

Doc. 300.1.1

Date: Date.

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

- **Higher Education Institution: University of Cyprus**
- **Town: Nicosia**
- **School/Faculty (if applicable): Faculty of Economics and Management**
- **Department/ Sector: Department of Business and Public Administration (BPA)**
- **Program of study- Name (Duration, ECTS, Cycle)**

In Greek:

Μάστερ στη Διοίκηση Ανθρώπινου Δυναμικού

In English: Master in Human Resource Management

- **Language(s) of instruction: English**
- **Program's status:** Currently Operating
- **Concentrations (if any):**

In Greek: Concentrations

In English: Concentrations



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].

A. Introduction

This part includes basic information regarding the onsite visit.

Due to CoVID-19, there was no physical onsite visit. Instead, the visit was conducted virtually. The “visit” included videos of the physical facilities and university vision and mission, a recording of an actual lesson, as well as meetings with various program stakeholders as noted below.

Prior to the “visit”, the committee received and reviewed the school’s application for program accreditation. We also received other program materials including the CVs of all instructors and the syllabi of the courses. Additionally, we were given access to material accessible to students including current syllabus, power points, and reading materials. Although CoVID prevented us from viewing a “live” course, we received a recording of a course. Finally, we had a full day of meetings with the leadership of the university, department and program (including the Vice Rector for Academic Affairs, Professor Irene-Anna Diakidoy, Professors George Hadjinicola and George Kassinis – the Chair and Vice-Chair [respectively] of the Department of Business and Public Administration, and Professor Eleni Stavrou-Costea -- Director of MScHRM Program).



B. External Evaluation Committee (EEC)

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>University</i>
Andreas Georgiadis	Reader	Brunel University
Sophie De Winne	Professor	KU Leuven
Peter Bamberger	Professor	Tel Aviv University
Zena Napoleontos	Student	Cyprus University of Technology
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 program of study, N/A (= Not Applicable) should be noted.*
- *The EEC should state the conclusions and final remarks regarding the program of study as a whole.*
- **The report may also address other issues which the EEC finds relevant.**

1. Study program and study program'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 program 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 program of study:*
 - *is designed with overall program 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 program 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 program 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 program*
- *is reviewed and revised regularly involving students and other stakeholders*

1.3 Public information

Standards

- *Regarding the program 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 program 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 programs*
 - *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 program and who is involved?*
- *Who is involved in the study program'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 program remains current and consistent with developments in society (labour market, digital technologies, etc.), and b) whether the content and objectives of the study program are in accordance with each other?*
- *Do the content and the delivery of the program correspond to the European Qualifications Framework (EQF)?*
- *How is coherence of the study program 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 program?*
- *How does the study program 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 program (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 program analogous to other European programs 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 program (courses/modules taught in a foreign language)?*
- *Is information related to the program 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 program 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 program under study is the Master's Program in Human Resource Management, organized by the Department of Business and Public Administration (part of the Faculty of Economics and Management) of the University of Cyprus. There is a documented policy for quality assurance at the University and Department level, and several initiatives show that quality is considered relevant, put high on the agenda and taken care of at the university and department. Examples are the quality assurance office that directly reports to the Vice-Rector for Academic Affairs; the internal quality system based on a plan-do-check-act cycle and continuous improvement; the declaration of 2017 as "year of quality teaching" at the University of Cyprus; and the existence of postgraduate and undergraduate studies committees at the department level who take on the role of internal quality committee. Finally, at university level, there are standard grievance procedures in place.

At the level of the program, there is a Director (i.e. a faculty staff member), and an administrative coordinator, taking care of the content, planning and daily execution of the program. There are instructor and student manuals to make sure that everything is clear for faculty members and students, and that everything goes smoothly. There is also a standard procedure for changes to the program (e.g. because of changes in the needs of society and prospective students). Each change needs to be well motivated and documented. After preparation, the motivation should be submitted to several bodies for study and approval (i.e. the Council of the program's Department, the Council of the program's Faculty, the Council of the Graduate School for approval of the academic aspects of the program of study, the Planning and Development Committee for approval of the financial aspects, and the Senate). During the faculty meeting, it became clear that quality is also important for the faculty members and that they continuously and individually search for improvement. During the conversation with the students, it became clear that they have opportunities to voice their concerns related to quality and content of the program as well as teaching quality (e.g. via focus groups, teaching evaluations).

As far as academic integrity, harassment, and discrimination are concerned, the department mainly relies on the existing structures, regulations and processes that are in place at the university level. Because of the small scale, the department has an open door policy and tries to be as inclusive as possible. The Department's chair also mentioned that they have yet to experience a single case of harassment or discrimination. We did not receive any general program information on the policy for the prevention and detection of plagiarism in the program, although we did see reference to a plagiarism policy in the syllabus for one course.

The courses and the structure of the program as well as the objectives of the program and intended learning outcomes were clearly described in the assessment document and the presentation throughout the visit. The same holds for the selection criteria, the submission procedure for applicants, the qualification that is awarded, tuition fees and scholarships. The Director also showed information on the financial resources of the program and the employment of graduates.

It is clear that a lot of information and data are collected (e.g. teaching performance, employment of students after graduating, financial resources), via different methods (e.g. focus groups, teaching evaluations, administrative data). During the presentation on the program, it was also said that minimal KPI's are set and monitored as part of the internal quality assurance process.

The design, and approval of the program comply with the specified standards, but the program is only partially compliant with the standards regarding on-going monitoring and review. In particular, concerns were raised about on-going monitoring of the overall program by the teaching staff, with staff noting that they rarely coordinate syllabi and course content. Furthermore, although the program is designed to meet the growing need for qualified HR executives by Cypriot enterprises, there is no monitoring and review of the program by key stakeholders such as policymakers, or leaders in the labor or business communities. Other concerns were noted with regard to the dual practitioner/research nature of the program, content of certain courses (both overlap of content and the absence or inadequate coverage of other key areas of HR), the sequencing of courses in the program, and failure to specify learning outcomes of courses in terms of competencies acquired or developed.

Strengths

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

The program, developed and administered by the University's Department of Business and Public Administration, well-reflects the stature of this research-oriented department and leverages its strong links to the international academic community. Reflecting the research orientation of the University as a whole, the program clearly develops students' research competencies as evidenced by the impressive set of theses that we reviewed.

The committee also took note of the comprehensive nature of the HRM program, and its modular construction comprising a combination of basic and advanced courses integrating theory and practice, workshops aimed at developing more technical practitioner competencies, courses focusing on research methods, as well as practical experience in conducting applied empirical research. This modular structure was praised by the students and faculty who noted how, in most cases, more advanced courses build on the knowledge presented in courses that students take earlier in the program.

The students were highly complementary of the program. While emphasizing that the workload was demanding and challenging, they also emphasized that the program prepared them well for a variety of fields involving the management of people and human capital. The positive feedback from students was a particular strength.

Additionally:

There is a documented internal quality assurance policy.

Structures, regulations and processes regarding an internal quality assurance process are in place at the different levels (i.e. university, department, program).

The faculty showed an open mind for change and feedback.

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 evaluation committee identified several key issues that should be addressed by the Department.

1. Dual practice/research focus of the program. The program is largely achieving its dual aims of developing well-trained HR practitioners *and* research scholars. However, by better positioning the unique nature of this program in the marketplace for higher education in Cyprus, it could do better. Given the research mission of the University, we suggest that the Department positions the HR program as one focused on generating HR executives with the analytical and research competencies needed to develop leading, evidence-based HR strategies, policies and practices. These same analytical and research competencies will provide a strong basis for those students interesting in pursuing doctoral research.
2. To achieve this aim, we suggest a number of changes in the overall design and structure of the program:
 - a. Split the methods course into three separate courses (namely statistics and quantitative methods, qualitative methods and research methods), and leverage students' quantitative expertise to infuse a strong analytics component into the relevant HR content courses. The statistics and quantitative methods course should be given in the first semester. This would allow for the upgrading of courses and workshops such as staffing (i.e., recruitment & selection), psychometrics, performance management and compensation, and ensure that students come out of these courses with the practical and applied analytical skills required. That is, rather than only examining issues in each of these areas, with more of a quantitative foundation, students will be able to develop the analytic competencies typically used by HR professionals such as validating selection and performance assessment tools, and modelling market pay rates. The other methods courses, more aligned with students' thesis research, could remain later in the course sequence.
 - b. Consider adding a workshop in accounting and finance as HR executives desire and are expected to be able to participate in broader management discussions ("have a seat at the table").
 - c. Ensure that the current course framework provides sufficient coverage of such emerging HR issues as "gig employment" and human-machine (AI) interface, as well as more traditional employment relations issues as labor law and collective bargaining.
 - d. Streamline the program and address course overlaps by reducing the number of courses offered and expanding the breadth and depth of key courses. For example, given that specific courses in each of the HR domains such as staffing, performance management and compensation are offered, consider dropping the introductory HR course and expanding the strategic HR course to include an overview of these domains. Additionally, the program includes a number of courses in organizational behaviour (e.g., OB, leadership, creativity), organizational theory (management principles, ethics, change) and strategic/international management (strategy, entrepreneurship). While these courses undoubtedly offer students a good foundation for understanding the broader management context, it is likely that much of this material can be covered more efficiently in fewer courses, thus enabling the program to enrich and expand the HR-oriented courses. Overall, we encourage the program director to develop a curriculum map in order to make more efficient use of the teaching resources available.
3. Changes recommended in course content and teaching approach: Several courses were noted by the students as needing further attention. In particular, attention should be paid to the compensation course. Given the centrality of this topic in HR, this course would likely benefit from an expansion in the number of hours allocated to it. Students voiced a desire to incorporate a broader range of applied analytics skills in the program. Finally, as a research-oriented program, students should have more opportunities to study papers

published in scholarly journals, and to apply the insights that they glean from these papers to practical workplace issues.

4. Despite the documented policy and the structures, regulations and processes that are in place, it is unclear to the external evaluation committee how faculty members, visiting scholars and external stakeholders are systematically and (in)formally involved. During the conversations it became clear that the faculty does not have (in)formal and regular meetings about the content of the courses, the learning outcomes, potential overlap in the courses. Yet, there seemed to be a need for that. We also do not have indications that external stakeholders are involved in evaluating the course content. Setting up regular meetings across faculty members to discuss the full curriculum, and the overall coherence and consistency of the program, as well organizing a Board of External Advisors might be solutions for a more systematic focus on quality.
5. Related to the information management, it is clear that a lot of data is collected and analysed (over time). It is, however, not yet clear to the external evaluation committee how the resulting information leads to actionable insights, and how faculty members or students are involved in the process of translating the resulting information into concrete actions.
6. A lot of information on the program was available to the external evaluation committee (e.g. selection criteria, learning outcomes, tuition fees, qualification awarded, financial resources). There is a webpage related to the program, but we received an error message when clicking through: <https://newdev.ucy.ac.cy/mschrm/en/>. Because of this error message, it is difficult to pronounce upon the standard regarding the extent to which the information that was available to the external evaluation committee is also publicly available. Additionally, we neither received nor found information on the yearly pass rates or average time to graduate.
7. The part on quality assurance on the website of the university could be enhanced, and provide the broader public with the systems in place. There is almost no content on this webpage which is a pity given the structures, regulations and processes that are in place, see <https://www.ucy.ac.cy/GoverningBodies/en/quality-assurance>.
8. The intended learning outcomes are a bit vague and are not formulated as concrete skills and behavioural competencies which might make it difficult to assess and follow-up on them. It is clear which learning outcomes are present in each course (cf. the assessment document), yet the overall picture is not that clear. The external evaluation committee would suggest to formulate the intended learning outcomes as skills and behavioural competencies students will possess (a) at the end of each course, and (b) at the end of the program so as to make sure they can be assessed properly, and to execute a curriculum mapping (i.e. map all learning outcomes against all courses). That way, overlap can be avoided and the growth in competencies throughout the trajectory will become more clear. Related to this, the learning outcomes for the master's thesis as well as the standards for grading were not explicitly mentioned in the assessment document. Finally, we suggest a periodic review of all course syllabi with the program faculty in order to identify gaps and overlaps in core knowledge and competency domains.

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 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 program? 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 student profile is very diverse (e.g. students with and without working experience, international and national students). The Program Director is aware of this, and this has already led to changes in the program, e.g. the introduction of an introductory course to make sure that all students are on the same page, and the organization of social events. Throughout the conversations with the faculty members and students, it became clear that student individual and personal development is stimulated, and that teaching methods are student-centred. Both faculty members and students could provide examples of opportunities for feedback and learning throughout the courses or the master's thesis trajectory. Different teaching methods are used (e.g. lectures, workshops), and both hybrid and online classes were organized during the pandemic, showing that modern educational technology was present. Students are actively involved in doing research via the master's thesis and learn the academic standards via the course on "Quantitative and Qualitative Research Methods". Procedures for dealing with student complaints are in place. There are the standard grievance procedures at the university level, and the focus groups and teaching evaluations at the program level to give feedback on the course content and teaching quality. Faculty members and students talked about each other with great respect during our conversations, and there seems to be an open culture and small distance between faculty and students.

As relates to the practical training, faculty members try to bridge theory and practice (e.g. via the use of case studies). The workshops focus on professional skills (e.g. negotiation) needed as a practitioner, and take a hands-on approach. The students also offered very concrete examples as to how the program prepared them for the labour market and their career.

We found information on the learning outcomes, method of assessment and weights for assessment in the annex of the assessment document. However, we did not find information regarding the specific criteria that are used while assessing, and do not know: (a) how these criteria are related to the course learning outcomes, and (b) whether these criteria are communicated to the students beforehand. The department's Chair also mentioned that mitigating circumstances are taking into account when assessing the courses. As for formal complaints about the grades, the department relies on the standard grievance procedures of the university.

Strengths

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

Open, stimulating learning environment.

Strong, mutual respect between students and faculty.

Bridging theory and practice. This was evident even in student evaluation (HR final exam in which students had to solve applying theory learned in the course).

Focus on professional skills, including offering students internships.

Students highly engaged in research.

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 faculty members acknowledged the diversity in student profile, and mentioned that this can be a challenge. One way to move forward might be the introduction of a boot-camp with some preliminary courses to make sure the students are (even more than they are now) on the same page. This might also have a socialization function. Also a self-learning module could be developed. That way students can prepare themselves at their own pace before the start of the official courses. Both options could be combined with a test to make sure that the knowledge and skills are at the same level for each student. Alternatively, the program could be more selective at the entrance (e.g. ask for a minimum GMAT/GRE score on quantitative skills).

Apart from the master’s thesis trajectory, we found little evidence of research-based teaching (e.g., leveraging research published in scholarly journals was highlighted in one course, but some faculty voiced problems with this approach). This might be a point for attention for the future, especially given the research-oriented focus in the vision and mission of the university, and the department.

In terms of assessment, it might be good to develop an assessment rubric in which scale anchors for each learning outcome are clearly developed. This might help to make the assessment more transparent and objective. It can also provide opportunities for giving very concrete feedback to students after the exam.

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 program, 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 program.*

3.2 Teaching staff number and status

Standards

- *The number of the teaching staff is adequate to support the program of study.*
- *The teaching staff status (rank, full/part time) is appropriate to offer a quality program 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 program'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 teaching staff have excellent and relevant qualifications and experience to transfer knowledge and inform the learning process through their own research activities. The University provides good support to teaching staff to improve their teaching, and makes available resources enabling faculty to attend conferences and develop their professional networks. Faculty members' teaching and research appears to be evaluated systematically, equitably and transparently, with research weighted more heavily than teaching (in line with the University mission).

Two areas of concern are the limited number of resident faculty whose primary focus is in HR, and thus the high reliance on visiting/part-time faculty. While over a dozen individuals teach in the HR program, there are only five resident faculty in the area of management, and only three of these focus on HR. In this regard, visitors greatly exceed the number of resident HR instructors.

Furthermore, it is not clear how teaching performance is rewarded and recognized in tenure and promotion. Similarly, criteria for promotion and tenure appear quite vague, and the criteria for selecting visiting faculty could be more clearly specified. Indeed, international/visiting faculty could be leveraged for mentoring junior faculty and PhD students, but we saw no evidence that such factors are considered when selecting program faculty. We also saw little evidence of practitioner-researcher synergies. Industry leaders and consultants can offer valuable access to research sites and study participants.

Strengths

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

The academic personnel, particularly resident faculty, are research active and publish research in respected, international peer-reviewed journals and edited volumes. They also participate and present in international conferences.

Part-time/practitioner and non-resident international faculty offer a diverse and complementary set of research interests and practical experience contribute significantly to the learning process. Faculty appear to be extremely dedicated to the students, offering extensive mentoring and feedback particularly in the context of students' thesis research.

The Program Director is clearly passionate about the Program and has an eye for continuous improvement.

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 relative understaffing of HR faculty members is a significant liability for the future development of the program. Efforts should be made to recruit at least two additional faculty members in HR-related domains in order to address the imbalance of resident to part-time/visiting faculty. Related to the area of faculty recruitment, attention should be paid to the gender diversity of teaching faculty. The committee noticed that there are very few women on the resident teaching faculty, although this is partially compensated by the balanced proportion men and women part-time/visiting faculty. We recommend that efforts be made to hire and develop more female resident faculty to ensure adequate gender representation.

As noted above, rewards for teaching excellence remain under-developed. Steps should be taken to enhance the recognition of and rewards for teaching excellence.

Enhancement of faculty research. The HR program could be leveraged in three ways to further the department's research objectives:

1. Practitioner faculty should be encouraged to work with research faculty in pursuing joint research interests, with the former providing access to research sites and samples.
2. Visiting faculty should be selected with research synergies and junior faculty development objectives in mind.
3. The committee was impressed by the quality of the student theses. Efforts should be made to: (a) ensure that theses are written in a manner more consistent with scientific writing (e.g., theses should not be longer



ΦΟΡΕΑΣ ΔΙΑΣΦΑΛΙΣΗΣ ΚΑΙ ΠΙΣΤΟΠΟΙΗΣΗΣ ΤΗΣ ΠΟΙΟΤΗΤΑΣ ΤΗΣ ΑΝΩΤΕΡΗΣ ΕΚΠΑΙΔΕΥΣΗΣ
CYPRUS AGENCY OF QUALITY ASSURANCE AND ACCREDITATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION



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than conventional journal articles), and (b) facilitate collaboration between students and practitioners in thesis research.

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	Partially 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, 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 program 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.

The University of Cyprus has clearly defined and published regulations regarding student admission, including English language proficiency and undergraduate degree GPA. There is also a clear description of the selection process and how the criteria are implemented by the Admissions Academic Committee in a consistent and transparent manner.

There are also pre-defined and published regulations on student progression, student recognition, and student certification. As a public University, the University of Cyprus offers recognition and certification of formal educational qualifications and the periods of study that are in line with national and EU principles, ensuring student's progression in their studies, and promoting academic mobility.

Strengths

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

The University of Cyprus meets all criteria as outlined in this section. Another strength is that the program has close links and has been endorsed by HR-related bodies, such as Cyprus Human Resource Management Association (CyHRMA).

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 committee noted that one of the key strengths of the University of Cyprus and the specific program under evaluation is the high quality of students selected through a rigorous process using high standards. One recommendation for improvement in this area will be adding a requirement on quantitative skills through inclusion of GMAT or GRE scores in the admissions criteria. The committee felt that the latter would respond to current and emerging industry-needed skills of HR specialists that will enable selected students to pursue a more analytics-driven curricula that may be particularly important for those with no quantitative background and with limited work experience.

The committee felt that the program will largely benefit from establishing systematic processes to collect and analyse information on students' progression (pass rates) and achievement -- overall, and for each course -- and use this information to develop a set of actions related to revising aspects of the program and its courses to address any progression/achievement gaps.



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 program.*
- *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 program.*
- *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 program.*
- *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 program 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 program, 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 finds all resources, including teaching and learning, physical, and human are fit for purpose; that adequate support is provided covering the needs of a diverse student population, e.g., student with special needs; and that information on the range of resources and support is available to students.

Strengths

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

Key strengths of the University of Cyprus are the modern and high-quality infrastructure, such as the Learning Resource Centre-Library “Stelios Ioannou”, the largest and most important library in Cyprus, and the University of Cyprus modern Sports Centre.

Another key strength was the availability of abundant electronic resources that are also available from publisher’s packages via consortium deals; as well as the wide range of student support mechanisms at the level of the department and centrally through the Student Welfare Office, Social Support Office, and the Psychological Support Centre (PSC) that address the diverse set of needs of the student population.

Finally, students highlighted the program’s efforts to develop and maintain a strong alumni network.

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 committee has the following recommendations for further improvements along several areas, as arisen from conversations with staff and students:

- Access to more case studies, particularly related to the local context of Cyprus: This could be achieved also through the encouragement of production of case studies from the Cyprus context by the teaching staff and students, including through collaboration of academics, practitioners, and PhD students.
- Although the program is adequately resourced and the University is responsive to the department’s needs, the committee understood from the meetings that it may take significant time for the University to respond to the program’s needs and that certain resource-related requests by the program are not addressed in each budget. Thus, the committee felt that the competitive positioning of the department and the program would be greatly improved if the University’s response to the program’s resource needs would be faster, and the University gradually fulfils a higher share of the program’s needs in future budgets.

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

Sub-area	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i></p>
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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 programs (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 program, as well as how the selection procedures are made, are defined.*
- *The following requirements of the doctoral degree program are analysed and published:*
 - *the stages of completion*
 - *the minimum and maximum time of completing the program*
 - *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 programs 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.

Click or tap here to enter text.

Strengths

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

Click or tap here to enter text.

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.

Click or tap here to enter text.

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	Choose answer
6.2	Proposal and dissertation	Choose answer
6.3	Supervision and committees	Choose answer

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 program of study under review may be achieved, with emphasis on the correspondence with the EQF.

Overall, the evaluation committee was positively impressed with University of Cyprus' Masters in HRM program. As specified below, there was general consensus that the program fully complies with all but two of the standards specified by the CYQAA, and even in these two areas, the program was partially compliant. In particular, the school's leaders, faculty, administrators and students expressed a high degree of enthusiasm about the program as well as a commitment to its further enrichment and development. When asked to indicate areas of improvement for the program, faculty were hard pressed to identify even a single limitation. Similarly, students and graduates identified areas in which current program strengths could be further enhanced. The program is notable in terms of the quality of the thesis research produced by the students, as well as in its ability to place practitioner-oriented students in highly relevant positions. Notable too is the fact that the program is starting to generate highly qualified candidates for its PhD program, and continues to support a strong record of research excellence for teaching faculty.

That said, as we detail below, we feel that there are a number of steps that should be taken to better position the school and this particular program for the future. These steps include:

- Better position the program as one that is research and evidence-based, thus differentiating the program's graduates from those of other schools in Cyprus.
- Reconsidering the structure of the program, content of particular courses and the sequencing of courses.
- Increasing the number of (female) resident faculty actively engaging in HR-oriented research.
- Developing more systematic ways of involving faculty members, students and external stakeholders in the quality assurance process, both regarding (continuously) evaluating and fine-tuning the program, and developing actions based on figures and analyses.
- Making learning outcomes more concrete (cf. skills and behavioural competencies) and more tightly linked to the curriculum (via a curriculum mapping) and assessment (via the development of an assessment rubric).
- Initiatives could be taken before the start of the program (e.g. boot-camp, self-learning module, exam, more selective assessment of applications) to make sure that diversity does not come at the expense of ensuring that all students have the necessary basic competencies to succeed in and contribute to the program.
- Including quantitative skills requirements in admissions criteria, such as GMAT or GRE scores, to ensure all students have adequate background to pursue a more analytics-driven/quant curriculum, thus facilitating the development of current and emerging highly demanded industry skills.
- Addressing some administrative deficiencies. The committee felt that the competitive positioning of the department and the program would be greatly improved were the University



to more quickly respond the program's needs and requests, and invest greater resources to facilitate the program's growth.



E. Signatures of the EEC

<i>Name</i>	<i>Signature</i>
Peter Bamberger	
Sophie De Winne	
Andreas Georgiadis	
Zena Napoleontos	
Click to enter Name	
Click to enter Name	

Date: Click to enter date