

Doc. 300.1.2

Date:

Higher Education Institution's response

- **Higher education institution:**
Mediterranean Institute of Management
- **Town:** Nicosia
- **Programme of study (Name, ECTS, duration, cycle)**

In Greek: Μάστερ στη Διοίκηση Επιχειρήσεων ή
Μάστερ στη Δημόσια Διοίκηση, 110 ECTS, 20
μήνες, Μάστερ

In English: Master in Business Administration or
Master in Public Administration, 110 ECTS, 20
months, Master

- **Language of instruction:** Greek
- **Programme's status**
New programme: No
Currently operating: Yes

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 and 2016” [N. 136 (I)/2015 and N. 47(I)/2016].

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) must justify whether actions have been taken in improving the quality of the programme of study in each assessment area.*
- *In particular, under each assessment area, the HEI must respond on, without changing the format of the report:*
 - *the findings, strengths, areas of improvement and recommendations of the EEC*
 - *the deficiencies noted under the quality indicators (criteria)*
 - *the conclusions and final remarks noted by the EEC*
- *The HEI’s response must follow below the EEC’s comments, which must be copied from the external evaluation report (Doc. 300.1.1).*
- *In case of annexes, those should be attached and sent on a separate document.*

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

(ESG 1.1, 1.2, 1.8, 1.9)

1.12 The panel commends the research used in the dissertations, however, the panel recommends that more and more recent research articles from scholarly journals are used in courses.

MIM management communicated with all members of the Teaching Staff and invited them to introduce more recent research articles from scholarly journals to their courses and revise accordingly section 14. "Recommended or Required Reading" of the Course Description Form (Appendices 4a & 4b). They were also advised to upload the research articles to the e-learning platform (Moodle) of the School.

1.8.2; 1.15; 1.18 The MPA programme consists of 43 percent MPA-specific courses. This is just narrowly within the bandwidth, communicated to the panel, of the 40% - 60% that is allowed by the Greek accreditation organization. Nevertheless, the panel notes a number of issues with the design of the application.

- In the first place, during the site visit, the panel was informed that separate diplomas are awarded for the Greek language Master in Business Administration and Greek language Master in Public Administration respectively.

- In the second place, the Programme Intended Learning Outcomes are the same for both programmes (Greek MBA and Greek MPA programme). This raises the question whether the programmes are really separate or are actually the same. When the intended learning outcomes are the same, technically there is only one programme.

- In the third place, the panel would like to stress that a master programme in Public Administration, according to international standards, is more than an extended MBA programme in terms of Programme Intended Learning Outcomes and curriculum content. Also the current structure of the MPA programme, as an elective addition to an MBA core, could be redesigned to better fit the specific nature of public administration. Courses in the field of business administration are likely candidates for electives in public administration. In its current form, the application focuses, according to the panel, strongly on the Greek- language MBA application. For an MBA programme, the current application would be satisfactory (see also its resemblance with the international MBA application).

The comments of the panel were taken into consideration and the programme structure and curriculum content have been redesigned in order to further distinguish the MPA from the MBA Programme. The specific MBA or MPA courses have been increased from 43% to 57%. Separate intended learning outcomes have been developed for the MBA and MPA programmes with specific reference to knowledge, skills and attitudes (see Appendices 1a & 1b). Detailed information regarding the changes introduced is presented in the "Areas of improvement and recommendations" section.

1.21 The panel recommends more structural collaborations with well-established universities from other countries, while being attentive to constraints on part time students.

The Erasmus office in an effort to connect internationally to well-established programmes has contacted several universities and it is in the process of signing an inter institutional

agreement with the Aleksander Moisiu University Durrës, Albania. It is also awaiting a response from the Athens University of Economics and Business (AUEB). The AUEB is the oldest educational institution in Greece in the fields of economics and business administration and is the top university in Greece and one of the best universities internationally in the fields of science that it covers.

Furthermore, MIM has recently become member of the Business Graduates Association (BGA) <https://businessgraduatesassociation.com/> and it is in the process of exploring collaboration with other members of the Association.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

The panel recommends to make more explicit the coherence between the intended learning outcomes--specifying these separately for the MBA and MPA programmes, and include attitudes explicitly in the program intended learning outcomes.

Separate intended learning outcomes have been developed for the MBA and MPA programmes with specific reference to knowledge, skills and attitudes (see Appendices 1a & 1b). The programme intended learning outcomes will be included in the new Programme prospectus and the MIM website.

In the panel meeting with staff, it became evident that the Internal Quality Committee strongly focuses on quality of education. The panel applauds these efforts. However, with regard to (continuous) development at the level of the programme and curriculum, the panel recommends the programme to develop a clear process for this, involving staff, students, and external stakeholders.

The **Annual Programme Review (APR)** Process is introduced in order to facilitate the regular monitoring and improvement of the MIM Programmes of Study. The APR Process is included in the updated MIM Quality Assurance Policy (Appendix 2). Paragraph 4.4.3 Study Programmes of the MIM Quality Assurance Policy states the following: “The revision of the Programmes of Study is carried out within the framework of the Annual Programme Review (APR). The APR is conducted with the involvement of staff, students and external stakeholders and aims to regularly monitor and improve the MIM Programmes of Study. The APR includes the analysis of the results of the evaluations completed by the students and the members of the teaching staff during the academic year. A critical analysis of the results is carried out by the Internal Quality Committee (IQC). Part of the APR is also the benchmarking of the MIM Programmes of Studies with other similar programmes (structure, content, duration, etc.) offered in Cyprus and abroad. Benchmarking helps to identify areas of improvement and good practices. The results of the evaluations and of the benchmarking are sent for views to the MIM Council and the final conclusions are used for the introduction of changes and the continuous development of the School Programmes. The contribution of external stakeholders is ensured with the involvement of the MIM Council members who advise on current issues that have arisen, based on their experience and the latest developments in the sectors /organisations they represent. It is noted that the Council has members from the Employer’s sector, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sport and Youth, the Ministry of Finance, the Human Resource Development Authority, the Directorate

General for European Programmes, Coordination and Development and two academic institutions based in Cyprus”.

In general, the curriculum reflects the subject areas that are relevant for an MBA programme. The electives for an MPA programme could be better tied to the complex political-administrative context in which managers function. That being said, however, the curriculum is relatively traditional and should—according to the panel—include more modern approaches. The discussions with teaching staff and students reinforce this assessment. More in particular, the panel strongly advises the MBA-programme to make the course on “Business Information systems” mandatory rather than elective or integrate information management in the present courses. Similarly, the programme could consider a course in international management or integrate international management into the present courses. The panel also strongly advises the programme to integrate the course on “Organisation of the Republic of Cyprus” in other courses, or to make this course elective rather than mandatory.

The recommendation of the panel has been adopted and the Programmes structure and curriculum content have been redesigned. Both the MBA and MPA programmes have 9 compulsory courses of a total of 60 ECTS, 4 elective courses of a total of 20 ECTS and a 30 ECTS compulsory dissertation. Five (5) out of nine (9) compulsory courses are MPA or MBA – specific courses. The redesigned Programmes consist of 57% specific courses resulting from 32.5 ECTS compulsory MPA or MBA – specific courses plus the 30 ECTS MPA or MBA -specific dissertation (see Appendices 1a & 1b).

Furthermore, more modern approaches have been introduced in order to make the Programmes less traditional. In particular, the course “Business Information Systems (5 ECTS)” was introduced as a compulsory course for the MBA programme and the course “e-government (5 ECTS)” for the MPA programme respectively.

The course “General Management (5 ECTS)” changed to “Management Principles and International Business (7.5 ECTS)” for both the MBA and the MPA.

The course “Business Analytics (5 ECTS)” has been introduced for both the MBA and the MPA Programmes.

The courses “Organisation of the Republic of Cyprus” and “Public Administration in Cyprus/Organisation & Operation” have been integrated in the new MPA course “Principles, Structure and Operations of the Public Sector”.

Numerous other changes have been introduced and apply to a number of courses as can be seen in the detailed Programme structure and content presented in Appendices 3a & 3b. Detailed description of each course can be found in Appendices 4a & 4b.

2. Teaching, learning and student assessment (*ESG 1.3*)

2.12 The teaching materials need to be enriched with recent articles and better access to databases. The students also have lack of knowledge of qualitative research methods and related software such as Nvivo.

The incorporation of more research articles is an aspect that the programme can improve on. Teachers can make better use of recent articles from refereed academic journals that are part of generally accepted peer reviewed journals.

MIM management communicated with all members of the Teaching Staff and asked them to introduce more recent research articles from scholarly journals to their courses and update accordingly section 14. “Recommended or Required Reading” of the Course Description Form (Appendices 4a & 4b). They were advised to upload the research articles to the e-learning platform (Moodle) of the School.

The programme can also improve by broadening the teaching portfolio on methodological research methods by adding qualitative research methods + software to conduct these methods, like Nvivo.

The course “Business Analytics (5 ECTS)” has been introduced and it will place emphasis on both numerical and non-numerical data gathering and analysis. Furthermore, the course “Research Methodology and Dissertation Writing” has been revised and upgraded from 5 to 7.5 ECTS (see Appendices 4a & 4b- Course Description Forms).

3. Teaching Staff (ESG 1.5)

In addition to your response to EEA's comments on the teaching staff:

- a. fill in TABLE 1: TEACHING STAFF at the end of this form and
- b. send the curriculum vitae of all the program lecturers on the forms posted on the Agency's website as an annex. (Form 500.1.03 for Universities and Form 500.1.04 for Higher Education Institutes)

3.10 The research output of the academic staff in internationally recognized peer-reviewed academic journals does not comply with standards mentioned in 3.10.

The MIM teaching staff is primarily composed of part time lectures occupied in other institutions where they are actively involved in research activities as it can be seen in Forms 500.1.04 (Appendix 6).

The teaching staff could include more recent research and more extensive analytical techniques in their teaching. The institute is also advised to include research activity of the staff in their evaluation.

MIM management communicated with all members of the Teaching Staff and asked them to introduce more recent research articles from scholarly journals to their courses and update accordingly section 14. "Recommended or Required Reading" of the Course Description Form (Appendices 4a & 4b). They were advised to upload the research articles on the e-learning platform (Moodle) of the School.

The TS Evaluation Questionnaire (See Appendix 5) has been revised and it now includes three more criteria as regards the promotion of students' dissertations for publication in scientific journals, the submission of research proposals in affiliation with MIM and the introduction in lectures/notes of recent research articles from scholarly journals. It was decided to use these criteria which are more explicit than research activity because the majority of MIM teaching staff are not MIM permanent staff.

The institute could work on better conditions to attract foreign staff and foreign students and actively involve them in the programme.

The MIM will continue with its subscription with Study Portals <https://studyportals.com/> in an effort to attract more foreign students and at the same time it will make an effort to participate in international fairs while being attentive to budget constraints.

The Erasmus Office continuously seeks ways to deploy already established agreements and at the same time aspires for new agreements. As already mentioned it is currently in the process of signing an inter institutional agreement with the Aleksander Moisiu University Durrës, Albania. It is also awaiting a response from the Athens University of Economics and Business (AUEB).

The MIM has identified Greece as a potential market due to common language and culture. Towards this effort MIM is aiming for a recognition from Δ.Ο.Α.Τ.Α.Π. (Hellenic NARIC) which is an organization supervised by the Hellenic Ministry of Education. Δ.Ο.Α.Τ.Α.Π. is responsible for the recognition of university or technological degrees that are awarded by foreign Higher Education Institutions (H.E.I.).

4. Students (ESG 1.4, 1.6, 1.7)

4.4 The program could offer better opportunities for exchange with good foreign universities.

The panel applauds the efforts made to connect the programme to the Erasmus exchange programme, especially given the small size of the programme. The panel also recognizes the constraints on professional students to combine study abroad with work and personal life. We encourage the programme with students to further facilitate the exchange of students.

As already mentioned the Erasmus Office is in the process of signing an inter institutional agreement with the Aleksander Moisiu University Durrës, Albania. It is also awaiting a response from the Athens University of Economics and Business (AUEB). The Erasmus Office will intensify its efforts to raise awareness amongst students and staff and also recent graduates so as to increase participation in mobility programs. Testimonials will be uploaded on the MIM website and also students that have participated in exchange programs will be invited in a well suited event to share their experiences and give useful tips.

5. Resources (ESG 1.6)

5.11 Teaching materials need to include more recent scientific journal publications.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

While programme has good library resources, like Ebsco and Proquest, it can make better use of it. Concretely, the programme can improve by making more use these resources by adding recent articles from refereed academic journals that are part of journal quality lists, like ABS to the courses in the educational programmes.

MIM management communicated with all members of the Teaching Staff and invited them to introduce more recent research articles from scholarly journals to their courses and revise accordingly section 14. “Recommended or Required Reading” of the Course Description Form (Appendices 4a & 4b). They were also advised to upload the research articles to the e-learning platform (Moodle) of the School.

6. Additional for distance learning programmes (*ALL ESG*)

N/A

7. Additional for doctoral programmes (*ALL ESG*)

N/A

8. Additional for joint programmes (*ALL ESG*)

N/A

B. Conclusions and final remarks

The panel concludes that overall the programme is partially compliant with international standards. The application combines a Business Administration and Public Administration programme, while an application usually concerns a specific programme with one distinct set of programme intended learning outcomes. Programme management may consider to explicitly integrate MPA as a major in the overall MBA programme.

The curriculum is relatively traditional and should—according to the panel—include more modern approaches. The discussions with teaching staff and students reinforced this assessment. More in particular, the panel strongly advises that the programme gives more attention to information management and international management topics and integrate this into the programme. The panel recommends the programme to further connect internationally to well-established programmes in the field.

As clearly stated in the MIM Internal Rules of Operation the following three separate Master Programmes are offered:

- MBA Programme taught in English
- MBA Programme taught in Greek
- MPA Programme taught in Greek

The Programmes have been redesigned based on the panel recommendations. Separate intended learning outcomes (Appendices 1a & 1b) have been formulated for the MBA and MPA programmes. The new Programmes structure and content (Appendices 3a & 3b) include more modern approaches with more emphasis to information and international management topics.

The revised structure of the MBA and MPA Programmes has now 9 compulsory courses of a total of 60 ECTS and 6 elective courses from which students can choose 4 of a total of 20 ECTS. Both Programmes also include a compulsory Dissertation of 30 ECTS.

The redesigned programme consists of 57% specific courses resulting from 32.5 ECTS compulsory MBA or MPA specific courses plus the 30 ECTS MBA or MPA-specific dissertation.

The revised structure of the MBA and MPA Programmes is presented in Appendices 3a & 3b and the detailed courses description is presented in Appendices 4a & 4b.

C. Higher Education Institution academic representatives

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>Signature</i>
Antonis Aniftos	Ag. Director	
Kyprianos Nicolaidis	MIM Manager	

Date:

TABLE 1: TEACHING STAFF

Full name	Employee status	Senior Academic Title	Taught Course	Course Code
Mr Kyprianos (Akis) Nicolaides	Permanent Full-time	MSc (Mechanical Eng.) MBA	Project and Quality Management in the Public Sector	ΔΕΠ209
Dr. Pavlos Panayi	Permanent Full-Time	PhD (Data Comm.)	Research Methodology and Dissertation Writing	ΕΣΔ206
Dr. Daina Nicolaou-Anastasiou	Part-time	PhD Strategy	Business Analytics Marketing Management	ΕΠΑ107 ΔΜΚ102
Vasos Georgiou	Part-time	Degree in law	Principles, Structure and Operation of the Public Sector	ΟΔΔ108
Dr. Andreas Efstathiades	Part-time	PhD Operations Management	Project and Quality Management in the Public Sector Organization and Management of Productive Systems	ΔΕΠ209 ΟΠΣ210
Pavlos Josephides	Part-time	MBA (Master in Business Administration- Finance)	Management Principles and International Business Strategic Management	ΑΔΔ109 ΣΔΣ205
Dr. Maria Michaelidis	Part-time	PhD Educational Leadership	Human Resource Management and Organizational Behavior	ΔΑΣ106
Andreas Sophocleous	Part-time	Master in Public Sector Management	Financial Management in the Public Sector	ΧΔΔ208
Dr. Paris Vogazianos	Part-time	PhD Preventive Medicine and Epidemiology	Research Methodology and Dissertation Writing Business Analytics Dissertation Workshop	ΕΣΔ206 ΕΠΑ107 ΕΔΠ100
Annita Petrou	Part-time	MSc in Organizational Psychology	Personal Development	ΑΠΔ105
Dr. Melita Charitou	Part-time	PhD in Financial and Accounting	Managerial Accounting Accounting and Financial analysis	ΕΔΛ402 ΛΧΑ110
Dr. Spyros Hadjidakis	Part-time	PhD Economics	Business Economics	ΟΙΚ202

Gianna Hadjihanna	Part-time	MA in Human Rights and Democratization	Civil Servant's Law	ΔΔΥ504
George Chrysafinis	Part-time	PhD Candidate in Public Administration	Principles, Structure and Operation of the Public Sector	ΟΔΔ108
George Kokou	Part-time	Master in Business Administration	Entrepreneurship and Innovation	ΕΠΚ408
Elia Kouzari	Part-time	PhD Candidate in Software Engineering	e-government Business Information Systems	ΗΛΔ207 ΠΔΕ407
Dr Alexandros Antonaras	Part-time	PhD Quality and Process Improvement	Ethics Corporate Sustainability and Responsibility	ΗΚΥ409
Stylianios Christophorou	Part-time	Master of Laws in International Commercial Law	Business Law	ΕΕΔ502