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Date: 17-06-2023

External Evaluation Report

(E-learning programme of study)

- **Higher Education Institution:**
NEAPOLIS UNIVERSITY PAFOS
- **Town:** Paphos
 - **School/Faculty (if applicable):** SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS, BUSINESS AND COMPUTER
 - **Department/ Sector:** DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMICS AND BUSINESS
- **Programme of study- Name (Duration, ECTS, Cycle)**
In Greek:
Programme Name
In English:
Business Administration (240 ECTS/ 4 Years / BSc / Distance)
- **Language(s) of instruction:** English & Greek
- **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 onsite visit of the EEC took place on the 16th of June 2025 from 9am until 7:15pm. The current report was written by the EEC members on the 17th of June 2025 from 9am until 6pm.

The present report is prepared for the evaluation of BSc program in Business Administration, at the Department of Economics and Business, Neapolis University Pafos. The Members of the External Evaluation Committee (EEC) have analysed a large number of materials related to the program: the detailed application report of the Neapolis University Pafos including program description, its structure, the profiles of the teaching staff, course descriptions, evaluation and admission procedures, e-learning procedures, available infrastructure, the library, and various online materials and information.

The Committee visited the university on June 16, 2025 and held the meetings with the Rector of the Neapolis University Pafos, the Rector, Vice Rector of Research and Innovation, Member of IQA Committee, Head of the Department of Economics and Business, the Programme Coordinator, the Head of Distance Unit, the Academic Educational Technologist, the CIO and IT Officer, representatives of external stakeholders of the programme, the Campus Director, the Head of the Library, representatives of Student Affairs Office and the Registry Office and the Student Progress and Welfare Coordinator, students representing existing DMPA and BSc programmes both on-campus and distance learning. All the meetings were accompanied by intensive and open discussions of all the relevant topics. During the exit discussion, the vice rector, the Head of the Academic Coordinator of the Programme Coordinator, had the opportunity to clarify additional questions that came up in the evaluation process.

The following report has been compiled on the basis of the provided documents and presentations, as well as the open exchange of opinions among EEC members during the visit to the university. The Committee believes that the report is unbiased and constructive. Our goal has been to provide an objective evaluation of the program and offer an external perspective on potential ways for its further development of the programme.

B. External Evaluation Committee (EEC)

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>University</i>
Ernst Verwaal	Chair	KU Leuven
Christine Holmström Lind	Member	Uppsala University
Manto Gotsi	Member	City St George's, University of London
Santi Caballé Llobet	Member (E-Learning expert)	Universitat Oberta de Catalunya
Alexandros Evgeniou	Member (Student)	Open University Cyprus

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:*
 - *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*

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*
 - *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*

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*

1.4 Information management

Standards

- *Information for the effective management of the programme of study is collected, monitored and analysed:*
 - *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*
- *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?*

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 EEC found that, overall, there is a clear policy for quality assurance for the BSc in Business Administration (e-learning). The information provided in the documentation prior to the visit, along with the presentations and discussions during the visit, demonstrated that the University of Neapolis Pafos puts a strong emphasis on quality assurance. This is evidenced through their Committee for Quality Assurance and the continuous evaluation of their programme through the PROSE system. Moreover, their membership in eMERGE, as well as in the European University Association, EURASHE, UNAI, EUA, UAVES, SDSN, UNIMED, NetWorld2020, EDN, PRME, EFMD, ISA, CSDP, ECLAS, and their partnerships with institutions worldwide provide ample opportunities to learn about and apply best practices in quality assurance. The Pedagogical Planning Unit Committee for Distance Learning Programmes also helps to endorse quality in the BSc in Business Administration (e-learning). Teaching, administrative staff, and students noted that they take an active role in quality assurance. The advisory board is actively involved in ensuring that market trends and needs are addressed, although they could be further involved in the development of the programme.

The EEC found that there are clear learning outcomes linked to the overall programme objectives and that these are largely in line with the institutional strategic goals. More could be done to align the programme's goals and learning outcomes with the institution's research goals. Students and the advisory board are involved in providing feedback on the programme; however, the advisory board could play a more active role in the design and continuous development of the programme. While the programme reflects and supports the four purposes of higher education of the Council of Europe, these could be made more explicit in the design and communication of the programme. The BSc in Business Administration (e-learning) largely enables smooth student progression. Assignments and exams correspond to the ECTS; there is a considerable amount of assessment, which appears to be primarily motivated by addressing engagement challenges. Current students provided diverse views on the student workload, with some commenting that it is about right, while others noted that they could be challenged more in some modules. Emphasis on continuous review and revisions was noted during the visit. More could be done in terms of research-led teaching in the programme.

The information in the documentation showcased that, overall, there is clear, accurate, and readily accessible information published about selection criteria, intended learning outcomes at the programme and module level, qualification awarded, teaching and learning, assessment procedures, and graduate employment. Neapolis University Pafos also collects information on dropout rates. While the university participates in the Erasmus programme, there was no clear answer during our visit in terms of whether students on the distance learning programme can also benefit from further learning opportunities through Erasmus exchange with another university.

The EEC was impressed by the effective management of information in terms of key performance indicators, student profile, progression and drop-out rates, learning resources, and student support available, including psychological support. Staff and students appear committed to endorsing this effort.

Strengths

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

The programme benefits from a clear and comprehensive policy, structures, and processes for quality assurance. This is supported by various internal units, students, and external advisory members.

The university invests time and effort in continuous quality monitoring, using data from multiple stakeholders.

The programme and modules have clear learning outcomes. These are broadly linked to programme and university goals.

There is clear information about the programme and its modules.

There is effective management of information. Staff and students enable this effort. Information is regularly updated, and it is readily accessible.

The external advisory board has an active role in supporting students through webinars, projects, and placement opportunities

Students provide regular developmental feedback and are proud of their 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.

The EEC found that more should be done by the programme and its modules in terms of endorsing the research goals of the institution. This could include: more research-led teaching by the teaching staff who can use their latest research insights to drive asynchronous and synchronous learning activities in their modules; teaching material in each module that go beyond textbooks to include further emphasis on cutting edge publications in top-ranked journals on the subject matter; a research project – this could be a standalone practical project, or an additional part of a more extensive module than the current research module; a clear indication of how the programme endorses the

research goals of the university. Incorporating the ABS list in the evaluation of research outputs of academic staff would also help in this direction.

The EEC also recommends a greater involvement of the external advisory board in the development of the programme, particularly in terms of opportunities for industry-led projects and as a means to foster engagement within the student and broader alumni community.

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

Sub-area		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>
1.1	Policy for quality assurance	Compliant
1.2	Design, approval, on-going monitoring and review	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

2.4 Study guides structure, content and interactive activities

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

Standards

- *The e-learning methodology is appropriate for the particular programme of study.*
- *Expected teleconferences for presentations, discussion and question-answer sessions, and guidance are set.*
- *A specific plan is developed to safeguard and assess the interaction:*
 - *among students*
 - *between students and teaching staff*
 - *between students and study guides/material of study*
- *Training, guidance and support are provided to the students focusing on interaction and the specificities of e-learning.*
- *The process of teaching and learning supports students' individual and social development.*
- *The process of teaching and learning is flexible, considers different modes of e-learning 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 e-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.*
- *For distance learning programs, the number of students in both undergraduate and Master's level postgraduate programs does not exceed **30** students per class.*

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.*

2.3 Student assessment

Standards

- *A complete assessment framework is designed, focusing on e-learning methodology, including clearly defined evaluation criteria for student assignments and the final examination.*
- *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 e-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.*

2.4 Study guides structure, content and interactive activities

Standards

- *A study guide for each course, fully aligned with e-learning philosophy and methodology and the need for student interaction with the material is developed. The study guide should include, for each course week / module, the following:*
 - *Clearly defined objectives and expected learning outcomes of the programme, of the modules and activities in an organised and coherent manner*
 - *Presentation of course material, and students' activities on a weekly basis, in a variety of ways and means (e.g. printed material, electronic material, teleconferencing, multimedia)*
 - ***Weekly schedule of interactive activities and exercises (i.e. simulations, problem solving, scenarios, argumentation)***
 - *Clear instructions for creating posts, discussion, and feedback*
 - *Self-assessment exercises and self-correction guide*
 - *Bibliographic references and suggestions for further study*
 - *Number of assignments/papers and their topics, along with instructions and additional study material*
 - *Synopsis*
- *Study guides, material and activities are appropriate for the level of the programme according to the EQF.*

You may also consider the following questions:

- Is the nature of the programme compatible with e-learning delivery?*
- How do the programme, the material, the facilities, and the guidelines safeguard the interaction between students, students and teaching staff, students and the material?*
- How many students upload their work and discuss it in the platform during the semester?*
- 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 nature of the program is well-suited for distance learning delivery, and the methodology provided is suitable for the specific program of study.

The university's learning management system, based on Moodle 4.11, supports basic online education and administration services. It features synchronous (via MS Teams) and asynchronous tools for student engagement with tutors and content. The system includes e-assessment options, such as quizzes with immediate feedback, to gauge student understanding. More complex e-assessment methods for skills, such as critical thinking, exist but were not presented during the meetings.

Each course offers 6 hours of teleconferences (every 2 weeks, with a duration of about 2 hours each), ensuring sufficient live interaction between tutors and students. Teleconferences aim to crystallise the knowledge acquired previously by studying the materials and performing the weekly interactive activities, following the flipped classroom methodological approach. These teleconferences are recorded for those students unable to attend in real-time, though most students typically do.

Collaboration between teachers and students, and among students, takes place synchronously via teleconferences and asynchronously through Moodle's online forums. Student collaboration is further encouraged through group work activities in small teams. However, the structure, process and technical support for these group activities are not formally defined, providing tutors and students with the flexibility to organise and manage groups autonomously.

During the meeting with stakeholders, it was highlighted that the online delivery of the programme provides added value through the development of digital competencies, fostered by the continuous use of online platforms and tools. This aligns students with the digital skills required in today's professional environment. Moreover, the programme attracts students from diverse regions around the world, thereby enhancing intercultural collaboration and the exchange of varied professional and academic perspectives. The EEC believes that these elements contribute to a richer, practice-oriented training environment that supports the achievement of learning outcomes and addresses the evolving needs of both students and employers.

Formative course assessment includes a mid-term assignment that contributes to 20% of the final grade, providing formative feedback during the course. The summative assessment comprises a mandatory final exam, which accounts for 60% of the grade. Course assessment also involves four graded interactive activities (5% each), which count for the remaining 20%, thus ensuring that students remain continuously engaged in the e-learning process. Despite a broad range of interactive activity types, such as jigsaw, wikis, presentations, group work, and simulations, it was not clarified how they align with this specific program. Finally, optional non-graded interactive activities, such as formative self-assessment with indicative answers, in-class discussions, and case studies, are included weekly to help students self-evaluate their understanding and skills. All interactive activities come with detailed rubrics, outlining how students will be assessed and facilitating their learning from these evaluations.

The proposed courses have a complete syllabus plus a highly detailed weekly student-centred study guide, which includes relevant information: objectives, learning outcomes, material to use, activities to perform, complementary bibliographic references, and recommended study time to carry out the proposed interactive activities. In addition, study guides include a Student Handbook, very well presented in an engaging way, which motivates students in the learning process. This is considered by the EEC as a best practice.

Strengths

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

The EEC believes that continually evaluating the quality assurance of distance learning by non-mandatory external accreditation organizations, such as EDEN, is a good practice. Therefore, the

The university is encouraged to keep applying for external accreditations (EFQUEL, EADTU, etc.) to evaluate the quality of its distance learning model.

The EEC considers the university's distance learning model to be in line with the specific needs of online students who have professional and family responsibilities and require effective and timely learning. The EEC notes that students benefit from a good student-teacher ratio (1:14), and student feedback is positive.

The provision of personalised feedback in submitted assignments and during teleconference sessions, as well as feedback based on rubrics, is considered best practice. In addition, the EEC recognises the many benefits of collaboration among students promoted by collaborative activities and discussions organised in online teams. Finally, the very detailed weekly study guides, which enable students to determine the work to be done each week, are also considered a best practice. The EEC urges the university to maintain these strong elements of its distance learning model while reinforcing them when possible.

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.

Concerning the administration of online final exams, the EEC urges the university to carefully consider the implications of proctoring these exams. While ensuring academic integrity is crucial, it is also essential to stay abreast of the latest advancements in online examination technologies, which offer various methods to secure exams without compromising fairness or privacy for students. The EEC suggests exploring innovative solutions, including open-book formats or project-based assessments that balance integrity with a positive final exam experience for all participants.

The EEC has identified an issue concerning the implementation of the flipped classroom methodology. Although this approach is designed to foster interactivity and active student engagement, its effectiveness has been undermined by the optional nature of students' preparation prior to the teleconference sessions. As a result, students can choose not to engage with the pre-class materials, leading to teleconferences being conducted without the expected level of prior knowledge or active participation. This situation appears to stem from limited awareness of the pedagogical rationale and intended benefits of the flipped classroom approach. To address this, the EEC recommends enhancing communication with students about the purpose, structure and advantages of the flipped classroom, helping them understand their role and how to engage in the process. This clarification should be integrated into the early stages of the programme, specifically during the student induction period, when students are introduced to the platform and key aspects of how their online courses are structured and delivered.

The EEC recommends that both Student Handbook and study guides be updated to include policies and best practices related to generative AI, along with academic guidance for students on the opportunities and risks these technologies present in education. This advice should also be extended to faculty staff.

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

Sub-area		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>
2.1	Process of teaching and learning and student-centred teaching methodology	Compliant
2.2	Practical training	Compliant
2.3	Student assessment	Compliant
2.4	Study guides structure, content and interactive activities	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.
- Training, guidance and support are provided to the teaching staff focusing on interaction and the specificities of e-learning.
- 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:

- *Is the teaching staff qualified to teach in the e-learning programme of study?*
- *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.

Neapolis University Pafos offers a comprehensive suite of academic courses within the traditional and essential disciplines of Business Administration. These include, but are not limited to, Human Resources Management, Marketing, Strategic Management, Finance, and Accounting. The curriculum is delivered by a highly qualified faculty body, comprising individuals with a

combination of robust academic credentials and substantial teaching experience. All lecturers in the distance learning BSc in Business Administration hold doctoral degrees (PhDs), and faculty staffing levels are currently adequate to support the effective implementation and delivery of the academic program.

The External Evaluation Committee (EEC) has determined that course leaders possess both the academic expertise requisite for the specialised modules they instruct. The alignment of their qualifications with the subjects they teach contributes positively to the academic integrity and overall quality of the program.

Student feedback is systematically gathered through formalised survey instruments, and the institution has established clear procedures for addressing such feedback, as well as any student grievances or complaints. The university's quality assurance team has developed a structured framework to distinguish between different forms of student misconduct and to recommend proportionate and appropriate responses. Furthermore, mechanisms are in place to regularly evaluate the effectiveness of teaching. When deficiencies in teaching performance are identified, remedial measures are implemented in a timely and constructive manner.

Neapolis University Pafos is an active participant in the Erasmus+ program. However, it should be noted that, at present, faculty members take limited advantage of this affiliation to engage in academic exchange or to host visiting staff from other participating institutions. Expanding participation in such exchanges could enrich the learning environment and broaden the institution's academic networks.

Faculty members at Neapolis University Pafos benefit from institutional support for research and industry collaboration, but there is currently no active research centre. A clearly articulated process exists for assigning workload credit to faculty engaged in research activities, and teaching workloads are acceptable.

In terms of academic qualifications, the majority of faculty members hold doctoral degrees and are actively engaged in research. However, the research output is quantified in a manner that does not fairly acknowledge the quality differences between various publication outlets. Faculty development is supported through participation in ongoing professional training and skill-enhancement initiatives. A structured recruitment process ensures the appointment of academically and professionally qualified individuals to teaching positions.

The university has a DL unit that provides training for distance learning in terms of seminars, mentoring, and technical support to faculty members from the different university departments. Faculty members can participate in training programs to enhance their skills for conducting high-quality online teaching. These training programs are certified as professional development pertaining to distance learning.

Strengths

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

The faculty's academic credentials and teaching experience are highly relevant to the field of Business Administration. The instructors have doctoral qualifications, and many have been teaching at the undergraduate level for a number of years.

Recruitment and faculty development procedures are closely monitored and appear to function effectively, ensuring continued academic excellence.

The academic qualifications of current faculty members generally meet the requirements necessary to achieve the program's intended learning outcomes and uphold high standards of instruction.

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 observes that the current policy does not require online teaching experience for faculty members to begin teaching online or transition from conventional programs. This approach may lead to problems, such as reduced student engagement and higher dropout rates. The university is strongly encouraged to revise its hiring criteria to require online teaching experience for new faculty members.

The development of a cohesive and forward-looking research strategy for the Business Administration faculty would contribute to stronger integration between research and teaching. This alignment could enhance the program's academic depth, improve its competitiveness in the higher education sector, and attract greater levels of industry-funded applied research.

Finally, the University should enhance the visibility and communication of its scholarly achievements through a dedicated management research centre. The improved dissemination of faculty research will not only increase transparency but also enhance the institution's academic profile.

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

Sub-area		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>
3.1	Teaching staff recruitment and development	Compliant
3.2	Teaching staff number and status	Compliant
3.3	Synergies of teaching and research	Partially compliant

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

The EEC considers the admission requirements to be transparent and explicitly stated in terms of required documents (Bachelor degree certificate and academic transcripts, Evidence of English language proficiency, reference letters, personal statement, etc.). Applicants are required to demonstrate satisfactory knowledge of English language (e.g. via TOEFL, IELTS, GCSE or equivalent). The level is set at B2, which is sufficient.

The application can be submitted electronically or by means such as regular mail, in person at the university's Admissions Office, or by fax. All prospective candidates must have completed a secondary school diploma at any accredited school, or equivalent. The tuition fee for this Distance BSc is set at an acceptable rate.

The language requirement in English for the Distance BSc in Business Administration Programme is set at B2. All applications are reviewed and approved by the Department Enrolment Committee, and admission into the programme is decided by the Admission Committee of the programme chaired by the Programme Coordinator. The EEC commends the emphasis on inclusivity and diversity with regard to the prospective students of this new Distance BSc. Attending the program requires a 'satisfactory' level of digital and technological knowledge and the access to a computer with a broadband Internet connection, speakers, microphone and camera. After the successful completion of the BSc the students is awarded a degree of Bachelor of Science in Business Administration.

In case of prospective students with special needs and disabilities, this can be declared in the application form and is sent to the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Center of the University to check for its credibility and reliability.

Admissions will be accepted twice a year. If a dissatisfactory decision is made, the applicants are able to appeal the decision to the admission office within ten days from the notification of the decision. The appeal is handled by the Neapolis University Pafos Admission Committee.

The EEC panel discussed the students' impressions of the Neapolis University Pafos admission processes as well as their learning experience with students from other programs. The students expressed high satisfaction and emphasised the strong support and flexibility at Neapolis University Pafos.

The Neapolis University Pafos Moodle platform offers an extensive range of learning analytics tools to monitor student progression and performance. These tools are based on log data from students with limited participation or uncompleted activities, flagging potential concerns for students at risk and prompting tutors and academic advisors to contact or meet with the student to address the issues. However, the learning benefits of these tools, such as enhanced performance and lower dropout rates, were not demonstrated during the meetings.

The Pedagogical Planning and Learning Process Unit at Neapolis University Pafos aims to further strengthen the learning process and progression of the students in the Neapolis University Pafos study programmes through different evaluation- and monitoring tools and methods. With regard to distance learning, the Distance Learning Unit (DLU) provides excellent support for student learning and progression. The use of the quality assurance platforms such as PROSE and TARGIT at Neapolis University Pafos are also effective means for monitoring student progression and learning.

The Neapolis University Pafos is currently implementing advanced learning analytics mechanisms, particularly those based on AI and Machine Learning. These tools can monitor and predict student performance and dropout rates, enabling the institution to take proactive corrective actions. However, these advanced tools were not shown during the meetings.

Strengths

Neapolis University Pafos has extensive and transparent pre-defined regulations and processes regarding student admission and progression. Appropriate procedures are in place to ensure coherent recognition in line with European and international standards.

Neapolis University Pafos provides evidence of extensive and well-organised support of the students in almost every area, which allows for student progression and learning.

The Neapolis University Pafos is currently implementing advanced learning, monitoring, and quality assurance tools, particularly those based on AI and machine learning, which the EEC welcomes.

A strength was noted around the low 10-15% drop-out rate at the university level. In addition, student feedback is mandatory at course end and is also actively sought on an on-going basis throughout course delivery. However, the effectiveness of this information in terms of specific measures for quality improvement taken by the university was not clear during the meetings.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

The admission requirements for this new Distance BSc are transparent but need further clarification. For example, it is unclear whether one or two reference letters are required. This needs to be clarified in the official admission information.

Currently, there are no clear defined guidelines available to students (or staff) on the ethical and responsible use of generative AI in group or individual assignments. We therefore recommend the establishment of a formal policy addressing the use of AI in teaching and assessments. These policies

should be clearly communicated through written materials, such as the course guide provided for each module.

The EEC has some concern with student progression in terms of the use and application of theories with practice due to lack of a final ‘thesis’ project, business project or equivalent. Since Neapolis University Pafos stands on three pillars, excellence in: teaching, research and social contribution, we recommend to consider an optional track with a research (thesis project) to provide students, that are interested, with an opportunity to gain in-depth insights into particular topics of interest under supervision of academic staff.

Currently, the impression of the EEC is that the attention is put more on the first and third pillar. Overall, the EEC recommends putting more attention and efforts at Neapolis University Pafos to create a dynamic research community and to aim for publications in high-ranked journals.

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

Sub-area		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>
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

- *Weekly interactive activities per each course are set.*
- *The e-learning material and activities take advantage of the capabilities offered by the virtual and audio-visual environment and the following are applied:*
 - *Simulations in virtual environments*
 - *Problem solving scenarios*
 - *Interactive learning and formative assessment games*
 - *Interactive weekly activities with image, sound and unlimited possibilities for reality reconstruction and further processing based on hypotheses*
 - *They have the ability to transfer students to real-life situations, make decisions, and study the consequences of their decisions*
 - *They help in building skills both in experiences and attitudes like in real life and also in experiencing - not just memorizing knowledge*
- *A pedagogical planning unit for e-learning, which is responsible for the support of the e-learning unit and addresses the requirements for study materials, interactive activities and formative assessment in accordance to international standards, is established.*
- *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 e-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.*

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.

The university's Distance Learning Unit (DLU) is responsible for providing pedagogical support for the creation and evaluation of online courses. This unit is supported by a Pedagogical Planning Committee, which ensures study materials, interactive activities, and both formative and summative assessments align with international standards. The DLU also offers a Faculty Handbook, detailing guidelines for distance learning course development and delivery. This handbook is a valuable

reference that ensures consistent quality across the University's distance learning courses. Currently, the DLU is exploring the integration of cutting-edge technologies, such as AI, into their online programs. The EEC acknowledges the efforts and concerns of the DLU to continuously improve the distance teaching and learning experience. However, although these initiatives have been underway for some time, tangible results or visible improvements from these efforts have not yet been observed.

Strengths

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

The DLU is considered a best practice, due to the structure, resources and services devoted to enhanced distance learning. The EEC believes that it can be a powerful support for guaranteeing and maintaining the quality of the teaching provided while offering a solid base to faculty members seeking to enhance their distance learning expertise.

Online courses incorporate multi-format learning materials, including e-books, articles and videos, all beneficial for distance learning. In addition, recorded teleconferences and video lectures include the tutor in all videos for non-verbal cues, and include subtitles for accessibility.

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 suggests the university anticipate potential challenges from attracting more international students across remote time zones, highlighting the importance of strengthening asynchronous online interaction and collaboration, while continuously adapting the DL methodology to accommodate emerging needs and diverse student circumstances.

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

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

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.

The External Evaluation Committee (EEC) affirms that Neopolis University Pafos largely meets the required standards of academic quality, institutional governance, and student support, as outlined in the evaluation framework and the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in higher education (ESG). The only noted exception is **partial compliance in the area of synergy between research and teaching**, where further improvement is necessary to ensure alignment with international best practices and academic expectations.

The EEC wishes to extend its sincere appreciation to the leadership, faculty, administrative staff, students, and external stakeholders of Neopolis University Pafos for their openness, collaboration, and deep engagement throughout the evaluation process. The Committee particularly values the **constructive dialogue**, the **transparent exchange of ideas**, and the **forward-looking orientation** that characterised all meetings and discussions. These interactions enabled the EEC to gain meaningful insights into the institution's operational strengths, educational philosophy, and strategic ambitions.

The Committee is especially impressed by the **inclusive, friendly, and supportive institutional culture** fostered at Neopolis University Pafos. This culture is consistently evident in the relationships between students and faculty, among colleagues, and in the overall sense of community on each campus. The EEC recognises and commends the **strong sense of personal commitment, engagement, and loyalty** exhibited by all members of the university. These qualities are seen as foundational assets that contribute significantly to the institution's ongoing success and its positive impact on students' academic and personal development.

Key Areas for Strategic Development

In its comprehensive review, the EEC has identified four **cross-cutting strategic challenges** that are central to the university's long-term growth and sustainability. These challenges transcend individual departments or programmes and apply across distance learning and on-campus learning business programmes within the institution. They are:

1. Student engagement

Neopolis University Pafos operates both on campus and distance learning BSc in Business Administration programmes, each serving a unique student profile and responding to specific socio-economic contexts. This creates both opportunities and challenges. Tailoring academic programmes and support services to meet the needs of distance learning students, while ensuring institutional consistency and cohesion across programmes, is a complex but necessary task.

2. Balancing Academic Demands with Students' Employment Obligations

A significant proportion of the student body is engaged in part-time employment during their studies. While work experience can positively contribute to a student's maturity and the practical application of academic knowledge, it also imposes constraints on students' time, energy, and academic performance, as well as their campus engagement. The dual burden of study and work must be acknowledged in the design and delivery of the programmes and the activation of the student body in both distance learning as on-campus environments.

3. Curriculum Innovation and distance learning innovation

The Neopolis University Pafos must continue its efforts to innovate and modernize its distance learning academic offerings. This includes restructuring existing courses, integrating new and emerging fields of study, and ensuring that curricula remain relevant in a rapidly evolving global and technological landscape. Notable are the technological challenges regarding AI that the EC feels must be better addressed by Neopolis University Pafos.

4. Enhancing the Research Dimension of the distance learning programme and the university

While the university has taken commendable steps toward building a research culture, it currently does not have a **Research Center** that focuses on management and economics. Further action is needed to integrate research application in the programme. Strengthening the business research foundation of the programme and will reinforce academic quality, support faculty development, and elevate the university's impact and reputation within the wider academic and professional communities.

The EEC is confident that Neopolis University Pafos possesses the capacity to address these key areas. However, this confidence is contingent upon the university's commitment to implement the recommendations set forth in this report in a timely and comprehensive manner.

Detailed Recommendations

To support continuous improvement and ensure the highest standards of academic quality and institutional performance, the EEC offers the following detailed recommendations:

1. Strengthen Assessment and Evaluation Methods

- Assessments should be designed to challenge students and encourage the demonstration of higher-order cognitive skills such as critical thinking, independent analysis, synthesis of ideas, and creative problem-solving. Student input was that, particularly the assignments before the final exam, were less challenging, leading to the impression that the student's commitment to the programme counts for substantially fewer hours than the ECTS format prescribes.
- AI introduces problems into assessments that are difficult to solve with current technologies. Introducing **oral components** into distance learning examinations or assessments may provide opportunities to evaluate students more comprehensively, particularly in terms of articulation, argumentation, and real-time reasoning, where AI cannot contaminate the student evaluation.

2. Develop a Coherent Strategy for Community and Student Engagement

While students' employment experiences can add value to their education, the physical and mental demands of working while studying can impair academic commitment and campus engagement. The university is encouraged to develop **clear policies and academic expectations** that take these realities into account.

Neopolis University Pafos should formalise and strengthen its **partnerships with stakeholders** to better support students in balancing their academic and professional responsibilities. Potential measures include:

Adding a **Business Project** into the programme with structured academic oversight.

Establishing **covenants** that define appropriate Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). As one of the stakeholders explained to the EEC, the SDGs can provide a framework for Industry-Government-University collaboration to develop social value for a broad range of stakeholders. This can bring focus to both research and teaching of the Neopolis University Pafos.

Facilitating **intercultural distance learning**. As one of the stakeholders very well explained to the EEC, one of the great opportunities of distance learning is that it can offer facilities for intercultural learning and global network building. This competence is of critical importance for the economic growth of Cyprus as a vital hub between various continents (Asia, Europe, Africa). The EEC fully supports this view and strongly recommends that these two elements become part of the underlying vision of the BSC distance learning programme.

3. Enhance Research Capacity and Culture

The establishment of a **Research Center** can be a promising step to activate the research culture at Neopolis University Pafos. A strategic plan should be developed to integrate research more fully into the core mission.

Faculty involved in delivering academic programmes should be supported and incentivised to engage in relevant, high-quality research activities. This includes allocating time for research within workloads, providing access to resources, and offering professional development in research methods and grant writing. The institute should have clear policies to prevent collaboration with predatory publishers that do not meet basic academic, professional, and ethical standards.

Building strong links between **teaching and applied research** in a business project will enrich the learning experience for students and contribute to the university's visibility and standing within both academic, professional, and broader stakeholder communities.

4. Modernise and Expand the Curriculum

The Neopolis University Pafos is encouraged to **review and update existing courses** regularly to ensure they reflect current developments in the fields of sustainability, international business, artificial intelligence, digital transformation, and other dynamic areas that are reshaping industries and society at large.

These topics should not be treated as supplementary or elective; rather, they must be **embedded as core components** of the programme to ensure graduates are well-equipped for the evolving demands of the labour market.

Interdisciplinary approaches and project-based learning should be explored as effective pedagogical strategies for integrating these complex and dynamic topics into the curriculum.



Conclusion

The EEC would like to reiterate its appreciation for the **welcoming and highly supportive atmosphere** that Neapolis University Pafos has cultivated for its entire academic community. The university's emphasis on student support and mutual respect is commendable and distinguishes it as a unique and nurturing place of higher learning.



E. Signatures of the EEC

<i>Name</i>	<i>Signature</i>
Ernst Verwaal	
Christine Holmstrom	
Manto Gotsi	
Santi Caballé Llobet	
Alexandros Evgeniou	
Click to enter Name	

Date: 17-06-2025