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ΦΟΡΕΑΣ ΔΙΑΣΦΑΛΙΣΗΣ ΚΑΙ ΠΙΣΤΟΠΟΙΗΣΗΣ ΤΗΣ ΠΟΙΟΤΗΤΑΣ ΤΗΣ ΑΝΩΤΕΡΗΣ ΕΚΠΑΙΔΕΥΣΗΣ
THE CYPRUS AGENCY OF QUALITY ASSURANCE AND ACCREDITATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Doc. 300.1.3

Date: …………………………

Feedback report from EEC experts

Higher education institution:

NEAPOLIS UNIVERSITY

- Town: PAFOS

- **Programme of study (Name, ECTS, duration, cycle)**

In Greek: ΜΕΤΑΠΤΥΧΙΑΚΟ ΣΤΟ ΨΗΦΙΑΚΟ ΜΑΡΚΕΤΙΝΓΚ /90 ECTS/18/12 ΜΗΝΕΣ

In English: MSc IN DIGITAL MARKETING /90 ECTS/18/12 MONTHS

- **Language of instruction:** Greek, English

Programme's status: New programme

ΚΥΠΡΙΑΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ
REPUBLIC OF CYPRUS

A. External Evaluation Committee (EEC)

Name	Position	University
Fredrik Nordin	Professor of Marketing	Stockholm University
Niki Panteli	Professor of Digital Business	Royal Holloway University of London
Savvas Papagiannidis	Professor of Innovation and Enterprise	University of Newcastle
Giorgos Longinos	Student	University of Cyprus

B. Guidelines on content and structure of the report

- *The EEC based on the external evaluation report (Doc.300.1.1) and the Higher Education Institution's response (Doc.300.1.2), must justify whether actions have been taken in improving the quality of the programme of study in each assessment area.*

- *Below each assessment area the EEC must circle the degree of compliance.*

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

EEC's recommendations

Revise the programme objectives and learning outcomes to ensure that they consistently focus on digital marketing throughout the programme. This will ensure not only that student expectations, when enrolling to a digital marketing programme are met, but also that students are prepared sufficiently for the future roles.

HEI's response

Done. We revised program objectives and learning outcomes to more consistently focus on Digital marketing. ***See Annex 1, Revised Program Study Guide, Sections 2, 3.***

EEC's recommendations

The revised programme objectives and learning outcomes will need to be reflected on a revised list of courses included in the programme specification. For example, courses like Information security (IS540) should be removed and replaced with more digital marketing specific courses (e.g. e-consumer behaviour or branding online). Similarly, courses like Big data and analytics (IS508) could be focused on digital marketing analytics (with both the title and content revised).

HEI's response

Done.

2a) We replaced the Course IS540 on "Information Security" with newly developed course "e-Consumer Behavior", ***See Annex1, Revised Program Study Guide, section 13 Syllabi.***
2b) We developed new course on "Big Data and Marketing Analytics" with the inclusion of weeks on pricing, forecasting, market segmentation, advertising etc., ***See Annex 1 Revised program Study Guide, section 13 Syllabi.***

EEC's recommendations

Given that this is a conversion master that can potentially attract student who have no marketing background, it could be useful to include a comprehensive foundation course in the principles of marketing in the first term

HEI's response

Done. Acceptance criteria have been modified. Prior basic knowledge on Marketing or related course, as student acceptance criterion, has been introduced. Students are expected to have a minimum prerequisite background in Marketing.
In cases of applications with inadequate Marketing background, students will have to sit on a pass/fail basis on an undergraduate class, such as Principles of Marketing **(BUSN104),** *see Annex1, revised Program Study guide, section 4.1*

EEC's recommendations

With recommendations 1+2+3 implemented, it will be useful to review the sequence of the courses and how they inform one-another so that the overall programme becomes more coherent. For example, Digital marketing (DM515) could appear in the first semester, given its expected prominent place in the programme called MSc in Digital Marketing

HEI's response

Done. *Please see Annex 1, revised Study Guide, section 6.*

EEC's recommendations

Based on the nature of the programme, we recommend that the programme team, review the student assessment strategy both at the programme level, but also for each individual course. For example, embedding assessment within real life scenarios using digital technologies (e.g. social media) for mid-terms may help enhance student experience and provide them with valuable real-life exposure.

HEI's response

Done, the student assessment strategy has been reviewed and revised accordingly both at the programme level and for individual courses as well, *see Annex 1, revised Study Guide, section 9*.
Additionally:
a) Assessment strategy for MBA583 changed and written assignment have been replaced by a crowdfunding video presentation of an innovative business. This practical element is widely used as assessment strategy in business schools across the world as it enables the students to take the role of the entrepreneur, *See Annex 1 Revised program Study Guide, section 13 Syllabi, Course DMBA583, Assessment component.*
b) Furthermore, the assessment strategy of DM515 was advanced with a business case study and students have to deliver a report of digital campaign with emphasis on social media for a real business. The students will take the role of an expert in the field and they will have the opportunity to better understand, familiarize and embrace the real life needs of an enterprise, *See Annex 1 Revised program Study Guide, section 13 Syllabi, Course DM515, Assessment component.*
c) The DM504 course "e-Consumer Behavior" has been enhanced with real-life scenarios, *See Annex 1 Revised program Study Guide, section 13 Syllabi.*

EEC's recommendations

Where appropriate teaching practice and assessment should be informed by current marketing practice and where possible feature industry sponsored assignments.

HEI's response

Done. See changes for comment 5 above. The aforementioned changes advance practical aspects of assessment strategy and assessments become more market-oriented. By implementing these changes other teaching objectives will be served towards advancing real life skills, such as communication/presentation skills. Furthermore, as the assessments demand market research and analysis, the research skills of the students will be advanced.
Last but not least, the weekly assignments of the students were advanced to become complex and more consistent with a postgraduate level. More specifically, following the international practices and Kolb's experiential learning cycle, some of the activities demand the students to reflect on their personal experience and current knowledge towards enabling them to identify areas of improvement.

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Moreover, the students are asked to make suggestions to an enterprise of their preference in digital marketing (DM515) by taking the role of digital marketing expert or innovation (MBA583) by taking the role or either the entrepreneur or innovation expert.

EEC's recommendations

Although the Committee was informed that the Dissertation (DIS600) courses included research methods training, it will be more in line with current practice, if there is a more comprehensive training in the form of a separate course (that can replace Quantitative Business Analysis (MBA620) that covers both quantitative and qualitative research methods.

HEI's response

Done. MBA620 course is replaced with DM620 that includes weeks on qualitative and mixed methods, *See Annex 1, Revised Program Study, section 6.*

Please circle one of the following for:

Study programme and study programme's design and development

Non-compliant   *Partially compliant*   <u>*Substantially compliant*</u>   *Fully compliant*

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

EEC's recommendations

Although the EEC has seen evidence of formative feedback of related courses, a coherent policy can be implemented across the programme.

HEI's response

Done, a policy of formative feedback is already available and students are aware before the beginning of their courses, **see Annex 2**, *Policy on Feedback to Undergraduate and Postgraduate Taught Students.*

EEC's recommendations

Even though the EEC was pleased to see evidence of industry sponsored dissertation topics, we encourage the teaching team that this becomes a more widespread practice, where possible.

HEI's response

Done. The comment has been noted and the teaching team will be encouraged to incorporate industry sponsored dissertation topics

EEC's recommendations

Based on the nature of the programme, we recommend that the programme team, review the student assessment strategy both at the programme team but also for each individual course. For example, embedding assessment within real life scenarios using digital technologies (e.g. social media) for mid-terms may help enhance student experience and provide them with valuable real-life exposure.

HEI's response

Answer: Done, see relevant answer **comment 5, assessment area 1.**

EEC's recommendations

Although the Committee was informed that the Dissertation (DIS600) courses included research methods training, it will be more in line with current practice, if there is a more comprehensive training in the form of a separate course (that can replace Quantitative Business Analysis (MBA260)) that covers both quantitative and qualitative research methods.

HEI's response

Answer: **Done**, see relevant answer **comment 7, assessment area 1.**

Please circle one of the following for:

Non-compliant　　　**Partially compliant**　　　**Substantially compliant**　　　**Fully compliant**

3. Teaching Staff (*ESG 1.5*)

EEC's recommendations

Overall, the teaching staff is adequate both in terms of their number and qualifications. The majority of courses are taught by permanent staff, ensuring the quality and consistency of the program. Nevertheless, partly as an implication of the student to teacher ratio, the teaching load of permanent teaching staff seems to be relatively high and this may impede the conduct of research and contribution to society. When it comes to training in teaching methods for teaching staff, there seems to be room for improvement regarding how to engage students further. Although the programme´s coordinator is highly qualified and suitable for the coordinating role, the Department may want to consider appointing a coordinator who has marketing expertise.

HEI's response

Answer: Noted, Dr Andreas Masouras, an NUP Lecturer of Marketing is the Deputy Coordinator of the Program to further enhance the Marketing component.

EEC's recommendations

To reduce the teaching load for permanent teaching staff to enable more focus on research that can in turn be reflected on the programme's content.

HEI's response

Answer: Done, NUP has a Permanent Teaching Staff workload policy, see **Annex 3,** to ensure that teaching staff can also focus on research, among other tasks.

EEC's recommendations

We would recommend that the pedagogic skills and practices of existing and future teaching staff are further developed (at the point of recruiting them, but also on an ongoing basis) to prepare them for their roles.

HEI's response

Answer: Done, NUP has instizualize a concrete mentoring program for the existing and future staff to prepare them for their roles**,** see **Annex 4, *Academic Staff Mentoring Policy, Annex 5, INTERACTION Working Methodology***
The mentoring program is both at the point of initial staff recruiting, but on an ongoing basis as well.

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It includes:

a) Formative Assessment

b) Feedback to students

c) Interactivity

d) Research opportunities.

Please circle one of the following for:

Teaching Staff

Non-compliant　　　　*Partially compliant*　　　　*Substantially compliant*　　　　<u>*Fully compliant*</u>

4. **Students** (*ESG 1.4, 1.6, 1.7*)

EEC's recommendations

To consider extending the opening hours of the library

HEI's response

Answer: Done, following the above suggestions, we are extending Neapolis University library opening hours to cover all examination periods. More specific:

☐ A week prior to each semester's examination period, the opening hours are extended to cover week **days 8:00 – 22:00, Saturday 9:00 – 19:00 and Sunday 9:00 – 17:00.**

☐ An internal communication system has already been implemented via our learning management system (LMS) platform (Moodle) to provide students direct access to the library. This allows student access to all library relevant information such as news, announcements, events, frequently asked questions and support manuals. In addition, the LMS internal communication system allows students to interact directly (online chat) with library staff.

☐ Furthermore, **a dedicated e-ticketing system has also been implemented** in parallel to the LMS internal communication system, which enables library staff to handle and address all inquiries and requests.

☐ Access to online library databases is possible at all times (24/7) and has been enriched via **our virtual private network (VPN) solutio**n.

☐ Finally, **separate workstations have been placed outside the library** accessible at all times (24/7) which provide direct access to online library databases.

EEC's recommendations

To clarify and standardize the admission requirements

HEI's response

Answer: Done, the admission requirements and criteria have been clarified and standardized, see *Annex 1, Revised Study Guide, section 4.1.*

EEC's recommendations

Introduce an online seminar for students about time and stress management, e.g., as an extension to S.K.E.PS.I.S.

HEI's response

Answer: Done, this is a productive comment already consulted with S.K.E.PS.I.S to endorse an on line seminar about time and stress management, as part of their induction in the program.

Please circle one of the following for:

Students

Non-compliant   *Partially compliant*   *Substantially compliant*   *Fully compliant*

5. Resources (*ESG 1.6*)

EEC's recommendations

It has been mentioned several times during the visit to the university that the currently small number of the academic community (i.e., student population) and the ability to sustain close connections between students and teachers can help the university address issues related to psychological or pastoral support. However, considering the new programmes will increase the student population), such support should be better structured and operationalized.

HEI's response

Answer: Done, the comment has been noted and upon a potential increase of student population, such support will be further structured and operationalized

EEC's recommendations

Improvement on resources relevant to qualitative methods could be possible, by extending, for example, the available software with the addition of tools such as nVivo.

HEI's response

Answer: Done, the University proceeded already in the provision of the proposed software tool*, see Annex 6, NVIVO NUP Quote.*

HEI's response

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Please circle one of the following for:

Resources

Non-compliant   *Partially compliant*   *Substantially compliant*   *Fully compliant*

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

    EEC's recommendations

    HEI's response

Please circle one of the following for:

Additional for distance learning programmes

Non-compliant   *Partially compliant*   *Substantially compliant*   *Fully compliant*

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

EEC's recommendations

HEI's response

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Please circle one of the following for:

Additional for doctoral programmes

Non-compliant　　　*Partially compliant*　　　*Substantially compliant*　　　*Fully compliant*

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

EEC's recommendations

HEI's response

Please circle one of the following for:

Additional for joint programmes

Non-compliant   *Partially compliant*   *Substantially compliant*   *Fully compliant*

C. Conclusions and final remarks

The EEC appreciates that the University and its staff have considered their recommendations and adopted most of them. The assessment is therefore changed to "fully compliant" throughout, except for the first assessment area ("Study program and study program's design and development") where the "substantial compliant" remains.

Although the EEC appreciates that the HEI has made revisions in line with the suggestions we put forward, these were offered as examples of the underlying principle. They were not supposed to be a prescribed set of changes to follow as such. In future revisions the program team should re-consider the feedback again and attempt to meet the spirit of the comments made. The above also applies to assessment strategies at the programme level, that needs to be more systematic with clear principles set from the outset and with the modules contributing towards addressing them.

Once again, the EEC would like to thank the University for its cooperation and wish the teaching team all the success with this programme.

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D. Signatures of the EEC

Name	Signature
Nordin, F	
Papagiannidis, S	
Panteli, N	

Date: 26/09/2019