

Doc. 300.1.1/2

Date: 16 May 2025

External Evaluation Report (E-learning programme of study)

- **Higher Education Institution:**
University of Limassol (UoL)
- **Town:** Limassol
- **School/Faculty (if applicable):** CIIM Business School
- **Department/ Sector:** Department of Management
- **Programme of study- Name (Duration, ECTS, Cycle)**

In Greek:

Μεταπτυχιακός τίτλος σπουδών στην Πράσινη
Μετάβαση και τη Βιώσιμη Ανάπτυξη (Εξ'
αποστάσεως)

In English:

M.Sc. in Green Transition and Sustainable
Development (E-Learning)

- **Language(s) of instruction:** Greek and English
- **Programme's status:** New
- **Concentrations (if any):**

In Greek: 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].

In English: Concentrations

A. Introduction

This part includes basic information regarding the onsite visit.

The Cyprus Agency of Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Higher Education (CYQAA) has invited the External Evaluation Committee (EEC) to evaluate the “M.Sc. in Green Transition and Sustainable Development (E-Learning) / Μεταπτυχιακός τίτλος σπουδών στην Πράσινη Μετάβαση και τη Βιώσιμη Ανάπτυξη (Εξ’ αποστάσεως)” programme, which is a proposed distance-learning M.Sc. programme to be offered by the University of Limmasol (CIIM Business School/Department of Management). The EEC consisted of four academics and a student member:

- Professor Frank Figge (ESCP Business School Paris/France) – Chair of the committee
- Assoc Professor Andrea Thorpe (Universidade Católica Portuguesa /Portugal)
- Professor Pasi Heikkurinen (Lahti University of Technology /Finland)
- Professor Santi Caballe (Open University of Catalonia /Spain),
- Mrs. Natasa Karletidou (University of Cyprus/Cyprus) - student representative member.

The evaluation of the programme took place at University of Limmasol premises on May 15^h, 2025. Prior to and during the site visit, the EEC was provided with comprehensive documentation, which was read prior to the meeting. The EEC met among others with the senior management team, members of the faculty and teaching staff, the Director and Co-Director of the proposed programme, representatives of the distance learning & IT, student support, exams office, admissions, library, external stakeholders, students and graduates of the University of Limassol.

During the site visit, the EEC met among others with:

- Professor Theodore Panayotou - Rector, University of Limassol
- Professor Andreas Artemiou - Dean of Technology and Innovation School, Chair of Internal Quality Committee
- Dr Paris Cleanthous - Chairperson, Dept. of Management; Programme Director; Member of Internal Quality Committee
- Ms. Vasiliki Moti - Quality Assurance and Programme Accreditations Manager, Member of Internal Quality Committee
- Dr Snezana Eminidou - Assistant Professor of Economics, Acting Chair, Dept. of Economics, Member of Internal Quality Committee
- Dr Afxentis Afxentiou - Director of the Research Centre, Member of Internal Quality Committee
- Professor William Brian Howieson - Vice Rector of Research & International Affairs, Dean of CIIM Business School

- Dr Georgia Sakka Vronti - Assistant Professor, Programme Director MSc Green Transition and Sustainable Development
- Dr Andreas Sousanis - Lecturer, Co-Director MSc Green Transition and Sustainable Development
- Dr Christodoulos Efstathiades - Assistant Professor, Acting Chair of Technology and Innovation School, Interim Co-Director of Distance Learning Unit
- Mr. Yiannis Theophanous - DLU Manager
- Ms. Maria Hadjikalli - Instructional Designer and Exams Officer
- Ms. Nicoletta Amyrotou - Learning Experience Designer and LMS Administrator
- Mr. Panagiotis Alexandrou - Student Support Officer
- Mr. Christos Pavlou - IT Director
- Mr. Andreas Constantinou - IT Project Manager
- Ms. Evanthia Itsa - Librarian
- Prof. Waldemar Pfoertsch - Professor of Marketing
- Mr Panayiotis Jacovides - Special Teaching Staff
- Dr Odysseas Kopsidas - Lecturer
- Dr Anna Artemi - Junior Energy Policy Expert, Ideopsis
- Mr. George Savva - Global ESG Practise Lead, Amdocs
- Dr Marinos Voukis - Chair, Board of Directors CSR Cyprus
- Dr Gregoris Panayiotou - Head of Infrastructure, Limassol District Local Government Organisation
- Ms. Evi Pilavaki - Chief Legal Officer, BBF Construction
- Ms. Aglaia Ntili - Managing Director, Sustainability Knowledge Group
- Mr. Costas Pantelides - Founder and Director, Rombus Services
- Mr. Kypros Zachariou - Student
- Ms. Maria Vryoni - Student
- Ms. Androniki Nikola Lagou - Student
- Ms. Fotini Markidou - Student
- Mr. Daniel Barasa - Graduate
- Ms. Marina Koumidou - Graduate
- Mr. Michais Tsangarides - Graduate
- Ms. Evie Yialloury - Registrar, Admin Office Manager and Limassol Campus Manager
- Mr. Evros Iniotis - Marketing and Recruitment Director
- Ms. Annita Sophocleous - Associate Director of International Admissions



- Ms. Despina Yenethli - Student Welfare Officer
- Ms. Nina Evripidou - Student Welfare Counselor
- Ms. Alisa Kyprianou - Student Support Officer
- Ms. Melanie Lytras - Executive Administration Officer
- Ms. Norma Ayvazian - Admissions Coordinator

During the sessions, the senior management team introduced the University of Limassol, CIIM Business School and the department of Management. The introduction covered among others the history of the University, the structure of the organization, and future plans. The Green Transition and Sustainable Development programme was introduced in detail. The discussions covered various aspects of the new programme, including its structure and content, academic issues, staff workload and organisation, assessments, available infrastructure and resources, course delivery, and the sustainability of the programme both in the context of the Cypriot and Greek, as well as the wider European and international market. The EEC had the opportunity to meet with faculty members, administrative staff, external stakeholders, and a number of students currently studying at the University of Limassol as well as graduates of the University. The final session comprised a meeting with the Vice Rector of Research and International Affairs, the Director and Co-Director of the Programme Green Transition and Sustainable Development to address any remaining questions, seek clarifications, and provide initial feedback.

After each presentation, the EEC had the opportunity to engage in a Q&A session to further explore details about the new programme. The questions posed by the EEC were specifically aimed at understanding various aspects of the programme, such as programme content, assessment approaches, support in terms of Distance Learning & IT and other resources, faculty issues, information about the materials provided, and learning methodologies. Furthermore, the EEC inquired about the programme's orientation and structure, the naming of the programme, the resources and processes in place and the University's plans for the future. Questions of Artificial Intelligence and its role in education were repeatedly raised and discussed throughout the day.

B. External Evaluation Committee (EEC)

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>University</i>
Frank Figge	Professor	ESCP Business School (Paris)
Andrea Thorpe	Assoc. Professor	Universidade Católica Portuguesa
Pasi Heikkurinen	Professor	Lappeenranta-Lahti University of Technology
Santi Caballe	Professor	Open University of Catalonia
Natasa Karletidou	Position	University of Cyprus
Name	Position	University

C. Guidelines on content and structure of the report

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

Findings

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

Strengths

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

Areas of improvement and recommendations

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

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

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

Sub-areas

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

1.1 Policy for quality assurance

Standards

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

1.2 Design, approval, on-going monitoring and review

Standards

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

Education and, consequently, to the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area

- *is regularly monitored in the light of the latest research in the given discipline, thus ensuring that the programme is up-to-date*
- *is periodically reviewed so that it takes into account the changing needs of society, the students' workload, progression and completion, the effectiveness of procedures for assessment of students, student expectations, needs and satisfaction in relation to the programme*
- *is reviewed and revised regularly involving students and other stakeholders*

1.3 Public information

Standards

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

1.4 Information management

Standards

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

You may also consider the following questions:

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

Findings

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

Policy for quality assurance. Quality Assurance (QA) has formal status at the University—as described in the University Charter—although the detailed QA policy is still in progress. The university has two 10-member internal quality assurance committees: (1) The university-wide QA Committee, chaired by the Vice-Rector for Academic Affairs and Quality Assurance, meets once per semester, and (2) the school-wide QA Committee, chaired by the Dean and co-chaired by the Department Chairperson, meets twice per semester. QA Committees support teaching and administrative staff as well as students in fulfilling their responsibilities in ensuring quality. They ensure academic integrity and freedom, guard against academic fraud, intolerance, or discrimination of any kind against students or staff, and actively support the involvement of external stakeholders. QA policies are formally approved by the University Senate. Additionally, clear guidelines and a structured approach to quality assurance are provided by the Distance Learning Unit (DL Unit), supported by the Pedagogical Unit, ensuring consistent quality management specifically for the distance learning programme. The ratio between academic faculty and others is about 40/60.

Design, approval, ongoing monitoring and review. The design of the study programme aligns closely with the University's overall strategic vision, clearly focusing on achieving institutional goals consistent with its declared values and priorities. Courses are explicitly mapped to the programme's overall aims and objectives, ensuring curriculum coherence. Learning outcomes are clearly defined, and assessment methods are systematically aligned to measure student achievement of these outcomes. Students and external stakeholders actively participated in the programme's design, and external expertise was also leveraged to enrich the programme's relevance and effectiveness. The design explicitly reflects the four purposes of higher education as defined by the Council of Europe: preparing students for sustainable employment, fostering personal development, encouraging active citizenship in democratic societies, and promoting a broad and advanced knowledge base through teaching, learning, and research. The curriculum facilitates smooth student progression, with clear correspondence between assessments, assignments, programme level, and ECTS credit allocation. The programme follows a formal institutional approval process and provides clearly specified qualifications aligned with both the National Qualifications Framework and the European Higher Education Area. Regular monitoring of the programme ensures continuous alignment with recent academic and industry developments, and periodic reviews will address societal needs, student workload, progression, and satisfaction, maintaining the programme's relevance over time.

Public information and information management. Upon launching, clear, accurate, up-to-date, and readily accessible programme information will be provided on the university's official website. This information will include selection criteria, intended learning outcomes, qualifications awarded, teaching methods, assessment procedures, pass rates, available learning opportunities, and employment data of graduates. A regular programme review process, including internal audits and self-assessments, is planned. Key performance indicators will systematically inform programme management, tracking student profiles, progression, satisfaction, success, and dropout rates. Feedback mechanisms involving students, faculty, and external stakeholders will further ensure continuous improvement. Additionally, the university intends to systematically evaluate the success of its graduates in the labour market, maintaining close contact with alumni to gauge employment outcomes and ongoing career progression, thus contributing to sustained programme quality and relevance.

Strengths

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

The commitment of university directors, faculty, administration, and external stakeholders to designing, delivering, and advancing the programme is a great asset and strength. Quality Assurance (QA) Committees will play a central role in ensuring that adequate resources and a culture of academic excellence are fostered in the programme; the establishment of formalized committees is particularly noteworthy. The programme has identified a niche in the marketplace, and the existing faculty, through their considerable experience and expertise, are well-equipped to respond effectively to this demand. The proven track record of participating faculty ensures that the programme will be intellectually stimulating, societally relevant, and effective in developing essential skills required to address challenges associated with green transition and sustainable development.

The programme's alignment with institutional strategy and broader educational goals, as articulated by the Council of Europe, demonstrates a clear and commendable commitment to equipping students with both robust academic knowledge and practical skills essential for their professional careers and active citizenship. The flexible programme format is particularly beneficial, allowing students to meet learning objectives while balancing work and other commitments, making the programme highly accessible to diverse student groups.

Additionally, the well-structured and detailed programme design, supported by clearly articulated learning outcomes, thorough curriculum mapping, and systematic alignment of assessment methods, significantly contributes to the coherence and consistency of student progression. Moreover, the active involvement of both internal and external stakeholders in the programme's design and ongoing development represents another substantial strength, enhancing the programme's relevance, responsiveness, and overall quality.

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.

Programme-University feedback. The university's values ambitiously combine economic and environmental goals. While this is a common starting point in sustainable development discourse (since Brundtland), explicitly addressing the tensions that emerge in the theory and practice of transitioning to green and just societies could further enhance the programme. The programme provides an excellent opportunity not only to reflect the university's strategy but also to actively inform and refine it by delivering research-based insights on the possibilities and limitations of economic growth within sustainability frameworks. This programme offers a valuable platform for strengthening feedback loops between business practitioners and scholars, students and faculty, as well as enhancing the broader QA processes of the university.

Broadening stakeholder engagement. While the programme already demonstrates exemplary engagement with key stakeholders, there is room to further expand this involvement by including fringe stakeholders whose perspectives are often underrepresented. Economic initiatives related to sustainability can occasionally face resistance or scepticism; therefore, proactively identifying and engaging a broader set of stakeholders could significantly enhance not only the ethical legitimacy and societal acceptance of green transition initiatives but also elevate the programme's academic quality through enriched diversity of viewpoints and experiences.

Holism and interdisciplinarity. Although technical and economic perspectives form the core of the programme, achieving a greater degree of holism by acknowledging and reconciling diverse disciplinary viewpoints is recommended. Explicitly positioning the programme within the rich tradition of interdisciplinary sustainability studies, clearly demonstrating connections to various established disciplines, and referencing the substantial existing body of knowledge on sustainability will significantly enhance its academic rigor and relevance. Integrating diverse disciplinary perspectives—including social, ethical, cultural, and political dimensions—will further enrich students' understanding of sustainability and improve their capacity to address complex, real-world challenges.

Local issues. The programme's existing international outlook could be effectively complemented by placing greater emphasis on local sustainability issues relevant to students' home regions or countries. Local case studies and context-specific challenges represent compelling educational tools, providing practical, hands-on learning experiences and opportunities for in-situ collaboration with practitioners. While international partnerships and global perspectives remain essential, systematically incorporating local sustainability contexts into the curriculum could provide novel pedagogical approaches, thereby further enhancing students' practical problem-solving abilities and appreciation of sustainability as both a global and local issue.

In summary, these recommendations are offered as constructive enhancements to the university's already robust programme framework, supporting continuous quality improvement and ensuring the programme remains dynamic, interdisciplinary, and responsive to diverse societal needs.

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

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

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

Sub-areas

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

2.2 Practical training

2.3 Student assessment

2.4 Study guides structure, content and interactive activities

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

Standards

- *The e-learning methodology is appropriate for the particular programme of study.*
- *Expected teleconferences for presentations, discussion and question-answer sessions, and guidance are set.*
- *A specific plan is developed to safeguard and assess the interaction:*
 - *among students*
 - *between students and teaching staff*
 - *between students and study guides/material of study*
- *Training, guidance and support are provided to the students focusing on interaction and the specificities of e-learning.*
- *The process of teaching and learning supports students' individual and social development.*
- *The process of teaching and learning is flexible, considers different modes of e-learning 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 e-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.*
- *For distance learning programs, the number of students in both undergraduate and Master's level postgraduate programs does not exceed 30 students per class.*

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

- *A complete assessment framework is designed, focusing on e-learning methodology, including clearly defined evaluation criteria for student assignments and the final examination.*
- *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 e-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.*

2.4 Study guides structure, content and interactive activities

Standards

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

You may also consider the following questions:

- *Is the nature of the programme compatible with e-learning delivery?*
- *How do the programme, the material, the facilities, and the guidelines safeguard the interaction between students, students and teaching staff, students and the material?*
- *How many students upload their work and discuss it in the platform during the semester?*
- *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 nature of the programme is compatible with distance learning delivery, and the methodology provided is appropriate for the specific programme of study. The university's learning management system, based on Moodle, supports basic online education and administration services. It features synchronous (via MS Teams) and asynchronous tools for student engagement with tutors and content. The system includes e-assessment options, such as quizzes with immediate feedback, to gauge student understanding. More complex e-assessment methods for skills exist, such as how to evaluate critical thinking, but were not presented during the meetings.

Each course offers six teleconference sessions (every two weeks, approximately two hours each), ensuring sufficient live interaction between tutors and students. Teleconferences aim to introduce the knowledge to be acquired in the upcoming weeks through studying the materials and performing the weekly interactive activities, following a

standard yet effective distance learning methodology. These teleconferences are recorded for students unable to attend in real time. Collaboration between tutors and students, and among students, takes place synchronously via teleconferences and asynchronously through Moodle's online forums. While student collaboration is further encouraged through groupwork activities in small teams, the structure, process, and technical support for these group activities are not formally defined, providing tutors and students with the flexibility to organize and manage groups autonomously.

Summative course assessment includes a mid-term written assignment connected to learning outcomes. This assessment contributes around 25% of the final grade, providing personalized formative feedback to students. The summative assessment is completed with a mandatory online final exam worth around 60% of the grade, which includes a written essay and often an oral examination with questions directly related to the essay. Course assessment also involves weekly graded interactive activities, which account for the remaining 15%, ensuring continuous student engagement in the e-learning process. Additionally, self-assessment activities with automatic feedback are included weekly to help students self-evaluate their understanding and skills. All summative and interactive activities include detailed rubrics, including group projects, outlining how students will be assessed and facilitating their learning from these evaluations.

The university has structured a clear and robust pedagogical framework for distance education, managed through its dedicated Digital Learning (DL) Unit and supported by the Pedagogical Unit. The e-learning methodology emphasizes interactive and collaborative learning, encouraging students to engage actively with course content, peers, and instructors. Detailed study guides explicitly articulate weekly learning outcomes, activities, primary and supplementary bibliographic references, as well as interactive tasks aligned with course objectives. The university ensures systematic quality through clear guidelines provided in the Distance Learning Guide, supporting faculty in creating effective, student-centred online courses. The DL Unit has also developed a comprehensive Distance Learning Assessment Framework, which clearly outlines the criteria and methodologies for assessing students' performance, including considerations regarding academic integrity and the impact of emerging technologies such as generative AI.

Finally, there is evidence of proactive consideration of the integration of advanced technologies, including artificial intelligence, within the teaching and assessment methodologies, demonstrating the university's forward-looking stance on education technology.

Strengths

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

The EEC considers the university's distance learning model to be well-aligned with the specific profile of online students who have professional and family responsibilities needing flexibility for learning effectively. The EEC notes that students benefit from a good student-tutor ratio (maximum 1:30), and student feedback is very positive. The provision of personalized feedback in the submitted assignments and during the teleconference sessions, as well as feedback based on rubrics, are considered best practices. Additionally, the EEC recognizes the numerous benefits of collaboration among students promoted through collaborative activities and discussions organized in online teams. Furthermore, the very detailed weekly study guides, which allow students to clearly identify the work required each week, are also considered a strength. In addition, oral exams as part of the final examination process provide the opportunity to evaluate key competencies of online students, such as oral communication and critical thinking, while helping ensure academic integrity and fairness by directly connecting questions to the written essays. The EEC urges

the university to maintain these strong elements of their distance learning model and to reinforce them where possible.

Additionally, the University of Limassol's robust Distance Learning Unit (DL Unit), supported by the Pedagogical Unit, stands out as a significant strength. This dedicated unit not only ensures high pedagogical quality across the distance learning programme but also actively and carefully explores the integration of innovative educational technologies, including Artificial Intelligence (AI). Both the potential and pitfalls of AI are reflected. The clearly defined Distance Learning Assessment Framework provides educators with comprehensive guidance, fostering consistency and fairness in assessment practices and addressing contemporary academic integrity issues. The programme also successfully combines synchronous and asynchronous online learning methodologies. Synchronous sessions via teleconferences effectively facilitate real-time interactions, while asynchronous forums and interactive activities encourage reflective and deeper student engagement. This blend of methodologies caters to diverse student needs, enhancing the overall online learning experience. Lastly, the structured approach to continuous student engagement through weekly interactive and self-assessment activities further enhances student-centred learning, effectively supporting individual student progress, motivation, and autonomy in the learning process.

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.

Continually evaluating the quality assurance of distance learning by non-mandatory external accreditation organisations, such as EDEN, EFQUEL, and EADTU, is encouraged. The programme and the university are encouraged to apply for these external accreditations to further demonstrate and validate the high quality of its distance learning programmes. The EEC suggests that the university considers potential challenges if the programme attracts international students from varied time zones, emphasizing the need for more asynchronous online interaction and collaborations, while continually adapting the distance learning model to meet evolving student needs.

Concerning the administration of online final exams, the EEC urges the university to carefully consider the implications of proctoring. While ensuring academic integrity is crucial, it is also essential to stay abreast of the latest advancements in online examination technologies, which offer various methods to secure exams without compromising fairness or student privacy. The EEC recommends exploring innovative solutions that balance integrity with a positive final exam experience for all participants. Additionally, building on the already excellent integration of interactive student activities, the university and/or the school might consider further formalizing the structure and guidance provided for group-work activities. While flexibility currently allows tutors and students autonomy, clearer guidelines and defined frameworks could enhance consistency, especially as student numbers grow.

Given the university's proactive stance on integrating new technologies such as AI into its learning environment, continued emphasis on clearly integrating policies and guidelines on generative AI within core student documentation, such as the study guides and student handbook, is recommended. Ensuring students and staff have straightforward and accessible information will support the responsible and effective use of emerging technologies, aligning with the university's forward-looking approach. AI challenges the practices of higher education (especially in online environments, where the degree of AI use is impossible to control). We as educators can avoid reducing learning to the operation of AI or the means of securing transparency on its use; this technological change calls us to engage in reflecting about both the opportunities and limitations of AI (vis-a-vis actual intelligence).

We expect the university to be aware of the European laws and guidelines regarding data protection and that the recorded data during the course is used in line with the best ethical and academic practices. The students and faculty will be informed about how data on them will be collected and stored.

Overall, these recommendations aim to enhance the already commendable quality of the university's distance learning programmes, supporting continuous improvement and ensuring a consistently positive experience for students.

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
2.4	Study guides structure, content and interactive activities	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.*
- *Training, guidance and support are provided to the teaching staff focusing on interaction and the specificities of e-learning.*

- *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:

- *Is the teaching staff qualified to teach in the e-learning programme of study?*
- *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 University is expanding rapidly with new programmes and an increasing number of students. In response, the University has embarked upon a recruit drive for new faculty. As an indicator of the pace of such recruitment, the current number of faculty at the time of writing (May 2025) was 45, comparing to the previous month of 40 'resident' faculty. The University has an emphasis on graduate education and faculty are recruited as appropriate. In the business school itself there are 14 resident academic faculty (three full professors, five associate professors, three assistant professors and three lecturers).

In addition to the usual provisions for on-campus programmes, the university has a DL unit that provides training for distance learning in the form of seminars and workshops to faculty members from various university schools. Faculty members can participate in training programs to enhance their skills for conducting high-quality online teaching.

Strengths

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

There are many strengths to note here and overall, the University is to be commended on its approach to how it recruits, develops and manages its faculty, as well as the synergies between teaching and research.

Although not directly related to 'teaching staff', it is also worth noting that the overall culture of the University will undoubtedly benefit the quality of the teaching, albeit indirectly. Support staff – although feeling the inevitable strain of increasing workloads as the University gets larger – are a tight knit and 'happy' unit, reporting a 'family' type ethos that is marked by mutual support and respect. The panel perceived much of the same of the DL unit. Both support staff and the DL Unit reported an excellent working relationship with faculty, and this is to be commended -- but also valued and nurtured, going forward. Similarly, it was evident that the Dean, Chairperson of the Management Department, and Programme Director genuinely care about and support faculty to the best of their ability, and again, this undoubtedly positively impacts the ability of faculty to deliver their part of the learning experience.

More specific strengths are as follows:

Recruitment and development. Despite its small size, the University has actively sought to internationalise with regards to its teaching faculty, with advertisements for new faculty placed in international outlets, e.g. Akadeus. The panel recognises that internationalisation comes in many guises, and whilst there is not a vast spread of nationalities represented, care has been taken to ensure that Cypriot faculty have been exposed to other countries, cultures and working practices through, for example, PhDs gained from overseas, work experience and so on. The panel is hopeful that this approach will continue as the programme gets larger, but the University currently does not give any indication that this will not be the case.

Overall, the panel had a high degree of confidence in the proposed faculty for the programme who are largely well qualified in terms of their subject knowledge, although the panel does make a tentative suggestion going forward (please see below).

The panel also saw evidence of a strong ethos of feedback via numerous channels. Students felt that faculty encouraged their feedback so they could improve both 'what' they delivered (course material) and 'how' they delivered it (activities, pedagogical approach, course structure and so on). Student evaluations are used – and taken seriously – as part of an approach of continuous improvement. This is perhaps the 'softer', less tangible side of

faculty development, but no less important than, for example, more formal modes of professional development such as training, which was also encouraged and supported by the University.

Teaching staff number and status. There is a good balance of faculty from senior to junior members of the team. The programme is adequately staffed, and the University has a policy in place that limits the number of adjunct or ‘non-resident’ faculty in relation to resident faculty. This seems to be rigorously adhered to but is perhaps reflective of the genuine interest that the management seems to have in the development of its students, faculty (and support staff). There was a clear belief amongst the faculty and management that ‘good’ programmes only come about through a holistic approach and resident faculty are at the forefront of student development. This was very pleasing to see. Again, we make one tentative suggestion for the future (please see below).

Synergies of teaching and research. Teaching loads at 40 ECTS credits are adequate to maintain a good standard of course development and to ensure that faculty remain research active. The panel recognises the importance of both research and practice dimensions to a good programme, and it was evident that there are several mechanisms in place to encourage research outputs: Monetary support for conference attendance and seed funds for projects, for example. Also of note is the potential for a teaching load reduction if faculty seek to focus on research more than the current ‘norm’ of 30% of their workload. This was actively accepted in practice, with cases considered on a case-by-case basis.

Clearly, faculty have been recruited for their strengths in specific fields. One team member, for example, with a PhD in Materials Science, is able to offer a very specific perspective on the circular economy course offered. Almost all faculty reported using their own research in the courses, which clearly enhances the cutting-edge nature of the content. This is to be commended and will, over time, help contribute to the reputation of the programme, both internationally and nationally. However, there are implications for the University, which the panel tentatively raises (please see below).

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

As before, there are numerous strengths concerning the staffing of the proposed programme. In the spirit of development, the panel suggests ways in which the faculty team could be improved, but also some tentative ‘things to keep an eye on’ for the future – again, made in the spirit of development.

Recruitment, development, staff numbers and status. Going forward, and as the programme gets larger, it might be prudent to recruit at the associate and assistant levels more vigorously. Clearly there are benefits in recruiting full professors – and of course the panel recognises the value they potentially bring to the wider university environment in terms of leadership, and so on. However, to ensure that your current assistant and associate professors stay, it is important that there are routes for internal progression.

Also, in terms of recruitment, perhaps think about recruiting a generalist in sustainability, or at least someone who can teach a wider range of subject areas within sustainability. Some of the panel were nervous about the specific knowledge needed to teach on some of the courses. The panel completely accepts that currently the University can reply on its network to give the Programme Director options if a faculty member leaves. However, the risk is still there. It might be that as the programme gets larger and you start to recruit more faculty anyway, the problem resolves itself, but it is perhaps something to keep an eye on.

As the programme evolves, please consider using your course faculty to help aid its development. The panel recognises the clear and impressive capabilities of the rather excellent current Programme Director and does not doubt her ability to develop the programme. We understand the current programme came about through 'top-down' means. Clearly there is nothing wrong with that, especially from a strategic point of view. However, in going forward, we encourage you to enfold a 'bottom-up' approach -- at least in part -- in developing the programme going forward. Specifically, we urge you to consider getting the course faculty members -- particularly those more junior -- more involved, i.e. beyond the boundaries of their own course design, as this will also enhance their own professional growth.

The programme is fortunate to have actively engaged and genuinely interested and enthusiastic external stakeholders -- this was strongly in evidence, and this is a real resource for the programme as a potential mark of quality, but also as a source of competitive advantage. Externals are keen to continue their relationship with the programme, including their offer to provide guest lectures and potential work placements. Please consider following up on their offers and nurturing these relationships. They could enrich the academic team and the course offerings, but they currently feel that their offers are being ignored.

Finally for recruitment and development, the EEC notes that the current policy does not require online teaching experience for faculty members beginning to teach online or transitioning from conventional programs. This approach may lead to issues such as reduced student engagement and higher dropout rates. The university is strongly encouraged to revise its hiring criteria to require online teaching experience for new faculty members.

Synergies of teaching and research. As above, the University is clearly encouraging its faculty to research and is investing resources to do so. Clearly, results will not occur overnight but going forward, we encourage you to devise some sort of system that monitors the impact of research outputs in the classroom. Metrics on whether faculty-generated research is being used within the courses, how and the student satisfaction with these outputs, might be a start.

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 Master of Science (MSc) in Green Transition and Sustainable Development offered by the University of Limassol is an e-learning postgraduate programme planned to commence in the Fall of 2025. It is structured around eight compulsory courses totalling 90 ECTS, including a final thesis project of 20 ECTS. Each course awards (other than the thesis) 10 ECTS credits, demonstrating clear adherence to the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) standards.

Admission criteria are clearly outlined, requiring applicants to possess a recognized Bachelor's degree with specific grade thresholds from UK, US, Cypriot, or Greek institutions. Candidates who do not fully meet these criteria may still be considered if compensatory strengths such as professional experience or relevant professional qualifications (e.g., CFA, ACCA, ACA) are presented. The programme also requires proof of English language proficiency through established international tests (e.g., IELTS, TOEFL), or the University's own placement test and remedial courses for students lacking sufficient proficiency.

Students' progression is supported by comprehensive feedback mechanisms, utilizing various assessment methods, including mid-term and final examinations, quizzes, assignments, projects, and participation. The grading system is transparently communicated, employing a standard numerical and letter-grade system clearly detailed in the programme's guidelines. Each course's assessment procedures and grading distribution are explicitly shared with students at the beginning of every semester.

The university's Moodle platform offers a wide range of learning analytics tools designed to effectively monitor student progression and performance. These tools analyse log data to identify students with limited participation or incomplete activities, flagging potential concerns, and prompting tutors and academic advisors to initiate contact or arrange meetings with affected students. The EEC recognises the value of the "Moodle Analytics for Instructors" guide provided by the university, which informs tutors how to optimally utilize these analytics tools. However, during the evaluation meetings, evidence demonstrating the concrete educational benefits of these analytics tools—such as improved student performance and reduced dropout rates—was not presented.

Recognition of prior learning is possible, with provisions for transferring up to 25 ECTS credits from accredited institutions, contingent upon achieving at least a 'B' grade or its equivalent.

Certification procedures are explicitly described and closely aligned with internationally recognized academic standards. Successful completion of the programme, including passing all required courses and the thesis, culminates in awarding the MSc in Green Transition and Sustainable Development. The programme's objectives and outcomes are explicitly mapped to the European Qualifications Framework (EQF Level 7), ensuring international comparability and recognition of the qualification.

Strengths

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

The admission criteria for the MSc in Green Transition and Sustainable Development are clearly defined, robust, and fully compliant with international standards. They facilitate inclusive yet rigorous candidate selection, allowing consideration of compensatory professional experiences and qualifications. Evaluation practices are comprehensive and transparent, incorporating diverse assessment methods clearly communicated to students at the commencement of each course.

Certification processes are explicitly aligned with recognized international frameworks, particularly reflecting adherence to the Bologna Accreditation principles through the use of the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS). This ensures the portability, recognition, and quality assurance of the awarded degrees across Europe and internationally.

The extensive use of the Moodle platform's learning analytics represents a significant strength. These analytics proactively monitor and flag students' progression, enabling targeted support interventions by academic staff. The clearly documented "Moodle Analytics for Instructors" guide further exemplifies good practice in empowering educators to effectively utilize these analytical tools to potentially enhance student outcomes and reduce dropout rates.

A key strength was noted around the low drop-out rate at the university level. Additionally, student feedback is collected at the end of each course and actively sought throughout course delivery. The effectiveness of this feedback, in terms of specific quality improvement measures implemented by the university, was acknowledged by students during the meetings. The university is urged to maintain this process of continuous improvement.

Overall, the integration of robust technological support systems, clear regulatory frameworks, and adherence to international quality assurance standards positions the programme to effectively support student progression and success.

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 University of Limassol has established strong foundations in student monitoring and support through the effective use of the Moodle platform and its sophisticated analytics tools. While recognizing these commendable efforts, the university could further strengthen this good practice by systematically evaluating and documenting the direct benefits these tools have on student outcomes, such as improved academic performance and retention.

Demonstrating the positive impact of these analytics could serve as a benchmark for continuous enhancement of the programme.

The university's existing mechanisms for collecting student feedback are already effective and actively acknowledged by students. To build upon this strength, it is recommended that the university explores additional structured opportunities for continuous feedback throughout each course. This could further enhance the responsiveness of academic staff to student needs, promoting an even more dynamic and engaging learning environment.

Regarding assessment practices, the programme employs clear and transparent evaluation criteria aligned with international standards. Nevertheless, introducing slightly more varied assessment approaches—such as project-based assignments, collaborative group activities, or interactive presentations—tailored specifically to the distinct objectives and content of each course, could enrich the learning experience. This would not only reduce potential workload pressures during examination periods but also actively encourage the development of important soft skills, such as teamwork, creativity, and communication, further enhancing student employability.

Overall, the existing framework established by the university is highly commendable. These recommendations aim to build upon the university's current strengths, supporting continued excellence and fostering an even more effective and enriching educational environment for students.

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

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

5.2 Physical resources

Standards

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

5.3 Human support resources

Standards

- *Human support resources, i.e. tutors/mentors, counsellors, other advisers, qualified administrative staff, are adequate to support the study programme.*
- *Adequacy of resources is ensured for changing circumstances (change in student numbers, etc.).*
- *All resources are fit for purpose and students are informed about the services available to them.*

5.4 Student support

Standards

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

You may also consider the following questions:

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

Findings

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

The University of Limassol provides robust and accessible learning resources specifically tailored to the MSc in Green Transition and Sustainable Development, delivered entirely through a distance-learning format. The Moodle platform is comprehensively utilized, providing structured teaching materials, interactive resources, and analytics for monitoring student progress and participation. The programme materials and resources are appropriately designed to meet the objectives of each module and support flexible and student-centred learning modes.

The proposed courses have complete syllabi plus highly detailed weekly student-centred study guides, which include relevant information: objectives, learning outcomes, keywords, teaching schedule and methods, materials, activities, primary and complementary bibliographic references, and rubrics for formative and summative assessment. Additionally, a detailed guide outlining what students need to study, along with indicative interactive activities for all courses and weeks, are well-presented and provided in a detailed manner. This is considered by the EEC to be a best practice.

Physical resources at the university, including IT infrastructure, study spaces, and library facilities, are extensive and well-equipped. The university maintains dedicated library services with a good array of electronic resources, databases (e.g., EBSCOHost, ProQuest, IEEE Xplore, and SAGE Journals), and an institutional repository (DSpace-Cris). These resources support student research, offering remote access to extensive academic materials essential for postgraduate-level studies.

The university's Distance Learning (DL) Unit is responsible for providing pedagogical support for the creation and evaluation of online courses. This unit is supported by a dedicated Pedagogical Unit, which ensures that study materials, interactive activities, and both formative and summative assessments align with international standards. The DL Unit also offers a comprehensive Distance Learning Guide, providing clear guidelines for developing and delivering distance learning courses. This guide serves as a valuable reference, ensuring consistent quality across the university's distance learning courses.

Currently, the DL Unit is exploring the integration of cutting-edge technologies, such as Artificial Intelligence (AI), into its online programmes. The EEC acknowledges the proactive efforts and forward-looking approach of the DL Unit to continuously enhance the distance teaching and learning experience.

The University also ensures adaptability of resources to changing circumstances, explicitly acknowledging the flexibility needed to accommodate potential variations in student numbers or other emerging requirements. The new headquarters planned for 2027-28 demonstrates strategic foresight in physical resource management and readiness for future growth. This also mirrors the resource needs expressed by staff, faculty, and students.

Human support resources at the university are comprehensive and fit for purpose. Qualified tutors, counsellors, and administrative staff provide structured support, including personalized academic advising, career guidance, psychological support, and assistance for international students and those with special needs. Dedicated student welfare mechanisms and robust counselling services underline a strong commitment to student well-being and academic success.

Student support services cover diverse needs effectively, supporting mature, part-time, employed, international students, and those with special requirements. The programme actively promotes student-centred learning, flexibility, and encourages student mobility through established Erasmus+ exchanges and placements. Support mechanisms such as mentoring, career counselling, and direct engagement with research-active faculty further enhance students' learning experiences and professional development.

Overall, the learning resources and student support services at the University of Limassol are extensive, systematically structured, and clearly communicated, significantly contributing to the successful implementation of the MSc programme in Green Transition and Sustainable Development.

Strengths

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

The University of Limassol demonstrates notable strengths in the quality, comprehensiveness, and accessibility of its teaching and learning resources, particularly within its distance-learning programmes. A significant highlight is the detailed weekly student-centred study guides that provide clear objectives, structured learning activities, comprehensive bibliographic references, and assessment rubrics. These guides have been recognized as best practice by the EEC, effectively supporting student learning and engagement.

The University's dedicated Distance Learning (DL) Unit, supported by the Pedagogical Unit, ensures that course materials, interactive activities, and both formative and summative assessments adhere to international standards. The existence of a comprehensive Distance Learning Guide enhances consistency and quality across all online courses, reflecting the university's commitment to maintaining high pedagogical standards. The DL Unit is considered a best practice due to its structure, resources, and services dedicated to enhancing distance learning. The EEC believes it provides powerful support for maintaining the quality of teaching and offers a solid foundation for faculty members seeking to improve their distance learning expertise.

The University's proactive approach to exploring and integrating cutting-edge technologies, such as Artificial Intelligence (AI), illustrates its commitment to innovation in teaching and learning. The EEC also recognizes the value of the UoL Distance Learning Assessment Framework, providing educators with useful information about the assessment framework, its criteria, and the activities used to assess students' performance in an online course, including the impact of AI on academic integrity. This forward-looking strategy positions the University of Limassol to continuously enhance student learning experiences and outcomes in an evolving technological landscape.

Online courses incorporate multi-format learning materials, including e-books, articles, and videos, all of which are beneficial for distance learning. Additionally, physical resources, including IT infrastructure, library services, and remote access to extensive online databases (e.g., EBSCOHost, ProQuest, IEEE Xplore, SAGE Journals), are robust and effectively support postgraduate-level academic research and study. The availability of these resources significantly facilitates student engagement with contemporary academic literature and research activities.

Human support resources are a clear strength. Qualified and dedicated tutors, counsellors, and administrative personnel offer robust and structured support systems tailored to the diverse student population, including mature, international, part-time, and students with special needs. Student-centred learning approaches, personalized advising, psychological support services, and career counselling collectively create a supportive and inclusive learning environment.

Additionally, the university strongly encourages student mobility, notably through its Erasmus+ programmes, providing valuable opportunities for international exchange and collaboration.

Overall, the University of Limassol demonstrates a strong, proactive, and systematic approach to providing comprehensive learning resources and student support services, significantly enhancing the overall quality and effectiveness of its distance-learning programme.

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 University of Limassol demonstrates a strong and commendable commitment to providing high-quality learning resources and student support, which positions the MSc in Green Transition and Sustainable Development for great

success. To further build upon the university’s existing strengths, several opportunities for enhancement have been identified.

The extensive library resources available, both digital and physical, already provide robust support for postgraduate study. Continued monitoring and regular updates of the library’s holdings—particularly specialized literature related to sustainability and green transition topics—are recommended to ensure sustained alignment with evolving academic standards and industry trends.

The University’s IT infrastructure is currently comprehensive and effective. Nonetheless, given the rapid pace of technological advancement, it is advisable to maintain proactive planning and periodic reviews of technological resources. Thoughtful integration of emerging tools, particularly in areas such as Artificial Intelligence (AI), will further enhance the already excellent online learning environment provided to students.

Regarding staffing, the current faculty team demonstrates impressive qualifications and strong dedication. As the programme expands, continuing to ensure a suitable balance of full-time academic staff is advisable to sustain personalized support, mentoring, and meaningful student-faculty interactions, further enriching the student learning experience.

Student support services are already commendably inclusive, addressing a diverse student community effectively. Moving forward, regularly reviewing and refining these services to cater to potential new student groups—such as mature professionals or recent graduates—could enhance the already positive student experience. Periodic evaluation of the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) will help ensure continued responsiveness and effectiveness, particularly as student cohorts grow or diversify.

Additionally, given the practical nature of sustainability studies, maintaining and expanding partnerships with relevant industries for internships and placements is recommended. This will complement the already strong academic foundation with enhanced real-world experience, benefiting student employability.

The EEC positively notes the proactive steps already taken regarding generative AI policies. As a further enhancement, integrating this information directly into existing study guides and the student handbook, rather than in separate documents, is recommended. Clearly outlined guidance will help students effectively navigate and responsibly use these technologies, aligning with the university’s forward-thinking approach.

Overall, these recommendations are designed to support and amplify the university’s existing strengths, ensuring continued excellence and positioning the programme at the forefront of innovation and educational quality.

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

D. Conclusions and final remarks

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

The evaluation visit confirmed that the University of Limassol has developed a robust, innovative, and highly relevant MSc programme in Green Transition and Sustainable Development. Throughout the process, key stakeholders provided consistently excellent ideas and feedback, underscoring their positive perception and strong support for the programme's aims and structure. It is recommended that the university continues to nurture and deepen, as well as broaden, stakeholder engagement in various dimensions of the programme, such as guest lectures, student theses, and context-specific case studies, to maintain the strong practical relevance and enhance students' experience on the diversity of issues and perspectives on green transition and sustainable development.

A key strength of the programme lies in its comprehensive yet focused approach to sustainability. Moving forward, it will be essential for the programme to consistently maintain the balance between business and the environment, openly addressing both the opportunities and the challenges associated with sustainable development. This will ensure that students gain a 360-degree perspective, preparing them effectively to navigate and critically assess the complex realities of sustainability in the (post-)modern world.

Moreover, given the programme's interdisciplinary aspiration, it is essential that students are adequately introduced to the fundamentals of relevant disciplines of sustainability and business in their studies. Providing a clear and structured introductory component at the programme's outset, possibly through an existing module, a dedicated kick-off seminar, or a similar initiative, would offer students foundational clarity and coherence, setting the stage for reflective learning.

Infrastructure was frequently discussed during the site visit, highlighting some existing limitations. While current facilities adequately support the programme's immediate needs, the new planned infrastructure is anticipated to significantly enhance the overall learning environment and resource availability, providing a strong foundation for sustainable growth and innovation. The university is encouraged to ensure timely progress on this new infrastructure to maximize its positive impact.

Regarding the naming of the programme, the university is advised to reflect on its suitability to ensure that the programme's title will help ensure it is clear, attractive, and fully representative of its comprehensive curriculum, enhancing its market appeal and resonance with prospective students.

Considering the prevailing resource constraints, the university is encouraged to utilize additional resources strategically, thus effectively leveraging the expertise and availability of existing faculty and staff. Targeted use of administrative or technical support, adjunct faculty, or teaching assistants can maximize efficiency, improve faculty availability for meaningful student engagement, and ensure the sustained high quality of teaching.

Library resources, already commendable, should continue to be systematically reviewed and expanded, ensuring they align with evolving programme requirements and student needs. Continuous improvement in this area will further strengthen student research capacity and learning outcomes.

In terms of faculty recruitment going forward, the university will need to pay attention to the changing needs of the programme on numerous dimensions such as more faculty who are specifically trained in online teaching and learning, the balance between sustainability generalists and those who have more niche areas of expertise, the level at which faculty are recruited and the international dimension.



Lastly, given that many students in this programme will likely balance academic responsibilities with professional and personal obligations, careful consideration should be given to ensuring a manageable and balanced exam load. Maintaining flexibility with rigour in assessment scheduling and diversifying assessment methods can significantly enhance the programme's accessibility and attractiveness to working professionals, further enriching the learning experience for all students.

Finally, the nature of the programme is well-compatible with distance learning delivery, and the methodology provided is appropriate for this specific programme of study.

Overall, the University of Limassol's MSc in Green Transition and Sustainable Development is already positioned strongly. By addressing these areas thoughtfully, the university can enhance the programme's effectiveness, attractiveness, and long-term success even further.



E. Signatures of the EEC

<i>Name</i>	<i>Signature</i>
Frank Figge	
Andrea Thorpe	
Pasi Heikkurinen	
Santi Caballe	
Natasa Karletidou	
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Date: 16 May 2025