

Αρ. Φακ.: 01.10.005

29 Οκτωβρίου 2020

Καθηγήτρια Μαίρη Ιωαννίδου-Κουτσελίνη
Πρόεδρο Φορέα Διασφάλισης και Πιστοποίησης της Ποιότητας
Λεωφόρος Λεμεσού 5,
2112 Λευκωσία

Αγαπητή κα. Ιωαννίδου-Κουτσελίνη,

ΘΕΜΑ: Απαντητική Έκθεση στα σχόλια της Εξωτερικής Επιτροπής Αξιολόγησης για τις αιτήσεις: α) Τμήματος Ολοκληρωμένης Επικοινωνίας Μάρκετινγκ και β) Διδακτορικού Προγράμματος στην Ολοκληρωμένη Επικοινωνία Μάρκετινγκ.

Με την παρούσα επιστολή επιθυμούμε να εκφράσουμε τις θερμές μας ευχαριστίες στα μέλη της Εξωτερικής Επιτροπής Αξιολόγησης, για την ευγενική τους διάθεση να συμμετάσχουν στη διαδικασία εξωτερικής αξιολόγησης του Τμήματος Ολοκληρωμένης Επικοινωνίας Μάρκετινγκ και του Διδακτορικού Προγράμματος στην Ολοκληρωμένη Επικοινωνία Μάρκετινγκ (3-8 Έτη/240 Π.Μ. /PhD).

Ιδιαίτερα ευχαριστούμε τα μέλη της Επιτροπής, για την ουσιαστική τους συμβολή μέσω των εισηγήσεων τους προς το εν λόγω Τμήμα και την οικεία Σχολή, σε σχέση με την διαμόρφωση του περιεχομένου του προγράμματος.

Επισυνάπτεται σχετική απαντητική έκθεση από τον Συντονιστή του Τμήματος και του Διδακτορικού Προγράμματος Καθ. Γεώργιο Πανηγυράκη, επί των παρατηρήσεων/σχολίων που έχουν καταγραφεί στις Εκθέσεις Εξωτερικής Αξιολόγησης.

Παραμένουμε στη διάθεση σας για οποιεσδήποτε περαιτέρω διευκρινίσεις χρειαστείτε.

Με εκτίμηση,

Καθηγητής Παντελής Κελίρης
Αντιπρύτανης Ακαδημαϊκών Υποθέσεων
Τεχνολογικό Πανεπιστήμιο Κύπρου



ΣΗΜΕΙΩΜΑ

ΑΠΟ: Καθηγητή Γεώργιο Πανηγυράκη, Κοσμήτορα Σχολής ΕΜΕ
& Συντονιστή Τμήματος Δημόσιας Επικοινωνίας (Ολοκληρωμένης Επικοινωνίας Μάρκετινγκ)

ΠΡΟΣ: Πρύτανη, Καθηγητή Παναγιώτη Ζαφείρη & Αντιπρύτανη ΑΥ, Καθηγητή Παντελή Κελίρη

ΗΜΕΡ.: 29 Οκτωβρίου 2020

ΘΕΜΑ: Τεκμηρίωση υλοποίησης προτεινόμενων σχολίων και παρατηρήσεων στις αιτήσεις
α) Τμήματος Ολοκληρωμένης Επικοινωνίας Μάρκετινγκ και β) Διδακτορικού Προγράμματος
στην Ολοκληρωμένη Επικοινωνία Μάρκετινγκ, μετά τις εκθέσεις Εξωτερικής Επιτροπής
Αξιολόγησης Φορέα ΔΙΠΑΕ

ΣΥΝΗΜ.: Δύο επιστολές προς Φορέα ΔΙΠΑΕ

Αξιότιμε κύριε Πρύτανη και αξιότιμε κύριε Αντιπρύτανη,

Επισυνάπτονται δύο επιστολές ως απάντηση των εκθέσεων αξιολόγησης της Επιτροπής Εξωτερικής Αξιολόγησης (ΕΕΑ) που λάβαμε από τον κύριο Αβράμη Δεσπότη του Φορέα ΔΙΠΑΕ, στις 31 Ιουλίου 2020 για τις ακόλουθες αιτήσεις:

A) Department of Integrated Marketing Communication

B) Integrated Marketing Communication (3-8 years/240 ECTS, Ph.D)

Βρίσκομαι στη διάθεσή σας για όποια διευκρίνιση χρειάζεστε.

Σας ευχαριστώ.

Mr Avramis Despotis
Education Officer
The Cyprus Agency of Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Higher Education (CYQAA)
Lemesou Avenue 5,
2112, Lefkosia Cyprus

Email:adespotis@dipae.ac.cy

29th October 2020

Dear Mr Despotis

Response to the recommendations provided in the External Evaluation Report about the Department “Integrated Marketing Communication” at Cyprus University of Technology from the Cyprus Agency of Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Higher Education

We would like to thank you for the detailed report of the External Committee’s Evaluation about the Department “Integrated Marketing Communication” at Cyprus University of Technology. The Department should take in a serious manner all the recommendations and suggestions about the areas of improvement as provided in the report.

We would like to address our willingness and decision taken in every suggestion about each section provided in the report. Specifically, you may find our comments as follows:

1. Department’s academic profile and orientation

We would like to thank the Evaluation Committee about the useful comments on every sub-area of above-mentioned section which all the three sub-areas have been evaluated as compliant.

Although the committee welcomes the effort of the Faculty to establish a Department that has a distinctive identity and culture, there is a concern about new recruitments of academic members who may support effectively the strategic planning of the department. More detailed information is provided on following section nr 5 (Teaching Staff) about recruitments and vacancies of academic positions that are posted or are in process.

The Department “Integrated Marketing Communication” has a BA in Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC) which has recently been approved and is expected to recruit its first cohort in September 2021. Therefore, the staffing employment is vital for the contribution and the development of the program and the department. It is worth mentioning that the staff that belong to the Department of Communication and Internet Studies (CIS) contribute to the first two semesters which are introductory semesters. The identity of each department cannot be jeopardized by such common modules in the first two semesters. We do not believe that there is an overreliance to the CIS department. Quite the opposite, as such synergy effect can offer the opportunity for most effective utilization of the existing staff and the same time, to give space to the new department to focus on IMC positions and related staff which will be necessary for the 3-8 semester of the undergraduate programme. In the PhD programme the modules supported by CIS Department’s staff are common modules which refer to research methodology and there are not connected to specific disciplines.

We fully agree on the recommendations provided in page 8. As the Department in 7 years time would like to have at least 11 tenure-track positions at all academic levels and 4 positions of special teaching staff, we do realize that new members of staff need to be in place soonest possible. New recruitments will help to meet department’s objectives. This will assist a clearer long-term view of the department. Efforts are given towards this direction and new recruitments will be in place in January 2021 (explanation is given in section 5).

2. Quality Assurance

We would like to thank the Evaluation Committee about the useful remarks on both sub-areas of above section which have been evaluated as compliant. It was nice reading that the established policies and practices related to quality assurance were along the expected lines.

In regard to the suggestion about a more systematic capacity building scheme will ensure that doctoral supervision can be scaled up, we would like to indicate the following:

- a. an informative handbook with all relevant procedures is provided to PhD students and is posted online on the following link: https://www.cut.ac.cy/digitalAssets/135/135154_1Odigos-PHD.pdf.
- b. Furthermore, quality assurance for Doctoral Dissertations is provided online on the following link: <https://www.cut.ac.cy/studies/phd/quality-ass/?languageId=1>.
- c. Moreover, in the Ph.D programme there are two reviewing committees: a) the Advisory Committee and b) the Examination Board. The advisory committee is informed on the progress of each PhD student throughout his/her studies. The dissertation is submitted after the approval of the three-member Advisory Committee of the student. Furthermore, the external members of the Examination Board of the PhD dissertation must have specialties relevant to the subject of the dissertation and meet the limitations set in the Rules.

3. Administration

We would like to thank the Evaluation Committee about the excellent comments on above-mentioned section which has been evaluated as compliant.

It was nice reading that the professional support staff met the expectations of the committee demonstrating sufficiently their competencies in their respective areas. Moreover, it seems that the administrative staff is highly qualified and successfully support the operation of the Department.

4. Learning and Teaching

We would like to thank the Evaluation Committee about the useful comments on both sub-areas of above section which have been evaluated as compliant.

It seems that the Committee recognized the design of the program and its link to real industry needs. Students attending the programme will be well prepared for professional practice and jobs after graduation.

The leadership and the teaching team will continue the successful path with their teaching approach infused by theoretical and practical aspects.

5. Teaching Staff

We would like to thank the Evaluation Committee about the vital and crucial comments on this section which has been evaluated as partially compliant.

The recommendations provided are of high importance for the continuation and the development of the Department "Integrated Marketing Communication. The university is committed to provide the needed and required support in recruiting the required numbers and quality of academic staff of this new program. Although we recognize the difficulties of cut backs in the budget for new positions due to the economic recession, the department and the university have defined a well thought plan for filling the required positions on time for the program to run smoothly. Specifically, openings of tenure tracked positions in the department and those that are in process/or have been completed, are provided hereunder:

1. The process for the recruitment of an Associate Professor in the specialization of "Integrated Marketing Communication – Services" has been completed and a letter of recruitment has been sent to the proposed candidate (relevant decisions in Rector's Council 137th meeting dated 7th October 2020 and Board's 33rd Committee dated 19th October 2020). The candidate is expected to fill the position in January 2021.

2. One position at the rank of Assistant Professor or Lecturer in the Specialization “Integrated Marketing Communication” was posted (<https://www.cut.ac.cy/university/administration/administrative-services/hr/jobs/job-vacancies-departments/pc/>) and applications were invited from candidates who possess the necessary qualifications in order to fill the academic position. Submission of applications’ deadline was the 7th of August 2020; therefore, the chair of the Special Committee runs the process to fill the position soonest possible.
3. One position at the rank of Assistant Professor or Lecturer in the Specialization “Consumer Behavior or Advertising” in the department, is a subject added in the agenda of the Senate’s next meeting (138th & 139th) which will be held on the 11th November 2020. Then, the new position will be posted publicly to invite applications of candidates who possess the necessary qualifications.
4. One position in the rank of Assistant Professor or Lecturer in the specialization “Marketing – Communication – Promotion”, which was included in the minutes of the 127th Senate’s meeting, dated 06th May 2020 and was planned to be posted, has been postponed, after the Circular nr 1618 dated 13th May 2020 which was sent by the Ministry of Finance (in the following link you may see the relevant circular: [https://www.mof.gov.cy/mof/papd/papd.nsf/All/EFA3EAD1EDFBCAA4C225856F0032BBBE/\\$file/%CE%95%CE%B3%CE%BA%CF%8D%CE%BA%CE%BB%CE%B9%CE%BF%CF%82%20%CE%91%CF%81.%201618.pdf?Openement](https://www.mof.gov.cy/mof/papd/papd.nsf/All/EFA3EAD1EDFBCAA4C225856F0032BBBE/$file/%CE%95%CE%B3%CE%BA%CF%8D%CE%BA%CE%BB%CE%B9%CE%BF%CF%82%20%CE%91%CF%81.%201618.pdf?Openement)). When the University receives an updated information, which allows us to proceed with the post of the academic position so as to receive applications from candidates, we will definitely act accordingly.
5. Another one position in the rank of Assistant Professor or Lecturer was planned to be posted, but due to the Circular received by the Ministry of Finance ([https://www.mof.gov.cy/mof/papd/papd.nsf/All/EFA3EAD1EDFBCAA4C225856F0032BBBE/\\$file/%CE%95%CE%B3%CE%BA%CF%8D%CE%BA%CE%BB%CE%B9%CE%BF%CF%82%20%CE%91%CF%81.%201618.pdf?Openement](https://www.mof.gov.cy/mof/papd/papd.nsf/All/EFA3EAD1EDFBCAA4C225856F0032BBBE/$file/%CE%95%CE%B3%CE%BA%CF%8D%CE%BA%CE%BB%CE%B9%CE%BF%CF%82%20%CE%91%CF%81.%201618.pdf?Openement)) the post has been postponed until further notice. Again, when the University receives an updated information which will allow us to proceed with the announcement of the academic position, we will definitely act accordingly.
6. The internal procedure to fill one position of Special Teaching Staff in the specialization of “Integrated Marketing Communication” has been completed and a candidate has been selected by the committee. There is a decision of Board’s 30th Committee dated 7th July 2020 to send a letter of recruitment to the proposed candidate in January 2021.
7. One position of Special Teaching Staff was planned to be posted, but due to the Circular received by the Ministry of Finance ([https://www.mof.gov.cy/mof/papd/papd.nsf/All/EFA3EAD1EDFBCAA4C225856F0032BBBE/\\$file/%CE%95%CE%B3%CE%BA%CF%8D%CE%BA%CE%BB%CE%B9%CE%BF%CF%82%20%CE%91%CF%81.%201618.pdf?Openement](https://www.mof.gov.cy/mof/papd/papd.nsf/All/EFA3EAD1EDFBCAA4C225856F0032BBBE/$file/%CE%95%CE%B3%CE%BA%CF%8D%CE%BA%CE%BB%CE%B9%CE%BF%CF%82%20%CE%91%CF%81.%201618.pdf?Openement)), the post has been postponed until further notice.
8. A written proposal is received by Full Professor in the Department of Communication and Internet Studies (CIS) for his transfer to the Department of Integrated Marketing Communication, contributing significantly to the development of the Department. This matter will be decided formally in the next meeting of CIS Department’s Council (dated 18th November 2020), then will be a subject in agenda of Faculty’s meeting and will be sent to Rector’s Council for final decision. The Rector of our University is informed about the matter

The two permanent academic members of the department are highly qualified academics as mentioned in the report by the EEC. Our purpose is to appoint more members in tenure-track positions in various ranks with teaching and research expertise in Marketing and Integrated Marketing Communication, thus we suggested above mentioned specializations and we make efforts towards more recruitments in the near future. We are

working towards this direction for further and appropriate development of the department and the programmes offered.

6. Research

We would like to thank the EEC about the excellent comments of this section which has been assessed as compliant.

Indeed, colleagues in the proposed Department and in the associated Department of Communication and Internet Studies regularly publish in relevant academic journals, they present their work in international conferences, they secure external funding for international research projects and they indicate in general a strong research culture and aspirations to become competitive players in Cyprus and beyond (via international collaborations). Of course, we will keep up the very good work.

In regard to the recommendation indicated in page 21, it is a very good point and academic members should incorporate their research in teaching so that they familiarize students with the state of the art in their own field.

7. Resources

We would like to thank the EEC about the excellent comments of this section which has been assessed as compliant.

Yes, the University has made available in its budget the necessary funding for recruitments. New Staff will definitely boost the Department's capabilities in teaching and learning but also to research and engagement. Our purpose, is to recruit new academic members specialized in Marketing and Marketing Communication so as that we meet department's mission and objectives, producing the expected outcomes.

D. Conclusions and final remarks

The University and the academic team find the feedback provided very useful and constructive. We are glad to read the committee believes that the University and new proposed Department is in line with expectations in number of areas as indicated in the scores of each section.

We do agree that there are areas which require further consideration and improvement. We reassure the Committee to sufficiently staff the department so that we meet department's mission and objectives in an efficient and effective way. It is imperative that we recruit imminently permanent staff, across all ranks. The appropriate staffing of the department is a catalyst for the effective actions to be implemented and be sustained in the long-term. Our immediate efforts are towards this direction and the University is committed to support this matter. We have already finalized evaluation procedures to fill a position at the rank of an Associate Professor and a position of a Special Teaching Staff. Another evaluation procedure is in process to fill the position of an Assistant Professor or Lecturer and one more position at same rank will be posted shortly. Other three positions which were planned but have been postponed, will definitely be supported as soon as there is a green light from the Ministry of Finance (our comments in detailed are provided in section 5).

We remain to your disposal for any further query you may have and we are looking forward to receiving a positive final decision.

Sincerely,

Georgios Panigyrakis, Professor
Dean of Faculty of Communication and Media Studies

Mr Avramis Despotis
Education Officer
The Cyprus Agency of Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Higher Education (CYQAA)
Lemesou Avenue 5,
2112, Lefkosia Cyprus

Email:adespotis@dipae.ac.cy

29th October 2020

Dear Mr Despotis

Response to the recommendations provided in the External Evaluation Report about the PhD programme in Integrated Marketing Communication at Cyprus University of Technology from the Cyprus Agency of Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Higher Education

We would like to thank you for the informative and detailed presentation of External Committee's Evaluation about the Ph.D programme in Integrated Marketing Communication at Cyprus University of Technology. The Department should take in a serious manner all the recommendations and suggestions about the areas of improvement as provided in the report.

We would like to address our willingness and decision taken in every suggestion about each section provided in the report. Specifically, you may find our comments as follows:

1. Study programme and study programme's design and development:

We would like to thank the Evaluation Committee about the useful comments on every sub-area of above-mentioned section which the four sub areas have been evaluated as compliant.

The suggested area of improvement in page 8, it is very well noted and definitely there will be guidance as to when a Ph.D topic falls in the area of Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC). Indicative topics in IMC will be supported in the Ph.D thesis in the department.

The Committee recognizes the difficulty that may arise between staff and candidates. The suggestion to have wider membership, it is worth mentioning that in the Ph.D program there are two reviewing committees: a) the advisory committee and b) the Examination Board. The advisory committee is informed on the progress of each PhD student throughout his/her studies. The dissertation is submitted after the approval of the three-member Advisory Committee of the student. Furthermore, the external members of the Examination Board of the PhD dissertation must have specialties relevant to the subject of the dissertation and meet the limitations set in the Rules.

2. Student – centred learning, teaching and assessment

We would like to thank the Evaluation Committee about the useful comments on every sub-area of above-mentioned section which the three sub areas seem to have been evaluated as compliant.

The suggestion in page 13 to avoid duplication of modules offered, especially the research methods and the quantitative methods, is well taken and improvements are scheduled in the next offer of theses modules. Nevertheless, should be noted that 10-15% duplication is an acceptable practice and in some cases like research methods is even, desirable. It connects one module to another and offers the opportunity to students to refresh their knowledge already offered.

A module that covers IMC should replace the Strategic Marketing module as per the suggestion, although parts of the strategic marketing are incorporated in the new module offer.

In regard to regular written feedback recommendation, we should notice the following: every 12 months, the PhD candidate submits an annual progress report on his/her doctoral dissertation (see Annex on the following link, point 1.4: <https://www.cut.ac.cy/studies/phd/quality-ass/>) to his/her Advisory Committee, which, if approved, it is forwarded for ratification to the Council of the Department, which through the Academic Affairs and Student Welfare Service, updates the student's register. It is very important that the Advisory Committee is informed on the progress of each PhD student throughout his/her studies. In this way, it will be possible to see whether a student is working systematically and qualitatively and that the necessary feedback is provided to the student. In the event of a student failing to deliver a progress report unjustifiably or the progress report is not approved for two consecutive times by his / her Advisory Committee then the Council of the Department examines the possibility of terminating student attendance or compliance.

Apart from the annual progress report, a written feedback is useful to be provided to PhD students in an informal way three times per year so that candidates have a clear set of instructions to act upon.

Teaching duties for PhD students provide the opportunity to expose themselves in the practice of teaching process. Teaching duties should remain as proposed in the application.

Administrative duties should be limited or even omitted so that candidates focus more on the doctoral academic progress.

As per the recommendation about wider academic development, we fully agree that can be facilitated by seminars on academic matters. We have already incorporated to our PhD program such seminars.

We should mention that in the examination process 10 ECTS have been assigned which reflect the amount of work required for revising and submitting a thesis. Additional 5 ECTS have been assigned for research proposal submission. Most probably the EEC overlooked this point.

3. Teaching Staff

We would like to thank the Evaluation Committee about the useful comments on every sub-area of above-mentioned section which two of the sub areas have been evaluated as partially compliant and one sub area with compliant.

The recommendation provided in page 16 is very crucial and vital for the continuation and the development of the PhD program in the Department of IMC. The university is committed to provide the needed and required support in recruiting the required numbers and quality of academic staff of this new program. Although we recognize the difficulties of cut backs in the budget for new positions due to the economic recession, the department and the university have defined a well thought plan for filling the required positions on time for the program to run smoothly. Specifically, openings of tenure tracked positions in the department and those that are in process/or have been completed, are provided hereunder:

1. The process for the recruitment of an Associate Professor in the specialization of “Integrated Marketing Communication – Services” has been completed and a letter of recruitment has been sent to the proposed candidate (relevant decisions in Rector’s Council 137th meeting dated 7th October 2020 and Board’s 33rd Committee dated 19th October 2020). The candidate is expected to fill the position in January 2021.
2. One position at the rank of Assistant Professor or Lecturer in the Specialization “Integrated Marketing Communication” was posted (<https://www.cut.ac.cy/university/administration/administrative-services/hr/jobs/job-vacancies-departments/pc/>) and applications were invited from candidates who possess the necessary qualifications in order to fill the academic position. Submission of applications’ deadline was the 7th of August 2020; therefore, the chair of the Special Committee runs the process to fill the position soonest possible.

3. One position at the rank of Assistant Professor or Lecturer in the Specialization “Consumer Behavior or Advertising” in the department, is a subject added in the agenda of the Senate’s next meeting (138th & 139th) which will be held on the 11th November 2020. Then, the new position will be posted publicly to invite applications of candidates who possess the necessary qualifications.
4. One position in the rank of Assistant Professor or Lecturer in the specialization “Marketing – Communication – Promotion”, which was included in the minutes of the 127th Senate’s meeting, dated 06th May 2020 and was planned to be posted, has been postponed, after the Circular nr 1618 dated 13th May 2020 which was sent by the Ministry of Finance (in the following link you may see the relevant circular:
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5. Another one position in the rank of Assistant Professor or Lecturer was planned to be posted, but due to the Circular received by the Ministry of Finance
[https://www.mof.gov.cy/mof/papd/papd.nsf/All/EFA3EAD1EDFBCAA4C225856F0032BBBE/\\$file/%CE%95%CE%B3%CE%BA%CF%8D%CE%BA%CE%BB%CE%B9%CE%BF%CF%82%20%CE%91%CF%81.%201618.pdf?Openelement](https://www.mof.gov.cy/mof/papd/papd.nsf/All/EFA3EAD1EDFBCAA4C225856F0032BBBE/$file/%CE%95%CE%B3%CE%BA%CF%8D%CE%BA%CE%BB%CE%B9%CE%BF%CF%82%20%CE%91%CF%81.%201618.pdf?Openelement)) the post has been postponed until further notice. Again, when the University receives an updated information which will allow us to proceed with the announcement of the academic position, we will definitely act accordingly.
6. The internal procedure to fill one position of Special Teaching Staff in the specialization of “Integrated Marketing Communication” has been completed and a candidate has been selected by the committee. There is a decision of Board’s 30th Committee dated 7th July 2020 to send a letter of recruitment to the proposed candidate in January 2021.
7. One position of Special Teaching Staff was planned to be posted, but due to the Circular received by the Ministry of Finance
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8. A written proposal is received by Full Professor in the Department of Communication and Internet Studies (CIS) for his transfer to the Department of Integrated Marketing Communication, contributing significantly to the development of the Department. This matter will be decided formally in the next meeting of CIS Department’s Council (dated 18th November 2020), then will be a subject in agenda of Faculty’s meeting and will be sent to Rector’s Council for final decision. The Rector of our University is informed about the matter.

The two permanent academic members of the department are highly qualified academics as mentioned in the report by the EEC. Our purpose is to appoint more members in tenure track positions in various ranks with teaching and research expertise in Marketing and Integrated Marketing Communication, thus we suggested above mentioned specializations and we make efforts towards more recruitments in the near future. We are working towards this direction for further and appropriate development of the department and the programmes offered.

4. Student admission, progression, recognition and certification

We would like to thank the EEC for the useful remarks about the student admission, progression, recognition and certification which appear to work smoothly and all mechanisms and procedures are in place and in compliance to the standards of CYQAA.

We fully understand the usefulness of such recommendation mentioned in page 18 about an informative handbook with all relevant procedures to be provided to PhD students. We would like to inform the EEC that an informative handbook is provided online (please see https://www.cut.ac.cy/digitalAssets/135/135154_10digos-PHD.pdf). Furthermore, quality assurance for Doctoral Dissertations is provided online on the following link: <https://www.cut.ac.cy/studies/phd/quality-ass/?languageId=1>.

5. Learning resources and student support

We would like to thank the EEC for the useful feedback about this section in which the three out of four sub-areas have been evaluated as compliant and the sub-area of Human support resources has been evaluated as partially compliant.

We definitely understand the need for the recruitment of new staff members and the call for immediate action. As explained in the section 3 (teaching staff) we are working towards this direction for the benefit of the department and for the benefit of PhD students. Detailed information of the position openings and the recruitments is provided in section 3.

6. Additional for doctoral programmes

We would like to thank the EEC for the comments and the remarks about this section in which the two out of three sub-areas have been evaluated as compliant and the remaining one, as partially compliant and deals with supervision and committees.

Indeed, there is a strong research culture among the members of the department and there are both internal and external funds available to support research activities.

In regards to the areas of improvement and recommendations stated in page 26, we would like to provide the following:

The majority of students are recruited on the basis of an advertised topic and position, but of course, there is flexibility regarding the topic idea and students are given the opportunity to adapt the proposed idea/topic. Meetings on regular basis are scheduled between students and advisors so that guidance and assistance is provided to students in such a way to adapt the topic of their dissertation.

Phd requirements with all the information on the composition, the procedures and the criteria for the formation of the advisory and examining committees are stated online on the following link <https://www.cut.ac.cy/studies/phd/PhD+requirements/>.

Furthermore, quality assurance for PhD dissertations is provided on the following link: <https://www.cut.ac.cy/studies/phd/Quality+assurance+for+PhD+/>

In regard to the support on students about writing research papers and conference submissions, there are three ways to guideline the students:

- a. The CUT Library offers the service titled “Ask your Librarian”, which is represented by the subject librarians. Subject librarians may work with students to schedule an effective research assignment and they are responsible for advanced research consultation. They guide the user on how to find and search scientific articles, on how to create bibliography and therefore how to write a scientific project. More information is provided on the following link: <https://library.cut.ac.cy/en/ask-your-librarian>.
- b. Students have the opportunity to attend seminars. Educational training seminars, either on individual or team level are organized by the Library and assist students with the valid and scientific material on the subject, how to create references and bibliography, etc. (<https://library.cut.ac.cy/en/seminars>).
- c. Recently, a network of reinforcement and learning development has been set up at the University (<https://politis.com.cy/agora/anakoinose-diktyo-enischysis-kai-anaptyxis-tis-mathisis-o-prytanis-toy-tepak/>) and various seminars are organized to assist academic members and PhD students in various subjects. For instance, on the 21st October 2020 a writing meet-up for postgraduate and doctoral students was planned, with three 25-minute writing sessions and 5-minute breaks for coffee or virtual chatting. On

the 14th October 2020 there was another seminar about scientific writing. Relevant information is provided on the following link <https://www.facebook.com/learningnetworkcut/>.

- d. Regular meetings between the supervisor and the student may assist the student in the process of writing a scientific research paper of conference submission.
- e. Modules offered in the PhD programme about research methods help students to get prepared about the guidelines they need to follow to write a research paper.
- f. The members of the Advisory committee can provide useful information to students about scientific writing.

Clear guidelines for writing the dissertation are supported by University's Library and are provided on the following link: <https://libguides.cut.ac.cy/etds>.

D. Conclusions and final remarks

The University and the academic team find the feedback provided in the six sections very useful and constructive. The vital issue that drew our attention is the staffing and employment. We fully agree that it is imperative to recruit imminently permanent staff across all the ranks of tenure track positions with specialization in Marketing and Marketing Communication. We do agree that the appropriate staffing of the department is a catalyst for the effective actions need to be implemented and be sustained in the long-term. Our immediate efforts are towards this direction and the University is committed to this matter. We have already finalized evaluation procedures to fill a position at the rank of an associate professor and a position of a special teaching staff. Another evaluation procedure is in process to fill the position of an Assistant Professor or Lecturer and one more position at same rank will be posted shortly. Other three positions which were planned but have been postponed, will definitely be supported as soon as there is a green light from the Ministry of Finance (our comments in detail are provided in section 3).

We remain to your disposal for any further query you may have and we are looking forward to receiving a positive final decision.

Sincerely,

Georgios Panigyrakis, Professor
Dean of Faculty of Communication and Media Studies