

Doc. 300.2.1

External Evaluation Report (Institutional)

Date: 13/1/2023

- **Higher Education Institution:**
American University of Beirut Mediterraneo
- **Town:** Paphos
- **Institution Status:** New Institution

The present document has been prepared within the framework of the authority and competencies of the Cyprus Agency of Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Higher Education, according to the provisions of the “Quality Assurance and Accreditation of Higher Education and the Establishment and Operation of an Agency on Related Matters Laws” of 2015 to 2021 [L.136(I)/2015 – L.132(I)/2021].

A. Introduction

This part includes basic information regarding the onsite visit.

The External Evaluation Committee (EEC) visited the premises of the American University of Beirut Mediterraneo on Monday 9th and Tuesday 10th of January 2023. During this visit the EEC had the opportunity to meet with the President Fadlo Khuri, the Rector Wassim Haji, the Senior Vice President for Advancement and Business Development Imad Baalbaki and the Vice Rector Prof. Arne Dietrich

The visit started with a welcome from the founders and academic staff and continued with a briefing at the Rector's office. It followed a meeting with the Head of the Institution and the Head or/and members of the Internal Evaluation Committee. Then there was an Institutional Evaluation/Presentation followed by a constructive discussion with Members of the Department.

The visit continued with short presentations of the programme's feasibility study and the curriculum (i.e. philosophy, allocation of courses per semester, weekly content of each course, teaching methodologies, admission criteria for prospective students, student assessment, final exams).

An extended discussion took place concerning the CVs (i.e. academic qualifications, publications, research interests, research activity) followed with an interactive discussion on duties other than teaching and research in the iDepartment's PPE programme or teaching obligations in other programmes.

Following the completion of our discussion a tour was offered to us to the premises of the institution (current and future - under construction)

B. External Evaluation Committee (EEC)

Name	Position	University
Senior Professor Matthias Kettner	Chair	University of Witten/Herdecke, Germany
Professor Kyriaki Kosmidou	Member	Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece
Professor Michael Bruter	Member	London School of Economics & Political Science, UK
Professor Dimitris Papadimitriou	Member	University of Manchester, UK
Niki Makri	Student Member	University of Cyprus
Ioustini Pilidi	Head of Career Office	University of Cyprus
Frangos Prokopa	Civil Engineer	Technical Chamber of Cyprus

C. Building Facilities - Student Welfare Services - Infrastructure

- *Under plans and licenses, choose Yes or No depending on the existence of the given documents.*
- *Note whether the statements given under the other facilities, the student welfare services and the infrastructure are considered satisfactory/poor/unsatisfactory for the operation of the Institution.*
- *The EEC must justify the answers provided for the building facilities, the student welfare services and the infrastructure by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.*

1. Building facilities

1.1 Plans and licenses

Choose Yes or No depending on the existence of the following documents.

1. Building facilities			
1.1 Plans and licenses		Yes / No	
1.1.1	The following should be copies from the original building permit. On the copies, there should be a visible official stamp of approval from the respective authorities.		
	1.1.1.1	A topographical plan, which displays in a clear manner the extent of the development.	Yes
	1.1.1.2	A general site plan, which marks the building facilities, allocated parking spaces (for students, academic and teaching personnel, visitors and disabled individuals), sports premises and outdoor areas.	Yes
1.1.2	An operating license issued by the Local Authorities	No	
1.1.3	The following operating license certificates, duly completed:		
	1.1.3.1	Visual Inspection Form E.O.E. 102	Yes
	1.1.3.2	Visual Inspection for the Building's Seismic Sufficiency Form E.O.E.Σ.E.K 103	Yes
	1.1.3.3	Inspection Certificate Form 104	Yes
	1.1.3.4	Fire Safety Certificate, issued by the Fire Department	Yes
1.1.3.5	Certificate for Adequate Electrical and Mechanical Installations, issued by the Electromechanical Department	Yes	

Justify the answers provided for the building facilities by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.

1.1.1.1 A topographical plan is attached

1.1.2 It was stated that it would be submitted as soon as it was secured.

1.1.1.2 There is an agreement with MAYFAIR HOTEL to offer it's facilities and recreational areas to be use by AUB University students, faculty and staff (The agreement is attached).

The university buildings on Apostolou Pavlou Street is under construction. They began to be built in September 2022. According to the work schedule, the classrooms building is expected to be completed in January 2024. The administraton and the auditorium building are expected

to be completed in July 2024. The schedules have been declared by Mr. Karim Jeha, civil engineer of AUB University.

1.2 Other Facilities

Choose Satisfactory or Poor or Unsatisfactory depending on the level of compliance of each statement.

1. Building Facilities		
1.2 Other Facilities		Satisfactory - Poor - Unsatisfactory
1.2.1	Number of teaching rooms and their respective areas, capacity and the percentage of daily occupancy for all units	Satisfactory
1.2.2	Number of offices for teaching staff and their respective areas and capacity	Satisfactory
1.2.3	Number of laboratories and their respective areas and capacity	Satisfactory
1.2.4	Number of rooms/offices for directors/administrators and their respective areas and capacity	Satisfactory
1.2.5	Number of rooms/offices for administrative services and their respective areas and capacity	Satisfactory
1.2.6	Number of parking spaces designated for students	Satisfactory
1.2.7	Number of parking spaces designated for teaching staff	Satisfactory
1.2.8	Number of parking spaces designated for people with disabilities	Satisfactory
Justify the answers provided for the building facilities by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.		
Click to add text		

2. Student Welfare Services

Choose Satisfactory or Poor or Unsatisfactory depending on the level of compliance of each statement.

2. 2. Student Welfare Services		Satisfactory - Poor - Unsatisfactory
2.1	Special access for students with disabilities (PWD)	Satisfactory
2.2	Recreation areas	Satisfactory
2.3	Policy and statutes for academic student support	Satisfactory
2.4	Policy and statutes for financial student support	Satisfactory
2.5	Counselling services	Satisfactory
2.6	Career office	Satisfactory
2.7	Service linking the institution with business	Satisfactory
2.8	Mobility office	Satisfactory
2.9	Student clubs/organisations/associations	Satisfactory
2.10	Other services	Satisfactory

Justify the answers provided for the student welfare services by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.

2.1. Special access for students with disabilities (PWD)

The Office of Student Affairs in collaboration and communication with students, faculty, and staff will provide services and accommodations that facilitate equal access for students with disabilities to academic, social, and recreational activities and programs. The AUB-M will apply the ADA Code (Annex 7) which requires that services, programs, and activities in buildings should be made accessible to people with disabilities in the most integrated setting possible, that is, assuring that people with disabilities can access the program or service along with non-disabled co-workers, friends, and colleagues. The evaluation of students' eligibility for accommodations will be conducted on a case-by-case basis by the Office of Student Affairs. Furthermore, the University will implement the Accessibility for a Bolder Learning Experience (ABLE), an initiative by the Office of Information Technology (IT) in collaboration with the Office of Student Affairs, in order to increase the retention and success rates of students with disabilities and to support their readiness for life after university by developing and deploying accessibility to campus-wide IT resources.

The University will also run a work-study program for all the students, including students with disability, which will give them the opportunity to develop hands-on skills and competencies by performing technical, secretarial, research, library, and additional work.

The University must address the legal issues related to the work permit of international, non-EU students.

2.2. Recreation areas

The AUB-M has signed a MoU with Mayfair Hotel. Students will be able to use the gym (complete with treadmill, spin bike, multi-exercise bars, elliptical machine, pull-up machine, eps, and workbench), the sauna and two swimming pools. After commencing operations, the University will house two basketball courts, two tennis courts, and one mini football course (Annex 8- Recreation Areas). At the moment, the University has a collaboration with the Municipality Cafeteria.

2.3. Policy and statutes for academic student support

Office of Student Affairs

The Office of Student Affairs and the faculty members will provide current students and prospective students with guidance, academic support and resources related but not limited to student recruitment, student activities, orientation, academic advising, course registration etc.

Academic Advising

The AUB-M will provide students an advising experience that facilitates personal development, enhances academic performance, and ensures progress towards graduation. Full-time faculty members are expected to dedicate 2 to 3 hours per week to student advising and mentoring. These office hours are to be publicised in course syllabi and other outlets. Advisors undergo a mandatory training annually, and there will be "Online Portal for Advising" in all faculties/schools. Each student has an academic advisor who mentors the student in course selection. Names of advisees and their respective advisors are available through the Student Information System (SIS). (6.1 FACULTY - DUTIES, RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS)

Student Survey

Students will fill a survey to evaluate their advisor and assess advising. The feedback on the academic advising (availability, knowledge, etc) is shared with the faculty members and is used by the department chair in the annual evaluation of the faculty member.

AUB Mediterraneo Orientation and Induction program

A 3-week Orientation and Induction program that will be obligatory for all students before they commence their first semester. The program introduces students to the goals and approaches of a liberal arts education and how these contribute to students' professional, social and personal lives after graduation. The students will get aware of some of the challenges that they may face and are equipped with some basic strategies and skills to address these challenges to enable them (academic literacy, soft skills, reflection). The program also serves a practical orientation to AUB-M including introduction of key personnel, facilities, support of student well-being, and processes of registration, advising, joining societies and clubs and other aspects of the university. (appx32- AUB Mediterraneo Orientation and Induction Program).

2.4. Policy and statutes for financial student support

Financial aid will be available for qualified students who are accepted and enrolled at AUB-M. It can be awarded on an annual basis or for the duration of the program depending on the specific type. Financial aid can be of different kinds e.g., Need based grants, Merit based grants, Graduate assistantships, Work study, Donor funded scholarships etc (Financial Aid Policy, Policy on Graduate Fellowship and Assistantship Program).

2.5. Counselling services

A student counsellor will be employed to provide counselling services to registered students and organise peer support activities and several events and workshops to support the students' physical and mental well-being and nurture a healthy university environment (Student Counsellor Job Description).

2.6 Career office and 2.7 Service linking the institution with business

The career services will include one to one career guidance (in collaboration with the private sector and businesses at the beginning), information sessions, career development workshops, outreach activities, and recruitment/career events to inform students about employment opportunities and to assist them in resume writing, interview readiness, and job search techniques.

The linkage with the labour market will further enhanced through company visits, job shadowing, internships, employment of graduates (post jobs on AUB-M website).

Challenges/Suggestions:

- The University should address the legal issues related to the work permit of international, non- EU students, to provide the employment/work experience opportunities to all the students.
- The University should consider the possibility to introduce the work placement/internships within the programs of studies (part of the program of studies), giving the opportunity to the students to gain relevant work experience and develop their skills and knowledge, based on pre-approved learning outcomes. Furthermore, a clear operating model regarding the placement of the students should be applied at a university level, describing the role and responsibilities of the academic departments/ faculty members and the administrative services (career office).
- A strategic plan for skills development will help the several offices/entities of the University (e.g Career Office, Counselling Office, Mobility Office, Faculty Departments) to design and provide a

comprehensive services package to the students that will enhance their employability and wellbeing. This will help the offices/entities to better collaborate and avoid overlapping, but at the same time will give to the students a clear student-career journey plan to follow.

2.8. Mobility office

The AUB-M will extend the already existing European, North American, as well as MENA, Australia, South America & Asia Agreements and MoU and it will provide student exchange opportunities and summer outgoing opportunities for the students in several universities. Furthermore, the Erasmus+ Program will be used as a special type of exchange program with European universities for students for studies and placements. (See attached - Office of International Programs, University Agreements).

2.9. Student clubs/organisations/associations

Clubs: Students have the choice to initiate new clubs and societies (appx20- Guidelines for Student Clubs).

Student Council: The students' formal governing body, the Student Council, will provide the link between students and the administration. Student representatives will be part of every committee at AUB-M (departmental committees, faculty committees, senate committees, and senate). This representation demonstrates the students' active role and responsibility in contributing to shared governance at the various levels of the university.

Community Action Program (on a voluntary basis): A Civic Engagement Journey is offered to the students, which is a four-pillar sequenced journey spanning from the first semester until graduation that encompasses volunteering rotations, workshops, community-based internships, and culminates with student-led Community Service Projects (CSP).

Civic Engagement Course: (6 ECTS) The students get theoretical knowledge of the civic engagement and the politics and then they select one of the four tracks (1) Rotations: volunteering in community-based organisations and participating in events and workshops related to civic issues, (2) Internships: interning with community-based organisations where students extend their research and technical skills. (3) Option of Capstone Projects applying course learning in real-world settings to address challenges faced by marginalised communities. (4) Community Service Projects: working in teams to identify pressing societal challenges relevant to specified locations and piloting action plans.

2.10. Other services

- Student Grievance Policy and Procedures: the students of AUB Mediterraneo may file grievances on issues related to academic freedom, academic misconduct, or non-academic misconduct (appx 8- Student Grievance Policy and Procedures)
- Non-Discrimination and Anti-Discriminatory Harassment Policy: the students of AUB-M are provided with mechanisms for seeking redress in case of sexual harassment, discrimination, or discriminatory harassment (appx5- Sexual Harassment Policy, appx 6 - Procedures to Address Allegations of Discrimination, Discriminatory, Harassment, and Sexual Harassment, appx 7 - Non-Discrimination and Anti- Discriminatory Harassment Policy).

3. Infrastructure

Choose Satisfactory or Poor or Unsatisfactory depending on the level of compliance of each statement.

2. Infrastructure		Satisfactory - Poor - Unsatisfactory
3.1	Library	satisfactory
3.2	Computers available for use by the students	satisfactory
3.3	Technological support	satisfactory
3.4	Technical support	satisfactory

Justify the answers provided for the infrastructure services by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.

Click to add text

D. Guidelines on content and structure of the report

- *The external evaluation report follows the structure of assessment areas and sub-areas.*
- *For each assessment area there are quality indicators (criteria) to be scored by the EEC on a scale from one (1) to five (5), based on the degree of compliance for the above-mentioned quality indicators (criteria). The scale used is explained below:*

<i>1 or 2:</i>	<i>Non-compliant</i>
<i>3:</i>	<i>Partially compliant</i>
<i>4 or 5:</i>	<i>Compliant</i>

- *The EEC must justify the numerical scores provided for the quality indicators (criteria) by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.*
- *It is pointed out that, in the case of indicators (criteria) that cannot be applied due to the status of the Department, N/A (= Not Applicable) should be noted and a detailed explanation should be provided on the Department's corresponding policy regarding the specific quality indicator.*
- *In addition, it is important to provide information regarding the compliance with the requirements. In particular, the following must be included:*

Findings

A short description of the situation in the Institution based on evidence from the Institution's application and the site - visit.

Strengths

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

Areas of improvement and recommendations

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

- **The report may also address other issues which the EEC finds relevant.**

1. Institution's Academic Profile and Orientation

(ESG 1.1, 1.2, 1.4, 1.5, 1.6, 1.7, 1.8, 1.9)

Sub-areas

1.1 Mission and strategic planning

1.2 Connecting with society

1.3 Development processes

Mark from 1 to 5 the degree of compliance for each quality indicator/criterion

1 or 2: Non-compliant

3: Partially compliant

4 or 5: Compliant

Quality indicators/criteria		
1. Institution's academic profile and orientation		
1.1 Mission and strategic planning		1 - 5
1.1.1	The Institution has formally adopted a mission statement, which is available to the public and easily accessible.	4
1.1.2	The Institution has developed its strategic planning aiming at fulfilling its mission.	5
1.1.3	The Institution's strategic planning includes short, medium-term and long-term goals and objectives, which are periodically revised and adapted.	4
1.1.4	The offered programmes of study align with the aims and objectives of the Institution's development.	4
1.1.5	The academic community is involved in shaping and monitoring the implementation of the Institution's development strategies.	5
1.1.6	In the Institution's development strategy, interested parties such as academics, students, graduates and other professional and scientific associations participate in the Institution's development strategy.	4
1.1.7	The mechanism for collecting and analysing data and indicators needed to effectively design the Institution's academic development is adequate and effective.	5

Justify the numerical scores provided for the quality indicators (criteria) by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.

AUB-M is a unique institution in many ways and its opening is based on a very thorough and impressive amount of excellent management and market research.

However, the EEC has a number of suggestions:

First, we feel that at times, the overall plan for the AUB-M feels a little too much like a smaller sized twin version of AUB instead of embracing the uniqueness of the new venture. In particular, AUB is the "face" of US higher

education in Lebanon whilst AUB-M would not be credible in the same role in Cyprus and will instead be widely perceived as an outpost of an excellent Middle Eastern University.

There is also some tension between the non-profit and benevolent aspects of the university's mission on the one hand, and tuition fees which are disproportionately higher than those of local competitors in Cyprus and other EU countries, notably for EU students. This risks entirely putting off EU students and could affect recruitment diversity.

Third, There is commendable staff engagement in the project, but student voices should be taken more strongly into account.

1.2 Connecting with society		1 - 5
1.2.1	The Institution has effective mechanisms to assess the needs and demands of society and takes them into account in its various activities.	4
1.2.2	The Institution provides sufficient information to the public about its activities and offered programmes of study.	4
1.2.3	The Institution ensures that its operation and activities have a positive impact on society.	4
1.2.4	The Institution has an effective communication mechanism with its graduates.	5

Justify the numerical scores provided for the quality indicators (criteria) by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.

The plans are tentative for the moment but there is clear intention to work with the local municipality and broader environment.

1.3 Development processes		1 - 5
1.3.1	Effective procedures and measures are in place to attract and select teaching staff to ensure that they possess the formal and substantive skills to teach research and effectively carry out their work.	4
1.3.2	The Institution has a two-year growth budget that is consistent with its strategic planning.	4
1.3.3	Planning academic staff recruitment and their professional development is in line with the Institution's academic development plan.	3
1.3.4	The Institution applies an effective strategy of attracting students/ high-level students from Cyprus.	3
1.3.5	The Institution applies an effective strategy to attract high-level students from abroad.	3

1.3.6 The funding processes for the operation of the Institution and the continuous improvement of the quality of its programmes of study are adequate and transparent.

4

Justify the numerical scores provided for the quality indicators (criteria) by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.

The initial plans are sound and well thought through. However, the EEC would have liked to have more clarity and commitment with reference to the development plans in terms of staff numbers in each department. Whilst the university's argument that expansion will come as needs require makes sense from an entrepreneurial point of view, it makes it difficult to assess medium term viability of the project beyond the first two or three years. There is a certain gap between the financial and infrastructural plan which is very clearly laid out to cover a whole decade in contrast to the academic and staff plan which is underspecified.

In that sense, the ranking on those elements is intended to highlight risk and the fact that the success of the venture will be massively dependent on the staff expansion plans after the first two or three years of operation.

The second concern is about tuition fees. The proposed \$24,000/year tuition (and our understanding from discussing with students is that in reality, it can be even more than that for many students) is out of line in comparison to tuition fees both in Cyprus and other EU countries. It will make it very difficult to attract excellent European students - especially in the first few years when AUB-M will not have a reputation of its own to rely on, and it creates risks for both the quality and the diversity of recruitment, in the sense that the entire institution will suffer if AUB-M were to become a "bubble" university only relying on international students without also bringing some national and other European students into the mix.

The narrative pertaining to the wide availability of scholarships and fee reduction is unlikely to work as effectively in AUB-M as it does in AUB because it is not part of the culture of European students as much as of those applying to American or Middle Eastern universities. The headline figure stating the tuition fees will be enough to discourage many potentially interested students from applying.

Additionally, write:

- Expected number of Cypriot and international students
- Countries of origin of international students and number from each country

The university expects between 20 and 50 new students per year per programme but we did not see a breakdown of the planned proportion between Cypriot and international students. The EEC's impression is that if tuition fees remain as high as presently indicated, the number of Cypriot and European students would likely be very small.

Findings

A short description of the situation in the Institution based on evidence from the Institution's application and the site - visit.

The institutional plan is impressive in many ways and based on highly professional planning and strong market research. However, for the time being, the panel felt that there was a lot more clarity about the specifics of the medium term plans in terms of finance and physical development than in terms of staffing and academic development (staffing levels, new degrees, etc) which are seen as contingent on student numbers (which the university models in its planning) but are therefore hard to evaluate.

There is also a relative lack of clarity concerning whether AUB-M is conceived as a new outpost of AUB or as a self-contained new university. In a way, it seems to be a little bit of both, but there is an almost “constitutional” issue on which aspects are considered subsidiary to AUB and which should be considered autonomous.

Finally, whereas the planning is impressive in many ways, the EEC is concerned that expected levels of tuition fees will detract students from Cyprus and other EU students from applying as those levels seem out of line with national and EU levels, at least with regard to study programmes like PPE. This could potentially jeopardise the quality of the students recruitment, the quality of the student and staff experience (which will benefit from the greatest possible mix between students from Cyprus, other parts of Europe, and from the Middle East) as a cultural, social, and intellectual community. This is one of the major risks that the EEC has identified at this stage.

Strengths

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

- Excellent infrastructural and financial planning
- Great involvement of AUB staff in the planning
- Excellent levels of professionalism and organisation
- Strong financial backing
- Willingness to partner with the local and national environment

Areas of improvement and recommendations

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

- Lack of clarity about planned academic staffing levels after the first two years
- Insufficient involvement of students in the planning
- Lack of clarity about the extent to which AUB-M will function as a truly autonomous university or an extension of the mother AUB institution.
- Very high planned tuition fees which may discourage Cyprus and European citizens from applying and affect both quality of recruitment, quality of experience, and viability.

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

Sub-Area	<i>Non-compliant / Partially Compliant / Compliant</i>
1.1 Mission and strategic planning	Compliant
1.2 Connecting with society	Compliant
1.3 Development processes	Partially compliant

2. Quality Assurance

(ESG 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.6, 1.7, 1.8)

Sub-areas

2.1 System and Quality Assurance Strategy

2.2 Ensuring quality for the programmes of study

Mark from 1 to 5 the degree of compliance for each quality indicator/criterion

1 or 2: Non-compliant

3: Partially compliant

4 or 5: Compliant

Quality Indicators/Criteria			
2. Quality Assurance			
2.1 System and Quality Assurance Strategy			1 - 5
2.1.1	The Institution has a policy for quality assurance that is made public and forms part of its strategic management.		5
2.1.2	Internal stakeholders develop and implement a policy for quality assurance through appropriate structures and processes, while involving external stakeholders.		5
2.1.3	The Institution's policy for quality assurance supports guarding against intolerance of any kind or discrimination against students or staff.		4
2.1.4	The quality assurance system adequately covers all the functions and sectors of the Institution's activities:		
	2.1.4.1	The teaching and learning	5
	2.1.4.2	Research	4
	2.1.4.3	The connection with society	5
	2.1.4.4	Management and support services	5
2.1.5	The quality assurance system promotes a culture of quality.		4
2.1.6	The Institution consistently applies pre-defined and published regulations covering all phases of student 'life cycle', e.g. student admission, progression, recognition and certification.		4

2.1.7	Institutional practice for recognition being in line with the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention, cooperation with other institutions and quality assurance agencies and the national ENIC/NARIC centre.	5
2.1.8	Graduates receive documentation explaining the qualification gained.	4
Justify the numerical scores provided for the quality indicators (criteria) by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.		
The EEC overall has been satisfied with the Quality Assurance Strategy		
2. Quality assurance		
2.2 Ensuring quality for the programmes of study		1 - 5
2.2.1	The responsibility for decision-making and monitoring the implementation of the programmes of study offered by the Institution lies with the teaching staff.	5
2.2.2	The system and criteria for assessing students' performance in the subjects of the programmes of studies offered by the Institution are clear, sufficient and known to the students.	4
2.2.3	The quality control system refers to specific indicators and is effective.	5
2.2.4	The results from student assessments are used to improve the programmes of study.	4
2.2.5	The policy dealing with plagiarism committed by students as well as mechanisms for identifying and preventing it are effective.	4
2.2.6	The institutionalised procedures for examining students' objections/ disagreements on issues of student evaluation or academic ethics are effective.	4
2.2.7	The Institution provides information about its activities, including the programmes of study it offers and the selection criteria for them, the intended learning outcomes of these programmes, the qualifications awarded, the teaching, learning and assessment procedures used, the pass rates and the learning opportunities available to the students as well as graduate employment information.	N/A
2.2.8	The Institution ensures that effective methodology is applied in the learning process.	4
2.2.9	The Institution systematically collects data in relation to the academic performance of students, implements procedures for evaluating such data and has a relevant policy in place.	N/A
2.2.10	The Institution ensures adequate and appropriate learning resources in line with European and international standards and / or international practices, particularly:	
2.2.10.1	Building facilities	4

2.2.10.2	Library	4
2.2.10.3	Rooms for theoretical, practical and laboratory lessons	4
2.2.10.4	Technological infrastructure	4
2.2.10.5	Support structures for students with special needs and learning difficulties	4
2.2.10.6	Academic Support	4
2.2.10.7	Student Welfare Services	4

Justify the numerical scores provided for the quality indicators (criteria) by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.

The EEC is satisfied with the learning resources in line. The building facilities can serve appropriately the educational purposes. The library is likely to operate online during the first year of operation and has not yet been equipped with books but the EEC was assured that this will take place soon. Major investments have taken place in technological infrastructure. The council has moved to a number of appointments in order to ensure provision of students welfare services.

Findings

A short description of the situation in the Institution based on evidence from the Institution's application and the site - visit.

Building a new university is a colossal task. There are so many issues to consider in order to have everything settled. AUB-M has already achieved major steps.

Strengths

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

The council of the University is determined to provide quality services to the students. Having this in mind they are determined to make all the required investments in order to achieve their tasks

The EEC believes that the close ties with the American educational system and the experience of the mother university in Lebanon will help the AUB-M progress well over the years.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

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

The AUB-M is a new institution in the making, so continuous improvements and additions should take place. Involvement in higher education is dynamic and requires universities to continue to invest in order to provide their students with the best learning experience.

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

Sub-Area	<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>
2.1 System and quality assurance strategy	Compliant
2.2 Ensuring quality for the programmes of study	Compliant

3. Administration (ESG 1.1)

Mark from 1 to 5 the degree of compliance for each quality indicator/criterion

- 1 or 2: Non-compliant
3: Partially compliant
4 or 5: Compliant

Quality indicators/criteria		
3. Administration		1 - 5
3.1	The administrative structure is in line with the legislation in force and the Institution's declared mission.	5
3.2	The members of the teaching and administrative staff and the students participate, at a satisfactory degree and on the basis of based on specified procedures, in the management of the Institution.	5
3.3	Adequate allocation of competences and responsibilities is ensured so that in academic matters, decisions are made by academics and the Institution's Council competently exercises legal control over such decisions.	5
3.4	The Institution applies effective procedures to ensure transparency in the decision-making process.	5
3.5	The Boards of Departments and Schools, as well as the institutionalised committees of the Institution, operate systematically and exercise fully the responsibilities provided by legislation and / or the constitution and / or the internal regulations of the Institution.	5
3.6	The Council, the Senate as well as the administrative and academic committees, operate systematically and autonomously and exercise the full powers provided for by the statute and / or the constitution of the Institution without the intervention or involvement of a body or person outside the law provisions.	5
3.6	The manner in which the Council, the Senate and/or and the administrative and academic committees operate and the procedures for disseminating and implementing their decisions are clearly formulated and implemented precisely and effectively.	5
3.7	The Institution applies procedures for the prevention and disciplinary control of academic misconduct of students, academic and administrative staff, including plagiarism.	5
3.8	The administrative structure is in line with the legislation in force and the Institution's declared mission.	5

Justify the numerical scores provided for the quality indicators (criteria) by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.

For the smooth functioning of the University, the University Council employs an adequate number of administrative staff and an appropriate administrative structure. All administrative policies are approved by the Council and are uniformly applied in a non-discriminatory manner.

Findings

A short description of the situation in the Institution based on evidence from the Institution's application and the site - visit.

The committee had the opportunity to meet and discuss with several administrators. Those will be the key persons that will support the AUB-M and govern its top processes. The EEC discussed with administrators in place and was well informed about their plans for the future.

Strengths

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

Click to add text

Areas of improvement and recommendations

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

Significantly more teaching personnel will be needed as the institution grows. The EEC was informed about a recruitment plan that answers to the institution's future needs but is underdetermined with reference to numbers, specialisations, and competencies.

Please select what is appropriate for the following assessment area:

Assessment Area	<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>
3. Administration	Compliant

4. Learning and Teaching
(ESG 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.9)

Sub-Areas

4.1 Planning the programmes of study

4.2 Organisation of teaching

Mark from 1 to 5 the degree of compliance for each quality indicator/criterion

- 1 or 2: Non-compliant
- 3: Partially compliant
- 4 or 5: Compliant

Quality indicators/criteria		
4. Learning and Teaching		
4.1 Planning the programmes of study		1 - 5
4.1.1	The Institution provides an effective system for designing, approving, monitoring and periodically reviewing programmes of study.	5
4.1.2	Students and other stakeholders, including employers, are actively involved on the programmes' review and development.	3
4.1.3	The programmes of study are in compliance with the ESG and the existing legislation and meet the professional qualifications requirements in the professional courses, where applicable.	5
4.1.4	The Institution ensures that its programmes of study integrate effectively theory and practice.	4
4.1.5	The assessment and evaluation procedures and content are in compliance with the level of the programme of study (in reference to EQF).	5
<p>Justify the numerical scores provided for the quality indicators (criteria) by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.</p> <p>Overall, the programmes are well designed. Students in the mother institution did not feel that they had much ability to influence the courses or that their criticisms of courses were taken seriously enough and effected change. Some complained that a significant proportion of advertised courses were not in fact running. It will be important to ensure that this does not happen at AUB-M</p>		
4.2 Organisation of teaching		1 - 5
4.2.1	The Institution establishes student admission criteria for each programme, which are adhered to consistently.	4

4.2.2	Recognition of prior studies and credit transfer is regulated by procedures and regulations that are in line with European standards and/or international practices.	4
4.2.3	The number of students in the teaching rooms is suitable for theoretical, practical and laboratory lessons.	4
4.2.4	The teaching staff of the Institution have regular and effective communication with their students.	4
4.2.5	The teaching staff of the Institution provides timely and effective feedback to their students.	4

Justify the numerical scores provided for the quality indicators (criteria) by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.

It is impossible to strictly assess those elements since neither recruitment nor teaching have started. The intentions are appropriate if not outstanding

Findings

A short description of the situation in the Institution based on evidence from the Institution's application and the site - visit.

It is not possible to evaluate admissions, teaching, and assessment at this initial stage of organisational development. The EEC was only able to evaluate intentions and statements, but how well they are adhered to will remain to be established when the institution is in full operation. Nevertheless, the panel was satisfied that the intentions of the institution certainly go in the right direction. A slight concern of the EEC is based on a conversation via Zoom with students from the AUB: We heard that some of these students did not feel that they had enough power to influence teaching, learning and assessment and that their criticisms were taken not seriously enough and did not lead to effective change. There were even references to (exceptional) cases whereby some members of academic staff tried to find out which students had criticised them or discouraged them from doing so. Such misbehaviour came from individuals (not the institution) who work at the mother institution (and not AUB-M). However, such grievances underscore the importance of ensuring that students' feedback should be taken seriously, and critical feedback must be strictly protected (in terms of absolute confidentiality) in order to ensure that students are free from any individual pressure.

Strengths

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

Overall, this is a university with an excellent track record of providing high level teaching and learning experience to their students in the AUB and will hopefully do so at AUBM. In principle, there is potential for a quality learning experience and diverse assessment.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

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

- The EEC could only assess intentions and not implementation and had to rely in part on the experience of students in the mother institution

- It is very important that students feel that they can give feedback freely, anonymously, and without any pressure and that this feedback will be taken seriously. Some experiences by students at the mother institution were not sufficiently positive - and sometimes really problematic - on that front and it will be essential to ensure that there is no risk of similar problems at AUB-M
- The EEC wants to stress that it is not tasked with assessing AU-B nor could it do so with its very limited information concerning the institution as a whole. However, it simply reflected on some issues that were mentioned to the EEC and that in the EEC's view highlight priorities that will need to be achieved at AUB-M.

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

Sub-area	<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>
4.1 Planning the programmes of study	Compliant
4.2 Organisation of teaching	Compliant

5. Teaching Staff (ESG 1.5)

Mark from 1 to 5 the degree of compliance for each quality indicator/criterion

- 1 or 2: Non-compliant
 3: Partially compliant
 4 or 5: Compliant

Quality Indicators/Criteria		
5. Teaching Staff		1 - 5
5.1	The number of teaching staff - full-time and exclusive work - and the subject area of the staff sufficiently support the programmes of study.	3
5.2	The teaching staff of the Institution have the relevant formal and substantive qualifications for teaching the individual subjects as described in the relevant legislation.	5
5.3	The Visiting Professors' subject areas adequately support the Institution's programmes of study.	4
5.4	The special teaching staff and special scientists have the required qualifications, sufficient professional experience and expertise to teach a limited number of programmes of study.	5
5.5	The ratio of special teaching staff to the total number of teaching staff is satisfactory.	5
5.6	The ratio of the number of subjects of the programme of study taught by teaching staff working fulltime and exclusively to the number of subjects taught by part-time teaching staff ensures the quality of the programme of study.	5
5.7	The ratio of the number of students to the total number of teaching staff is sufficient to support and ensure the quality of the Programme of Study.	4
5.8	The number of teaching staff - full-time and exclusive work - and the subject area of the staff sufficiently support the programmes of study.	4
5.9	The visiting Professors' subject areas adequately support the Institution's programmes of study.	4

Justify the numerical scores provided for the quality indicators (criteria) by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.

[Click to add text](#)

Also, write the following:

- Number of teaching staff working full-time and having exclusive work
- Number of special teaching staff working full-time and having exclusive work
- Number of visiting Professors
- Number of special scientists on lease services

[Click to add text](#)

Findings

A short description of the situation in the Department based on evidence from the Department's application and the site - visit.

The applicants have identified a large pool of members of staff from the parent institution in Beirut that could potentially be transferred to AUB-M. During the presentation to the EEC a number of staff were identified as "being committed" to join the AUB-M if the accreditation process is completed satisfactorily. The specific nature of this commitment was not entirely clear to the EEC. An additional five (5) members of staff have made a similar pledge for the Institute for Liberal Arts which will also service some of the teaching. However, our understanding is that no formal contracts have yet been issued for most of the identified staff to be transferred to the AUB-M.

Given the transitory nature of establishing the new university such arrangements are not exceptional or particularly worrisome. However, there are risks in connection to the delivery of teaching (as this is presented in the application form) and the credibility of promises made to potential new students. These will need to be mitigated as soon as possible to facilitate internal planning and preserve external reputation.

The quality of identified teaching staff is internationally competitive with strong pedagogical credentials and research profiles. The established internal processes of evaluating academic staff (some of whom will be transferred to Paphos) offer additional reassurance on quality. The balance between permanent and contract (or part time) staff is very good initially and the mix of seniority of those delivering teaching is appropriate. Given the strong research profile of staff, the availability of research-led teaching is to be welcomed.

The parent institution has an established procedure of evaluating teaching, which includes student-led evaluation. There is some evidence to suggest that the student-led evaluation process in the parent institution needs to be made more robust. For the AUB-M, the small number of students envisaged in the first few years will necessitate careful consideration of how student-led evaluation remains confidential and what are the most appropriate channels for following up student concerns.

Strengths

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

- Evidence of the strong pedagogical commitment of members of staff to ensure a more personalised educational experience
- Strong research profile of staff allowing for the delivery of research-led teaching (although this may be impacted by the small number of staff based in the AUB-M in the first years of operation.
- Small student-staff-ratio which is compatible with the pedagogical mission of the university. Commitment of the institution to sustain this ratio as student number expand over the next few years
- Established record of the parent institution in delivering student-focused teaching based on the US Liberal Arts College tradition

Areas of improvement and recommendations

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

- The list of staff who will be transferred to the AUB-M needs to be finalised as soon as possible and the appropriate employment contracts should be signed.
- It is not entirely clear to the members of the evaluation committee whether all units listed in the programme of study can be serviced effectively by the number of staff who have 'committed' to join the AUB-M.
- Special care should be taken in the advertisement of the new programme to ensure that potential students are not misled about the availability of units.
- It should be expected that the first years of operating the new university may generate a higher number of student complaints, as the new structures bed in. The leadership of the university should embrace this challenge by designing student evaluation processes that are temporarily even stronger than the routine processes without compromising anonymity while allowing the department to 'learn' quickly from its mistakes.

Please select what is appropriate for the following assessment area:

Assessment Area	<i>Non-Compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>
5. Teaching staff	partially compliant

6. Research

(ESG 1.1, 1.5, 1.6)

Mark from 1 to 5 the degree of compliance for each quality indicator/criterion

1 or 2: Non-compliant

3: Partially compliant

4 or 5: Compliant

Quality indicators/criteria		
6. Research		1 - 5
6.1	The Institution has a research policy formulated in line with its mission.	4
6.2	The Institution consistently applies internal regulations and procedures of research activity, which promote the set out research policy and ensure compliance with the regulations of research projects financing programmes.	4
6.3	The Institution provides adequate facilities and equipment to cover the staff and students' research activities.	4
6.4	Through its policy and practices, the Institution encourages research collaboration within and outside the Institution, as well as participation in collaborative research funding programmes.	5
6.5	The Institution uses a policy for the protection and exploitation of intellectual property, which is applied consistently.	4
6.6	The results of the teaching staff research activity are published to a satisfactory extent in international journals which work with critics, international conferences, conference proceedings, publications, etc. The Institution also uses an open access policy for publications, which is consistent with the corresponding national and European policy.	4
6.7	The Institution ensures that research results are integrated into teaching and, to the extent applicable, promotes and implements a policy of transferring know-how to society and the production sector.	4
6.8	The Institution provides mechanisms which ensure compliance with international rules of research ethics, both in relation to research activity and the rights of researchers.	5
6.9	The external, non-governmental, funding of research activities of academic staff is similar to other Institutions in Cyprus and abroad.	4
6.10	The policy, indirect or direct of internal funding of the research activities of the academic staff is satisfactory, based on European and international practices.	5

Justify the numerical scores provided for the quality indicators (criteria) by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.

Once again, it is difficult to evaluate the research of the new university as the staffing is not finalised. The profiles of research in the mother institution is satisfactory as are the policies developed thus far but we could not assess their implementation. The intention to increase staff research support in early years is very positive.

Findings

A short description of the situation in the Institution based on evidence from the Institution's application and the site - visit.

The EEC could only assess intentions, proposed policies, and the profile of research in the mother institutions but not the implementation nor the research profile of AUM-B since recruitment is ongoing.

Also, the University should pay particular attention to EU regulations pertaining to research and notably to employment law.

AUM-B could benefit from the strong research profile of AUB and will second a number of AUB academics to the new university.

Policies are well organised and well thought through in general.

One particularly noteworthy aspect of research relates to access to EU funding which will be possible for AUB-M in ways that such funding was not for AUB. The EEC pointed out the specificity of EU funding as well as EU grants management and implementation, including reporting, data protection, etc.

The staff size of the proposed research office is minimal in the first instance, and it is unlikely that the team of AUM-B will be able to successfully pursue an ambitious agenda of externally funded research until more staff are recruited.

The university intends to use consulting services to prepare for EU funding applications, but the panel would encourage the new university to consider autonomous recruitment instead of hiring service providers since in this field many service providers are far from adequate in the support they sell to universities.

Research prospects may also suffer from the lack of PhD students and MA programmes, at least in the PPE department.

Finally, the online only library suffices in the initial phase of the new university but is a limiting factor on the university's research activity.

Strengths

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

- Backed by the strong research profile of mother institution AUB
- Quality academic staff
- Sensible and comprehensive set of policies that will be largely mirrored from AUB

Areas of improvement and recommendations

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

- Research ambition of AUB-M specifically is still not very clear
- No PhD programmes
- Limited research office in the first instance (pre award, post award, and research policy require very different skills)
- It will be important to focus on the specificities of EU funding and the choice of relying on an external service provider may not be the most effective way to achieve success.
- Online only library in the first instance may be an issue.

Please select what is appropriate for the following assessment area:

Assessment Area	<i>Non-Compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>
6. Research	Compliant

7. Resources (ESG 1.6)

Mark from 1 to 5 the degree of compliance for each quality indicator/criterion

- 1 or 2: Non-compliant
3: Partially compliant
4 or 5: Compliant

Quality indicators/criteria		
7. Resources		1 - 5
7.1	The institution has sufficient financial resources to support its functions, managed by the Council/Senate.	5
7.2	The Institution follows sound and efficient management of the available financial resources in order to develop academically and research wise.	5
7.3	The Institution's profits and donations are used for its development and for the benefit of the university community.	5
7.4	The Institution's budget is appropriate for its mission and adequate for the implementation of strategic planning.	5
7.5	The Institution carries out an assessment of the risks and sustainability of the programmes of study and adequately provides feedback on their operation.	5
7.6	The Institution's external audit and the transparent management of its finances are ensured.	5
7.7	The fitness-for-purpose of support facilities and services is periodically reviewed.	5
Justify the numerical scores provided for the quality indicators (criteria) by specifying (if any) the deficiencies. Click to add text		

Findings

A short description of the situation in the Institution based on evidence from the Institution's application and the site - visit.

The establishment of the entire new University is backed by a strong investment (50 million US dollars) by the parent institution (AUB) over the next few years. AUB is an established academic institution with a reputable presence for over 150 years. The parent institution is supported by a substantial endowment and a steady supply of financial support from its large alumni base and other donors. The accounts of the parent institution are monitored by a Board of Trustees in line with best international practice.

The establishment of the new university at Paphos has been backed by independent market research (not accessible to the EEC) and financial forecasting which accounts for a short-term deficit, to be recovered in the medium term as the university increases its student intake. Sufficient funds are allocated to key services, the development of its staff (also supporting their research activities) and, importantly, the financial support for eligible students who cannot afford the high fees charged. There are adequate provisions for the periodic review of the strategic plans at all levels of operations (University, Faculty, Department).

The university is currently operating from a temporary (but very well equipped) facility in Paphos which can comfortably accommodate the student intake for the time until the development of the AUB-M's campus is completed. The investment allocated to the construction of the AUB-M's campus is substantial and expected to provide first class facilities for students and staff as well as providing substantial benefits for the local economy and society.

Strengths

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

- Strong financial support for establishing the new university.
- Reputable financial procedures in line with international best practice
- Non profit institution with a generous commitment to staff and student welfare
- Investment delivers strong returns for the local community

Areas of improvement and recommendations

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

- The high level of fees may pose a financial risk in terms of student recruitment. This issue may need to be revisited in light of student recruitment performance over the medium term.

Please select what is appropriate for the following assessment area:

Assessment Area	<i>Non-Compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>
7. Resources	Compliant

E. Conclusions and Final Remarks

Please provide constructive conclusions and final remarks which may form the basis upon which improvements of the quality of the Institution under review may be achieved.

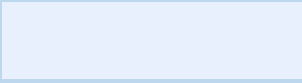
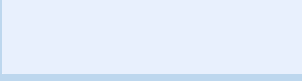
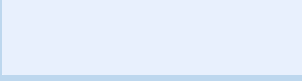
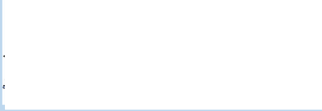
The EEC was impressed by the amount of preparation that went into the AUB-M project, including financial commitment, infrastructural planning, market research, and staff involvement.

The project, backed by the ethos and experience of the mother institution, has the potential to result in an excellent university of local, regional, and international reputation.

Nevertheless, the EEC has identified a number of potential risks and challenges that should be considered:

- There is a certain gap between the financial and infrastructural plan which is very clearly laid out to cover a whole decade in contrast to the academic and staff plan which is underspecified.
- There is some uncertainty regarding the long-term relationship between AUB and AUB-M whether AUB-M should be considered as a fully fledged university or a branch of the AUB. This will have significant implications for both institutions in terms of their outlook, teaching delivery, staff experience, research profile, and international reputation.
- Tuition fees across the entire academic offer are disproportionately higher than those of local competitors in Cyprus and other EU countries, notably for EU students. This pricing strategy involves financial risks for the institution as well as putting off EU students which could affect recruitment diversity and the intellectual environment of the university.

F. Signatures of the EEC

<i>Name</i>	<i>Signature</i>
Senior Professor Matthias Kettner	
Professor Kyriaki Kosmidou	
Professor Michael Bruter	
Professor Dimitris Papadimitriou	
Niki Makri	
Ioustini Pilidi	
Frangos Prokopa	

Date: 13/1/2023

