Doc. 300.1.1

Date: Date.

External Evaluation Report

(Conventional-face-to-face programme of study)

- **Higher Education Institution:**
  Ledra College
- **Town: Nicosia**
- **School/Faculty (if applicable):** School/Faculty
- **Department/ Sector:** Department/Sector
- **Programme of study- Name (Duration, ECTS, Cycle)**

  In Greek:

  Programme Name

  In English:

  AI for Digital Business
- **Language(s) of instruction: English**
- **Programme's status:** New
- **Concentrations (if any):**

  In Greek: Concentrations
  In English: Concentrations

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 evaluation is about the new programme AI for digital business, 120 ECTS, 2 years Diploma, Ledra College, Nicosia. Here follows the programme of the visit at the premises of Ledra College:

09:00 – 09:10, introduction

09:10 – 09:30, meeting with the Academic Director and members of the Academic Committee

09:30 – 09:50, meeting with the members of the Internal Evaluation Committee

10:00 – 11:10, meeting with the Head(s) of the relevant department and the Coordination Committee

11:10 – 12:30, meeting with members of the teaching staff

12:40 – 13:30, meeting with members of the administrative staff

14:30 – 16:00, meeting with external stakeholders

16:00 – 16:30, meeting with students

16:30 – 16:50, visit to the premises

16:50 – 17:20, meeting between the EEC members

17:20 – 18:00, discussion with the head of the department, the coordinator of the programme and the Academic Quality and Compliance

B. External Evaluation Committee (EEC)

Name	*Position*	*University*
Iordanis Kavathatzopoulos	Professor	Uppsala University
Raghava Rao Mukkamala	Professor	Copenhagen Business School
Shahab Heshmati Alamdari	Asc. Professor	Aalborg University
Georgia Christodoulou	Student	Cyprus University
Name	Position	University
Name	Position	University

C. Guidelines on content and structure of the report

- *The external evaluation report follows the structure of assessment areas.*
- *At the beginning of each assessment area there is a box presenting:*
  (a) *sub-areas*
  (b) *standards which are relevant to the European Standards and Guidelines (ESG)*
  (c) *some questions that EEC may find useful.*
- *The questions aim at facilitating the understanding of each assessment area and at illustrating the range of topics covered by the standards.*
- *Under each assessment area, it is important to provide information regarding the compliance with the requirements of each sub-area. In particular, the following must be included:*

Findings

A short description of the situation in the Higher Education Institution (HEI), based on elements from the application for external evaluation and on findings from the onsite 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 to be dealt with, followed by or linked to the recommendations of how to improve the situation.

- *The EEC should state the compliance for each sub-area (Non-compliant, Partially compliant, Compliant), which must be in agreement with everything stated in the report. It is pointed out that, in the case of standards that cannot be applied due to the status of the HEI and/or of the programme of study, N/A (= Not Applicable) should be noted.*
- *The EEC should state the conclusions and final remarks regarding the programme of study as a whole.*
- ***The report may also address other issues which the EEC finds relevant.***

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

(ESG 1.1, 1.2, 1.7, 1.8, 1.9)

Sub-areas

1.1 Policy for quality assurance
1.2 Design, approval, on-going monitoring and review
1.3 Public information
1.4 Information management

1.1 Policy for quality assurance

Standards

- *Policy for quality assurance of the programme of study:*
  - *is a part of the strategic management of the program.*
  - *focuses on the achievement of special goals related to the quality assurance of the study program.*
  - *has a formal status and is publicly available*
  - *supports the organisation of the quality assurance system through appropriate structures, regulations and processes*
  - *supports teaching, administrative staff and students to take on their responsibilities in quality assurance*
  - *ensures academic integrity and freedom and is vigilant against academic fraud*
  - *guards against intolerance of any kind or discrimination against the students or staff*
  - *supports the involvement of external stakeholders*
    - *is developed with input from industry leaders and other stakeholders (i.e. industry leaders, professional bodies/associations, social partners, NGO's, governmental agencies) to align with professional standards.*
    - *integrates employer surveys to adapt to evolving workplace demands.*
    - *regularly utilizes alumni feedback for long-term effectiveness assessment.*
    - *is published and implemented by all stakeholders.*

1.2 Design, approval, on-going monitoring and review

Standards

- *The programme of study:*
  - *is designed with overall programme objectives that are in line with the institutional strategy and have explicit intended learning outcomes*

- *Aligns course learning outcomes with student assessments using rubrics to ensure objectives are met.*
- *Connects each course's aims and objectives with the programme's overall aims and objectives through mapping, aligning with the institutional strategy.*
- *is designed by involving students and other stakeholders*
- *benefits from external expertise*
- *reflects the four purposes of higher education of the Council of Europe (preparation for sustainable employment, personal development, preparation for life as active citizens in democratic societies, the development and maintenance, through teaching, learning and research, of a broad, advanced knowledge base)*
- *is designed so that it enables smooth student progression*
- *is designed so that the exams' and assignments' content corresponds to the level of the programme and the number of ECTS*
- *defines the expected student workload in ECTS*
- *includes well-structured placement opportunities where appropriate*
- *is subject to a formal institutional approval process*
- *results in a qualification that is clearly specified and communicated, and refers to the correct level of the National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education and, consequently, to the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area*
- *is regularly monitored in the light of the latest research in the given discipline, thus ensuring that the programme is up-to-date*
- *is periodically reviewed so that it takes into account the changing needs of society, the students' workload, progression and completion, the effectiveness of procedures for assessment of students, student expectations, needs and satisfaction in relation to the programme*
- *is reviewed and revised regularly involving students and other stakeholders*
    - collaborates with industry experts for curriculum development.
    - conducts joint reviews with external academic specialists to maintain academic rigor.
    - performs periodic assessments with external stakeholders to ensure continuous alignment with market needs.
    - establishes collaboration with international educational institutions or/& other relevant international bodies for a global perspective.
    - conducts regular feedback sessions with local community leaders for societal relevance.

1.3 Public information

Standards

- *Regarding the programme of study, clear, accurate, up-to date and readily accessible information is published about:*
    - *selection criteria*
    - *intended learning outcomes*

- *qualification awarded*
- *teaching, learning and assessment procedures*
- *pass rates*
- *learning opportunities available to the students*
- *graduate employment information*

In addition, the program has established mechanisms of transparency & communication to ensure that

- Professional bodies validate program descriptions and outcomes.
- Community leaders actively participate in ensuring that the program's public information is relevant and resonates with the local and societal context.
- External auditors review public information for accuracy & consistency vis-à-vis the actual implementation of the program.
- Industry-specific & societal information is regularly updated with expert inputs.
- Alumni testimonials are included for a realistic portrayal of program outcomes.

1.4 Information management

Standards

- *Information for the effective management of the programme of study is collected, monitored and analysed using specific indicators and data i.e:*
  - *key performance indicators*
  - *profile of the student population*
  - *student progression, success and drop-out rates*
  - *students' satisfaction with their programmes*
  - *learning resources and student support available*
  - *career paths of graduates*
  - *industry trend analysis.*
  - *feedback mechanisms from external partners/stakeholders*
  - *data exchanges with professional networks*
  - *employer insights concerning career readiness*

- *Students and staff are involved in providing and analysing information and planning follow-up activities.*

You may also consider the following questions:

- *What is the procedure for quality assurance of the programme and who is involved?*
- *Who is involved in the study programme's design and development (launching, changing, internal evaluation) and what is taken into account (strategies, the needs of society, etc.)?*
- *How/to what extent are students themselves involved in the development of the content of their studies?*

- *Please evaluate a) whether the study programme remains current and consistent with developments in society (labour market, digital technologies, etc.), and b) whether the content and objectives of the study programme are in accordance with each other?*
- *Do the content and the delivery of the programme correspond to the European Qualifications Framework (EQF)?*
- *How is coherence of the study programme ensured, i.e., logical sequence and coherence of courses? How are substantial overlaps between courses avoided? How is it ensured that the teaching staff is aware of the content and outputs of their colleagues' work within the same study programme?*
- *How does the study programme support development of the learners' general competencies (including digital literacy, foreign language skills, entrepreneurship, communication and teamwork skills)?*
- *What are the scope and objectives of the foundation courses in the study programme (where appropriate)? What are the pass rates?*
- *How long does it take a student on average to graduate? Is the graduation rate for the study programme analogous to other European programmes with similar content? What is the pass rate per course/semester?*
- ***How is it ensured that the actual student workload is in accordance with the workload expressed by ECTS?***
- *What are the opportunities for international students to participate in the study programme (courses/modules taught in a foreign language)?*
- *Is information related to the programme of study publicly available?*
- *How is the HEI evaluating the success of its graduates in the labor market? What is the feedback from graduates of the study programme on their employment and/or continuation of studies?*
- *Have the results of student feedback been analysed and taken into account, and how (e.g., when planning in-service training for the teaching staff)?*
- *What are the reasons for dropping out (voluntary withdrawal)? What has been done to reduce the number of such students?*
- *How and to what extent are external stakeholders involved in the quality assurance process of the program?*
- *How is external stakeholder feedback gathered, analyzed and implemented,?*
- *In what ways do external stakeholders assist in making program information publicly available?*
- *How do external stakeholders contribute to evaluating graduate success in the labor market and obtaining feedback on employment outcomes?*

Findings

A short description of the situation in the Higher Education Institution (HEI), based on elements from the application for external evaluation and on findings from the onsite visit.

The "AI for Digital Business" programme is an undergraduate-level diploma programme proposed at Ledra College, targeting students and professionals who hold a high school certificate and possess a basic mathematical background. The diploma curriculum is structured across four semesters over two years, comprising foundational, technical, and applied business-oriented and AI-oriented courses. The programme aims for broad exposure to digital technologies and business applications of AI rather than deep specialization in technical domains.

The first-year semesters consist of 5 courses, totaling 30 ECTS, while the second-year semester includes courses with 7.5 ECTS per course in the later semesters. The course structure covers topics such as the fundamentals of business, digital marketing, machine learning in business, and cybersecurity. The intention behind the curriculum appears to be to provide a broad yet shallow introduction to topics at the intersection of AI, data science, digital business, and emerging technologies.

The first two semesters establish foundational knowledge in business (e.g., Fundamentals of Business, Economics of Digitization), computing (Online Computer Essentials, Software Design), and foundational subjects (Mathematics for AI). While they lay a broad groundwork, they do not create cumulative depth. For instance, despite introducing Software Design, students do not gain programming experience (due to a lack of a dedicated programming course), which is a significant gap, particularly in an AI-oriented curriculum.

The second year of the programme shifts toward applied domains, including Emerging Technologies, Machine Learning in Business, Business Data Analytics, Big Data Management, and Cybersecurity. This phase suggests a shift from theory to application; however, the lack of foundational programming limits students' ability to engage deeply with these more technical topics. The addition of two electives is a positive step, as these electives allow students to engage with emerging areas. However, courses such as IoT and Robotics, as well as Natural Language Processing, still require technical foundations.

External stakeholder involvement in the AI for Digital Business program is limited. There is no evidence of employer consultations in the design, evaluation, or updating of the curriculum. Additionally, mechanisms for gathering and implementing feedback from industry or external partners are not specified, nor is there any indication of stakeholder participation in promoting the programme or assessing graduate employability. Strengthening these connections could enhance the programme's relevance, improve alignment with the job market, and support ongoing quality assurance.

There are significant gaps in programming skills, technical depth in data science, and project-based learning components. For example, the programme does not conclude with a capstone or bachelor-level project, which is typically expected in higher education diploma programs to consolidate the student's learning and demonstrate their competencies.

Strengths

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

- A Balanced Introduction to Business and AI Concepts: The curriculum blends business fundamentals with emerging AI subjects, ensuring accessibility for students from non-technical backgrounds.

- Focus on Practical Application Areas: Courses such as Digital Marketing, Software Design, and Cybersecurity emphasize practical skills and career-relevant fields.
- Inclusion of Ethics and Digital Business Context: The inclusion of Professional Ethics and Digital Business Technology demonstrates an awareness of broader societal and managerial issues in AI adoption.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

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

1. Lack of Programming Foundation: No course on Python or any programming language is included in the first semester.

- Recommendation: Introduce a compulsory course on Python programming in the first semester to equip students with essential coding skills necessary for AI and data analytics.

2. Insufficient Depth in Data Science and AI: Core concepts in AI/data science are missing or only lightly addressed. For example, courses on time series analysis and deep learning are missing, which are crucial components of data analytics.

- Recommendation: Include dedicated courses on time series forecasting and a deep learning course in the second year, either as a mandatory or an elective course.

3. Absence of Capstone or Bachelor's Project: The curriculum lacks a final-year project or hands-on, end-of-program project to demonstrate learning outcomes of the diploma program.

- Recommendation: Add a final semester capstone project or thesis module where students can apply the knowledge gained from the program to a business problem.

4. Absence of Legal and Regulatory Aspects in Ethics Course and the need of developing Ethical Decision Making and Problem-Solving Skills. While including a Professional Ethics course is a positive aspect of the programme, it does not address regulatory frameworks, data protection laws, or compliance standards related to AI and digital business. Given the increasing importance of legal literacy in AI deployment, particularly in relation to GDPR and EU AI Act, this omission leaves students unprepared for the real-world legal obligations that accompany the ethical dilemmas associated with AI systems.

- Recommendation: Revise the Professional Ethics course to explicitly include regulatory and legal topics relevant to digital and AI-driven environments. This could include an overview of the GDPR, the EU AI Act, and other relevant jurisdictional data protection laws. It should also focus especially on developing skills to identify, handle and solve ethical issues in AI and Business.

5. Limited Involvement of External Stakeholders: The program lacks processes for involving outside groups, like industry partners or employers, in its design and evaluation. There is no clear method for collecting feedback on curriculum relevance, graduate preparedness, or alignment with the job market. This limits the programme's ability to adjust to evolving industry demands, ultimately diminishing its effectiveness in helping graduates secure employment.

- Recommendation: Establish a structured framework for engaging external stakeholders in the programme's governance and quality assurance. This may include forming an industry advisory board, conducting regular discussions with employers, and involving external experts in curriculum development and review. These measures will help ensure that the programme remains aligned with labour market demands, improves graduate outcomes, and enhances institutional credibility.

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

Sub-area		***Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant***
1.1	Policy for quality assurance	Compliant
1.2	Design, approval, on-going monitoring and review	Partially compliant
1.3	Public information	Compliant
1.4	Information management	Compliant

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

Sub-areas

2.1 Process of teaching and learning and student-centred teaching methodology
2.2 Practical training
2.3 Student assessment

2.1 Process of teaching and learning and student-centred teaching methodology

Standards

- *The process of teaching and learning supports students' individual and social development.*
- *The process of teaching and learning is flexible, considers different modes of delivery, where appropriate, uses a variety of pedagogical methods and facilitates the achievement of planned learning outcomes.*
- *Students are encouraged to take an active role in creating the learning process.*
- *The implementation of student-centered learning and teaching encourages a sense of autonomy in the learner, while ensuring adequate guidance and support from the teacher.*
- *Teaching methods, tools and material used in teaching are modern, effective, support the use of modern educational technologies and are regularly updated.*
- *Mutual respect within the learner-teacher relationship is promoted.*
- *The implementation of student-centred learning and teaching respects and attends to the diversity of students and their needs, enabling flexible learning paths.*
- *Appropriate procedures for dealing with students' complaints regarding the process of teaching and learning are set.*
- *Detailed schedules in course materials are included, explicitly stating the expected hours for lectures, self-study, and group projects, ensuring transparency in time allocation.*
- *A system is integrated where each learning activity is assigned a weight proportional to its importance and time requirement, aiding in balanced curriculum design.*

2.2 Practical training

Standards

- *Practical and theoretical studies are interconnected.*
- *The organisation and the content of practical training, if applicable, support achievement of planned learning outcomes and meet the needs of the stakeholders.*

- *The expected hours for different components of practical training, such as lab work, fieldwork, and internships are clearly documented in the training manuals*
- *A weighting system is applied to various practical training elements, reflecting their significance in the overall learning outcomes and student workload.*

2.3 Student assessment

Standards

- *Assessment is consistent, fairly applied to all students and carried out in accordance with the stated procedures.*
- *Assessment is appropriate, transparent, objective and supports the development of the learner.*
- *The criteria for the method of assessment, as well as criteria for marking, are published in advance.*
- *Assessment allows students to demonstrate the extent to which the intended learning outcomes have been achieved. Students are given feedback, which, if necessary, is linked to advice on the learning process.*
- *Assessment, where possible, is carried out by more than one examiner.*
- *A formal procedure for student appeals is in place.*
- *Assessors are familiar with existing testing and examination methods and receive support in developing their own skills in this field.*
- *The regulations for assessment take into account mitigating circumstances.*
  - *The time allocation for each assessment task isexplicitly stated in course outlines, ensuring students are aware of the expected workload.*
  - *A balanced assessment weighting strategy is implemented, considering the complexity and learning objectives of each task, to ensure fair evaluation of student performance.*

You may also consider the following questions:

- *How is it monitored that the teaching staff base their teaching and assessment methods on objectives and intended learning outcomes? Provide samples of examination papers (if available).*
- *How are students' different abilities, learning needs and learning opportunities taken into consideration when conducting educational activities?*
- *How is the development of students' general competencies (including digital skills) supported in educational activities?*
- *How is it ensured that innovative teaching methods, learning environments and learning aids that support learning are diverse and used in educational activities?*
- *Is the teaching staff using new technology in order to make the teaching process more effective?*
- *How is it ensured that theory and practice are interconnected in teaching and learning?*

- *How is practical training organised (finding practical training positions, guidelines for practical training, supervision, reporting, feedback, etc.)? What role does practical training have in achieving the objectives of the study programme? What is student feedback on the content and arrangement of practical training?*
- ***Are students actively involved in research? How is student involvement in research set up?***
- *How is supervision of student research papers (seminar papers, projects, theses, etc.) organised?*
- ***Do students' assessments correspond to the European Qualifications Framework (EQF)?***
- *How are the assessment methods chosen and to what extent do students get supportive feedback on their academic progress during their studies?*
- *How is the objectivity and relevance of student assessment ensured (assessment of the degree of achievement of the intended learning outcomes)?*

Findings

A short description of the situation in the Higher Education Institution (HEI), based on elements from the application for external evaluation and on findings from the onsite visit.

The programme employs a variety of teaching methods, almost all courses including lectures, group work, audiovisual aids, presentations, discussions, and guided writing. While theoretical courses such as Mathematics for AI primarily follow traditional classroom formats, they are complemented by collaborative group activities. Technical courses introduce additional lab components and project-based tasks, further enhancing hands-on engagement.

The curriculum is structured to offer a broad interdisciplinary foundation, combining AI, business, and digital market concepts. This comprehensive coverage is commendable and was positively received by the committee. However, to further strengthen the programme, it is recommended to better integrate fundamental technical competencies expected of AI graduates, even at the diploma level. Specifically, core programming skills (e.g., Python, C++) are not explicitly covered in the current curriculum. This gap becomes more evident in later semesters where courses such as Machine Learning in Business, Big Data Management, Natural Language Processing, and IoT and Robotics inherently rely on such programming knowledge. We suggest either introducing a dedicated course on (programming languages e.g. python and C++ and related libraries for data analysis (specially Python) or adapting existing courses; such as Online Computer Essentials; to include practical programming instruction.

The committee values the curriculum's relevance to industry needs, particularly its integration of AI tools, data analytics, cybersecurity, digital marketing, and contemporary topics like AI in society/ethics and emerging technologies that all together ensure relevance and modernity. Nonetheless, based our experience, some course contents may benefit from better alignment with programme objectives. For instance, the IoT and Robotics course includes advanced robotics topics such as kinematics, dynamics motion control and navigation, which may exceed the scope of a business-oriented AI diploma. A refined focus; e.g., reshaping the course as IoT for Business; would ensure tighter alignment with intended learning outcomes and enhance curricular cohesion. It is observed that a key strength of the programme lies in its balance between technical and business modules, catering to diverse student interests and learning styles aligned with industry needs. This interdisciplinary structure prepares graduates to

navigate both the business and technological aspects of AI applications; an essential trait for the targeted graduate profile. With minor curricular refinements, and trying to make more focused materials and aligned with the main objectives, the programme can better realize this promising vision.

Students are actively involved in quality assurance processes. They evaluate courses and instructors twice per semester, with feedback collected mid-course and near its conclusion. This feedback is used for both pedagogical improvements, e.g. teaching quality and better alignment as well as staff development. Furthermore, peer review of teaching methods is also institutionalized, indicating a feedback-driven and collaborative culture. Student evaluations influence faculty appraisal and teaching improvement. The programme benefits from active student involvement in feedback processes and peer review mechanisms; however, it was not clearly evident whether a formal procedure exists for students to raise academic complaints related to teaching quality, course delivery, or assessment concerns. Although the institution maintains a code of conduct and has established procedures for addressing ethical or behavioural issues (e.g., harassment), the lack of clearly communicated academic grievance pathways represents a gap. Introducing and formalizing such procedures would further enhance transparency, fairness, and student confidence in the academic environment.

During the programme, the students are receiving ongoing consultation on academic and procedural matters, both from an assigned academic advisor and from another teacher involved in the programme. Moreover, the relation between students and teachers (learner-teacher relationship) are defined based on professional conduct, non-discrimination, and student rights, and faculty are trained to treat all students impartially and with civility.

Course outlines specify weekly hours, semester periods, and ECTS credits, ensuring transparency. Assessment strategies are consistent and appropriately weighted, typically 30% for the midterm, 50% for the final exam, and 20% for participation; effectively balancing formative and summative assessment. However, regarding final exams, it was noted that a uniform final written exam across all courses may not suit the nature of more technical, programming-heavy subjects. The teaching staff acknowledged this and expressed openness to adapting “final exam” assessments in these cases, e.g., by replacing the written exam with lab-based project assessments. This flexibility would better reflect course-specific learning outcomes and is strongly encouraged.

Strengths

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

- Diverse teaching methodologies support different learning styles and promote engagement.
- Curriculum integrates both technical and business modules, ensuring relevance to industry and versatility of graduates.
- Active student involvement in quality assurance processes, including structured evaluations and feedback mechanisms.
- Transparent and consistent assessment strategies across courses.
- Inclusion of contemporary topics such as AI ethics, digital transformation, and data analytics.
- Good academic advising and professional conduct frameworks promoting student support and inclusive learning environments.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

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

- **Programming Foundations**: Introduce one or two dedicated course(s) on programming (particularly Python and C++ and data related libraries) or integrate these skills more explicitly into existing modules like *Online Computer Essentials*. This would better prepare students for advanced AI-related courses in later semesters.
- **Course Alignment**: Review and refine course content to ensure alignment with programme objectives. For example, *IoT and Robotics* currently includes advanced robotics content that may exceed the programme's intended scope; reframe it as *IoT for Business* to improve curricular cohesion.
- **Assessment Flexibility**: Adapt the final exam structure in technical courses to allow project-based or lab-based assessments, better reflecting learning outcomes and practical skills.
- **Complaints Procedures**: Formalize and communicate clear academic grievance procedures for students regarding course delivery or assessment concerns.

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

Sub-area		***Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant***
2.1	Process of teaching and learning and student-centred teaching methodology	Compliant
2.2	Practical training	Partially compliant
2.3	Student assessment	Compliant

3. Teaching staff *(ESG 1.5)*

Sub-areas

3.1 Teaching staff recruitment and development
3.2 Teaching staff number and status
3.3 Synergies of teaching and research

3.1 Teaching staff recruitment and development

Standards

- *Institutions ensure the competence of their teaching staff.*
- *Fair, transparent and clear processes for the recruitment and development of the teaching staff are set up.*
- *Teaching staff qualifications are adequate to achieve the objectives and planned learning outcomes of the study programme, and to ensure quality and sustainability of the teaching and learning.*
- *The teaching staff is regularly engaged in professional and teaching-skills training and development.*
- *Promotion of the teaching staff takes into account the quality of their teaching, their research activity, the development of their teaching skills and their mobility.*
- *Innovation in teaching methods and the use of new technologies is encouraged.*
- *Conditions of employment that recognise the importance of teaching are followed.*
- *Recognised visiting teaching staff participates in teaching the study programme.*

3.2 Teaching staff number and status

Standards

- *The number of the teaching staff is adequate to support the programme of study.*
- *The teaching staff status (rank, full/part time) is appropriate to offer a quality programme of study.*
- *Visiting staff number does not exceed the number of the permanent staff.*

3.3 Synergies of teaching and research

Standards

- *The teaching staff collaborate in the fields of teaching and research within the HEI and with partners outside (practitioners in their fields, employers, and staff members at other HEIs in Cyprus or abroad).*
- *Scholarly activity to strengthen the link between education and research is encouraged.*
- *The teaching staff publications are within the discipline.*

- *Teaching staff studies and publications are closely related to the programme's courses.*
- *The allocation of teaching hours compared to the time for research activity is appropriate.*

You may also consider the following questions:

- *How are the members of the teaching staff supported with regard to the development of their teaching skills? How is feedback given to members of the teaching staff regarding their teaching results and teaching skills?*
- *How is the teaching performance assessed? How does their teaching performance affect their remuneration, evaluation and/or selection?*
- *Is teaching connected with research?*
- *Does the HEI involve visiting teaching staff from other HEIs in Cyprus and abroad?*
- *What is the number, workload, qualifications and status of the teaching staff (rank, full/part timers)?*
- *Is student evaluation conducted on the teaching staff? If yes, have the results of student feedback been analysed and taken into account, and how (e.g., when planning in-service training for the teaching staff)?*

Findings

A short description of the situation in the Higher Education Institution (HEI), based on elements from the application for external evaluation and on findings from the onsite visit.

Ledra College does not have own pedagogical development training programs. Instead, it is arranging external seminars. On the other hand, there are in place certain procedures for regular evaluation. Teaching performance is assessed through a combination of student evaluations, peer reviews, and departmental assessments. The teaching staff comprises a balanced mix of full-time (75%) and part-time members (25%). Student evaluations are planned to be conducted regularly in all courses of the programme.

Strengths

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

Although Ledra College is not a research institution, the staff are privately very much active in research and in scientific publications.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

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

Since Ledra College is exclusively a teaching institution it could be very positive regarding the quality level of the education they offer if they had a pedagogical unit and some regular procedures under their own management despite the institution's small size.

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

Sub-area		***Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant***
3.1	Teaching staff recruitment and development	Compliant
3.2	Teaching staff number and status	Compliant
3.3	Synergies of teaching and research	Not applicable

4. Student admission, progression, recognition and certification *(ESG 1.4)*

Sub-areas

4.1 Student admission, processes and criteria
4.2 Student progression
4.3 Student recognition
4.4 Student certification

4.1 Student admission, processes and criteria

Standards

- *Pre-defined and published regulations regarding student admission are in place.*
- *Access policies, admission processes and criteria are implemented consistently and in a transparent manner.*

4.2 Student progression

Standards

- *Pre-defined and published regulations regarding student progression are in place.*
- *Processes and tools to collect, monitor and act on information on student progression, are in place.*

4.3 Student recognition

Standards

- *Pre-defined and published regulations regarding student recognition are in place.*
- *Fair recognition of higher education qualifications, periods of study and prior learning, including the recognition of non-formal and informal learning, are essential components for ensuring the students' progress in their studies, while promoting mobility.*
- *Appropriate recognition procedures are in place that rely on:*
  - *institutional practice for recognition being in line with the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention*
  - *cooperation with other institutions, quality assurance agencies and the national ENIC/NARIC centre with a view to ensuring coherent recognition across the country*

4.4 Student certification

Standards

- *Pre-defined and published regulations regarding student certification are in place.*
- *Students receive certification explaining the qualification gained, including achieved learning outcomes and the context, level, content and status of the studies that were pursued and successfully completed.*

You may also consider the following questions:

- *Are the admission requirements for the study programme appropriate? How is the students' prior preparation/education assessed (including the level of international students, for example)?*
- *How is the procedure of recognition for prior learning and work experience ensured, including recognition of study results acquired at foreign higher education institutions?*
- *Is the certification of the HEI accompanied by a diploma supplement, which is in line with European and international standards?*

Findings

A short description of the situation in the Higher Education Institution (HEI), based on elements from the application for external evaluation and on findings from the onsite visit.

The programme has clearly defined admission criteria as well as a Diploma with a detailed description of the content and status of the studies completed by the graduate. It has well-defined and publicly accessible policies concerning student admission and progression. Admission criteria apply to both Cypriot and international students, with English language proficiency requirements clearly stated and assessed via internationally recognized tests.

Student progression is monitored through regular academic advising and faculty supervision. All students are assigned academic advisors, and faculty are accessible for support and mentoring. Internal quality assurance mechanisms and regular student feedback are predicted. Recognition of prior learning and student mobility is supported through Erasmus+ participation. Upon successful completion, students are awarded a diploma with 120 ECTS credits.

Strengths

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

- It is planned to provide foundation courses, when necessary, as part of the programme.
- The recruitment process is very active and focused in countries outside Europe.
- Transparent and inclusive admission criteria for both local and international students, with detailed English language proficiency requirements.

- Clear and structured progression support, including academic advisors, student support services, and access to faculty guidance.
- Participation in the Erasmus+ Mobility Programme, supporting internationalization and credit recognition.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

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

- Effort to achieve a more balanced recruitment of students between Cyprus/EU and third countries.
- Although academic advising is present, the use of systematic data collection tools to monitor and act on student progression trends could be further elaborated or strengthened.

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

Sub-area		***Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant***
4.1	Student admission, processes and criteria	Compliant
4.2	Student progression	Compliant
4.3	Student recognition	Compliant
4.4	Student certification	Compliant

5. Learning resources and student support *(ESG 1.6)*

Sub-areas

5.1 Teaching and Learning resources
5.2 Physical resources
5.3 Human support resources
5.4 Student support

5.1 Teaching and Learning resources

Standards

- *Adequate and readily accessible teaching and learning resources (teaching and learning environments, materials, aids and equipment) are provided to students and support the achievement of objectives in the study programme.*
- *Adequacy of resources is ensured for changing circumstances (change in student numbers, etc.).*
- *All resources are fit for purpose.*
- *Student-centred learning and flexible modes of learning and teaching, are taken into account when allocating, planning and providing the learning resources.*

5.2 Physical resources

Standards

- *Physical resources, i.e. premises, libraries, study facilities, IT infrastructure, are adequate to support the study programme.*
- *Adequacy of resources is ensured for changing circumstances (change in student numbers, etc.).*
- *All resources are fit for purpose and students are informed about the services available to them.*

5.3 Human support resources

Standards

- *Human support resources, i.e. tutors/mentors, counsellors, other advisers, qualified administrative staff, are adequate to support the study programme.*
- *Adequacy of resources is ensured for changing circumstances (change in student numbers, etc.).*

- *All resources are fit for purpose and students are informed about the services available to them.*

5.4 Student support

Standards

- *Student support is provided covering the needs of a diverse student population, such as mature, part-time, employed and international students and students with special needs.*
- *Students are informed about the services available to them.*
- *Student-centred learning and flexible modes of learning and teaching, are taken into account when allocating, planning and providing student support.*
- *Students' mobility within and across higher education systems is encouraged and supported.*
- *Students receive support in research-led teaching through engagement in research projects, mentorship from research-active faculty, and access to resources that enhance their research skills and critical engagement with current studies.*

You may also consider the following questions:

- *Evaluate the supply of teaching materials and equipment (including teaching labs, expendable materials, etc.), the condition of classrooms, adequacy of financial resources to conduct the study programme and achieve its objectives. What needs to be supplemented/ improved?*
- *What is the feedback from the teaching staff on the availability of teaching materials, classrooms, etc.?*
- *Are the resources in accordance with actual (changing) needs and contemporary requirements? How is the effectiveness of using resources ensured?*
- *What are the resource-related trends and future risks (risks arising from changing numbers of students, obsolescence of teaching equipment, etc.)? How are these trends taken into account and how are the risks mitigated?*
- *Evaluate student feedback on support services. Based on student feedback, which support services (including information flow, counselling) need further development?*
- *How is student learning within the standard period of study supported (student counselling, flexibility of the study programme, etc.)?*
- *How students' special needs are considered (different capabilities, different levels of academic preparation, special needs due to physical disabilities, etc.)?*
- *How is student mobility being supported?*

Findings

A short description of the situation in the Higher Education Institution (HEI), based on elements from the application for external evaluation and on findings from the onsite visit.

There is in place a wide range of up-to-date teaching materials and equipment. Teaching laboratories are adequately equipped to meet curricular requirements. Teaching staff express satisfaction with the all the above. Student mobility is encouraged and supported through participation in Erasmus+ and other international exchange programmes. There are no internal psychological support procedures for the students, but external ad hoc solutions when such problems arise.

Strengths

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

- Ledra College provides great support to the students regarding migration procedures, accommodation, and work during studies.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

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

- Support students to find job in the broader area of their Diploma studies after examination, in a similar way as Ledra College puts into the recruitment process.
- It would be good if Ledra College established own internal official and defined procedures for supporting students' special needs.

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

Sub-area		***Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant***
5.1	Teaching and Learning resources	Compliant
5.2	Physical resources	Compliant
5.3	Human support resources	Compliant
5.4	Student support	Compliant

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

Sub-areas

6.1 Selection criteria and requirements
6.2 Proposal and dissertation
6.3 Supervision and committees

6.1 Selection criteria and requirements

Standards

- *Specific criteria that the potential students need to meet for admission in the programme, as well as how the selection procedures are made, are defined.*
- *The following requirements of the doctoral degree programme are analysed and published:*
  - *the stages of completion*
  - *the minimum and maximum time of completing the programme*
  - *the examinations*
  - *the procedures for supporting and accepting the student's proposal*
  - *the criteria for obtaining the Ph.D. degree*

6.2 Proposal and dissertation

Standards

- *Specific and clear guidelines for the writing of the proposal and the dissertation are set regarding:*
  - *the chapters that are contained*
  - *the system used for the presentation of each chapter, sub-chapters and bibliography*
  - *the minimum word limit*
  - *the binding, the cover page and the prologue pages, including the pages supporting the authenticity, originality and importance of the dissertation, as well as the reference to the committee for the final evaluation*
- *There is a plagiarism check system. Information is provided on the detection of plagiarism and the consequences in case of such misconduct.*
- *The process of submitting the dissertation to the university library is set.*

6.3 Supervision and committees

Standards

- *The composition, the procedure and the criteria for the formation of the advisory committee (to whom the doctoral student submits the research proposal) are determined.*
- *The composition, the procedure and the criteria for the formation of the examining committee (to whom the doctoral student defends his/her dissertation), are determined.*
- *The duties of the supervisor-chairperson and the other members of the advisory committee towards the student are determined and include:*
  - *regular meetings*

- *reports per semester and feedback from supervisors*
- *support for writing research papers*
- *participation in conferences*

- *The number of doctoral students that each chairperson supervises at the same time are determined.*

You may also consider the following questions:

- *How is the scientific quality of the PhD thesis ensured?*
- *Is there a link between the doctoral programmes of study and the society? What is the value of the obtained degree outside academia and in the labour market?*
- *Are the criteria reflected in dissertation samples?*

Findings

A short description of the situation in the Higher Education Institution (HEI), based on elements from the application for external evaluation and on findings from the onsite visit.

Click or tap here to enter text.

Strengths

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

Click or tap here to enter text.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

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

Click or tap here to enter text.

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

Sub-area		***Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant***
6.1	Selection criteria and requirements	Choose answer
6.2	Proposal and dissertation	Choose answer
6.3	Supervision and committees	Choose answer

D. Conclusions and final remarks

Please provide constructive conclusions and final remarks which may form the basis upon which improvements of the quality of the programme of study under review may be achieved, with emphasis on the correspondence with the EQF.

Our most important recommendations are:

Introduce a compulsory course on Python programming in the first semester to equip students with essential coding skills necessary for AI and data analytics.

Include dedicated courses on time series forecasting and a deep learning course in the second year, either as a mandatory or an elective course.

Add a final semester capstone project or thesis module where students can apply the knowledge gained from the program to a business problem.

Revise the Professional Ethics course to explicitly include regulatory and legal topics relevant to digital and AI-driven environments. This could include an overview of the GDPR, the EU AI Act, and other relevant jurisdictional data protection laws. It should also focus especially on developing skills to identify, handle and solve ethical issues in AI and Business.

Review and refine course content to ensure alignment with programme objectives. For example, IoT and Robotics currently includes advanced robotics content that may exceed the programme's intended scope; reframe it as IoT for Business to improve curricular cohesion.

Adapt the final exam structure in technical courses to allow project-based or lab-based assessments, better reflecting learning outcomes and practical skills.

Formalize and communicate clear academic grievance procedures for students regarding course delivery or assessment concerns.

Effort to achieve a more balanced recruitment of students between Cyprus/EU and third countries.

It would be good if Ledra College established own internal official and defined procedures for supporting students' special needs.

E. Signatures of the EEC

Name	*Signature*
Iordanis Kavathatzopoulos	
Raghava Rao Mukkamala	
Shahab Heshmati-Alamdari	
Georgia Christodoulou	
Click to enter Name	
Click to enter Name	

Date: 23-5-2025