

Doc. 300.1.2

Date: 31 July 2022

Higher Education Institution's Response

- **Higher Education Institution:**
Limassol International University
(Formerly CIIM-Cyprus International Institute of Management)

- **Town: Nicosia & Limassol**

- **Programme of study**
Name (Duration, ECTS, Cycle)

In Greek:

Programme Name

In English:

MBA-Master in Business Administration (14 months full-time, 24 part-time, 90 ECTS, 2nd Cycle)

- **Language(s) of instruction: English**
- **Programme's status: Currently Operating**
- **Concentrations (if any):**

In Greek: Concentrations

In English: Digital Business Track, Oil & Gas Track, Entrepreneurship Track, and General Management



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. Guidelines on content and structure of the report

- *The Higher Education Institution (HEI) based on the External Evaluation Committee's (EEC's) evaluation report (Doc.300.1.1 or 300.1.1/1 or 300.1.1/2 or 300.1.1/3 or 300.1.1/4) must justify whether actions have been taken in improving the quality of the programme of study in each assessment area. The answers' documentation should be brief and accurate and supported by the relevant documentation. Referral to annexes should be made only when necessary.*
- *In particular, under each assessment area and by using the 2nd column of each table, the HEI must respond on the following:*
 - *the areas of improvement and recommendations of the EEC*
 - *the conclusions and final remarks noted by the EEC*
- *The institution should respond to the EEC comments, in the designated area next each comment. The comments of the EEC should be copied from the EEC report **without any interference** in the content.*
- *In case of annexes, those should be attached and sent on separate document(s). Each document should be in *.pdf format and named as annex1, annex2, etc.*

1. Study programme and study programme's design and development (ESG 1.1, 1.2, 1.7, 1.8, 1.9)

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For official use Only
The successful delivery and development of this programme depends on the willingness of the institution to further develop the professional capacity of staff in line with the ambitions of the University.	The Institution is not only willing to further develop the professional capacity of staff in line with the ambitions of the University but it has designed its own Professional Development Scheme and has committed resources (80,000 euro per year) for the participation of its faculty in international academic conferences, exchanges, and professional development opportunities abroad. LIU has also introduced one semester sabbatical every 3.5 years of service or a full year after 7 years of service. For more details see attached LIU Faculty Professional Development Policy (ANNEX 1).	Choose an item.
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2. Student – centred learning, teaching and assessment (ESG 1.3)

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The connection to research could be further improved.	To improve the connection of teaching and learning to research CIIM-LIU has developed an Instructors Manual on Student-Learning, Problem-Based Instruction (attached as ANNEX 2) that involves students in researching real world problems by applying quantitative and qualitative research methods which are part of their core curriculum. Research papers are also assigned in the required and recommended readings of courses. In the MBA programme in particular, students are involved in research through the capstone core course MB791 – Applied Business Research Project I (12 ECTS). They can continue their research by selecting to do in addition elective MB792 – Applied Business Research Project II (18 ECTS). See revised MBA curriculum (ANNEX 3). Students also are engaged as research assistants (occasionally, as co-authors) in faculty research projects.	Choose an item.
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3. Teaching staff (ESG 1.5)

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<p>While there is some diversity of the teaching staff in terms of nationalities and cultures, the degree of diversity tends to be lower than what can be observed in other business schools across Europe and the USA. This lower degree of diversity may reflect the local reality of the academic labour market in Cyprus. Similarly, the gender diversity of the teaching staff is relatively low. Hence, the EEC encourages the Department to consider broadening the diversity of its teaching body in its future recruitment drives.</p>	<p>The gender imbalance of the faculty (80% male, 20% female) is an issue, as in many other institutions. Out of the 1,000+ applicants for advertised positions at LIU only 15% were female. Improving the gender imbalance of the faculty is a long-term strategic objective of the institution. Currently, we are addressing this problem by targeted “head-hunting” of accomplished female academics of Cypriot or Greek origin based in UK and EU universities who wish to return to their home countries. Currently, we are considering three such possibilities mindful that this might increase the cultural imbalance. However, we are doing better with regard to cultural & national diversity of our faculty with Greek, German, Israeli, Italian, Russian, American and Canadian nationalities in addition to Cypriots. Our ongoing faculty recruitment search is global aiming to add more nationalities and increase the cultural diversity of our faculty.</p>	<p>Choose an item.</p>
<p>It was pointed out through our discussion that incentives are given to the teaching staff to publish. The EEC observed a number of good attempts, but they also believe that the academic staff could make a few more steps at the research level. Even though the existence of research seminars was pointed out to the committee during the interviews there was no detailed evidence in the internal evaluation report of these seminars and whether faculty presented their work to colleagues in order to obtain feedback, a practice that may improve the quality of the research and research related teaching in the institution. The COVID-19 global situation could foster the introduction of virtual research seminars with renowned speakers from abroad to present their work at little or no cost to the Department</p>	<p>The academic staff are making more than a few more steps at the research level, as evidenced by the attached LIU Research Center Presentation (ANNEX 4)</p> <p>The research seminars are based on both working and published papers by both CIIM-LIU and external international academics of great repute. Discussants are assigned and the entire seminar is recorded and exchanges and comments continue beyond the seminar and common interests among the participants are identified as a basis for potential research collaborations. The senior academics (both internal and external) act as research models and mentors for the junior ones. The junior faculty present their preliminary work such as working papers to colleagues (internal and external) precisely in order to obtain feedback. This helps enormously in improving the quality of the research and the identification of synergies and common interest leading to collaborations and even cross-disciplinary research.</p> <p>The EEC is right that during the interviews there was no detailed evidence in the internal evaluation report of these seminars. We keep no such detailed evidence of internal evaluation beyond the oral and written exchanges among the participants. We do so by deliberate decision, based on both internal experience and external expert advice that such a practice will limit the willingness of junior</p>	<p>Choose an item.</p>



	<p>researchers to present early drafts of their work and the free exchange of genuine comments and feedback from senior researchers which might impact promotion evaluations.</p> <p>This is exactly what happened with COVID-19 at CIIM-LIU. It has fostered the introduction of biweekly virtual research seminars with renowned speakers from abroad who presented their work at little or no cost to the Institution (see research seminar list by with renowned speakers in ANNEX 5)</p>	
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4. Student admission, progression, recognition and certification (ESG 1.4)

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None whatsoever.	No actions warranted.	Choose an item.
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5. Learning resources and student support (ESG 1.6)

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<p>Previous evaluations of the Department and programmes highlighted the need for the Department to improve the access to electronic journals and databases. While the Department has gone some way in terms of improving access to electronic journals, more needs to be done in terms of access to specialised databases. Compared to other business schools, the Department seems light in terms of databases and staff typically rely on free databases (such as Yahoo Finance and the IMF databases). The EEC was told that the Department is currently looking into obtaining a Bloomberg terminal or a Refinitiv Eikon terminal. This would be an important step in the right direction. However, more would still need to be done.</p>	<p>This week we purchased the Refinitiv Eikon with DataStream for Academia a global cross-asset data platform (see ANNEX 6 for evidence). This solution also includes comprehensive company information on a global basis, and covers financials, estimates, ESG data, Deals data, Ownership, DataStream's wealth of content including the best in class macro-economic database, and cover other contents set from derivatives to fixed income, from exchange rates and interest rates, to commodities data and sophisticated analytics such as Starmine or the Lipper mutual fund database to mention a few. With specific tools such as Portfolio analytics, calculators etc. It also allows downloading of data in an easy fashion through excel add-in or Python code.</p> <p>We recognized that more need to be done and for this reason the Department is currently looking into obtaining additionally: The University of Manchester Library: Business and Management: Databases https://subjects.library.manchester.ac.uk/business/databases and the ProQuest One Academic https://about.proquest.com/en/products-services/ProQuest-One-Academic/ (See ANNEX 7 a list of databases available to CIIM-LIU as a Member of the Cyprus Library consortium)</p>	<p>Choose an item.</p>
<p>In a meeting with current students and alumni there was mention that the facilities in Nicosia were in need of an upgrade and were not always well maintained. Still, the EEC was reassured during the exit meeting with senior management and the programme coordinators that the Nicosia facilities had been recently modernised and that the opinions that had been voiced must have referred to the state of the facilities before the upgrade</p>	<p>The alumni who made this comment have been students at CIIM several years ago; while current students may have not visited the premises during the past 3 years because of the COVID-19 Pandemic and therefore they have not experienced or even observed the recently (2020-21) expanded, upgraded and modernized Nicosia campus premises and facilities.</p>	<p>Choose an item.</p>
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6. Additional for doctoral programmes
 (ALL ESG)

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7. Eligibility (Joint programme) (ALL ESG)

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B. Conclusions and final remarks

Conclusions and final remarks by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For official use Only
<p>The MBA programme has been running for 32 years, since 1991. It is a well-structured and well-functioning programme, which has been evaluated quite a few times. The programme is connected with industry. The programme coordinator and the Department are to be commended for the latest update of the programme.</p>	<p>No action is needed here. We fully concur with everything said by the EEC Committee, which proved to be quite perceptive. The EEC endorsed fully the latest update of the programme and the changes made and complimented the MBA Director for these, which is reflected in their conclusion and final remark here.</p>	<p>Choose an item.</p>
<p>The quality of the student intake and student performance and progression on the programme are comparable to equivalent programmes at competing academic institutions across Europe. A meeting of the EEC with current students and alumni suggested that the programme generates high levels of student satisfaction and student development. Students and alumni would typically recommend the programme to prospective students.</p>	<p>Again no action is needed. The EEC is impressed with <i>“the quality of the student intake and student performance and progression on the programme are comparable to equivalent programmes at competing academic institutions across Europe... the programme generates high levels of student satisfaction and student development”</i>.</p>	<p>Choose an item.</p>
<p>Areas for improvement would include the diversity of the teaching staff in terms of their national and cultural backgrounds as well as gender. The Department and senior management of the new university should take into consideration improvements in diversity when engaging in future recruitment drives.</p>	<p>We have answered this comment in section 3 above.</p>	<p>Choose an item.</p>
<p>Similar to what was highlighted in the Departmental review, the new university’s investors should be made aware that the Department may require further investment to provide access to financial databases, databases which are typically on offer to</p>	<p>The new university’s investors are fully aware and committed. Following this EEC comment, they have been recommitted themselves to make all further investments required to provide access to financial and other databases typically on offer to faculty and students at other comparable institutions in Europe. Already, this week we purchased the Refinitiv Eikon with DataStream for Academia a global cross-asset data platform (see ANNEX 6</p>	<p>Choose an item.</p>

<p>faculty and students at other comparable institutions in Europe.</p>	<p>for evidence) and they proceed to make further investments in additional databases (see section 5 above).</p>	
<p>The EEC is of the opinion that an upgrade of the Department's facilities is not only necessary to recruit new members of faculty and to retain existing members, but also to ensure the Department's competitive edge in an increasingly competitive local market for MBA students.</p>	<p>The issue of upgrading the department's facilities is addressed in our response to the EEC Departmental Report. Here it suffices to say that the CIIM facilities (within which the MBA enjoys a privileged position, as the institution's flagship) have been recently (2020-21) expanded upgraded and modernized. These facilities will constitute the University's temporary headquarters for only the first two years to be transfer to super-modern purpose-built campus in Palodia, Limassol by AY 2025-26.</p>	<p>Choose an item.</p>

C. Higher Education Institution academic representatives

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>Signature</i>
Professor Theodore Panayotou	Rector	
Professor Doron Sonsino	Vice Rector and Dean of Law & Social Science School	
Professor Waldemar Pfoertsch	Dean of Business School & Director of Research Centre	
Associate Professor Theodosis Mourouzis	Dean of Technology & Innovation School	
Paris Cleanthous	Department Chairman and MBA Programme Director	

Date: Click to enter date

