Nevertheless, some of the teachers attend conferences with some contributions.

There is no visiting staff at C.D.A Larnaca, but occasionally speakers invited by the college offer their expert knowledge on subjects relevant to secretarial studies. These speakers may include people practicing Law, Medicine, Accounting or other professions that usually have the need of secretarial services.

There is, finally, a large degree of cooperation between the teaching staff of C.D.A Larnaca and the staff of other branches of the college.

Strengths

A list of strengths, e.g. examples of good practices, achievements, innovative solutions etc.

1. C.D.A Larnaca is a well-known brand in secretarial studies with a large number of alumni (372). The program exists since 2000, and the college's presence in all four large cities of Cyprus is offering a unique advantage to C.D.A.
2. The program is targeted at the local labor market, so graduates after completing their studies can be employed directly or continue to higher level degrees.
3. The design of the programs is such that allows for a preparation of the students for a variety of employers, such as Lawyers, Medical Doctors, and different Business secretarial positions.
4. The small number of students is helping the learning process with "customizing" the teaching to a certain extent. The experienced teaching staff is an asset to the college, providing the students with "applied knowledge rather than theory-based teaching".
5. The family-like culture that permeates the college is indicative of the strong bond between students' teachers and management.
6. The relations with other universities through the Erasmus program provide the college with an external orientation, with many opportunities for learning practices, techniques and methods.
7. The extended network of C.D.A alumni, which promotes the college's brand.
8. The program is being offered in the mornings and/or afternoons accommodating the students that are employed.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

A list of problem areas to be dealt with, followed by or linked to the recommendations of how to improve the situation.

1. One weak point of C.D.A Larnaca is the low-performing student quality. The secretarial studies tend to attract students with lower-than-average aspirations, and as a result the students are usually not high performers. The low number of students enrolled if continued will be threatening the sustainability of the program. The management and the public relations of C.D.A will need to explore ways to increase the student and parent interest in the market. If there is a trend of disinterest in secretarial studies in the market, the program may need to be abandoned.

2. There is space for improvement in teaching mobility among the staff through the Erasmus program. There is room for expanding the number of agreements with other tertiary education institutions from abroad.
3. The monitoring of the careers of alumni and the continuous contact with them is something that will help the college to formulate its strategies and ultimately increase student intake.

Please select what is appropriate for each of the following sub-areas:

Sub-area		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>
3.1	Teaching staff recruitment and development	Compliant
3.2	Teaching staff number and status	Compliant
3.3	Synergies of teaching and research	Not applicable

4. Student admission, progression, recognition and certification (ESG 1.4)

Sub-areas

- 4.1 Student admission, processes and criteria
- 4.2 Student progression
- 4.3 Student recognition
- 4.4 Student certification

4.1 Student admission, processes and criteria

Standards

- *Pre-defined and published regulations regarding student admission are in place.*
- *Access policies, admission processes and criteria are implemented consistently and in a transparent manner.*

4.2 Student progression

Standards

- *Pre-defined and published regulations regarding student progression are in place.*
- *Processes and tools to collect, monitor and act on information on student progression, are in place.*

4.3 Student recognition

Standards

- *Pre-defined and published regulations regarding student recognition are in place.*
- *Fair recognition of higher education qualifications, periods of study and prior learning, including the recognition of non-formal and informal learning, are essential components for ensuring the students' progress in their studies, while promoting mobility.*
- *Appropriate recognition procedures are in place that rely on:*
 - *institutional practice for recognition being in line with the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention*
 - *cooperation with other institutions, quality assurance agencies and the national ENIC/NARIC centre with a view to ensuring coherent recognition across the country*

4.4 Student certification

Standards

- *Pre-defined and published regulations regarding student certification are in place.*
- *Students receive certification explaining the qualification gained, including achieved learning outcomes and the context, level, content and status of the studies that were pursued and successfully completed.*

You may also consider the following questions:

- *Are the admission requirements for the study programme appropriate? How is the students' prior preparation/education assessed (including the level of international students, for example)?*
- *How is the procedure of recognition for prior learning and work experience ensured, including recognition of study results acquired at foreign higher education institutions?*
- *Is the certification of the HEI accompanied by a diploma supplement, which is in line with European and international standards?*

Findings

A short description of the situation in the Higher Education Institution (HEI), based on elements from the application for external evaluation and on findings from the onsite visit.

Pre-defined and published regulations regarding student admission are in place. Those interested in enrolling are informed through the admissions officer, the information is available on the college's site, the study guide, and informally through the teaching staff. The candidates must possess a high-school diploma or an equivalent certificate showing that he/she has completed a six-grade school post elementary school. Since the program is offered in Greek, it is catering to the needs of Cypriots and Greek speakers. The program accepts new students twice a year for both fall and spring semesters. Regulations are in place to admit transfer students from inside the college (other C.D.A branches) or other tertiary education institutions, both from Cyprus and abroad.

A course outline provides the students with all information regarding the course's contents, teaching methods, evaluation methods and course outcomes. This is the case for all courses offered, while the information is posted on the Moodle platform, used by the teaching staff.

The college collects all relevant information to monitor the students' progress and the program director is aware of the student's standing at any time. Students usually pass their final exams and their courses, but in the case, they fail they have three chances of being re-examined. The promotion of students will be achieved separately for each course per semester. For all full-time students', is obligatory to attend 15 didactic periods per week. A student can graduate when the necessary marks

for each course are completed and he/she achieves a passing mark in all courses, as it is stated on the declaration of registration of the Program of Study.

The assessment of the students is composed of two parts, the continuous assessment and the final examination. The continuous assessment includes various types of evaluation of the student such as mid-terms, project-work, where is possible, oral tests or any other kind of examination. These assessment methods are not official written examinations and can be carried out throughout the semester. There are three examination periods, end of Fall and Spring semesters and one in September. They represent 60% of the grade with the remaining 40% allocated in the continuous assessment activities.

The student work is recognized by all formal entities in the government and private organizations. The graduate can expect to be recognized and qualify for the benefits associated with the certificate (which explains the qualification gained, including achieved learning outcomes and the context, level, content and status of the studies that were pursued and successfully completed).

Strengths

A list of strengths, e.g. examples of good practices, achievements, innovative solutions etc.

1. The program is using predefined and published regulations regarding student admissions, progression, recognition and certification. The abundance of information provided to parents, students and other stakeholders, creates an atmosphere of trust among all these constituencies, resulting into strong relationships with the college and the program.
2. The small classes of the program create a better than usual setting for learning and teaching, giving students the advantage of special attention not being afforded for students in large classes.
3. The high level of trust and affection of the students towards their teachers is indicative of the family – like culture characterizing the college and especially the program. A reflection of this is the fact that many of the employees of C.D.A are former students of its programs.
4. The potential offered to certificate recipients to continue their studies toward receiving a diploma or a higher diploma in the same field is an attractive proposition, offered by only C.D.A. No other college offers a one-year certificate program in secretarial studies

Areas of improvement and recommendations

A list of problem areas to be dealt with, followed by or linked to the recommendations of how to improve the situation.

1. The relatively small enrolment is potentially an existential threat to the program. Although this offers an advantage to the attending students, it threatens the sustainability of the program and its viability in the future. The college administrators may have to face the situation where they will have to discontinue the one-year program, or they may want to pursue a more aggressive campaign to promote it and see what the results look like. If it is a market change, favouring longer education programs such as the 2-year or 3-year ones, the college must adapt to it.

2. There are some inherent problems with a one-year program. Students who work for Lawyers for example, will have a need for Law-specific courses and one elective course may not meet the needs for such a career. Also, at the same time a change in jobs from a lawyer to a doctor's office for instance would render the knowledge acquired at the Lawyer's office less useful.

Please select what is appropriate for each of the following sub-areas:

Sub-area		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>
4.1	Student admission, processes and criteria	Compliant
4.2	Student progression	Compliant
4.3	Student recognition	Compliant
4.4	Student certification	Compliant

5. Learning resources and student support (ESG 1.6)

Sub-areas

5.1 Teaching and Learning resources

5.2 Physical resources

5.3 Human support resources

5.4 Student support

5.1 Teaching and Learning resources

Standards

- *Adequate and readily accessible teaching and learning resources (teaching and learning environments, materials, aids and equipment) are provided to students and support the achievement of objectives in the study programme.*
- *Adequacy of resources is ensured for changing circumstances (change in student numbers, etc.).*
- *All resources are fit for purpose.*
- *Student-centred learning and flexible modes of learning and teaching, are taken into account when allocating, planning and providing the learning resources.*

5.2 Physical resources

Standards

- *Physical resources, i.e. premises, libraries, study facilities, IT infrastructure, are adequate to support the study programme.*
- *Adequacy of resources is ensured for changing circumstances (change in student numbers, etc.).*
- *All resources are fit for purpose and students are informed about the services available to them.*

5.3 Human support resources

Standards

- *Human support resources, i.e. tutors/mentors, counsellors, other advisers, qualified administrative staff, are adequate to support the study programme.*
- *Adequacy of resources is ensured for changing circumstances (change in student numbers, etc.).*

- *All resources are fit for purpose and students are informed about the services available to them.*

5.4 Student support

Standards

- *Student support is provided covering the needs of a diverse student population, such as mature, part-time, employed and international students and students with special needs.*
- *Students are informed about the services available to them.*
- *Student-centred learning and flexible modes of learning and teaching, are taken into account when allocating, planning and providing student support.*
- *Students' mobility within and across higher education systems is encouraged and supported.*

You may also consider the following questions:

- *Evaluate the supply of teaching materials and equipment (including teaching labs, expendable materials, etc.), the condition of classrooms, adequacy of financial resources to conduct the study programme and achieve its objectives. What needs to be supplemented/ improved?*
- *What is the feedback from the teaching staff on the availability of teaching materials, classrooms, etc.?*
- *Are the resources in accordance with actual (changing) needs and contemporary requirements? How is the effectiveness of using resources ensured?*
- *What are the resource-related trends and future risks (risks arising from changing numbers of students, obsolescence of teaching equipment, etc.)? How are these trends taken into account and how are the risks mitigated?*
- *Evaluate student feedback on support services. Based on student feedback, which support services (including information flow, counselling) need further development?*
- *How is student learning within the standard period of study supported (student counselling, flexibility of the study programme, etc.)?*
- *How students' special needs are considered (different capabilities, different levels of academic preparation, special needs due to physical disabilities, etc.)?*
- *How is student mobility being supported?*

Findings

A short description of the situation in the Higher Education Institution (HEI), based on elements from the application for external evaluation and on findings from the onsite visit.

The EEC focused on the analysis of 4 groups of resources: (a) Teaching and learning resources; (b) Physical resources; (c) Human support resources; (d) Student support

Regarding educational resources and student support, the EEC found a student-focused learning and flexible modes of learning and teaching.

Physical resources were considered particularly persuasive.

The teaching staff includes experienced teachers at all levels, in each case at least one level above the degree level offered by the educational institution. The knowledge and research subjects as well as the practical experience of the teachers are relevant and in correspondence with the assignments of their courses in the curriculum.

An appreciable effort to adapt resources was observed (e.g. renewal of computer equipment and software, renewal of textbooks and training manuals)

In addition, the EEC observed that all resources (e.g., human resources and support services) are fit for purpose. There are adequate human support resources (i.e., tutors/mentors, counsellors, other advisers, qualified administrative staff) and the student support services provided cover the needs of a diverse student population (e.g., employed students and students with special needs). The interviews with the student body showed that students are informed about the support services available to them. Particularly, the students highlighted that they are content with the support services provided and special mention was given to the careers office of the college.

Strengths

A list of strengths, e.g. examples of good practices, achievements, innovative solutions etc.

Regarding the field of physical infrastructure, the following strengths were found:

1. Teaching incorporates modern technologies such as the use of the Moodle platform, computer labs, electronic data bases, modern classrooms, comfortable places for students to stay, such as recreation and rest.
2. There are also good student support structures for finding housing, psychological support, financial facilities (payment of tuition fees in instalments, discounts) and more.

Concerning the teaching staff, the main strengths are as follows:

1. Relevance of the academic and research subjects of the teachers to the program
2. Small number of students per teacher.
3. Professional dedication and commitment of teachers.
4. Good working environment.

As regards students, during the on-site visit, a high percentage of student satisfaction was found with their participation in the program and the services provided at all levels. In particular:

1. Quality service to the students of the program by the teaching and administrative staff at all levels
2. Special care for the disabled students
3. Facilitation of working students
4. Special care for foreign students

Areas of improvement and recommendations

A list of problem areas to be dealt with, followed by or linked to the recommendations of how to improve the situation.

1. It is proposed to encourage teachers to participate more actively in mobility programs, training seminars and conferences related to their subject.
2. More intensive use of teachers with high professional experience, who will transfer practical knowledge to students and increase the attractiveness of their professional degree.
3. Further strengthening of student mobility through programs (e.g. ERASMUS+) in more EU countries, beyond Greece.
4. Increasing the College's international collaborations with individual scientists, institutes and academic organizations.
5. More subscriptions to electronic scientific and professional journals for the systematic professional information of the students.
6. Updating and enriching the educational material at regular intervals, particularly the supplementary teachers' manuals.

Please select what is appropriate for each of the following sub-areas:

Sub-area		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>
5.1	Teaching and Learning resources	Compliant
5.2	Physical resources	Compliant
5.3	Human support resources	Compliant
5.4	Student support	Compliant

6. Additional for doctoral programmes (ALL ESG)

Sub-areas

- 6.1 Selection criteria and requirements**
- 6.2 Proposal and dissertation**
- 6.3 Supervision and committees**

6.1 Selection criteria and requirements

Standards

- *Specific criteria that the potential students need to meet for admission in the programme, as well as how the selection procedures are made, are defined.*
- *The following requirements of the doctoral degree programme are analysed and published:*
 - *the stages of completion*
 - *the minimum and maximum time of completing the programme*
 - *the examinations*
 - *the procedures for supporting and accepting the student's proposal*
 - *the criteria for obtaining the Ph.D. degree*

6.2 Proposal and dissertation

Standards

- *Specific and clear guidelines for the writing of the proposal and the dissertation are set regarding:*
 - *the chapters that are contained*
 - *the system used for the presentation of each chapter, sub-chapters and bibliography*
 - *the minimum word limit*
 - *the binding, the cover page and the prologue pages, including the pages supporting the authenticity, originality and importance of the dissertation, as well as the reference to the committee for the final evaluation*
- *There is a plagiarism check system. Information is provided on the detection of plagiarism and the consequences in case of such misconduct.*
- *The process of submitting the dissertation to the university library is set.*

6.3 Supervision and committees

Standards

- *The composition, the procedure and the criteria for the formation of the advisory committee (to whom the doctoral student submits the research proposal) are determined.*
- *The composition, the procedure and the criteria for the formation of the examining committee (to whom the doctoral student defends his/her dissertation), are determined.*
- *The duties of the supervisor-chairperson and the other members of the advisory committee towards the student are determined and include:*
 - *regular meetings*

- reports per semester and feedback from supervisors
- support for writing research papers
- participation in conferences
- The number of doctoral students that each chairperson supervises at the same time are determined.

You may also consider the following questions:

- How is the scientific quality of the PhD thesis ensured?
- Is there a link between the doctoral programmes of study and the society? What is the value of the obtained degree outside academia and in the labour market?
- Can you please provide us with some dissertation samples?

Findings

A short description of the situation in the Higher Education Institution (HEI), based on elements from the application for external evaluation and on findings from the onsite visit.

N/A

Strengths

A list of strengths, e.g. examples of good practices, achievements, innovative solutions etc.333

N/A

Areas of improvement and recommendations

A list of problem areas to be dealt with, followed by or linked to the recommendations of how to improve the situation.

N/A

Please select what is appropriate for each of the following sub-areas:

Sub-area		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>
6.1	Selection criteria and requirements	Not applicable
6.2	Proposal and dissertation	Not applicable
6.3	Supervision and committees	Not applicable

D. Conclusions and final remarks

Please provide constructive conclusions and final remarks which may form the basis upon which improvements of the quality of the programme of study under review may be achieved, with emphasis on the correspondence with the EQF.

The final opinion formed by the EEC for the proposed study program from the examination of the application, the accompanying material and from the on-site visit, is very positive. The specific program is flexible and provides students with the opportunity to obtain a professional certificate in a short period of time, in a field of work with good growth prospects.

The specific program is a one-year program, offered at the Larnaca branch, operates autonomously, while at the same time it is harmoniously connected with the two-year and three-year secretarial studies, on a modular basis. Thus, this connection enables those students who wish to continue their studies in the relevant subject to further deepen their knowledge and substantially upgrade their skills.

The program under re-evaluation is offered by an educational organization with many years of experience (about 50 years) in the specific field of study. C.D.A was the first college to introduce this specific program into the professional education of the sector. Today, the program runs in 4 cities (Larnaca, Limassol, Paphos and Nicosia), an element that provides the possibility of homogenization and standardization of management procedures, administrative and educational functions and financial management. Valuable synergies are observed between the 4 educational units of the College regarding management techniques, teaching staff, technical instruments and other instruments and materials.

Of course, among the 4 units there are some differences in individual issues such as in the building facilities, and in the technical infrastructures, without, however, altering or degrading the general characteristics and philosophy of the program. Theoretically, a student who would like to continue his/her studies in the 2nd semester in another unit/city of the College would not face any academic adjustment problem.

To date, the number of graduates in the one-year secretarial studies at Larnaca C.D.A College amounts to 372. In the current phase, the number of registered students is 4. A significant effort is made to connect with the local labour market, through contacts with professional networks that could function as an employer (doctors, lawyers, accountants, hotels, government agencies, etc.). There are not a few cases where the College employs its graduates in its own units.

An important asset for the program is its human resources, both educational and administrative. At the present stage, 7 teachers of various specialties are employed in the C.D.A College in Larnaca; 6 of them hold a master's degree, while 1 teacher has professional typist qualifications.

Administrative mechanisms are clear and defined, while they support the students in multiple areas (e.g., admission and adaptation to the program, resolution of personal, financial and other problems, psychological support). In the current phase, 8 administrative employees of different specializations are employed full-time.



Signatures of the EEC

<i>Name</i>	<i>Signature</i>
Antonios Georgopoulos	
Alexandros Sahinidis	
Simos Chari	
Petros Louca	
Click to enter Name	
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Date: 21/06/2024