

Doc. 300.1.1

Date: 08/09/2020

# External Evaluation Report (Programmatic)

- **Higher Education Institution:**  
Cyprus College
- **Town:** Nicosia
- **School/Faculty (if applicable):** Cyprus College
- **Department/ Sector:** N/A
- **Programme of study- Name (Duration, ECTS, Cycle)**

## **In Greek:**

Διαδικτυακό Μάρκετινγκ και Μέσα Κοινωνικής  
Δικτύωσης

## **In English:**

Internet Marketing and Social Media

- **Language(s) of instruction:** Greek
- **Programme's status**  
**New programme:** No  
**Currently operating:** Yes



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 2019” [N. 136 (I)/2015 to N. 35(I)/2019].

## A. Introduction

*This part includes basic information regarding the onsite visit.*

The External Evaluation Committee (EEC) would like to thank the CYQAA for the invitation to evaluate the Diploma in Internet Marketing and Social Media offered by the Cyprus College based in Nicosia.

The committee consisted of three academics with relevant disciplinary expertise and a student representative.

Given the current circumstances due to the on-going pandemic, the evaluation took place online. The committee had the opportunity to meet with the senior management of the College, the academic faculty and administrative/support staff. During the online meetings, the committee had the chance to attend presentations related to the College and the program and ask questions pertinent to the under-review program. The committee also had the opportunity to review the physical infrastructure via the videos provided.

The external evaluation committee would like to thank all parties involved for their cooperation and support during the evaluation. The committee would also like to thank the CYQAA coordinator for managing the process both efficiently and effectively.

## B. External Evaluation Committee (EEC)

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>University</i>
<b>Prof Savvas Papagiannidis</b>	David Goldman Professor of Innovation of Enterprise	Newcastle University Business School
<b>Dr Anastasia Veneti</b>	Associate Professor	Bournemouth University
<b>Dr Simos Chari</b>	Associate Professor	Alliance Manchester Business School
<b>Charalampia Vraka</b>	Student Rep	University of Cyprus

## 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 College has established quality assurance processes that are transparent and inclusive. Such processes and policies underpin the on-going review and development of both new and existing programmes. Teaching and administrative staff were aware of the relevant policies and procedures. In addition to the formal mechanisms, the Committee noted evidence of informal mechanisms that supported staff in their endeavours to deliver quality teaching.

Overall, the Committee felt that the programme featured appropriate learning objectives at the programme level. When it came to the taught modules of the proposed program, a good mixture of marketing and communication modules provided a balanced theoretical and practical perspective.

ECTs are clearly defined signalling the corresponding student workload. The practice around the definition of ECTs is along the expected lines. The programme features a practical component, which given its nature, is a welcome feature.

The EEC notes evidence of internal programme development at both the module and programme level, aiming to ensure that the programme content remains up to date. Coupled with the regular external evaluation, such developments can benefit the programme and in the long term keeping it in line with the latest developments.

Admissions criteria are in line with the EEC expectations.

Information on student satisfaction as well as other student demographics are collected by the College. The committee notes that many of the students currently attending the programme are professionals who are interested in extending their knowledge and skills set. This can be turned into an opportunity if the College and teaching team tap into their students' networks to bring into the programme a more market-oriented approach. Such an approach can help elevate the overall learning experience for all students on the program.

### Strengths

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

Overall, this is a well-designed program that offers a good balance between theory and practice.

The programme benefits from several part time staff who have a wealth of practical experience and expertise and can bring this into the classroom.

### 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 would like to encourage the teaching team to consider introducing more marketing (e.g. consumer behaviour, marketing research) modules to replace non-directly related modules, such as sociology. Modules that cover peripheral/wider objectives could have been integrated in other modules helping both contextualise the core modules but also make room for more specialised ones.

A more collaborative and synergetic approach to reviewing and developing the curriculum could have avoided overlaps among modules and ensured a more efficient transition from one to the other.

Modules like the Development of Internet Relations or Introduction to Social Media can have clearer objectives and outcomes. This will help them play a more distinct role in the programme.

The order and overall progression from one term to the next could be reviewed and minor adjustments made to ensure that the transition is even smoother.

Feedback from students should be taken into consideration more effectively and operationalised accordingly. This is especially true for PT staff teaching on the programme as any changes to the staff list may result in student suggestions being lost in the translation, losing an opportunity to further improve the programme.

**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	Partially 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**

#### 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 and 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?*
- *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.*

The EEC noted that the College and teaching faculty aimed to support both the individual and student community development by providing tailored support that met their needs. To some extent the EEC has

seen evidence of student-centred learning and teaching. There was evidence that the College and staff take into consideration the students career requirements and show the necessary flexibility to meet their needs.

The methods, tools, and materials used in teaching were similar to those found in comparative vocational programs. They were regularly reviewed and updated as per necessary.

The programme featured both theoretical and practical components. Given the nature of the programme, the practical and theoretical components of each module should be clearly delineated, and their interconnections clarified to the students so that their expectations can be set accordingly. The practical component and the corresponding expectations could have been better managed so that students have a common understanding as to what constitutes practice. The College has a system in place for monitoring the engagement/placement of students with companies while gaining valuable practical experience. .

The Committee notes that there appear to exist good working relationships between teaching faculty and students. However, the number of PT appointments there can be an inhibiting factor for creating longitudinally strong relationships among the teaching faculty and students.

### Strengths

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

The teaching process and overall student development was flexible enough to make it possible for students to fit the programme around their working commitments.

### 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.*

Overall, an assessment strategy at a programme level that reflects the learning objective needs to be established. An assessment strategy at the programme level would help clarify the choices made with regards to the distribution of the assessment types used.

Overreliance on multiple choice assessments should be avoided. Instead, more critical and practiced based assignments could be utilised to test and benchmark the student knowledge and skills. Such assessment types could be more effective for a programme that has a strong vocational underpinning. In turn, more feedback can be provided to encourage the students' summative and normative development.

**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	Partially 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 college is sufficient when it comes to the number of staff. In contrast with permanent, visiting staff represents a higher proportion of the teaching faculty. Regardless, it is apparent that the staff of the college have adequate qualifications, background, and expertise to perform their tasks and help the college meet the learning objectives of the modules and the programme of study. However, the college lacks specialised personnel in the field of marketing and communication. In addition, the EEC observed a number of internal and external initiatives (e.g., specialised training seminars) that are in place to support and develop the teaching staff; especially, junior staff and new recruits. Furthermore, it was identified that there is a budget available for attending international conferences and submitting papers to academic journals.

It has been observed that, student module evaluations is the main mode for assessing teaching performance; this is regularly used across the board at the end of each module. However, the EEC committee is still unsure how the students' feedback is utilised to further improve the curriculum or address issues raised by the students.

Finally, the EEC committee spotted that there is a lack of an annual peer review observation scheme and a cross-checking system of module content and assignment briefs.

### Strengths

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

The EEC observed a friendly and collegial environment in Cyprus College; there were evidence of support to new members of staff by existing ones.

FT and PT staff are encouraged by the College to be involved in research projects and activities; such activities can help staff gaining valuable experiences, and develop further (i.e., personally and professionally)

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.*

Despite that the committee deemed the staff of the college as adequately qualified to perform their tasks, it feels that staff with more specialised education background and expertise in marketing and communications would have been beneficial to the development and delivery of the programme. More FT appointments (i.e. with marketing specialisation) could address the balance between marketing and business modules and benefit the faculty and programme.

Cyprus college needs to consider introducing an annual peer observation scheme that would further enhance the existing teaching quality and put in place a system that makes possible to cross-check modules descriptors for avoiding overlaps and facilitating synergies.

Cyprus college may consider incorporating field practitioners in teaching as guest speakers to give a practical spin on theoretical concepts.

**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	Partially compliant
3.2	Teaching staff number and status	Compliant
3.3	Synergies of teaching and research	Compliant

#### 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

###### 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.*

In general, student admission, progression, recognition and certification seem to work smoothly, and all the necessary mechanisms and procedures are in place. Section 5 of the College application clearly states the admissions criteria, procedures relevant to Transfer students, and Transfer credits.

##### Strengths

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

The College is an established institution in the education sector of Cyprus and its expertise is evidenced in its clear procedures for admission, progression, recognition, and certification. Moreover, the programme uses ECTS credits for each course, which demonstrates the commitment to European standards, and allows for recognition of attended courses outside Cyprus College.

##### 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>
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 committee had the opportunity to meet with representatives of the administrative and IT units and discussed the support facilities and processes in place. The committee also reviewed virtually the facilities of the Cyprus College (e.g., IT labs, classrooms etc) and the online resources available.

The committee feels that the teaching and learning resources made available to support teaching and learning, are sufficient. The virtual learning environment follows the international standards (e.g., the use of Moodle). Sufficient IT support is provided to enable teaching staff to deliver their classes smoothly.

During the online presentation, the committee was informed about a number of different counselling services as well a career office and alumni relations. Furthermore, an academic advisor scheme is in place to cater for student academic issues.

From the discussion with the students, it became apparent that students are made sufficiently aware of the existing support services and they see the merit in these services. Furthermore, to some extent, the committee has seen evidence of student-centred learning and teaching.

### Strengths

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

The EEC noted synergies with other HEI in Cyprus; such synergies make it possible to access resources that meet the established international standards. Such synergies enable to acquire resources more economically, which in turn makes it possible to divert resources at other aspects of the underlying infrastructure. During our discussion, it became obvious that IT support has been proven invaluable during the pandemic, ensuring that teaching migrated effectively online in a relatively short period of time. Going forward such support will be crucial when it will come to ensuring business and learning continuity.

Academic advising, tutoring, support and other counselling services are well established. The College follows international standards relevant to student well-being.

### 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.*

Given the impact of the current pandemic, we recommend sustaining and enhancing IT support for both staff and students.



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 distance learning programmes (ALL ESG)

### Sub-areas

- 6.1 Distance learning philosophy and methodology
- 6.2 Distance learning material at the appropriate level according to EQF
- 6.3 Interaction plan and Interactive weekly activities
- 6.4 Study guides

### 6.1 Distance learning philosophy and methodology

#### Standards

- *The distance learning methodology is appropriate for the particular programme of study.*
- *Feedback processes for students in relation to written assignments are set.*
- *A complete assessment framework is designed, focusing on distance learning methodology, including clearly defined evaluation criteria for student assignments and the final examination.*
- *Expected teleconferences for presentations, discussion and question-answer sessions, and guidance are set.*

### 6.2 Distance learning material at the appropriate level according to EQF

#### Standards

- *Twelve weekly interactive activities per each course are set.*
- *The distance learning material and activities take advantage of the capabilities offered by the virtual and audio-visual environment and the following are applied:*
  - *Simulations in virtual environments*
  - *Problem solving scenarios*
  - *Interactive learning and formative assessment games*
  - *Interactive weekly activities with image, sound and unlimited possibilities for reality reconstruction and further processing based on hypotheses*
  - *They have the ability to transfer students to real-life situations, make decisions, and study the consequences of their decisions*
  - *They help in building skills both in experiences and attitudes like in real life and also in experiencing - not just memorizing knowledge*
- *A pedagogical planning unit for distance learning, which is responsible for the support of the distance learning unit and addresses the requirements for study materials, interactive activities and formative assessment in accordance to international standards, is established.*

### 6.3 Interaction plan and Interactive weekly activities

#### Standards

- *A specific plan is developed to safeguard and assess the interaction:*
  - *among students*
  - *between students and teaching staff*
  - *between students and study guides/material of study*
- *Training, guidance and support are provided to the students and teaching staff focusing on interaction and the specificities of distance learning.*

### 6.4 Study guides

#### Standards

- *A study guide for each course, fully aligned with distance learning philosophy and methodology and the need for student interaction with the material is developed. The study guide should include, for each course week / module, the following:*
  - *Clearly defined objectives and expected learning outcomes of the programme, of the modules and activities in an organised and coherent manner*
  - *Presentation of course material, and students' activities on a weekly basis, in a variety of ways and means (e.g. printed material, electronic material, teleconferencing, multimedia)*
  - *Weekly outline of set activities and exercises and clear instructions for creating posts, discussion, and feedback*
  - *Self-assessment exercises and self-correction guide*
  - *Bibliographic references and suggestions for further study*
  - *Number of assignments/papers and their topics, along with instructions and additional study material*
  - *Synopsis*
- *Study guides, material and activities are appropriate for the level of the programme according to the EQF.*

*You may also consider the following questions:*

- *Is the nature of the programme compatible with distance learning delivery?*
- *How do the programme, the material, the facilities, and the guidelines safeguard the interaction between students, students and teaching staff, students and the material?*
- *How many students upload their work and discuss it in the platform during the semester?*
- *Are the academics qualified to teach in the distance learning programme?*

### 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.*

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>
<b>6.1</b>	Distance learning philosophy and methodology	N/A
<b>6.2</b>	Distance learning material at the appropriate level according to EQF	N/A
<b>6.3</b>	Interaction plan and Interactive weekly activities	N/A
<b>6.4</b>	Study guides	N/A

## 7. Additional for doctoral programmes (ALL ESG)

### Sub-areas

#### 7.1 Selection criteria and requirements

#### 7.2 Proposal and dissertation

#### 7.3 Supervision and committees

### 7.1 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*

### 7.2 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.*

### 7.3 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.*

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:**

<b>Sub-area</b>		<b><i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i></b>
<b>7.1</b>	Selection criteria and requirements	N/A
<b>7.2</b>	Proposal and dissertation	N/A
<b>7.3</b>	Supervision and committees	N/A

## 8. Additional for joint programmes (ALL ESG)

### Sub-areas

#### 8.1 Legal framework and cooperation agreement

#### 8.2 The joint programme

### 8.1 Legal framework and cooperation agreement

#### Standards

- *The joint programme is offered in accordance with legal frameworks of the relevant national higher education systems.*
- *The terms and conditions of the joint programme are laid down in a cooperation agreement. The agreement in particular covers the following issues:*
  - *Denomination of the degree(s) awarded in the programme*
  - *Coordination and responsibilities of the partners involved regarding management and financial organisation, including funding, sharing of costs and income, resources for mobility of staff and students*
  - *Admission and selection procedures for students*
  - *Mobility of students and teaching staff*
  - *Examination regulations, student assessment methods, recognition of credits and degree awarding procedures*
  - *Handling of different semester periods, if existent*

### 8.2 The joint programme

#### Standards

- *The partner universities apply joint internal quality assurance processes.*
- *The joint programme is offered jointly, involving all cooperating universities in the design, delivery and further development of the programme.*
- *Aims and learning outcomes are clearly stated, including a joint syllabus, language policy, as well as an account of the intended added value of the programme.*
- *Study counselling and mobility plans are efficient and take into account the needs of different kinds of students.*

You may also consider the following questions:

- Does the joint study programme conform to the requirements of a study programme offered at the specific level?
- Is there a system that assures the quality of joint provision and guarantees that the aims of the programme are met?
- Do the mechanisms for ensuring the quality of the joint study programme take into consideration the European Standards and Guidelines (ESG)? Are they adopted by all the universities involved?
- Is the division of responsibilities in ensuring quality clearly defined among the partner universities?
- Is relevant information about the programme, e.g. admission requirements and procedures, course catalogue, examination and assessment procedures, well documented and published by taking into account the specific needs of students?
- What is the added value of the programme of study?
- Is there a sustainable funding strategy among the partner universities? Explain.

### 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.

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>
8.1	Legal framework and cooperation agreement	N/A
8.2	The joint programme	N/A

## 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.*

We hope that the University and the academic team find the feedback provided constructive and useful. Overall, the committee believes that the University and revised program is in line with expectations. We advise the faculty to take into consideration the individual areas of recommendations reported in the above sections. We wish colleagues all the best in the next steps at this challenging period for everyone. We remain at the disposal of the Cyprus Agency of Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Higher Education for any clarification necessary.



## E. Signatures of the EEC

<i>Name</i>	<i>Signature</i>
<b>Prof Savvas Papagiannidis</b>	
<b>Dr Anastasia Veneti</b>	
<b>Dr Simos Chari</b>	
<b>Charalampia Vraka</b>	

**Date:** 09/09/2020