

Doc. 300.1.2

Date: 3/05/2023

Higher Education Institution's Response

- **Higher Education Institution:**

UCLan Cyprus

- **Town:** Larnaca

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

In Greek:

Πτυχίο στη Διαφήμιση και Επικοινωνίες Μάρκετινγκ
(4 ακαδημαϊκά έτη, 240 ECTS, Πτυχίο)

In English:

BA (Hons) Advertising and Marketing
Communications (4 academic years, 240 ECTS,
Bachelor)

- **Language(s) of instruction:** English

- **Programme's status:** Currently Operating

- **Concentrations (if any):**

In Greek: N/A

In English: N/A



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
<p>1) External stakeholders (e.g. industry representatives) are not involved in informing and shaping the BA curriculum.</p>	<p>We thank the EEC for pointing to the importance of a formal participation of external stakeholders (e.g., industry experts) to curriculum design. It is important to clarify at this point that the academic team leading the programme considers it vital too to develop and maintain a strong network of collaborators and enduring partnerships for both curriculum design and student employability purposes. Since the development of the Bachelor's programme, the team has established a large network of national and international partners and collaborators, especially industry partners, which have been informally engaged with the programme in terms of providing advice on curriculum content and suggesting skills and competencies that are critical for success in the industry, including enhancing students' employability. These informal contributions have been valuable in shaping or changing the content of modules, assessment topics, module and course learning outcomes, etc. In addition, our industry partners have been engaging in other educational activities, such as guest lectures, workshops, real case studies, real life student projects, student competitions, student awards and many more.</p> <p>We welcome the Committee's constructive recommendation to adopt a more formal and systematic approach towards external stakeholders' involvement in curriculum design. As such, the programme team along with the Head of the School will proceed to create an Advisory Board. The role of the Advisory Board will be to provide formal feedback and recommendations to the programme team in relation to its existing curriculum, suggest further enhancements, share news on industry developments and point towards any changes required in terms of developing targeted transferrable skills.</p>	<p>Choose an item.</p>
<p>2) The learning outcomes in the BA program should be reconsidered and revised to include a more concise listing which reflects the learning associated with a program of this nature and level.</p>	<p>The targeted feedback that the EEC made on the programme's structure has allowed the improvement of our BA (Hons) Advertising and Marketing Communications provision. Following the re-structuring of the programme, the academic team has proceeded with the revision of the Learning Outcomes (LOs). In this respect, Bloom's taxonomy has been used to ensure that both the appropriate level is reflected in the LOs and the appropriate wording is used. In addition, the LOs have been revised to reflect the updated</p>	<p>Choose an item.</p>

	structure (modules and content), which addresses the recommendations of the ECC. The updated LOs are presented in Appendix I.	
3) The BA would be strengthened, if the content in each year was reconsidered so that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Year one could consist of advertising and marketing communications; introduction to business functions; marketing essentials plus two other marketing modules to make up the quota of modules. • Year two could consist of the current year 3 modules. Effectively this year should feature modules with codes starting with 2. • Year three could consist of the current year 4 modules (excluding the thesis/project which would stay in the new year 4). Effectively this year should feature modules with codes starting with 3. • Year 4 could consist of the electives currently listed for year 4 plus the thesis/project. 	We would like to thank the EEC in offering recommendations on how we can strengthen our BA (Hons) Advertising and Marketing Communications programme and enrich it with more specific and state-of-the-art marketing modules. The academic team has seriously considered the detailed feedback offered by EEC and proposes in response a new structure, that it is available in Table 2 (see attached Appendix II).	Choose an item.
4) The program could improve if generic topics such as academic writing etc. were removed from the list of compulsory courses and support provided through workshops and 1-to-1 support as per necessary.	The revised structure of the programme took into consideration the EEC feedback and the module <i>EF1498 Academic Writing and Study</i> has been removed from the list of compulsory modules in Year 1. Still, the academic team has included this module in the list of optional modules in order to give students the opportunity to benefit from more in-depth learning when it comes to fundamentals of academic writing and study skills.	Choose an item.
5) The information provided in the student handbook often includes information and references to UCLan UK and other campuses. For instance, the program appears to be accredited by CIM (valid for the UK only) and entry requirements for Hong	We agree with the EEC that the student handbook should contain information relevant to the programme of study on offer at UCLan Cyprus only. Following this request, the handbook has been updated to now contain information which is related only to UCLan Cyprus provision (Annex 1).	Choose an item.

<p>Kong are listed. In addition, the description of the program structure and awards needs to be clarified. The handbook needs to be updated with UCLan Cy information only.</p>		
<p>6) Students' satisfaction with their modules is recorded. However, student participation in the evaluation is rather low.</p>	<p>As discussed during the meeting, we agree that there is a need to increase student participation in the evaluation process. In this respect, the University's Student Experience and Engagement Committee (SEEC), as well as Student Support Services are currently investigating alternative ways to motivate students to increase their participation in the University's evaluation of student satisfaction. The efforts taking place at the moment are centred on the provision of incentives to students and the revision of the Module Feedback Questionnaire (MFQ) with the aims of making it more appealing to the students.</p>	<p>Choose an item.</p>

2. Student – centred learning, teaching and assessment (ESG 1.3)

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For official use Only
<p>1) Considering the nature of the programme, integrating more active engagement with industry and external stakeholders in the curriculum could enhance the student learning experience.</p>	<p>The programme team considers it vital to build a strong network of partners and long-term industry collaborations with depth and breadth. Through the years, the programme managed to develop a large network of national and international collaborators, especially industry partners, who have been informally engaging with the School in terms of providing advice on curriculum development, industry knowledge/skill needs and student employability aspects. Moreover, our industry partners have been engaging in other educational activities, such as guest lectures, field trips, real case studies, real life student projects, student internships and many more. It is also worth noting that the programme organises an annual employability week for its students, where industry partners are invited to talk to the students about their future profession as well as deliver specialised presentations on the latest trends in their industry sector and specific employability skills sought after by employers. We welcome the EEC's constructive recommendation to integrate more active engagement of the industry partners and external stakeholders with the programme, and we acknowledge the substantial benefit and value this can offer to our students. To this end, the programme team will pursue further industry collaborations as well as enhance the engagement of our industry partners with the programme.</p>	<p>Choose an item.</p>
<p>2) We note that the program team has a high-level perspective of the assessment methods utilised across the program. The EEC encourages the program team to consider ways to further innovate with assessment, especially when it comes to practicing important skills and competencies, such as problem-based learning and live cases/projects.</p>	<p>We agree with this recommendation, and we will further pursue innovative assessment methods, such as problem-based learning, live cases, etc. The programme team is working closely with our Teaching and Learning Enhancement Committee (TLEC) to review the current assessment methods and identify a series of modern and engaging ways that will enable the students to transfer knowledge, skills, competencies, etc. between learning and assessment (e. g., providing marketing solutions for real companies/projects as part of assessment).</p> <p>Further than seminars and trainings, TLEC establishes forums for the exchange and sharing of information among academics who deliver on both conventional and distance learning programmes. This takes place through interactive workshops as well as a monthly bulletin/newsletter where</p>	<p>Choose an item.</p>

	<p>academics can write about their own classroom experience, including the efficacy of assessment strategies. Furthermore, TLEC at UCLan Cyprus has a close cooperation with UCLan UK's Centre of Collaborative Learning (CCL), and, most importantly, the Technology Enabled Learning and Teaching (TELT) unit of CCL. Tutors can access via TELT a variety of professional development resources including assessment methods.</p>	
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3. Teaching staff (ESG 1.5)

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For official use Only
<p>1) The University has a very detailed workload policy document. Still, its operationalisation could have been underpinned by a more structured and transparent system.</p>	<p>The School operates an academic workload model, which follows an interactive process of defining the academics' yearly workload and considers each academic's individual plans. The structured approach and transparency of the workload model is ensured by following University-wide standards, but it is also personalised depending on the planned activities of each member of the academic team. This is done during the appraisal period before the start of the academic year, where the academic completes the workload and appraisal document enlisting all activities (teaching, research, and admin). This is then discussed in detail during the meeting with the line manager and once agreed the workload is submitted. Note that the workload model is revisited during the academic year to control for changes in planned or unplanned activities.</p> <p>As a result, the workload model provides necessary foundations and processes and enables adjustment of the distribution of academics' time among teaching (e.g., delivery of lectures, assessment marking, student support, student feedback, etc.), research and administrative duties.</p> <p>The standard target distribution of the academics' workload hours is 40% teaching, 40% research and 20% administration, but during the annual review other adjustments can be made according to the academic's research output and engagement. The workload model considers several aspects of the responsibilities of the academics in the aforementioned three areas, including:</p> <p>Teaching:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct Regular Teaching Hours • Direct Evening/Weekend Teaching Hours • Direct Distance Learning Hours • Preparation for Modules (conventional and distance learning delivery) • Coursework assessment marking, verification, and moderation • Undergraduate and Postgraduate thesis supervision • Annual curriculum update <p>Research:</p>	<p>Choose an item.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research Activities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Quantity and Quality of Scientific Publications (includes factors such as journal quality, length of work, number of authors and first authorship, monographs, etc.). ○ Preparation of research bidding (includes factors such as type/size of proposal, first submission/re-submission, contribution to proposal writing, academic's role (principal investigator, local coordinator, work package leader, scientific contributor, etc.)). ○ PhD external supervision • Scholarly Activities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ External research activities (e.g., organisation/delivery/chairing of research seminars, research conferences, workshops, and round tables) ○ Peer Esteem activities (e.g., editors of journals, reviewers for journals, participation in external research committees/boards) • Research Income generated activities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ External Research Funding (e.g., EU, RIF) ○ Contract Research ○ Research Exploitation ○ Research Consultancy <p>Administration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course Leadership • Module Leadership • Personal Tutoring/Academic Advising • Office Hours • Preparation/Validation of new courses • Preparation of paperwork for minor changes or re-validation of existing courses • Panel membership • Lead/Participation in University Committees • Other administrative activities (team meetings, assessment board attendance, training sessions, e-mail enquiries by students, data input, report preparation, attendance and student at risk monitoring and input, writing references for students, etc.). <p>Once the workload model is prepared, academics who are above the allocated 40% research-active, can request a reduction in teaching hours and increase in research hours.</p>	
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	<p>It is the responsibility of the academic and the Head of School to ensure during the annual review meeting that academics are allocated the needed time to conduct research and be productive in this area. This is a transparent process, since we consider it important for the sustainability and strengthening of our research environment.</p>	
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4. Student admission, progression, recognition and certification (ESG 1.4)

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For official use Only
<p>1) The EEC would like to note the low response ratio of online surveys (15-20%), which raises doubts regarding the reliability of the feedback collected from students and in turn the effectiveness of the specific measures for improvement and actions plans taken by the University. The evaluation form can be shortened, so that it is easier for more students to complete it.</p>	<p>We acknowledge that the response rate is low, and the University is taking various actions to provide incentives to students. These have been covered in point 1.6 (see page 5 above).</p>	<p>Choose an item.</p>
<p>2) The use of more sophisticated forms of learning analytics mechanisms based on AI and specifically Machine Learning are encouraged in order to monitor and predict student performance and dropout and to be able to provide timely corrective measures. This is strongly recommended in light of University's expansion plans to increase its academic portfolio.</p>	<p>With the School's and University's plan to expand its academic portfolio and grow its number of students, the use of such sophisticated learning analytics mechanisms, such as AI and machine learning, is considered highly important. As the volume of student cohort increases, it will become more challenging for tutors to monitor student engagement and provide personalised feedback to each student for formative assessment components. We acknowledge that learning analytics can assist to fill this gap by providing automated feedback and intervention to support students who may be struggling. To this end, therefore, the University is committed to investing in Machine Learning resources to predict student performance and dropout as soon as student numbers justify this.</p> <p>Currently, however, we use the below student performance and engagement mechanisms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The SEAM meetings: The Student Support Services office, along with tutors, collect information on students, and then the School SEAM Board (Student Engagement and Attendance Monitoring Board) convenes to evaluate each case separately. The SEAM board takes place every couple of months during which all students-at-risk are discussed (students-at-risk are identified in relation to attendance, interaction, and academic performance), and actions are taken to contact and provide support to the relevant students. • Academic advisor scheme: each student is assigned an academic advisor who informs the course leader 	<p>Choose an item.</p>

	<p>and the SEAM in case a student is struggling or has not been engaging.</p> <p>The above tools have been critical to predict student performance and potential dropouts, allowing tutors to intervene early and provide support or any other corrective measures timely. In addition to the above tools, the University considers the use of learning analytics mechanisms as important assets in education which can significantly benefit students and tutors. As numbers of students grow, the use of AI and machine learning tools will also increase and we will act accordingly, as the University is committed towards student progression, support, and retention. We aim at investigating more advanced on-line systems to complement our existing LMS (Blackboard).</p>	
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5. Learning resources and student support
 (ESG 1.6)

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For official use Only
<p>We note that while the University has a small research budget for all academic staff it is not enough to fully cover expenses such as attending international conferences. This is considered essential if the University is to meet its research aspirations. Although staff can apply for more funding, it would be beneficial if the budget is increased (ideally to cover 1 conference a year for all academic staff) which will also streamline the research funding application process.</p>	<p>We agree that it is important for academics to attend international conferences as part of their academic development. The School already includes in its yearly budget dedicated funds for Faculty development. Following your suggestion, the Head of School has already made a relevant provision for the budget of the next academic year, which has been approved by the University's Finance Office. This will allow each member of the faculty to present in at least 1 conference per year with all expenses covered.</p>	<p>Choose an item.</p>



6. Additional for doctoral programmes (ALL ESG)

NOT APPLICABLE

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For official use Only
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7. Eligibility (Joint programme) (ALL ESG)

NOT APPLICABLE

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For official use Only
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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 EEC report provides feedback on the BA (Hons) Advertising and Marketing Communications. The report outlines the main findings, highlights areas of strength and proposes actions to improve the content and delivery of the program. In particular, the EEC would like to draw the program team's attention to the comments made with regards to the structure of the program (please see Section 1).</p>	<p>We are grateful for the feedback provided by the External Evaluation Committee with respect to our BA (Hons) in Advertising and Marketing Communications programme. It is very encouraging that the panel has been generally positive and supportive towards the re-accreditation of the Programme, and we welcome the recommendations which offer us the opportunity to strengthen the Programme in terms of the structure and other components, as it is reflected in Table 2 (see Appendix II)</p>	<p>Choose an item.</p>
<p>We trust that the feedback will inform future developments and help underpin the success of the BA (Hons) Advertising and Marketing Communications. We wish colleagues at the UCLan Cy all the best in the next steps when it comes to developing the program.</p>	<p>We would again like to express our appreciative thanks to the Committee for their valuable input and contributions to our programme.</p>	<p>Choose an item.</p>
<p>Should the Cyprus Agency of Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Higher Education require any clarifications with regards to the points raised in the report, the EEC remains at the Agency's disposal. Last but not least, the EEC would like to thank the CYQAA coordinator for managing the process both efficiently and effectively. His facilitation has been exemplar and has made it possible for the evaluation to run smoothly.</p>	<p>UCLan Cyprus would also like to thank the CYQAA coordinator for the exemplar management of the re-accreditation procedure.</p>	<p>Choose an item.</p>



C. Higher Education Institution academic representatives

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>Signature</i>
Dr Olga Kvasova	Course Leader of BA (Hons) Advertising and Marketing Communications	
Prof Loukas Glyptis	Head of School of Business and Management	
Dr Cosmina Theodoulou	Chair of UCLan Cyprus Academic Standards and Quality Assurance Committee	

Date: 3/05/2023

