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Date: 23/04/2024

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

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

In Greek:

Μάστερ στη Δημόσια Διοίκηση

In English:

Master in Public Administration

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

In Greek: N/A

In English: N/A



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

A. Introduction

This part includes basic information regarding the onsite visit.

The External Evaluation Committee (hereafter EEC) convened at 8.45am on Monday 22nd April at the campus of the Mediterranean Institute of Management (hereafter MIM, or the Institute) in Nicosia. (Prior to the site visit, we had read a large volume of documentation supplied by the MIM leadership, and held a short, virtual coordinating meeting.) At the Institute, we were greeted by the MIM Manager, the Acting Director, and an Administration Officer, and then began the morning's programme.

We first received a presentation from the MIM Manager on the history of the Institute, its organisational structure, the composition of the teaching faculty and the MIM Council (an advisory body), and the MIM's governance committees, documents and procedures. The EEC asked questions about the distinctiveness of the Master of Public Administration (hereafter: MPA) degree, student admissions and the composition of the student body, and the mix of permanent and visiting teaching faculty.

Next we received a presentation from the Acting Director on the quality assurance procedures of the Institute. This included information on quality standards, the responsibilities of the Internal Quality Assurance committee, the professional development opportunities for staff, the procedures for soliciting feedback from students and others, and some examples of recent changes implemented in response to feedback. The EEC asked questions relating to the assessment of student work and the standardisation of grading across the permanent and visiting faculty; the process of, and criteria for, hiring teachers with professional rather than academic backgrounds; and the support provided to first-time and more experienced teachers.

After a short break, we reconvened for a further presentation from the MIM Manager on the content, teaching methods, assessment, and governance of the MPA programme. Two members of teaching faculty joined the discussion. Initially, the EEC's questioning focused on the aims and distinctiveness of this programme vis-a-vis its competitors in other institutions. The EEC also asked about: the overlap between MPA and MBA (Master of Business Administration) teaching; key decisions regarding the curriculum; opportunities for integration and synergy between the various modules of the MPA; student workload; and teaching innovations during and since Covid-19.

The MIM leadership then left, and the EEC met with the administrative team supporting the MPA programme delivery. The EEC asked questions relating to student welfare and workload, library and other resources available to students, the capacity of the admin team to support MIM's three degrees, and the ease of liaising with teaching faculty.

Finally in the morning sessions, we spent an hour with the majority of the teaching faculty responsible for delivering the MPA. The EEC sought comments on: the distinctiveness of the MPA vis-a-vis other programmes that faculty teach on; student workload and preparedness for class; the possibilities for student-led teaching through the application of concepts and theories to current work-related problems; student feedback; curriculum adaptation and pedagogical innovations; the benefits and challenges of teaching mixed classes of MPA and MBA students; integration and synergy between different MPA modules; and on-going contact between faculty and alumni.

After breaking for lunch, the EEC reconvened for two further scheduled sessions.

First, we met with external stakeholders of the MIM (all of whom were members of the MIM Council, the aforementioned advisory body to the Institute.) After introductions, the EEC asked for the stakeholders' observations on: labour-market needs in Cyprus; the distinctiveness of the MPA and its reputation vis-a-vis competitor degrees; the suitability of the Institute's dependence upon visiting faculty; and the openness of the MIM leadership and faculty to change and innovation in curriculum and pedagogy.

Second, we met with eleven current or former MPA students. No MIM faculty or staff were present. After explaining the purpose of the evaluation and sharing introductions, the EEC sought the students' feedback on: their motivation for selecting the MIM among competitor institutions; the on-course workload; the professional relevance and utility of the curriculum, especially in the time since graduation; the responsiveness of leadership, faculty and administrators to student concerns and needs; the quality of the physical facilities and learning resources; and the MIM's pedagogy during and since Covid-19.

Next, we received a tour of the MIM Campus, including libraries and computer suites, before the EEC met in private to deliberate. (It should also be noted that, throughout the day, we had access to examples of student work, including dissertations.)

Finally, the MIM Manager, the Acting Director, and the Administration Officer reconvened with the EEC for the initial verbal debrief. Before providing the initial feedback, the EEC asked to be provided (by email) with recent statistics on course completion and dropout rates, and assessment grades. The EEC also asked for further information on the plans, opportunities and constraints for hiring both permanent and visiting faculty. Then the EEC Chair, Prof Kevin Orr, gave a brief summary of the Committee's initial findings.

The day ended with a visit to observe one scheduled evening class (on Entrepreneurship and Innovation). The Committee dispersed at 5.30pm.

The EEC would like to express its gratitude to Mrs. Loucia Constantinou, the CYQAA coordinator, for her excellent, efficient and very supportive management of the process and for her preparation for the evaluation day.

B. External Evaluation Committee (EEC)

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>University</i>
Kevin Orr	Chair	University of St. Andrews, U.K.
Vasileios Kefis	Member	Panteion University, Greece
Thomas Elston	Member	University of Oxford, U.K.
Manolis Diakourakis	Member	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:*
 - *is a part of the strategic management of the programme*
 - *focuses on the achievement of special goals related to the quality assurance of the study program.*
 - *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*
 - *is developed with input from industry leaders and other stakeholders (i.e. industry leaders, professional bodies/associations, social partners, NGO's, governmental agencies) to align with professional standards.*
 - *integrates employer surveys to adapt to evolving workplace demands.*
 - *regularly utilizes alumni feedback for long-term effectiveness assessment.*
 - *is published and implemented by all 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*

- *Aligns course learning outcomes with student assessments using rubrics to ensure objectives are met.*
- *Connects each course's aims and objectives with the programme's overall aims and objectives through mapping, aligning with the institutional strategy.*
- *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*
 - *collaborates with industry experts for curriculum development.*
 - *conducts joint reviews with external academic specialists to maintain academic rigor.*
 - *performs periodic assessments with external stakeholders to ensure continuous alignment with market needs.*
 - *establishes collaboration with international educational institutions or/& other relevant international bodies for a global perspective.*
 - *conducts regular feedback sessions with local community leaders for societal relevance.*

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*

In addition, the program has established mechanisms of transparency & communication to ensure that

- Professional bodies validate program descriptions and outcomes.
- Community leaders actively participate in ensuring that the program's public information is relevant and resonates with the local and societal context.
- External auditors review public information for accuracy & consistency vis-à-vis the actual implementation of the program.
- Industry-specific & societal information is regularly updated with expert inputs.
- Alumni testimonials are included for a realistic portrayal of program outcomes.

1.4 Information management

Standards

- *Information for the effective management of the programme of study is collected, monitored and analysed using specific indicators and data i.e:*
 - *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*
 - *industry trend analysis.*
 - *feedback mechanisms from external partners/stakeholders*
 - *data exchanges with professional networks*
 - *employer insights concerning career readiness*
- *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?
- How and to what extent are external stakeholders involved in the quality assurance process of the program?
- How is external stakeholder feedback gathered, analyzed and implemented?
- In what ways do external stakeholders assist in making program information publicly available?
- How do external stakeholders contribute to evaluating graduate success in the labor market and obtaining feedback on employment 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 MIM has instituted a variety of good-practice quality assurance mechanisms (sub-area 1.1) of the kind expected of a reputable and diligent institution. There is an Internal Quality Assurance Committee, consisting of leadership, faculty and students. QA policies are regularly updated and are transparent and publicly available. External stakeholders, including members of the MIM Council, are aware of and involved in QA.

Regarding the design, approval, monitoring and review of the MPA (sub-area 1.2), individual modules have clear and concise objectives, although there don't appear to be prominent learning outcomes advertised for the degree as a whole. MPA faculty are aware of what each other teaches, and when; and are sensitive to student suggestions about module sequencing, class timetabling and the need to relate topics to current world events (e.g. the present conflict in Gaza). Faculty and leadership are also aware of pressures on student time (because of their professional commitments in the day time), and have innovated to make workload manageable; e.g. by recently reducing the number of ECTS credits from 110 to 90, in line with competitor programmes. External stakeholders (i.e., employers, employer federations, government departments) are involved in curriculum design, largely through the monthly meeting of the MIM Council. There appears to be less involvement of outside academics in curriculum review and development, beyond the contribution of visiting academic faculty.

Regarding public information (sub-area 1.3) MIM publishes clear information about the MPA programme, including selection criteria and module-level learning outcomes.

Regarding information management (sub-area 1.4), levels of record keeping and management information seem appropriate to meet requirements for good administration, transparency, monitoring, and improvement. Leadership and faculty maintain good links with MPA graduates, monitoring career progress and occasionally involving alums in programme delivery.

Strengths

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

Processes and procedures for quality assurance appear to be given high priority by the MIM Leadership, faculty and staff. Recent welcome innovations include training in, and strengthening of, academic integrity policies (e.g. relating to the use of AI in student work). Dissertations are double-marked and their assessment is overseen by a Master's Thesis Examination Committee. Liaison between MIM Leadership and prominent external stakeholders seems to be frequent and impactful. External stakeholders who serve on the MIM Council are active in engaging with how

the MPA can articulate with (and support) wider local and societal context. Links with alumni are maintained, creating a strong MIM network in government.

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.

Regarding quality assurance (sub-area 1.1):

Although MIM regularly solicits student feedback and is open to adapting to meet student needs (e.g. in terms of class scheduling), students reported that they weren't always aware of the MIM's responses to their more strategic requests (e.g. the sequencing of modules, the value retaining Covid-innovations such as lecture videos long term). We recommend that MIM finds ways to "close the loop" with students, in terms of de-briefing on what changes are being made in response to feedback.

Regarding programme design etc. (sub-area 1.2):

Although MPA core and elective modules have clear and concise learning objectives, the same is not the case for the degree as a whole. We recommend that MIM publish and keep under review a clear and ambitious set of degree-level intended learning outcomes, stating what students should have achieved by the end of the whole course of study and how this should prove transformational in their public service careers. In addition, we recommend that MIM clearly explain how module-level outcomes contribute to these overall outcomes.

In addition, while the EEC sees great value in some mixing of MBA and MPA teaching, there are times when the modules offered to Master of Public Administration students are, nonetheless, explicitly aimed at developing business capability. This includes, for example, references in intended learning objectives to understanding the "competitive environment" in which firms operate, and the importance of ethics and sustainability in "modern business." Some reading lists also seem to be skewed towards private rather than public administration. We recommend substantive revisions to these courses (objectives and content) to make them more relevant to the specifically public-sector audience that the MPA targets.

Regarding public information (sub-area 1.3):

There is scope to make information about pass rates and the post study employment routes (including career progression and impacts) more visible and accessible.

Regarding information management (sub-area 1.4):

There is scope to make alumni testimonials more visible (and as a wider point to utilise alumni more systematically for the benefit of future MPA students).

Equally there is scope to make employer testimonials more visible as a means of promoting the programme.

Some information about student progression, completion/ drop-out rates were supplied to the committee at its request. It is important that such information acts as part of the regular review of management information in the institution.

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.*
- *Detailed schedules in course materials are included, explicitly stating the expected hours for lectures, self-study, and group projects, ensuring transparency in time allocation.*
- *A system is integrated where each learning activity is assigned a weight proportional to its importance and time requirement, aiding in balanced curriculum design.*

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.*

- *The expected hours for different components of practical training, such as lab work, fieldwork, and internships are clearly documented in the training manuals*
- *A weighting system is applied to various practical training elements, reflecting their significance in the overall learning outcomes and student workload.*

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.*
 - *The time allocation for each assessment task is explicitly stated in course outlines, ensuring students are aware of the expected workload.*
 - *A balanced assessment weighting strategy is implemented, considering the complexity and learning objectives of each task, to ensure fair evaluation of student performance.*

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 Committee visited classes. The classroom and in-class facilities were adequate. The teachers were very much engaged and the students motivated. The members of Committee also interviewed a lot of enthusiastic students (three students and eight graduates) who were satisfied with their study and explained to us the role of the combination of theories and practices in their current jobs. It is evident that the graduate students felt that the programme had successfully changed their practice for the better, in ways which went beyond surface level learning.

Strengths

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

Class sizes are small. There are about twenty (20) students per class. This is a favourable situation which allows interactive teaching and engaging the students. Communication to the students happens in a clear way. The programme makes use of modern educational systems, an e-learning portal (Moodle) which provides students access to all kinds of educational resources. The involvement of students in the quality assurance process is characterised by assessments after each session, discussions after course delivery and participation in committees. They consider as quite useful the recording of lessons during COVID pandemic. Also, students find the development of effective time management and the opportunities to collaborate in teams (the teamworking aspects of the teaching) to be useful elements of the programme. Students arrive at the programme with strong professional backgrounds, and these are incorporated into the classroom discussions. One faculty member reported that the benefit of teaching and learning at MIM was that there was, effectively, "20 different instructors in 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 programme might broaden the teaching portfolio on public and social policy analysis, public economics, public management and public law. There is scope to provide more external academic input to the programme, alongside the external practitioner and professional input. The aim is to update the curriculum with current cutting-edge thinking in the scientific literature; for instance, on the use of AI in government, current thinking on social interventions and social programme design, and the evolving literature on collaborative public management. We were also surprised that students weren't taught or encouraged to problematise the public-private management distinction, this being a central debate in public administration and highly relevant to effective management in government. In general the programme could better engage with international debates and developments in the academic literature on public management. Doing so will broaden the content and ensure that the Cyprus specificities can be understood in a wider context.

Practically, for example, the Institute might consider appointing two or more international academic advisors to help review and update the curriculum; and it might exploit the Erasmus programme to bring international visiting professors to MIM.

The students we met with suggested that, given their professional work commitments, the adoption of hybrid classes to accommodate absences or diary conflicts might be beneficial. Equally, the EEC is aware that hybrid learning poses challenges as well as opportunities; for instance, in terms of class dynamics, cohesiveness and attention. The EEC recommends the MIM engage in an open dialogue with student cohorts about the pros and cons of any expansion in hybrid teaching.

Regarding student assessment, although there is double marking of dissertations (overseen by a Thesis Examination Committee), we recommend that a similar approach be applied to grade standardisation for other core and elective modules on the MPA. This could perhaps be done by expanding the remit of the aforementioned committee into a general "Examinations Board." This would be particularly valuable given the large and diverse faculty involved in the programme, which includes a mix of academic and professional teachers, and many visitors.

We were also told that faculty are willing to meet with students concerned about grading decisions, provide additional oral feedback, and potentially consider grade adjustments. Faculty investment of time in this process is commendable; but we recommend that grade adjustments after student petitions should be exceptional (especially given the tightened oversight and double-making procedures recommended above). Moreover, such adjustments should require sign-off/approval from senior faculty.



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 Teaching Staff of the Institute gave a satisfactory presentation of the study programme.

Strengths

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

The Teaching Staff (Permanent and Visiting Professors) have good academic and/ or professional qualifications. Learning and teaching are student oriented. The Teaching Staff updates the portal very often (with announcements, case studies, resources, etc). The faculty bring professional and research experience and often are aware of recent developments relevant to the provision. They use examples, which often act as the basis of topics on which the students undertake further research, e.g. in the dissertation work. There is a collaborative ethos between Teaching Staff and students. For example (and not only) Viber groups (one for students and one for students and the instructors) remain operational after graduation. Some of the students are colleagues of the instructors, and thus are directly communicating. There appears to be good coordination between faculty members on day-to-day matters, and it is important that this continues to be effective in the face of the challenges of operating with a diffuse set of Visiting Faculty.

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 percentage between Permanent Staff and Visiting Faculty is disproportionate. The committee understands that MIM is in the process of recruiting 2 permanent faculty members, with plans for further recruitment. The committee sees strengthening the core teaching faculty profile as a welcome development. We make further observations about the reliance on visiting faculty in the Conclusions of this Report.

While coordination between faculty was good in terms of day-to-day programme delivery, the EEC did not leave the site visit with a clear sense of the long-term ambition and aspirations for the MPA, nor with a clear articulation of the current narrative and learning objectives for the programme. When asked, we were provided with very few examples of desired future innovations in either pedagogy or curriculum; and those that were cited (e.g. assessment marking rubrics) were modest in scale and somewhat administrative. We therefore recommend that MIM develop opportunities for faculty to meet to think more broadly about the programme and its future - and to ask: what do we want to be doing in five years, and how will we get there?

Related to this broader, blue-sky thinking: while we appreciate the constraints and particular context in which MIM operates, we encourage the Institute's leadership to develop MIM's own core academic capacity via the recruitment of good quality permanent academic staff, including staff with an active research profile relevant to the programme. Long term co-appointments with neighbouring universities, or use of international visiting professors, might also help.

The institute could work on better conditions to attract foreign staff and foreign students and actively involve them in the programme.

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

Sub-area		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>
3.1	Teaching staff recruitment and development	Compliant
3.2	Teaching staff number and status	Compliant
3.3	Synergies of teaching and research	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 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.

The Programme works with Greek and Cypriot students, drawn largely from public sector organisations. The annual cohort (student numbers) cannot exceed 30, and the application process is relatively competitive. The average cohort size is 20. The committee was told that quality is a core institutional value that informs its approach to student admission and progression. Pre-defined and published regulations regarding student certification are in place and Registry issues certification identifying the qualification gained, including level and status of the studies. In academic year 2022/23, 17 out of 20 students successfully completed the programme, with 3 pending. The average attainment level was around 85%.

Processes are in place to help ensure programme regulations and requirements are available to students and staff. There is a detailed programme of studies on the Program website. The programme of studies contains relevant information for prospective and current students. The programme study guide includes information about the aim, content and structure of the programme and its modules. This seems to be updated regularly, although care must be taken to ensure an ongoing update and review.

Strengths

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

The professional and work experience of the students is an important prerequisite for admission, as well as an asset to the cohort and to the pedagogical opportunities.

Many of the students whom we spoke with had prior postgraduate experience, including MBA and PhD level awards. This programme was seen as a very useful way of orienting towards public management skills, achieving professional development, and pursuing career progression.

Student progress is followed by MIM and there is effort to support those students that encounter difficulties, including flexibility on timescales.

Course workloads are aligned with international standards and following a review and consultation with external stakeholders the programme moved from 120 ECTS to 90 ECTS.

In general, current and former students of the programme highlighted the support that faculty and administrative staff provide to them.

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 Programme also offers internships but there are no examples of these being taken up. This was explained in relation to the existing work commitments of the students. However, it may be that given the excellent links with public sector employers, and given coordinated support in the sector, there could be opportunities for students to spend periods of time in different public sector organisations as part of professional development and network building. Doing so would add to the distinctiveness of the programme, and act as a marker of innovative public sector partnership working.



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.*
- *Students receive support in research-led teaching through engagement in research projects, mentorship from research-active faculty, and access to resources that enhance their research skills and critical engagement with current studies.*

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.

We reviewed MIM's physical resources with an on-site inspection of the entries listed in Annex 4 of the application. More specifically, we verified the capacity and quality of the lecture rooms, computer laboratories, the library, and administration offices. Furthermore, we confirmed the availability of ample parking space and areas for student and personnel recreation.

All facilities were found to be adequate for their intended purpose and the current level of the student body, while being able to accommodate further expansion.

In regards to Distance Learning, we confirmed the adequate operation of services provided during the COVID-19 pandemic from multiple sources, including the teaching and administration staff, as well as the students. In addition, flexibility in use of resources was exhibited in exceptional cases, such as the recording of lectures for asynchronous viewing due to medical and other issues.

Human support measures (including teaching and administrative staff) were also found to be adequate for the programme's intended purpose and current capacity level.

Strengths

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

One of the major strengths is the availability of the Erasmus+ option for student mobility, even though it is not being taken advantage of to a desired level due to the characteristics of the student population: mature, full-time working, many with family obligations.

In addition, the relatively small size of the student body allows for excellent levels of interpersonal relationships between the students and the administrative staff, as well as with the teaching staff.

Access to online information sources, including access to a network of resources shared between libraries of educational institutions at a national level.

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 administration has reported efforts to accommodate students with special needs, which were verified during our on-site inspection. However, given the increasing rate of improvements in

accessibility and assistance resources for various forms of disabilities, we recommend the continuous evaluation of potential upgrades for students with special physical or other needs.

Furthermore, we would suggest the evaluation of the option to deliver hybrid courses, especially since the student body is composed of professionals with professional and personal needs that may force them to be absent or unavailable to participate for the entire class.

A final suggestion is to explore the option to interact with public sector representatives from foreign countries in order to exchange experiences and best practices. This can be accomplished via invited lectures and/or organised visits abroad.

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

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

6. Additional for doctoral programmes (ALL ESG) δεν έχει οποιαδήποτε αναφορά στα ESG για επίπεδο σπουδών-τα αλλά νομίζω καλύπτονται από αυτά που υπάρχουν.

Sub-areas

6.1 Selection criteria and requirements

6.2 Proposal and dissertation

6.3 Supervision and committees

6.1 Selection criteria and requirements

Standards

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

6.2 Proposal and dissertation

Standards

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

6.3 Supervision and committees

Standards

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

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

You may also consider the following questions:

- *How is the scientific quality of the PhD thesis ensured?*
- *Is there a link between the doctoral programmes of study and the society? What is the value of the obtained degree outside academia and in the labour market?*
- *Are the criteria reflected in 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 programme of study under review may be achieved, with emphasis on the correspondence with the EQF.

This is a well-established MPA in an institution with a very good reputation in the region, having been one of the first providers of management education in Cyprus. The Institute and the programme enjoy strong connections with the public sector, government ministries and agencies, and wider industry. The programme also benefits from enthusiastic students (both current and former) and there are seemingly strong word of mouth recommendations about the merits of the programme, the student experience, and the professional and developmental benefits of the MPA. In particular, a strength is the way in which the MPA helps students progress beyond functional or professional expertise and build capacity as managers. The committee recognises this as a socially valuable contribution, and it is evidently a contribution which is valued by public sector organisations and by the students themselves.

Given this contribution, the committee suggests that there is scope for MIM to tell a more effective story about the distinctiveness of the programme, its ethos, and its benefits. In a competitive market, and given the wider challenges that MIM faces, refreshing the narrative of the programme may be a worthwhile undertaking, to better articulate what makes the MIM MPA distinctive and valuable. This feedback is therefore an encouragement for MIM stakeholders to express how the MIM programme is differentiated from other MPA (or even MBAs) on offer in the region.

As noted above, a further means of developing the distinctiveness of the programme is to explore the option of creating opportunities for students to interact with public sector representatives from other countries in order to exchange experiences and best practices. This can be accomplished via invited lectures and/or organised visits abroad.

There is a strong reliance on the teaching contributions of Visiting Faculty. This strikes the committee as an imbalance. It raises strategic questions for MIM, which we encourage the leadership of the organisation (and its Ministry) to consider carefully. These questions include the sustainability of this model. Some of the Visiting faculty have made longstanding contributions but may be moving towards retirement. It is important that succession planning is in place. Equally there is perhaps scope for Visiting Faculty to help build capacity through working closely with MIM permanent faculty. For example, this could include a greater incidence of co-teaching. It is also important to consider diversity in the profile of the Visiting faculty. From a management and organisational development perspective, it may be more challenging to develop a team and distinctive MIM ethos amongst diffuse and dispersed faculty members whose home institutions are other than MIM. We identify these as strategic considerations which merit reflection as part of the ongoing development of the Programme and its underpinnings.

The students that the committee met are enthusiastic advocates for the MPA and for MIM. This is to the credit of all staff involved. There is evidence of regular student consultation and feedback mechanisms, but there is sometimes a need to ‘close the loop’ with the students and communicate how their feedback has been used, and how it has affected the design and development of the programme.

The committee recognises the benefits of MPA students taking modules on ethics, and on entrepreneurship. However, there is scope to introduce more public sector readings to these modules.

As we have noted, the programme is well established and makes good contributions to the students and to the wider public sector. However, given the excellent linkages with the sector, there is a coming opportunity to develop an exciting vision for the future development of the programme. One of the presenters spoke compellingly of the ethos of developing practitioners who are effective, inclusive, and work towards a peaceful and just world. We suggest there is scope for further articulating this ‘big picture’ vision and for translating that into the scope and content of the programme. Doing so would further add to the distinctiveness of the MIM MPA. In doing so there is an opportunity to engage with the MIM external stakeholders to help develop the vision and to communicate the values of the programme across their professional networks.



E. Signatures of the EEC

<i>Name</i>	<i>Signature</i>
Kevin Orr	
Vasileios Kefis	
Thomas Elston	
Manolis Diakourakis	

Date: 23/04/2024