

**Cyprus Agency of Quality Assurance and Accreditation in
Higher Education**

Republic of Cyprus

**External Evaluation Report
Program of Study**

Institution: University of Nicosia

**Program of Study: Bachelor of Business Administration in
Sports Management**

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INSTRUCTIONS:

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 2016” [N. 136 (I)/2015].

The document is duly completed by the External Evaluation Committee for each program of study. The ANNEX (Doc. Number 300.1) constitutes an integral part of the external evaluation report for the external evaluation accreditation of a program of study.

EXTERNAL EVALUATION COMMITTEE:

NAME	TITLE	UNIVERSITY / INSTITUTION
Martin Broad	Professor	University of Southampton
Georgios Fotopoulos	Professor	University of Peloponnese
Tony Ghaye	Professor	The Hartpury Graduate School, University Centre Hartpury
Angelique Dimitracopoulou	Professor	University of the Aegean
Marina Christofide	Student	University of Cyprus

INTRODUCTION:

I. The External Evaluation procedure

- Short description of the documents that have been studied, of the on site visit meetings, and of the on site visit to the infrastructures.

The committee has been provided with an e-copy before the visit and a hard copy of Document 200.1 which also included all the Distance Learning Documents relating to the University of Nicosia.

Additionally in the on-site meetings the committee received study guides for numerous courses, hard copies of powerpoint slides of three presentations made during the visit, an updated student evaluation questionnaire and minutes of the Faculty Affairs Committee Meeting (1 June 2017). The committee also saw various infrastructure including the DL unit.

II. The Internal Evaluation procedure

- Comments concerning the quality and the completeness of the application submitted by the institution of higher education (Doc. Number 200.1), as well as concerning the overall acceptance of and participation in the quality assurance procedures, by the institution in general and by the program of study under evaluation in particular.

The committee would like to commend the University of Nicosia for the thoroughness of the submitted documentation. The document was extremely helpful in understanding the programme to be reviewed. However the committee did identify some inconsistencies in Document 200.1 and the actual material reviewed on the day of the visit, particularly in relation to SPOR-460, SPOR-370 and SPOR-360. Notwithstanding this, the committee were confident that the inconsistencies were positive improvements in the curricula being developed and this do not constitute a major change to the programme structure nor overall learning outcomes of the programme.

The committee acknowledges also the quality of the engagement of all staff that were available on the day of the visit. There was an excellent range of staff available from the institution in general and the programme specifically that enabled the committee to explore a full range of areas commensurate with the agenda of the day and questions raised by committee members.

FINDINGS:

1. EFFECTIVENESS OF TEACHING WORK – AVAILABLE RESOURCES

- **Organization of Teaching Work**
- **Teaching**
- **Teaching personnel**

Overall the committee were satisfied with the organisation of the teaching work and teaching personnel. Whilst it was not possible to review the actual teaching on the programme as it was yet to recruit students, the committee had an overview provided of how the teaching would take place.

The committee also included an expert panel member in Distance Learning who was able to focus on the student educational journey and likely experience whilst studying this programme. As such there are a number of comments we would like to make that would further enhance the educational experience and engagement of students (and staff) in the pedagogy of the materials being taught. The comments have general application to distance learning across the university as well as specifically to this programme:

(I) The “Pedagogical Planning Unit for Distance Education”

The “Pedagogical Planning Unit” is a new and recent requirement of the DIPAE. University of Nicosia has developed and applied activities related to the scope of such a unit. However, the University of Nicosia has to properly define, structure and support such a Unit with appropriate and well educated and experienced specialized staff, so as to:

- (a) Prepare appropriate teaching training methods and material for modern and advanced teaching methods, according to the DIPAE criteria;
- (b) Support teachers to produce appropriate learning material, learning activities and various assessment methods (formative & summative ones) and
- (c) Support Lecturers in the learning approaches problems’ resolution.

(II) Teacher Training and Teacher Support Methods

There is a detailed and sufficient training material for the use of on-line Learning Management System (Moodle) regarding the technical aspects of use.

However, regarding the support to the teaching personnel on the dimensions of Teaching Methods with on-line Distance Learning Technologies, for Adult Education, there is a scope for further improvements through:

- (a) The design of a structured training process on teaching methods (adults’ education via on-line technologies, with modern teaching approaches according to the new DIPAE standards for Distance Education) and using a

- mixed of methods [material to study, workshops, peer-tutoring, mentoring (between experienced teachers and newcomers one etc.)];
- (b) Studying the productions of international scientific and educational productions on ICTs in Education, and especially the on-line education for adults, in order to develop comprehensive, detailed and appropriate material with:
- (1) Best practices concrete examples of different teaching/learning approaches;
 - (2) Concrete examples of learning activities categories according to the DIPAE standards, promoting social constructivism and constructionism, social interaction, collaborative learning (in various modes), high level argumentation etc. In addition, it would be fruitful to produce guidelines for Teaching problems' resolution, learners' community management (e.g. dominant behaviors, breakdown instances) etc., for the different categories of learning activities;
 - (3) Concrete examples of different formative and summative assessment methods, in accordance with social constructionism.
- (c) Continuously enrich, update and improve the teachers support material, arising from:
- (1) new advanced pedagogical guidelines and standards of DIPAE (as they are reflected by the indicated "Best Practices" documents and
 - (2) the continuous evolution of ICTs applications.

(III) STUDY GUIDES

Program Teachers have to complete the development of the full version of Study Guides for each course of the Program, according to the corresponding DIPAE criteria.

(IV) LEARNING ANALYTICS

The committee is glad that University of Nicosia has been using Learning Analytics Indicators for a number of years so as to support the educational process and the learners. The committee, taking into account the related text included to the "Application" (Section 6, Draft Code of Practice of Learning Analytics), strongly recommends to proceed as soon as possible to further improve the use of these by:

- (1) Thoughtful and concrete decisions of the University of the Nicosia Senate related to the application of Learning Analytics on Distance Learning Programs.

In fact, the DL programs can exploit the functionalities of the adopted Distance Learning Platform (Moodle/ i.e. see: https://docs.moodle.org/33/en/Learning_analytics). However, the use of Learning Analytics, according to the best practices of Universities, must be used in an institutionalized way, under the Senate study, approval, and decisions on how and which specific Learning Analytics approaches and methods to use for: (a) the support of learners (e.g. awareness and self-regulation), (b) the support of lecturers

(monitoring students, awareness on the teaching methods effectiveness), (c) administrative support, (d) institution support on decisions' taken.

Defining a high level "Committee on Learning Analytics Ethics" (with the participation of Senate members), with the scope to assure that the University Learning Analytics applied processes respect the related laws of the country (Data protection and Privacy related laws), as well as the EU laws, regarding the students as well as the institution staff (teachers, lecturers, administration). Inform the students on what data are stored and analysed and why, Define the "Consent form for Students", as well as the "Data Protection Compliance" forms for all the involved personnel (e.g. ICT personnel, teachers, administration)

2. PROGRAM OF STUDY AND HIGHER EDUCATION QUALIFICATIONS

- **Purpose and Objectives and learning outcomes of the Program of Study**
- **Structure and Content of the Program of studies**
- **Quality Assurance of the Program of studies**
- **Management of the Program of Study**
- **International Dimension of the Program of Study**
- **Connection with the labor market and the society**

Given the subject area the committee were generally satisfied with the purpose, objectives and content of the Programme of study although there were areas of teaching techniques and teacher training that the programme team could consider to ensure the education experience is further enhanced (over and above the excellence currently aspired to).

The committee felt the structure and content was satisfactory although one area of concern was the amount of time a student would have to fully understand research methodology/ methods within the same course that also required a project to be completed (SPOR-490).

The committee was satisfied with the Quality Assurance mechanism and saw evidence of this with three courses that had been updated since the documentation was submitted on 19 Dec 2016.

The committee was confident that the management of the Programme of Study was satisfactory.

The committee was satisfied with the International Dimension of the Programme and noted that this programme had global appeal.

The committee noted the engagement of a significant number of industrial partners but the link to society and the labour market is to be determined and notes that work is underway to systematically collect data on alumni destinations.

3. RESEARCH WORK AND SYNERGIES WITH TEACHING

- Research Teaching Synergies

The committee noted a number of research initiatives and saw evidence of such research being incorporated into updated course study guides, which would further improve the content of the programme. SPOR-460 was an example of such an area where there were clear links between current ongoing research and conferences and an updated study guide demonstrated that the programme team had engaged in a thoughtful, positive improvement in the curricula informed by current research debates.

The committee noted the research active status of staff and their publications and conference attendances. In such areas there are always ways of improving the overall profile of staff through targeted journal publications and enabling competitive internal funding opportunities, but resource constraints may not always mean this is possible.

4. ADMINISTRATION SERVICES, STUDENT WELFARE AND SUPPORT OF TEACHING WORK

- **Administrative Mechanisms**
- **Infrastructures / Support**
- **Financial Resources**

The committee were satisfied in all these areas.

5. DISTANCE LEARNING PROGRAMS

The committee acknowledges the University of Nicosia has experience, gained over a number of years of delivering DL programmes, although the numbers are mainly focussed on 2nd cycle students.

DL programmes for 1st cycles students have much fewer students and the Business School has ambitions to expand this area. The support offered by the DL unit is an exemplar of best practice in technical competency development for staff and support that is offered in this area.

The committee has also referred to the ‘Criteria for the Distance Learning Programmes of Study’ as part of their review of the programme and has the following comments to make in relation this to build on the experience and success of DL programmes that are currently in operation and to enhance further the experience of students on this new programme:

General Comments

(A) The General Distance Learning Institution Structure and Infrastructure:

The University of Nicosia, regarding the Distance Learning Programs, among others, disposes:

- (I) A defined General Model of Distance Education via on line technologies (involving face to face final exams)
- (II) A Distance Learning Unit, with appropriate infrastructure especially in terms of building (a specially dedicated building), technological infrastructure (teleconferencing rooms, PC laboratories rooms, servers, etc) and qualified IT personnel. In the Distance Learning Unit is associated an appropriate number of administrative staff devoted to the support of distance learning students.
- (III) Electronic Libraries appropriate for the specific Program
- (IV) Policies related to the needs of Distance Learning via Technologies
In particular:
 - (1) They have defined General Guidelines for the Development and Delivery of Distance Learning Programs via online technologies.
 - (2) They have defined an E-learning Code of Practice
 - (3) They have adopted (as it appears into the annexes of the “Application”), that the Best Practices for the Distance Learning Programs of University of Nicosia are similar to the Best Practices indicated by DIPAE.
 - (4) They have defined appropriate General Pedagogical Considerations
 - (5) They have started to use and apply Learning Analytics methods and tools for the support of the whole educational process
- (V) The “Pedagogical Planning Unit for Distance Education” : The “Pedagogical Planning Unit” is a new and recent requirement of the DIPAE. University of

Nicosia has developed and applied activities related to the scope of such a unit. However, the University of Nicosia has to properly define, structure and support such a Unit with appropriate and well educated and experienced specialized staff, so as to: (a) Prepare appropriate teaching training methods and material for modern and advanced learning methods, according to the DIPAE criteria (b) Support teachers to produce appropriate learning material, learning activities, and various assessment methods (formative & summative ones), (c) Support Lecturers in the learning approaches problems resolution

- (VI) Learning Analytics methods: The University of Nicosia have started to use and apply Learning Analytics methods and tools, in order to support the educational process and the learners.

EDUCATIONAL MATERIAL

The Educational Material of the new Program under evaluation is to be fully developed. Concerning the DIPAE recent criteria on the content of Study Guide for each Course:

- (a) The Study Guide of all the Courses of the Program contains:
- Clearly Defined Objectives and expected learning outcomes;
 - Presentation of the main course material on a weekly basis;
 - Bibliographic References and suggestions for further study.
- (b) The full content of Study Guide with all the requirements, including:
- Weekly outline of the specific set of activities and exercises with clear instructions for making posts, discussion and feedback;
 - Self-assessment exercises and self-correction guide;
 - The number of assignments/papers and their topics, with instructions for writing papers along with additional study material is to be developed. However, the more advanced productions of under development Study Guide, presented in the ICT platform (Moodle) by two teachers, showed to us, that the teachers have the capability to develop the full dimensions of a complete Study Guide according the DIPAE criteria.

EDUCATIONAL APPROACH ASPECTS

Regarding the DIPAE criteria (5), (2):

The related policy texts of Distance Learning Programs, provide indications that the new Program Teachers will define a complete assessment framework with clearly defined evaluation criteria for students work as well as the final examination and will define a clear feedback process for students for all learning activities including the written works. These aspects must be developed early enough before the program starting

Regarding the DIPAE criteria (3) and (6) :

The related policy texts as well as the specific guidelines of Distance Learning Programs, provide indications that the new Program Teachers will plan a sufficient number of expected teleconferences for presentations, discussions, clarifications, guidance etc. Similarly, there are indications on the design of activities assuring interactions with the study material as well as among students. These aspects must be developed early enough before the program starting.

6. DOCTORAL PROGRAMS OF STUDY

This section is not applicable to this programme.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS OF THE EXTERNAL EVALUATION COMMITTEE¹

- The present situation of the program, good practices, weaknesses that have been detected during the external evaluation procedure by the external evaluation committee, suggestions for improvement.

Overall the committee welcomed the fusion of a bachelors in business administration and sports management and the content that has been brought together fits neatly. The challenge for the programme team is to ensure that the components brought together truly integrate with each other so that sports management is incorporated into the business administration courses and visa versa. This is entirely possible with case studies, problem based learning etc. but at the time of the committee meeting not all courses had been fully populated online and therefore this was not fully verifiable except via a verbal desire of the programme team to make this happen.

The additional challenge is now to take this blended, fused content and then ensure it is delivered in a pedagogically robust and engaging manner. The excellent support offered by the DL unit will help staff use the technical tools and monitor student engagement with technology, however the committee felt that ‘training the teacher in relation to interaction and the specificities of distance education’ was an area where further improvement could be made.

¹ It is highlighted, at this point, that the External Evaluation Committee is expected to justify its findings and its suggestions on the basis of the Document num.: 300.1. The External Evaluation Committee is not expected to submit a suggestion for the approval or the rejection of the program of study under evaluation. This decision falls under the competencies of the Council of the Agency of Quality Assurance and Accreditation of higher education.

Doc. Number: 300.1

Quality Standards and Indicators

External Evaluation of a Program of Study

Institution: University of Nicosia

Program of Study: Bachelor of Business Administration in Sports Management

Duration of the Program of Study: 4 years Distance Learning

Evaluation Date: 7th June 2017

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 2016”.

The document describes the quality standards and indicators, which will be applied for the external evaluation of programs of study of institutions of higher education, by the External Evaluation Committee.

DIRECTIONS: Note what is applicable for each quality standard/indicator.

1. Applicable to a minimum degree
2. Applicable to a non satisfactory degree
3. Applicable to a satisfactory degree
4. Applicable to a very satisfactory degree
5. It applies and it constitutes a good practice

It is pointed out that, in the case of standards and indicators that cannot be applied due to the status of the institution and/or of the program of study, N/A (= Not Applicable) should be noted and a detailed explanation should be provided on the institution’s corresponding policy regarding the specific quality standard or indicator.

Members of the External Evaluation Committee

NAME	TITLE	UNIVERSITY / INSTITUTION
Martin Broad	Professor	University of Southampton
Georgios Fotopoulos	Professor	University of Peloponnese
Tony Ghaye	Professor	The Hartpury Graduate School, University Centre Hartpury
Angelique Dimitracopoulou	Professor	University of the Aegean
Marina Christofide	Student	University of Cyprus

Date and Time of the On-Site Visit: 7th June 2017

Duration of the On-Site Visit: 09:00hrs – 16:30hrs

1. EFFECTIVENESS OF TEACHING WORK – AVAILABLE RESOURCES						
1.1	Organization of teaching work	1	2	3	4	5
1.1.1	The student admission requirements to the program of study, are based on specific regulations which are adhered to in a consistent manner.				X	
1.1.2	The number of students in each class allows for constructive teaching and communication, and it compares positively to the current international standards and/or practices.				X	
1.1.3	The organization of the educational process safeguards the quality implementation of the program's purpose and objectives and the achievement of the learning outcomes. Particularly, the following are taken into consideration:					
1.1.3.1	The implementation of a specific academic calendar and its timely publication.				X	
1.1.3.2	The disclosure of the program's curricula to the students, and their implementation by the teaching personnel				X	
1.1.3.3	The course web-pages, updated with the relevant supplementary material				X	
1.1.3.4	The procedures for the fulfillment of undergraduate and postgraduate assignments / practical training				X	
1.1.3.5	The procedures for the conduct and the format of the examinations and for student assessment				X	
1.1.3.6	The effective provision of information to the students and the enhancement of their participation in the procedures for the improvement of the educational process.					X
1.1.4	Adequate and modern learning resources, are available to the students, including the following:					
1.1.4.1	facilities					X
1.1.4.2	library					X
1.1.4.3	infrastructure					X
1.1.4.4	student welfare					X

	1.1.4.5	academic mentoring						X
1.1.5	A policy for regular and effective communication, between the teaching personnel and the students, is applied.						X	
1.1.6	The teaching personnel, for each course, provide timely and effective feedback to the students.						X	
1.1.7	Statutory mechanisms, for the support of students and the communication with the teaching personnel, are effective.						X	
1.1.8	Control mechanisms for student performance are effective.						X	
1.1.9	Support mechanisms for students with problematic academic performance are effective.						X	
1.1.10	Academic mentoring processes are transparent and effective for undergraduate and postgraduate programs and are taken into consideration for the calculation of academic work load.						X	
1.1.11	The program of study applies an effective policy for the prevention and detection of plagiarism.							X
1.1.12	The program of study provides satisfactory mechanisms for complaint management and for dispute resolution.						X	
<p>Justify the answer you have provided and note the additional comments you may have on each standard / indicator.</p> <p>1.1.3.2: The committee noted that there were some inconsistencies between document 200.1 and the study guides that were reviewed. This documentation needs to be tightened. The differences arose from improvements made in the programme and the committee were happy with these and fully supported the programme team.</p> <p>1.1.3.3: There was a concern by the committee that there is a significant amount of work to be completed to be ready for this course to deliver content to students by Semester 1 2017.</p> <p>1.1.3.6: The committee noted that for further development of good practice, student consent for the use of data analytics needs to be ensured. There is also the potential for more powerful use of the analytics to help support students.</p> <p>1.1.4.2: Ideally the committee sees JSTOR as a desirable addition to the available resources.</p> <p>1.1.5 TO 1.1.9 The committee is unable to confirm this is applied on the programme given this is a new programme.</p> <p>1.1.10 The committee have assumed this to be the case given the variable workload of academic staff in the School.</p> <p>Note, additionally:</p> <p>α) the expected number of Cypriot and International Students in the program of study.</p>								

β) the countries of origin of the majority of students.

γ) the maximum planned number of students per class-section.

The panel notes the projected number of students and that class sizes will be restricted to 30. The panel are unable to confirm where students will originate from but note this is targeted internationally.

1.2	Teaching	1	2	3	4	5
1.2.1	The methodology utilized in each course is suitable for achieving the course's purpose and objectives and those of the individual modules.				X	
1.2.2	The methodology of each course is suitable for adults.					X
1.2.3	Continuous-formative assessment and feedback are provided to the students regularly.				X	
1.2.4	The assessment system and criteria regarding student course performance, are clear, adequate, and known to the students.					X
1.2.5	Educational activities which encourage students' active participation in the learning process, are implemented.				X	
1.2.6	Teaching incorporates the use of modern educational technologies that are consistent with international standards, including a platform for the electronic support of learning.					X
1.2.7	Teaching materials (books, manuals, journals, databases, and teaching notes) meet the requirements set by the methodology of the program's individual courses, and are updated regularly.				X	

Justify the answer you have provided and note the additional comments you may have on each standard / indicator.

1.2.1: The panel would suggest that the teaching team prepare more comprehensive teaching notes that fully engage students in the learning experience, for example how is self-reflection catered for, or what additional learning activities could help students engage more fully with the DL programme learning outcomes. The panel saw some evidence of the teaching materials but these had not been comprehensively developed for the programme. Overall this comment applies to all the questions in this area.

1.2.6: Additional modern technologies could include concept mapping which are being discussed in developing International Standards. Technology is continually evolving so the team should be mindful of this in developing this area.

1.3	Teaching Personnel	1	2	3	4	5
1.3.1	The number of full-time academic personnel, occupied exclusively at the institution, and their fields of expertise, adequately support the program of study.				X	
1.3.2	The members of teaching personnel for each course have the relevant formal and fundamental qualifications for teaching the course, as described by the legislation, including the following:					
1.3.2.1	Subject specialization, preferably with a doctorate, in the discipline.					X
1.3.2.2	Publications within the discipline.				X	
1.3.3	The specializations of Visiting Professors adequately support the program of study.					X
1.3.4	Special Teaching Personnel and Special Scientists have the necessary qualifications, adequate work experience and specialization to teach a limited number of courses in the program of study.					X
1.3.5	In every program of study the Special Teaching Personnel does not exceed 30% of the Teaching Research Personnel.					X
1.3.6	The teaching personnel of each private institution of tertiary education, to a percentage of at least 70%, has recognized academic qualification, by one level higher than that of the program of study in which he/she teaches.					X
1.3.7	In the program of study, the ratio of the number of courses taught by full-time personnel, occupied exclusively at the institution, to the number of courses taught by part-time personnel, ensures the quality of the program of study.			X		
1.3.8	The ratio of the number of students to the total number of teaching personnel is adequate for the support and safeguarding of the program's quality.					X
1.3.9	The academic personnel's teaching load does not limit the conduct of research, writing, and contribution to the society.			X		
1.3.10	Future redundancies / retirements, expected recruitment and promotions of academic personnel safeguard the unimpeded implementation of the program of study within a five-year span.			X		
1.3.11	The program's Coordinator has the qualifications and					X

	experience to efficiently coordinate the program of study.					
<p>Justify the answer you have provided and note the additional comments you may have on each standard / indicator.</p> <p>1.3.1 This is a new programme and therefore will require additional staff to ensure complete coverage of teaching.</p> <p>1.3.2.2 Aligns with a strategy of applied and basic research. The panel would encourage a policy of encouraging staff to publish in higher ranked international journals</p> <p>1.3.7 The full teaching team has yet to be agreed/ recruited and therefore the panel is marking this as a (3).</p> <p>1.3.8: The panel noted that different staff levels have different teaching loads so there is some evidence of this however more time for research would be beneficial.</p> <p>1.3.9 Noted that Council are being asked to approve investment in staff shortly.</p>						

2. PROGRAM OF STUDY AND HIGHER EDUCATION QUALIFICATIONS						
2.1	Purpose and Objectives and learning outcomes of the Program of Study	1	2	3	4	5
2.1.1	The purpose and objectives of the program of study are formulated in terms of expected learning outcomes and are consistent with the mission and the strategy of the institution.					X
2.1.2	The purpose and objectives of the program and the learning outcomes are utilized as a guide for the design of the program of study.					X
2.1.3	The higher education qualification and the program of study, conform to the provisions of their corresponding Professional and Vocational Bodies for the purpose of registration to these bodies.					X
2.1.4	The program's content, the methods of assessment, the teaching materials and the equipment, lead to the achievement of the program's purpose and objectives and ensure the expected learning outcomes.				X	
2.1.5	The expected learning outcomes of the program are known to the students and to the members of the academic and teaching personnel.					X
2.1.6	The learning process is properly designed to achieve the expected learning outcomes.				X	
2.1.7	The higher education qualification awarded to the students, corresponds to the purpose and objectives and the learning outcomes of the program.					X
<p>Justify the answer you have provided and note the additional comments you may have on each standard / indicator.</p> <p>2.1.4 See comment section 1.2.1</p> <p>2.1.6 The panel through expert knowledge, had some concerns as the full programme had not been developed and all the learning outcomes and teaching materials for all the modules had yet to be fully developed. Of the modules that were seen there was evidence of video, quizzes, learning materials, assignments and support was provided by the DL unit. There is however scope for additional richer engagement activities which enable students to engage in, for example (but not exclusive) self-reflection activities which are relevant to distance learning type learning courses.</p>						

2.2	Structure and Content of the Program of Study	1	2	3	4	5
2.2.1	The course curricula clearly define the expected learning outcomes, the content, the teaching and learning approaches and the method of assessing student performance.				X	
2.2.2	The European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) is applied and there is true correspondence between credits and workload per course and per semester for the student either he / she studies in a specific program or he/she is registered and studies simultaneously in additional programs of studies according to the European practice in higher education institutions.				X	
2.2.3	The program of study is structured in a consistent manner and in sequence, so that concepts operating as preconditions precede the teaching of other, more complex and cognitively more demanding, concepts.				X	
2.2.4	The higher education qualification awarded, the learning outcomes and the content of the program are consistent.					X
2.2.5	The program, in addition to the courses focusing on the specific discipline, includes an adequate number of general education courses.					X
2.2.6	The content of courses and modules, and the corresponding educational activities are suitable for achieving the desired learning outcomes with regards to the knowledge, skills, and abilities which should be acquired by students.				X	
2.2.7	The number and the content of the program's courses are sufficient for the achievement of learning outcomes.					X
2.2.8	The content of the program's courses reflects the latest achievements / developments in science, arts, research and technology.				X	
2.2.9	Flexible options / adaptable to the personal needs or to the needs of students with special needs, are provided.					X

Justify the answer you have provided and note the additional comments you may have on each standard / indicator.

2.2.2 The panel noted that the ECTS values were consistently applied across all courses however the panel would recommend that the learning activities and student workload is calibrated once the programme is up and running.

2.2.3 The richness and progression of the programme was more clearly articulated in the discussion

as opposed to the documentation.

2.2.4 See comment in 2.1.6 above

2.2.6 Panel has not seen all the educational activities for all modules (see also comment 2.1.6 above)

2.2.8 Course documentation and the presentation of current direction of the programme were not consistent but improvements in course curricula evidenced at the meeting showed that this was in development

Note the expected number of students who will be studying simultaneously at another academic institution, based on your experience so far, regarding students who study simultaneously in the programs of your institution.

This is not applicable to this programme

2.3	Quality Assurance of the Program of Study	1	2	3	4	5
2.3.1	The arrangements regarding the program's quality assurance define clear competencies and procedures.					X
2.3.2	Participation in the processes of the system of quality assurance of the program, is ensured for					
	2.3.2.1 the members of the academic personnel					X
	2.3.2.2 the members of the administrative personnel					X
	2.3.2.3 the students.					X
2.3.3	The guide and / or the regulations for quality assurance, provide detailed information and data for the support and management of the program of study.					X
2.3.4	The quality assurance process constitutes an academic process and it is not restricted by non-academic factors.					X

Justify the answer you have provided and note the additional comments you may have on each standard / indicator.

2.4	Management of the Program of Study	1	2	3	4	5
2.4.1	Effective management of the program of study with regard to its design, its approval, its monitoring and its review, is in place.					X
2.4.2	It is ensured that learning outcomes may be achieved within the specified timeframe.					X

2.4.3	It is ensured that the program's management and development process is an academic process which operates without any non-academic interventions.					X
2.4.4	The academic hierarchy of the institution, (Rector, Vice-Rectors, Deans, Chairs and Programs' Coordinators, academic personnel) have the sole responsibility for academic excellence and the development of the programs of study.					X
2.4.5	Information relating to the program of study are posted publicly and include:					
2.4.5.1	The provisions regarding unit credits					n/a
2.4.5.2	The expected learning outcomes					n/a
2.4.5.3	The methodology					n/a
2.4.5.4	Course descriptions					n/a
2.4.5.5	The program's structure					n/a
2.4.5.6	The admission requirements					n/a
2.4.5.7	The format and the procedures for student assessment					n/a
2.4.6	The award of the higher education qualification is accompanied by the Diploma Supplement which is in line with the European and international standards.					X
2.4.7	The effectiveness of the program's evaluation mechanism, by the students, is ensured.				X	
2.4.8	The recognition and transfer of credit units from previous studies is regulated by procedures and regulations which ensure that the majority of credit units is awarded by the institution which awards the higher education qualification.					X

Justify the answer you have provided and note the additional comments you may have on each standard / indicator.

2.4.7 The panel noted that the Student Evaluation Survey has had some changes and this is to be approved by Senate however it could be further improved with specific questions about administrative support.

Concerning the data produced by the students on the program and faculty, via the revised anonymous questionnaire (Document: DL Student Evaluation Questionnaire), adopted by the Senate, June 1st 2017):

- (1) It is clearly an improved version comparing to the one presented to the "Application". The updated version (01.06.2017) includes questions regarding four (4) dimensions: (a) Course and Material Evaluation, (b) Lecturer Evaluation, (c) Technology and Platform Evaluation, (d) Library Evaluation.

- (2) It is suggested to change the title of the second unit of questions, currently untitled “ Faculty Evaluation”, that are all devoted to the Lecturer, by the title “Lecturer Evaluation”, and proceed by conceiving and adding an appropriate unit of questions concerning the “Administrative Support”, that is actually missing.

In the case of practical training, note:

- The number of credit units for courses and the number of credits for practical training
- In which semester does practical training takes place?
- Note if practical training is taking place in a country other than the homecountry of the institution which awards the higher education qualification

A course with 10 ECTS PRACTICAL TRAINING SPOR – 382. This takes place in the 8th Semester (final semester year 4) and is only available in the home country as it is an elective course.

2.5	International Dimension of the Program of Study	1	2	3	4	5
2.5.1	The program’s collaborations with other institutions are compared positively with corresponding collaborations of other departments / programs of study in Europe and internationally.					n/a
2.5.2	The program attracts Visiting professors of recognized academic standing.					X
2.5.3	Students participate in exchange programs.					n/a
2.5.4	The academic profile of the program of study is compatible with corresponding programs of study in Cyprus and internationally.					X

Justify the answer you have provided and note the additional comments you may have on each standard / indicator.

The panel noted visiting professors on the programme and their CVs to confirm this point. The other questions were not applicable to this programme.

Also, comment on the degree the program compares positively with corresponding programs operating in Cyprus and abroad in higher education institutions of the same rank.

The panel has knowledge of other similar programmes in other countries and confirms that these are comparable to those in the UK and overseas.

2.6	Connection with the labor market and the society	1	2	3	4	5
2.6.1	The procedures applied, so that the program conforms to the scientific and professional activities of the graduates, are adequate and effective.			X		
2.6.2	According to the feasibility study, indicators for the employability of graduates are satisfactory.			X		

2.6.3	Benefits, for the society, deriving from the program are significant.				X	
<p>Justify the answer you have provided and note the additional comments you may have on each standard / indicator.</p> <p>2.6.1 There are no graduates from this programme yet but reviewing the design and the significant links with industry then the panel would expect this to be the case.</p> <p>2.6.2 The panel noted that all alumni are to be contacted to ensure such statistics are available but this programme has no graduates yet.</p> <p>2.6.3 The panel notes very favourably that this should be significant from this programme.</p>						

3. RESEARCH WORK AND SYNERGIES WITH TEACHING						
3.1	Research - Teaching Synergies	1	2	3	4	5
3.1.1	It is ensured that teaching and learning have been adequately enlightened by research.				X	
3.1.2	New research results are embodied in the content of the program of study.				X	
3.1.3	Adequate and sufficient facilities and equipment are provided to support the research component of the program of study, which are available and accessible to the personnel and the students.		X			
3.1.4	The results of the academic personnel's research activity are published in international journals with the peer-reviewing system, in international conferences, conference minutes, publications etc.			X		
3.1.5	External, non-governmental, funding for the academic personnel's research activities, is compared positively to the funding of other institutions in Cyprus and abroad.			X		
3.1.6	Internal funding, of the academic personnel's research activities, is compared positively to the funding of other institutions in Cyprus and abroad.			X		
3.1.7	The policy for, indirect or direct, internal funding of the academic personnel's research activity is satisfactory.			X		
3.1.8	The participation of students, academic, teaching and administrative personnel of the program in research activities and projects is satisfactory.			X		
3.1.9	Student training in the research process is sufficient.		X			
<p>Justify the answer you have provided and note the additional comments you may have on each standard / indicator.</p> <p>3.1.1 and 3.1.2 See 2.2.8 above</p> <p>3.1.3 and 3.1.9 The panel was not convinced that a single course, e.g SPOR490 had sufficient time allocated to understanding research methods and to prepare a student for a 6,000 – 8,000 word report all within the time frame of a single course. The expectations do not seem to be commensurate with a 10 ECTS value module.</p> <p>3.1.5 The panel did not have details of the values of external funding made available to them but noted there was activity in this area.</p> <p>3.1.6 and 3.1.7 The panel had no evidence of any funding from internal sources</p>						

4. ADMINISTRATION SERVICES, STUDENT WELFARE AND SUPPORT OF TEACHING WORK

4.1	Administrative Mechanisms	1	2	3	4	5
4.1.1	There is a Student Welfare Service that supports students with regards to academic and personal problems and difficulties.					X
4.1.2	Statutory administrative mechanisms for monitoring and supporting students are sufficient.					X
4.1.3	The efficiency of these mechanisms is assessed on the basis of specific criteria.			X		
<p>Justify the answer you have provided and note the additional comments you may have on each standard / indicator.</p> <p>4.1.3. The panel notes that the Student Evaluation Survey currently omits questions about administrative services.</p>						
4.2	Infrastructure / Support	1	2	3	4	5
4.2.1	There are suitable books and reputable journals supporting the program.					X
4.2.2	There is a supportive internal communication platform.					X
4.2.3	The facilities are adequate in number and size.					X
4.2.4	The equipment used in teaching and learning (laboratory and electronic equipment, consumables etc) are quantitatively and qualitatively adequate.					X
4.2.5	Teaching materials (books, manuals, scientific journals, databases) are adequate and accessible to students.				X	
4.2.6	Teaching materials (books, manuals, scientific journals, databases) are updated regularly with the most recent publications.					X
4.2.7	The teaching personnel are provided with training opportunities in teaching method, in adult education, and in new technologies on the basis of a structured learning				X	

	framework.					
<p>Justify the answer you have provided and note the additional comments you may have on each standard / indicator.</p> <p>4.2.5 see 2.1.6 above</p> <p>4.2.6 The panel assumes that e-books will continually be updated in this area, however the programme has yet to run for the first time.</p> <p>4.2.7 The panel particularly noted the support provide by the DL unit in technical aspects of using the technology, however further enhancements would be beneficial in the pedagogical engagement in using the technical components (see also point 4 under the Criteria for Distance Learning Programmes of Study, notably the need for teacher training in distance learning programmes).</p> <p>There is a detailed and sufficient training material for the use of technologies regarding the technical aspects of use. Regarding the support to the teaching personnel on the dimensions of Teaching Methods with Distance Learning Technologies, and Adult Education, they must be improved by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) The design of a structured training process on teaching methods (adults' education via on-line technologies, with modern teaching approaches according to the new DIPAE standards for Distance Education), using a mixed of methods [material to study, workshops, peer-tutoring, mentoring (between experienced teachers and newcomers one etc.)]. (b) The design and the development of detailed and appropriate material with (a) Best practices concrete examples of different teaching/learning approaches, and learning activities categories, as well as concrete examples of different assessment methods. (b) Teaching problems' resolution, learners community management (etc. dominant behaviors, breakdown instances) etc. 						
4.3	Financial Resources	1	2	3	4	5
4.3.1	The management and allocation of the financial resources of the program of study, allow for the development of the program and of the academic / teaching personnel.				X	
4.3.2	The allocation of financial resources as regards to academic matters, is the responsibility of the relevant academic departments.			X		
4.3.3	The remuneration of academic and other personnel is analogous to the remuneration of academic and other personnel of the respective institutions in Cyprus.				X	
4.3.4	Student tuition and fees are consistent to the tuition and fees of other respective institutions.				X	
<p>Justify the answer you have provided and note the additional comments you may have on each standard / indicator.</p>						

4.3.2 The committee could not determine if the allocation of financial resources were at the discretion of the academic department, but from institutions of which the committee were familiar this has not hindered developments if they are strategically important.

The following criterion applies additionally for distance learning programs of study.

5.	DISTANCE LEARNING PROGRAMS	1	2	3	4	5
5.1	Feedback processes for teaching personnel with regards to the evaluation of their teaching work, by the students, are satisfactory.				X	
5.2	The process and the conditions for the recruitment of academic / teaching personnel, ensure that candidates have the necessary skills and experience for long distance education.				X	
5.3	Through established procedures, appropriate training, guidance and support, are provided to teaching personnel, to enable it to efficiently support the educational process.			X		
5.4	Student performance monitoring mechanisms are satisfactory.					X
5.5	Adequate mentoring by the teaching personnel, is provided to students, through established procedures.					X
5.6	The unimpeded long distance communication between the teaching personnel and the students, is ensured to a satisfactory degree.					X
5.7	Assessment consistency, its equivalent application to all students, and the compliance with predefined procedures, are ensured.				X	
5.8	Teaching materials (books, manuals, scientific journals, databases) comply with the requirements provided by the long distance education methodology and are updated regularly.				X	
5.9	The program of study has the appropriate and adequate infrastructure for the support of learning.				X	
5.10	The supporting infrastructures are easily accessible.					X
5.11	Students are informed and trained with regards to the available educational infrastructure.					X
5.12	The procedures for systematic control and improvement of the supportive services are regular and effective.				X	
5.13	Infrastructure for distance education is comparable to university infrastructure in the European Union and					X

	internationally.					
5.14	Electronic library services are provided according to international practice in order to support the needs of the students and of the teaching personnel.					X
5.15	The students and the teaching personnel have access to the necessary electronic sources of information, relevant to the program, the level, and the method of teaching.					X
5.16	The percentage of teaching personnel who holds a doctorate, in a program of study which is offered long distance, is not less than 75%.					X

Justify the answer you have provided and note the additional comments you may have on each standard / indicator.

- 5.1 See comments above re the Student Evaluation Survey re the enhancements proposed. Student comments are positive here also.
- 5.2 Note that appropriate teacher training needs to be in place for those staff who are new to DL delivery

In order to effectively support the educational process that take place by distance and via ICTs, through an appropriate guidance and support to the teaching staff, the University has to:

(I) Related comment on “4.2.7” that has as follows:

In order to effectively support the educational process that takes place by distance and via ICTs, the University should consider the follow...

1. There is a detailed and sufficient training material for the use of technologies regarding the technical aspects of use. Regarding the support to the teaching personnel on the dimensions of Teaching Methods with Distance Learning Technologies, and Adult Education, there is a space of serious improvements by:
 - (a) The design of a structured training process on teaching methods (adults' education via on-line technologies, with modern teaching approaches according to the new DIPAE standards for Distance Education), using a mixed of methods [material to study, workshops, peer-tutoring, mentoring (between experienced teachers and newcomers one etc.)].
 - (b) The design and the development of detailed and appropriate material with (1) Best practices concrete examples of different teaching/learning approaches, (2) Concrete examples of learning activities categories according to the DIPAE standards, promoting social constructivism and constructionism, collaborative learning in various forms, social interaction and argumentation modes, etc. (3) Concrete examples of different formative and summative assessment methods, in accordance to social constructionism (b) Teaching problems' resolution, learners community management (etc. dominant behaviors, breakdown instances) etc.
2. Continuously enrich, update and improve the teachers support material, due to the new advanced pedagogical guidelines and standards of DIPAE (as they are reflected by the “Best Practices” documents, as well as to the continuous evolution of ICTs

applications.

5.7, 5.8 and 5.12 The panel notes that they have not been able to verify this for the new programme however are assured that a consistent policy process exists which will map onto this programme,

LEARNING ANALYTICS

As it is noted into the “Application” the Distance Learning Programs of University of Nicosia, has started some years ago, to use Learning Analytics Indicators, so as to support the educational process and the learners. In fact, the DL programs can exploit the functionalities of the adopted Distance Learning Platform (Moodle/ i.e. see:

https://docs.moodle.org/33/en/Learning_analytics), that could support in an essential way the educational process. However, the use of Learning Analytics, according to the best practices of Universities, must be used in an institutionalized way, under the Senate approval, and with the requirements that respect the related laws of the country (Data protection and Privacy related laws), regarding the students as well as the institution staff (teachers, lecturers, administration).

If the following apply, note “√” in the appropriate space next to each statement. In case the following statements do not apply, note what is applicable:

The maximum number of students per class-section, should not exceed 30 students.	X
The conduct of written examinations with the physical presence of the students, under the supervision of the institution or under the supervision of reliable agencies which operate in the countries of the students, is compulsory.	X
The number of long distance classes taught by the academic personnel does not exceed the number of courses taught by the teaching personnel in conventional programs of study.	X

The following criterion applies additionally for doctoral programs of study.

6.	DOCTORAL PROGRAMS OF STUDY	1	2	3	4	5
6.1	The provision of quality doctoral studies is ensured through Doctoral Studies Regulations.					n/a
6.2	The structure and the content of a doctoral program of study are satisfactory and they ensure the quality provision of doctoral studies.					n/a
6.3	The number of academic personnel, which is going to support the doctoral program of study, is adequate.					n/a
6.4	The doctoral studies' supervisors have the necessary academic qualifications and experience for the supervision of the specific dissertations.					n/a
6.5	The degree of accessibility of all interested parties to the Doctoral Studies Regulations is satisfactory.					n/a
6.6	The number of doctoral students, under the supervision of a member of the academic personnel, is apt for the continuous and effective feedback provided to the students and it complies with the European and international standards.					n/a
6.7	The research interests of academic advisors and supervisors are satisfactory and they adequately cover the thematic areas of research conducted by the doctoral students of the program.					n/a
<p>Justify the answer you have provided and note the additional comments you may have on each standard / indicator.</p> <p>n/a</p> <p>Note the number of doctoral students under the supervision of each member of the academic personnel of the program and the academic rank of the supervisor.</p> <p>n/a</p>						

FINAL REMARKS – SUGGESTIONS

Please note your final remarks and suggestions for the program of study and/or regarding particular aspects of the program.

In general the committee were impressed with the professionalism of the university staff, their positive and lively engagement in further articulating the richness and potential of the programme and their openness to reflect, re-consider and identify areas for further strengthening the curricula. It was clear to the committee that the university have both experience and capability in delivering, monitoring and evaluating programmes of quality in a distance learning mode.

However the committee does recommend that once the programme is running the study guides need to aligned more fully to confirm to the Criteria for Distance Learning Programmes of study which are required from the Agency of Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Higher Education, notably section 7 and all its subsections.

The committee welcomes the interdisciplinarity of the programme design and the programme team’s aspiration of bringing together Business Administration, Sports Management and a Distance Learning Unit. This will create a distinctive offering as business administration is linked clearly to sports management and visa versa. The ability to support the teaching staff in new pedagogical modes of delivery will further enhance the student experience for this innovative programme. The committee welcomes the effective fusion of all these aspects.

The committee’s observations, stated in this report, are areas where further reflection and action may be fruitful in order that the aims of the programme are successfully met and the university’s reputation in distance learning delivery, that is appropriate to both student needs and industry expectations, is secured.

Names and Signatures of the Chair and the Members of the External Evaluation Committee:

Name:	Signature:
Professor Martin Broad	
Professor Georgios Fotopoulos	
Professor Tony Ghaye	
Professor Angelique Dimitracopoulou	
Marina Christofide	

Date: 9th June 2016