
External Evaluation Committee (EEC)
Program of Study: BA (Hons) Accounting and Finance
Institution: CDA College

Friday, January 12, 2018

To: Dr Eleni Deligianni

Cyprus Agency of Quality Assurance
and Accreditation in Higher Education (DI.P.A.E.)
Lemesou Avenue, 5
2112 Lefkosia, Cyprus

Dear Dr Deligianni,

In response to your email, dated 15 December 2017, the EEC members assembled and examined carefully all the enclosed documentation, cited below:

EEC_Report_CDA_Lim_Accounting_and_Finance_BA;
Foreas_Letter_Deuterh_Accounting_and_Finance_BA_CDA_Limassol;
Report_On_Defferi_CDA_Accounting_and_Finance_BA;
Report_On_Enstasi_CDA_Limassol_Accounting_and_Finance_BA

In the original report of the EEC, alongside many good practices, a number of weaknesses in the working of the College were identified and highlighted for the attention of the management of the college. These weaknesses mainly referred to (p.10§4 – p.11§7):

1. The insufficiency of suitably qualified academic personnel, whose academic qualifications and active research in the field of Accounting & Finance would enable the delivery and administration of a BA Degree.
2. The absence of an active research culture in the College at large, appropriate to a modern, research-led, Higher Education institution.
3. The lack of a recruitment/promotions practice in line with the norms of the profession, including provisions for research-performance related progression and external validation of appointments and promotions.
4. The presence of a rather 'lax' admissions policy, with very low admissions criteria for a BA degree. Correspondingly, provisions that ensure student admission, progression and graduation in line with the established international standards of the profession were absent.

In its two follow-up reports, the College has responded to some of the above weaknesses. In particular, the College has proceeded with the provisional appointment of three new faculty members, two of which are M.Sc. holders with professional qualifications (ACCA) and one has a doctoral degree (Ph.D.) and is also an active researcher in the relevant subject. In addition, the College has offered further responses to the comments of the EEC, with respect to the provisions and policies on research.

The EEC has reviewed carefully the qualifications of these provisional appointments as well as the responses of the College on other matters. While these actions are certainly a move in the right direction, it is the unanimous opinion of the EEC that these actions are not enough to address the 4 major issues addressed above. Point 1 is partly addressed (in our view more recruitments of active researchers with a Ph.D. in Accounting and Finance or a related field are needed). The additional provisions, however, hardly address the underlying bigger issue:

The College still lacks a research culture and orientation while it does not possess the typical higher-education mechanisms for the quality assurance of academic appointments and promotions, student admissions and progression.

This is unfortunate, as - in the opinion of the EEC - the leadership of the College and the entire team exhibited an exceptional commitment to the overall operation and a genuine student-focused drive. However, in an ever-changing, global and highly competitive Higher Education environment, the delivery and award of academic degrees demands compliance with the strictest quality criteria. These criteria - today more than ever - orbit around a research-led (instead of a merely research-informed) academic environment.

Sincerely,

The External Evaluation Committee:

Dr Konstantinos Bozos, *Associate Professor, University of Leeds*
Professor Dimitrios Milonakis, *Professor, University of Crete*
Dr Spyros Galanis, *Associate Professor, University of Southampton*
Mr Eythymios Lykopoulos, *PhD Candidate, University of Cyprus*