**ENQA**
EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION
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IN HIGHER EDUCATION

**ΔΙΠΑΕ
CYQAA**

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

**Doc. 300.1.2**

# Higher Education Institution's response

Date:

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Theo

REPUBLIC OF CYPRUS
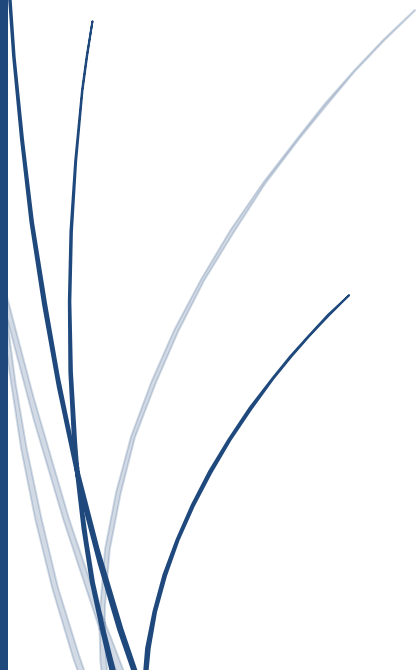
**Higher education institution:**

Cyprus International Institute of Management……………………………………………………
……………………

**Town:** Nicosia  (online programme)……………………………………………………………
………

**Programme of study (Name, ECTS, duration, cycle)**

**In Greek:** ……………………………………………………….

………………………………………………………………………

**In English:** MSc Shipping Operations and

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*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 and 2016" [N. 136 (I)/2015 and N. 47(I)/2016].*

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### A.  Guidelines on content and structure of the report

- *The Higher Education Institution (HEI) based on the External Evaluation Committee's (EEC's) evaluation report (Doc.300.1.1) must justify whether actions have been taken in improving the quality of the programme of study in each assessment area.*

- *In particular, under each assessment area, the HEI must respond on, without changing the format of the report:*

  - *the findings, strengths, areas of improvement and recommendations of the EEC*
  - *the deficiencies noted under the quality indicators (criteria)*
  - *the conclusions and final remarks noted by the EEC*

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- *The HEI's response must follow below the EEC's comments, which must be copied from the external evaluation report (Doc. 300.1.1).*

- *In case of annexes, those should be attached and sent on a separate document.*

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

*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 would recommend to CIIM to improve and spell out the logic of progression in the program structure, which is currently missing. The program guidance document should explain to the students, how the first courses in the program feed into the subsequent courses. We would like to see how the academic level increases in the course of the three semesters, as reflected by course learning goals. This will provide valuable guidance for students about the rising expectations that students will be subject to during the program.*

**The courses are scheduled as follows and the logic behind the scheduling and progression is explained below:**

**Semester 1 (September, October, November, December):**
Maritime Economics (Preceded by a one-hour introduction to the Programme)
Environmental Management & Safety in Shipping
Research Methods in Shipping /Master Thesis: Research Questions & Literature [PART I]

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**Semester 2 (January, February, March, April, May, June):**
Ship Operations, Optimizing Performance & Analytics
Managing Chartering Operations
Marine Insurance and Carriage of Goods by Sea
Research Methods in Shipping /Master Thesis: Methodology, Data & Analysis [PART II]

**Semester 3 (July, August, September, October, November):**
Leadership, Team Building & Crew Management
Port Operations and Logistics
Ship Financing & Risk Management
Research Methods in Shipping/Master Thesis: Implications & Critique of Findings [PART III]

The logic of progression is a combination of prerequisites and balance. Subsequent courses build on the ground covered by previous one. At the same time, we ensure that there is no overload of difficult courses in a single semester. The new Research Methods in Shipping course is taught in three parts, one in each semester to guide the students along in their research assignments and mandatory Thesis, also new per EEC recommendation. The logic of the progression is explained in detailed in Attachment 1 and Attachment 6.

*The course descriptions provide long lists of bullet points regarding expected learning outcomes for each course. We would recommend major revisions in the wordings of learning goals. Many of them use the ambiguous wording "understand", which is difficult to test in an exam situation. We would recommend replacing "understand" with other verbs, such as "identify", "select", "justify", "formulate", "apply", "calculate", and "assess". We recommend that CIIM provides more explicit pedagogical reflections regarding the different levels of abstractions for the individual learning goals (e.g., using Bloom's learning taxonomy). We recommend to reduce the number of learning goals, and order them according to their levels of abstraction (from simple goals to the most advanced and difficult goals).*

The wording of the intended learning outcomes has been revised replacing "understand" with verbs, such as "identify", "select", "justify", "formulate", "apply", "calculate", and "assess" as seen in the revised syllabuses. See revised course revised course descriptors with strengthened intended learning outcomes in Attachment 4. At the same time, where necessary, adjustments have been made to the study guides.

*The MSc program is missing an explicit focus on research methods. For MSc programs, we would expect graduates to be able to formulate research questions of their own. MSc graduates should be able to make appropriate methodological and theoretical choices that enable them to investigate their research questions. Finally, we would also like to see the MSc graduates, who have developed skills to carry out academic analyses, which provide valid and convincing answers to research questions. We would recommend to the CIIM to consider the inclusion of a research methods course (introducing both qualitative and quantitative research methods) and a mandatory MSc thesis in the program.*

We have added a **Research Methods in Shipping** course, 10 ECTS course, introducing both qualitative and quantitative research methods, to help students with their study and understanding of research articles as well as with their research assignments (see Attachment 3 for a course description and study guide). We have also introduced a mandatory MSc thesis in the program (see response to related comment below).

In order to make the introduction of the new course, *Research Methods in Shipping*, possible without increasing the ECTS beyond 90 and without displacing another course we combined two closely related courses, Management of

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Financing and Shipping Risk Management into one course, Ship Financing & Risk Management; the course description of this combined course is found in Attachment 13.

*We would like to see CIIM's professors scale up on the research content in the individual courses. An appropriate way to do this would be to include more, mandatory, academic journal articles in the syllabus. This would enable CIIM's professors to leverage more recent research results in the program. This could include journal articles from journals such as Transportation Research Parts A-D, Journal of Transport Geography, Maritime Economics and Logistics but also publications from more generalist management journals such as Management Science or Organization Science.*

The research content of the courses has now been enhanced by including a large number of pertinent research papers from academic journals in the course content (and the study guides) of every course as described in Attachment 2 (Enhancement of research content & inclusion of research papers).

*In our comparisons of the course material and syllabus, we discovered several overlaps. Grammenos et al. (2010); Panayides (2018) and Stopford (2009) appear in several courses. These are highly relevant works to include in the program, but it is important to avoid that students read the same text twice in two different courses. We would recommend more coordination between professors on course content in order to avoid overlaps in topics and readings.*

Reading overlaps have been eliminated, except when the same source has parts pertaining to different courses. (See revised readings in Attachments 2 & 4).

*In the context of global ship operations, social scientists have documented widespread issues of organizational mistrust, which have negative effects on ship organizations (See the recent work by Sampson et al. 2019). We would recommend that the program management include such work in the syllabus. In particular, and we would like to see more exercises in the human resource management course that enables the students to critically reflect ship management's effects on the quality of working life for seafarers and the performance of ship organizations. In particular, research conducted by the University of Cardiff's Seafarers International Research Centre (SIRC) would be particularly relevant to consider in this context. Given the CIIM's vision statement regarding the aim to foster ethical behaviour and sustainability thinking among students, we would recommend the program management for the MSc*

*in Shipping Operations and management to include this more explicitly in the syllabus.*
*Some relevant references:*
*Sampson et al. (2019). 'Between a Rock and a Hard Place': The Implications of Lost Autonomy and Trust for Professionals at Sea, Work, Employment and Society, 33 (4), 648 –665*
*Sampson and Tang (2019). Strange things happen at sea: training and new technology in a multi-billion global industry, Journal of Education and Work 29 (8), 980-994*
*Sampson and Bloor (2007). When Jack gets out of the box: the problems of regulating a global industry, Sociology 41 (3), 551-569*

We have included the suggested by the EEC readings and listed above in the Syllabus (see Attachment 5) and enhance the Study Guide of the Leadership, Team Building and Crew Management course correspondingly.

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

*Advisory Board, which we consider very strong. It includes several highly esteemed senior scholars and practitioners.*
*True*

*CIIM has a very strong relationship with the local business community in Cyprus. The institute can leverage this to ensure job market relevance of programs and graduates. True*

*CIIM holds the potential to gain a first mover advantage in the online teaching within the field of shipping operations and management. True*

*The location in Cyprus is a major advantage for CIIM: It combines the strong shipping environment with the strong Anglo Saxon education traditions. True*

*CIIM appears to be very attentive to student welfare. This is very valuable to ensure student well-being and retention (minimizing risk of drop-out). True*

*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.*

*Spell out the logic of progression in the program.*
Done (see response to related finding #1 above and Attachment 1 for details)

*Revise the learning goals to reflect different levels of abstraction*
 Done (see revised intended learning outcomes in revised course descriptors/syllabuses in Attachment 4)

*Include more academic journal articles in the mandatory readings*
 Done (see attached amended readings in Attachment 2)

*Avoid overlaps in content and readings between the individual courses*
Done (see revised Readings in Attachments 2 & 4)

*Include assignments to reflect on business ethics and quality of working life for seafarers.*
Done within the course of Leadership, Team Building and Crew Management (see revised readings in Attachment 5)

*Include a methods course in the program.*
 Done (see attached Course description & Study Guide in Attachment 3)

*Include MSc thesis in the program.*
Done (see Attachment 1 and 6)

*Deficiencies noted under the quality indicators (criteria)*

*1.3.5. We did not find convincing evidence for procedures that allow students to improve the program.*

Student feedback form is added to the LMS Platform.

*1.4. For EQF level, we would expect to see strong research methods training.*

Research methods course added (see Attachment 3)

*1.8.2./1.8.4./1.8.7/1.11/1.12, For most of the courses in the programme, relevant, recent research articles*

*from academic journals should be included.*

Relevant, recent research articles from academic journals included (see Attachments 2 and 4)

*recommend higher admission criteria for English language skills.*

CIIM's admission criteria for English language skills are already among the highest, if not the highest among universities and business schools on the island. No one enters CIIM without fluency in the English language established by both certification and personal interview. It is the first time in the school's 30-year history and countless of accreditation assessments that such issue is raised. The EEC comment must be due to a misunderstanding.

*1.18 For a MSc program, we would expect to see more focus on research methods and recent academic*

*Articles*

Research methods course added and relevant recent research articles from academic journals included in response to the EEC recommendation (see Attachments 2 & 3)

*1.23. We would recommend writing more specific admission criteria for the admission interviews. This will*

*ensure consistency in the admission process.*

The detailed specific admission criteria are found in Attachment 16. The criteria for the admission interviews which is an integral part of the admission process, are:

a) personality
b) motivation
c) articulation skills (oral language proficiency/communication skills)
d) social skills
e) quantitative skills
f) work experience
g) academic background
h) potential contribution to class
i) socioeconomic conditions

## 2. *Teaching, learning and student assessment* (ESG 1.3)

*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.*

*Although in general the evaluation of the teaching and learning processes support student individual and social*

*development, the programme should place more focus on developing student's research skills.*
*In particular, the link to the research activities of faculty and instructors and the teaching is not evident. This is an important prerequisite for EQF level 7 to which the programme should align to. Notwithstanding the high research expertise of the faculty, there is no evidence that this expertise is used in the programme. While it might be expected that new research will be embedded in the materials used for teaching, this is not documented in the course outlines and there is no reference to processes aimed at updating the lecture materials with latest developments in research.*
Development of students' research skills: the programme now places more focus on developing student's research skills in three ways:
   1. Through the inclusion of many more recent research articles from academic journals in the mandatory & recommended readings (Attachment 2)
   2. Through the addition of a new course on Research Methods (Attachment 3)

introduction of a mandatory MSc Thesis (Attachment 1 & 6)
4. The strengthening of the link of teaching to the research activities of the faculty and instructors by embedding new research in the teaching materials (see revised course outlines in attachment 3)

*EQF requirements for MSc degrees include critical awareness of knowledge issues in a field and at the interface between different fields, as exemplified also in criterion 2.11. There is no evidence in the curriculum that students will be able to acquire such critical awareness. In particular, as the programme does not have any specific methodological foundations, it is unlikely that students will be able to acquire the necessary skillsets to support specialised inquiry in the forefront of knowledge and original thinking.*

Development of students' critical awareness of knowledge issues is centred on the methodological foundations of the Maritime Economics and Shipping Finance course and it has now been enhanced with the addition of the Shipping Research Methods course, the research paper assignments and the mandatory Thesis.

*There is no evidence that students are trained in the research process. Although the programme foresees the use of individual and group assignments and it is possible that lecturers structure those assignments to foster the acquisition of research capabilities for the students, this process is not documented, and the exercises/assignments provided in the course materials are not research-based. The absence of a final master's thesis and the absence of a research methods course is further evidence of the fact that students are not adequately trained in the research process.*

Student training in the research process: we responded by adding both a Research Methods in Shipping course and research paper assignments as well as a Master Thesis (see attachments3 & 6)

*Strengths*

*A list of strengths, e.g. examples of good practices, achievements, innovative solutions etc.*
· *The students will benefit from the small class size*
 True
· *The teaching and learning processes proposed allow for paying attention to individual student needs*
 True
· *The programme structure allows for effective communication*
True
· *There is clear evidence the management team care about the wellbeing of students*
 True

*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.*
· *Focus on research methods or research training should be strengthened, by including for example a research methods course.*

Done, a Research Methods in Shipping course has been added (see Attachment 3)

· *The work on case studies should target specific skills and integrate problem-solving skills required in Research.*
 Done via the added Research Methods course and the added Master Thesis as well as added emphasis on problem-solving skills in individual courses employing case studies as instructional vehicles.

· *A stronger focus on novel, cutting-edge and up-to-date research should be included in the programme*
Done by the inclusion of Academic Journal Articles in the Syllabus of courses (see Attachment 2)

*Procedures to ensure that new knowledge is integrated in the programme should be put in place, by for example specifying that the compulsory reading materials for some of the courses should be based on recent academic publications.*

Done by the inclusion of recent academic publications in the required readings (Attachment 2)

*· The production of individual or group work should be added to the assessment, to ensure that students develop specialised problem-solving skills required in research, e.g. through a master's thesis.*

Done by the adding the requirement of a Master's Thesis (see Attachments 1& 6)

*Deficiencies noted under the quality indicators (criteria)*

*2.10: The link to the research activities of faculty and instructors and the teaching is not evident.*

Done. The link of the teaching to the research activities of faculty and instructors has been enhanced by the inclusion of the following three modalities that constitute concrete opportunities for faculty-student and teaching-research interaction, cross fertilization of ideas and even collaboration:
a) research papers authored or co-authored by instructors in the reading materials
b) assignment of research papers to students
c) a mandatory Master Thesis

*2.11: There is no evidence in the curriculum that students will acquire the research skills and that the programme promotes inquiry learning.*

Done by the addition to the curriculum of a course on Research Methods, the addition in the mandatory readings of updated recent academic journal articles and the addition of the assignment of research papers and a Master Thesis (see Attachments 1 and 6)

*2.12: There is limited evidence that students are trained in conducting research and are familiar with research Processes.*

Done as described in sections 2.10 and 2.11 above and detailed in Attachments 2 and 6)

3. *Teaching Staff (ESG 1.5)*
   *In addition to your response to EEA's comments on the teaching staff:*
   *a.  fill in TABLE 1: TEACHING STAFF at the end of this form and*
   *b.  send the curriculum vitae of all the program lecturers on the forms posted on the Agency's website as an annex.  (Form 500.1.03 for Universities and Form 500.1.04 for Higher Education Institutes)*

*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 resident faculty are experienced scholars, having held academic positions in academic institutions overseas and are also active researchers in their fields of study.*

*Visiting faculty members comprise both experienced practitioners, with significant practical experience in their respective fields, as well as academics with significant research track record.*

 True, we fully agree.

*This presents a nice balance between practical and theoretical concepts. However, the ratio of resident to visiting faculty is on the high end of the scale and may need to be rebalanced.*

True, we fully agree and we have rebalanced the ratio of resident to visiting faculty in favour of the resident faculty as described in our response to "Areas of improvement and recommendations" below.

*The ratio of the number of students to the total number of teaching personnel is adequate.*
True and we fully agree.

*The program's coordinator has the qualifications and expertise to co-ordinate the program of study.*

True and we fully agree.

*Resident faculty members have some expertise on the use of online technologies and may assist in training other faculty members. However, this knowledge transfer is mostly at an anecdotal level and no evidence of that has been provided.*
This is not completely accurate as five resident faculty members, Dr. Stylianides, Dr. Christodoulou, Dr. Pavlou, Dr. Mourouzis and Dr. Markoullis have significant prior multiyear experience in distance learning instruction. The first has extensive multiyear experience while Dr. Pavlou along with Dr. Mourouzis have expertise in online technologies. Admittedly we have not been explicit on how this knowledge is being transferred but this is actually done both in an informal one-to-one interaction as well as in a planned and systematic way through collegial tutorials. A tutorial for the use of online technologies has been planned to take place next month (see Attachment 7).

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

*Suitably qualified and experienced resident faculty.*
True. We fully agree

*Wide range of experienced and suitably qualified visiting lecturers.*
True. We fully agree.

*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.*

*Provide guidelines and training material for training and supporting faculty members to the use of new technologies.*
Done (see Attachment 7 for details)

*Address the balance between resident and non-resident faculty; at an initial stage this can be achieved by integrating more widely resident faculty in teaching in the proposed programme.*

exactly that following the EEC recommendation. We have appointed an additional resident faculty, Dr. Antonis Violaris, who will assume responsibility for the Research Methods course and Thesis supervision. Dr. Demos Petropoulos, a shipping industry specialist and a visiting faculty with the programme has been appointed as an adjunct faculty member lending his experience to the programme and improving the balance between resident and non-resident faculty.

*The time requirements for the development of distance learning should be accounted for so that faculty and instructors are not overburdened.*

Done, by including the time for the development of a distance learning course in the faculty's teaching load (10 hours of preparation, 10 hours of live delivery, 6 hours of live Q&A sessions, 10 hours providing guidance to individual students, and 10 hours for setting and grading exams and assignments for a total of 46 hours which are equivalent to the contact hours for 10 ECTs face to face course (10 X 4.67= 46.7). Thus, the time requirements for the development of a distance learning course is fully accounted for in the faculty workload so that faculty and instructors are not overburdened.

*Deficiencies noted under the quality indicators (criteria)*

*3.1: There is an overreliance to external teaching faculty. The team should consider supplementing the external lecturers with more full-time resident faculty.*
Done, we have improved the ratio of full-time resident faculty to external teaching faculty significantly, from 22% to 60% in terms of ECTS taught by resident faculty (see our response to similar comment above and attached Teaching Staff Table at the end of this Response Document to the EEC Report). We did this by:

a) Supplementing the external lecturers with more full-time resident faculty (Dr. Takis Stylianides in Shipping Operations Management) per the EEC recommendation

b) Recruiting a new full-time permanent faculty (Assistant Professor) Dr. Antonis Violaris to teach the Maritime Economics course instead of a visiting faculty (Dr. Tsouknidis). Dr Antonis Violaris holds a M.Sc. in Business Finance from Brunel University and holds a Ph.D. in Economics and Finance from University of Durham, UK. Over his professional career, as consultant, he has gained extensive experience in shipping investments and analysis of the international markets - Shipping, Oil and Energy, Foreign Exchange. He has been active in the field of Academia, serving posts as visiting lecturer in local academic institutions, delivering Shipping related modules in Finance and Investment, and currently holds such a post at Cyprus University of Technology. (Dr. Violaris CV is found in Attachment 15).

c) Converting one of the Programme's visiting faculty Dr. Demos Petropoulos into a permanent part-time (50%) faculty (Associate Professor) to teach the Leadership, Team Building & Crew Management course. Dr. Demos Petropoulos has completed his PhD studies at the University of Piraeus and over the years has amassed extensive industrial research and practical experience and expertise intertwined with an exemplary teaching record of maritime subjects. Of particular value in the shipping management programme and the subjects that he will be leading is his vast experience at top managerial positions in shipping enterprises and ventures but also the experience as a speaker and presenter of relevant work in international conferences. (Dr. Petropoulos CV is found in Attachment 16).

*3.6: The use of external faculty may create problems of consistency in the quality of delivery and consistency of assessment. However, we also recognise that visiting faculty have been with the Institution for a number of years*

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external faculty may create problems of consistency in delivery and assessment, this it is not the case with CIIM since, as the EEC aptly recognizes, our visiting faculty have been with the Institution for a number of years; furthermore, they are subject to common guidelines and regular oversight by the programme director and the internal Quality Assurance Committee.
.

*3.8: There is a duplication of effort particularly with respect to the dual recording of lectures. This may create unnecessarily high workload for academic staff which can be at the detriment of research and other activities.*

It is easier for us to adopt the EEC recommendation eliminate the dual recording of lectures and record them only once (automatically) during the live delivery on the platform, as is done by most online programmes. However, the imperfections in technology and the relative unpredictability of the live delivery on the one hand and the tradition and philosophy of CIIM for quality and strive for excellence drive us to be willing to exert the extra effort to pre-record our lectures in addition to the recording of the live sessions. The pre-recorded lectures will be assigned as "pre-reading" or preparation material to make the live delivery more effective. One of our resident faculty teaching in the programme has attended recent EFMD seminars on online delivery during which the dual recording was encouraged. Perhaps, once we acquire more experience we can move to single recording during live delivery.

*3.11: There has been no evidence that training opportunities are available for existing faculty members particularly to the use of new technologies.*

We do have training opportunities for faculty on instructional methods and the use of new technologies but inadvertently we failed to describe them in our report. We have now increased and formalized these training opportunities in response to this and a similar comment above by EEC as evident in Attachment 7.

## 4. *Students* (ESG 1.4, 1.6, 1.7)

*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 has mentoring, tutoring and communication mechanisms that would ensure that students are in a situation to perform to the best of their abilities in the programme.*

True; this is an assessment we fully share.

*The experience of the HEI with flexible programmes can be used to the benefit of students.*

True; this is an assessment we fully share.

*· There is evidence that programme evaluation mechanisms are in place.*

True

*· Some components of the QAP take place in an informal and undocumented manner. This is acceptable*

*programme and the close collaboration among faculty and support staff.*
We agree

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

*Experience with understanding needs of students who do the programme alongside their current Employment.*
Indeed, a very long experience!

*Highly motivated staff who cares about the well-being and success of the students.*

Indeed, our staff are very motivated and care about the well-being and success of our students, and we are proud of 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.*

*· More clear and structured admission criteria guidelines for interview to ensure consistency in the admission Process*
As stated in our response to recommendation 1.23 in section 1 there are detailed specific admission criteria which we made explicit in our response to the recommendation 1.23 above and for brevity we do not repeat here (see also Attachment 17.

*· As the QAP components take place in an informal manner, it would be valuable to define structured processes, in particular, in relation to the uptake of student concerns at an institutional level.*

As the EEC states in its findings above, this informality is acceptable given the small size of the School and the programme and the close collaboration among faculty and support staff. Nevertheless, we do have, in addition, a structured QAP process as described in Attachment 8.

*Deficiencies noted under the quality indicators (criteria)*

*The expertise of the HEI and the experience with educational programme support the perception that the interaction with students will be satisfactory on this programme. Admission's criteria are comparable to other institutions, although particular attention should be paid to ensure consistency, English language skills and pre-requirements to enable students to succeed in the programme. Mentoring, support and welfare services appear adequate on the basis of the assessment of the already existing programmes. Institution experience with providing flexible and adaptable programmes will contribute to tailor the current programme to student needs.*

As stated in a similar comment above, our admissions criteria, including language proficiency and pre-requirements are stricter than other institutions on the island (see Attachment 17). The personal interview ensures that additional criteria such as personality and motivation are considered and satisfied. The EEC is right that this contains the risk of inconsistency between applicants. To guard against this risk, interviews involve the programme director, a second faculty member and the admission officer. Difficult cases are brought to the Admission Committee for decision.

## 5. *Resources* (ESG 1.6)

*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.*

*Overall the resources for the program are compliant and seem to be widely available for teachers and students. By giving online access to the library the program integrates most electronic resources needed for online teaching and learning.*

Indeed.

*Student welfare services and career consulting opportunities are available on campus and should also be integrated in the online portal for the program.*

They are available and are integrated in the online portal for the program.

*An internal communication platform is provided with the learning management system (LMS) through which the communication between students, their peers and teachers is supported.*

Yes, it is so provided.

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

*Accessibility of wider academic resources available through CUT library.*
Yes, indeed!

*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.*

*Explicit use of research resources in the course (Journal Articles)*
Complied by adding Academic Journal Articles in the Syllabus, as required readings (attachment 1).

*Setup of virtual student office for support, welfare, and study guidance.*
This will be a section on the platform where we will have documentation and tutorials about the platform, how to use the platform, online forms to contact relevant departments for technical or academic support, forums where students can interact and help each other, forums involving teachers and staff. This requires and will have the involvement from various staff and faculty in order to offer the best possible service to the students.

*Online laboratories explicitly integrated in the online portal with cases and basic learning materials.*
There will be a section within the online platform that includes simulation games, for example, to allow the students to test ideas and observe results. Case studies will also be included in this section. This depends on the teachers and the courses as to what will be included, but from a platform point of view, the section can be created. We currently have a simulation which is a MS Windows application, so this would be a zip (compressed) file which students can download with instructions on how to install and use (see Attachment 11). Links to other resources relevant to each courses content can be added.

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*Deficiencies noted under the quality indicators (criteria)*

None indicated by EEC.

## 6. *Additional for distance learning programmes* (ALL ESG)

*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 pedagogical planning for the repeating weeks is promising but the translation of the classical pedagogical approach to a distance learning setting requires more integration of the presented and bespoken interactive materials in the pedagogical approach as well as in the learning materials (6.1, 6.3).*

We have now integrated the presented and bespoken interactive materials in the pedagogical approach (see Attachments 7 & 12), as well as in the learning materials by revising the individual course Study Guides.

*A lot of the learning outcomes are on the knowledge level and, while the opportunities for higher level skills and skills application have been described, they are not visible now in the current curriculum (6.3, 6.4).*

We have now made the opportunities for higher level skills and skills application visible in the curriculum by redefining the learning outcomes as seen in the revised course descriptors (Attachment 4).

*While the interaction between lecturer and students is facilitated with the two weekly Q&A session and online lectures there have been no clear descriptions of the facilitation of interaction between students and their peers as well as on how the high study load of learning materials can be enhanced by interactive components (6.5).*

The facilitation of interaction between students and their peers is now provided as follows:
The faculty teaching the course will be in their office and through their computer and a high bandwidth internet line, will be teaching the class presenting the material – PowerPoint presentation, videos, case studies, exercises, etc. They will be able to use his/her PC video and speakers' facility to be seen and heard during the live presentation.  At the same time the instructors will be able to respond live on questions from participants and answer any questions arising.  They will be able to also ask questions and get answers from the participants, and monitor who has joined the class who is missing.  After the class students can form forums, create chat rooms, email to the faculty or to the class, etc. Here are some of the additional tools available for student interaction:

1) Forum (Allows participants to have asynchronous discussions)

2) Chat (Allows participants to have a real-time synchronous discussion)

3) Choice (A teacher asks a question and specifies a choice of multiple responses)

4) (LTI) External tool (Allows participants to interact with LTI compliant learning resources and activities on other web sites)

*Training for the teaching staff has been specified as a PowerPoint presentation on the core functionality of the online learning platform. We believe this should be extended to a f2f training or online training in a Virtual Classroom for all teachers of the course (6.8).*

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As described in attachment 6, we now provide for a f2f training to the Cyprus-based instructors and online training in a Virtual Classroom for overseas instructors, a training that can be attended by all instructors of the programme (see Attachment 7).

*The chosen LMS (Canvas) offers a variety and detailed possibilities in pre-prepared modules for student performance monitoring and Learning Analytics for educators as well as for students. The program should specify the basic components that will be tracked in the LA modules of the LMS (6.9).*

The basic components (analytics) that are being tracked in the LA modules of the chosen LMS include the following:

For the students:
•        Progress
•        Success rate
•        Interaction

For the instructors:
•        Student participation
•        Student success
•        Student understanding
•        Student feedback
•        Course quality

For the institution:
•        Student retention
•        Teacher involvement
•        Teacher success
•        Course quality

*The consistency of assessment should be enhanced with the introduction of rubrics on the different assessment components. There should be a rubric template with specific categories for assessment of the weekly assignments and the final exam; this is also linked to formative student feedback (6.12).*
*While there are very good evaluation schemes for the course content this should also be extended to the evaluation of the online services and the student experience with the online learning format (6.17).*
*As described above, the feedback on student assignments should be based on a common and underlying rubric which should reduce teacher workload and provide diversity and consistency of feedback 6.22).*
*It is not clear how the final exam is evaluated. The teacher should have a common evaluation scheme (rubric) for the evaluation of final exams (6.23).*

A rubric template with specific categories for assessment of the weekly assignments and the final exam, linked to formative student feedback has been incorporated. We added to our student evaluation scheme the evaluation of the online services and the student experience with the online learning format (see Attachment 9)

*Strengths*

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

*Core 3 weeks' cycles*
We agree

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*LMS with enhanced functionality in place and experienced external implementation partner.*

We agree

*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.*

*Integration of interactive components such as simulations and collaborative tasks in the basic course structure.*

Done with the incorporation of simulation STRATSHIP in study guides (see Attachment 11).

*Development of rubrics for assessment and feedback.*

A rubric template with specific categories for assessment of the weekly assignments and the final exam, linked to formative student feedback has been incorporated (see Attachment 9)

*Planning of student interaction tasks and online networking space for students.*
*Make use of available learning analytics based on CANVAS modules and specific monitoring indicators*

The learning analytics and monitoring indicators of the LMS are used to monitor:
- Attendance of lectures
- Participation in the Q&A sessions
- Study of materials
- Participation in networking
- Participation in group work
- E.t.c  (see related section above on analytics)

*Deficiencies noted under the quality indicators (criteria)*

## 1. Assessment of the interaction (among students, between students and teaching staff, between students and study guides/material of study)
*The program underestimates the efforts for the transition from a classical education program to an online program. Interaction by and for students should be more explicitly integrated in the course design especially in form of collaborative learning exercises. Interaction with teachers is well integrated but the workload of teachers for replying to online requests should be considered in the workload.*

The integration of interaction by and for students is now made explicit in the course design in form of collaborative learning exercises (See Revised Course Syllabuses in attachment 4). The workload of teachers for replying to online requests is being considered in their workload as explained in our response to the same comment made in section 3 above on Teaching Staff and we reproduce here for easy access: We have included the time for the development of a distance learning course in the faculty's teaching load (10 hours of preparation, 10 hours of live delivery, 6 hours of live Q&A sessions, 10 hours providing guidance to individual students, and 10 hours for setting and grading exams and assignments for a total of 46 hours which are equivalent to the contact hours for 10 ECTs face to face course (10 X 4.67= 46.7). Thus, the time requirements for the development of a distance learning course is fully accounted for in the faculty workload so that faculty and instructors are not overburdened.

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## 2. Student-centered teaching and learning

*The program is very much content driven. The EEC would recommend integrating as well social aspects, like networking between students in form of either a kick-off physical meeting or types of online networking sessions with students only. Also, a more "case and problem" oriented approach and a better integration of the described cases into the core courses would enhance the link with concrete problems and relevance for students.*

The facilitation of interaction between students and their peers is now provided as follows:
The faculty teaching the course will be in their office and through their computer and a high bandwidth internet line, will be teaching the class presenting the material – PowerPoint presentation, videos, case studies, exercises, etc. They will be able to use his/her PC video and speakers' facility to be seen and heard during the live presentation. At the same time the instructors will be able to respond live on questions from participants and answer any questions arising. They will be able to also ask questions and get answers from the participants, and monitor who has joined the class who is missing. After the class students can form forums, create chat rooms, email to the faculty or to the class, etc. Here are some of the additional tools available for student interaction:

1)    Forum (Allows participants to have asynchronous discussions)

2)    Chat (Allows participants to have a real-time synchronous discussion)

3)    Choice (A teacher asks a question and specifies a choice of multiple responses)

   5)  (LTI) External tool (Allows participants to interact with LTI compliant learning resources and activities on other web sites)

The "case and problem" oriented approach is an integral part of our "Learner-focused, Problem-based Pedagogical Model" described in our Instructors Manual. This model integrates cases into the course content; the case method is central to our teaching. We have made this more explicit in our course outlines (see attachment 3) and the course study guides.

## 3. Training, guidance and support provided to the teaching staff

*We believe that the complexity in shifting from face-to-face to online learning is underestimated in the program and some training sessions with staff and clear guidelines should be developed, not only to transfer knowledge about the use and functionality of the online platform but also for the online pedagogy.*

As described in Attachment 7 we provide for a f2f training to the Cyprus-based instructors and online training in a Virtual Classroom for overseas instructors, a training that can be attended by all instructors of the programme.

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

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

## B.  Conclusions and final remarks

### 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 committee assessment concludes that the programme partially complies with the EQF. The CIIM is a reputable institution with considerable experience in providing programmes in business and management. However, the committee evaluated that the lack of experience in providing distance learning programmes is a critical aspect in the evaluation. Distance learning programmes have specific requirements that the CIIM does not appear to be fully aware of.*

*Furthermore, the programme builds on the expertise of very reputable faculty and instructors but does not fully capitalise on the research focus and capabilities of resident faculty.*

Now we have devised ways to capitalise on the research focus and capabilities of resident faculty. Introducing courses dedicated to research is one way to ensure that students are introduced to current research results in their area of study as well as acquire and hone their own research skills. However, this is not enough.

The course will aim to help the instructors to inject more of their research into teaching and thus enrich their classes. Following Stephen Bostock's paradigm, our instructors use the following ways to bring the process as well as the products of research into the classroom:

1. Use current research perspectives, paradigms, and debates in the classroom to show that knowledge is contested and growing, rather than accepted fact.
2. Include recent research results as part of curriculum content.
3. Introduce both generic and subject-specific research skills and scholarly activities into course assignments, including literature review, experiment design, peer review, book review, conference paper presentation, and grant application.
4. Invite students into your research community in small ways by requiring them to join scholarly email lists or discussion boards, use online conference proceedings as resources for class assignments.

 (see Attachment 18 for further details)

*The EEC also recommend a stronger integration of the research component in the programme, for example by including a MSc thesis and a research method course in the curriculum.*
Both a MSc thesis and a research method course in the curriculum have been incorporated in the programme as described in section 1 and presented in Attachments 3 & 6.

*For the strengthening of the research component of the programme, the inclusion of a wider set of recent academic publications in the study material would be beneficial.*
Done as described and evidenced in section 1 and evidence in Attachment 2.

*To strengthen the CIIM vision of student centred and problem-oriented learning a clearer integration of case studies and collaborative exercises would be valuable.*
Case studies and collaborative exercises have been incorporated as described and evidenced above.

There is a clear need in the market for a course in this specific area, and the CIIM has the possibility of providing a successful programme and holds the potential of taking the first mover advantage.
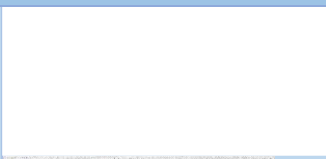
Having taken full advantage of EEC's constructive feedback, we are confident that we will be providing a successful online MSc in Shipping Operations & Management that will capture the first mover advantage in this specific area, in a market which has a clear need for such a programme.

## C.  Higher Education Institution academic representatives

| Name | Position | Signature |
|------|----------|-----------|
| Theodore Panayotou | Director | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |

Date:  29 February 2020…………………………….

## TABLE 1: TEACHING STAFF

| Full name | Employee status | Senior Academic Title | Taught Course | Course Code |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Antonis Violaris | Permanent Full-time | Ph.D. Economics & Finance (Shipping) | 1) Maritime Economics<br><br>2) Shipping Research Methods | SOM 001<br><br>SOM 009 |
| Theodore Panayotou | Permanent Full-time | Ph.D. Environmental Economics | Environmental Management in Shipping | SOM 003 |
| Takis Stylianides & Nicholas Anastasiou | Permanent Full-time Permanent Part-time | Ph.D. Engineering (Operations) Ph.D. Computing (Analytics) | Operations Management, Optimization & Analytics | SOM 004 |
| Demos Petropoulos | Permanent Part-Time | Ph.D. in Shipping | Leadership, Team Building & Crew Management | SOM 002 |
| Stelios Markoulis | Permanent Part-Time | Ph.D. Finance (Shipping) | Ship Financing & Risk Management | SOM009 |
| Stelios Alexandrou | Non-permanent part-time | Ph.D. Shipping | Managing Chartering Operations | SOM 005 |
| Andria Alexandrou | Non-permanent part-time | Ph.D. Commercial Law | Marine Insurance & Carriage of Goods by Sea | SOM 006 |
| Dimitris Tsouknidis | Non-permanent part-time | Ph.D. Finance (Shipping) | Port Operations & Logistics | SOM 007 |

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## ATTACHMENTS

ATTACHMENT 1. The Logic of progression of courses

ATTACHMENT 2. Enhancement of research content & inclusion of research papers

ATTACHMENT 3. Addition of Shipping Research Methods course: Syllabus & Study Guide

ATTACHMENT 4: Course descriptions with revised expected learning outcomes and reading materials

ATTACHMENT 5.  Revised "Leadership, Team Building and Crew Management" Course

ATTACHMENT 6.  Revised Course Curriculum, Progression & Scheduling

ATTACHMENT 7. Tutorial on the Use of Online Technologies

ATTACHMENT 8. Structured QAP process OK

ATTACHMENT 9. Assessment & Feedback Rubric

ATTACHMENT 10. Virtual student office for support, welfare, and study guidance

ATTACHMENT 11. Incorporation of simulation STRATSHIP in study guides

ATTACHMENT 12. The Pedagogical Support Provided by CIIM's Distance Learning Unit

ATTACHMENT 13. Shipping Financing and Risk Management Course Description

ATTACHMENT 14. Teaching Personnel, Courses and Teaching Periods

ATTACHMENT 15. CV of Dr. Antonis Violaris, Newly Recruited Full-Time Resident Faculty

ATTACHMENT 16. CV of Demos Petropoulos, Newly Recruited Part-Time Permanent Faculty

ATTACHMENT 17. Admission Criteria for CIIM's MSc Programs

ATTACHMENT 18. Capitalizing on the Faculty's Research Capabilities and Introducing Students to Instructors' Research Results

Attachments_CIIM_re
ply_to_EEC_report_for