Doc. 300.1.1/2

Date: 01/02/2023

External Evaluation Report

(E-learning programme of study)

- **Higher Education Institution:**
  UCLan Cyprus

- **Town:** Larnaca

- **School/Faculty (if applicable):** School of Business and Management

- **Department/ Sector:** Department/Sector

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

  In Greek: Programme Name

  In English: Master Business Administration (E-leaning)

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

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

- **Concentrations (if any):**

  In Greek: Concentrations
  In English: Concentrations

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A. Introduction

The External Evaluation Committee (EEC) would like to thank the Cyprus Agency of Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Higher Education (CYQAA) for the invitation to evaluate the Masters in Business Administration (MBA) (E-learning) at the University of Central Lancashire Cyprus.

UCLan Cyprus aims to be a modern international university recognised for delivering taught programs and research of international standing. It also aspires to engage with industry and stakeholders making a positive impact. To this end, the MBA (E-learning) can help train managers and enhance their career prospects making a valuable contribution to the local business environment and beyond.

The evaluation took place in-person on 30th January 2023 and was conducted by a team of three academic experts in management and marketing, a professor who is an e-learning expert, as well as a student representative.

The EEC met with key individuals at the University, including the Rector, the Head of the School, the program coordinator, and various teaching and administrative staff (academic quality and compliance, admissions and recruitment, marketing, IT, human resources, library and student support) and students. The information gathered during these meetings, the self-evaluation report prepared in-advance of the evaluation, staff presentations, and all the other documents requested by the EEC, provided a comprehensive view of the program's strengths and areas for potential improvement.

The report includes a comprehensive analysis of the current status and identifies areas for further development. The recommendations provided are based on good practice. It is hoped that the suggestions outlined in the report will lead to significant improvements in the functioning and effectiveness of the Masters in Business Administration (E-learning). As such, the EEC hopes that the report becomes a valuable resource for the University and the program team as they work towards achieving their goals. If CYQAA has any questions about the report, the EEC members are readily available to answer them.

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B. External Evaluation Committee (EEC)

Name	Position	University
Savvas Papagiannidis	Professor	Newcastle University
Christina Boutsouki	Professor	Aristotle University of Thessaloniki
Michele O'Dwyer	Professor	University of Limerick
Santi Caballe Llobet	Professor (E-learning Expert)	Universitat Oberta de Catalunya
Maria Agathangelou	Student Representative	University of 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.*

Findings

UCLan Cyprus is in a unique position being in the EU and having to abide by the Quality Assurance Framework of Cyprus while at the same time UCLan Cy has a very strong relationship/partnership with a British University (UCLan UK). As a result, the underlying policies and processes adopted and implemented are well developed and clearly defined. This also applies to Quality Assurance where all relevant parties participate in quality assurance process. All committees have student and academic representatives. Having to adhere to more than one quality assurance framework offers an opportunity to review a program offering in a more comprehensive manner. As the program is aligned with UCLan UK and has a similar structure and course content, there are a number of opportunities to explore (e.g., it makes student exchanges easier). Changes to one side need to be reflected to a great extent to the other side. However, this alignment can potentially limit the freedom that the program team has, and may slow down program development.

The MBA (E-learning) consists of 5 compulsory courses (e.g. leading and developing people and processes, international strategic management, financial management etc) and 2 electives (contemporary marketing in organisations and business intelligence and data analytics). Following the UCLan UK policy all modules are 10 ECTS. The only exception is the MBA dissertation which is 30 ECTS. Overall, the MBA program content does not currently reflect the content commonly associated with the award. Similarly, the way that the modules are titled and the content that they contain is not aligned, making it difficult to get a clear sense of their role in the program.

Beyond the comments made with regard to the program's content and structure, the program is in principle, in line with the European Qualifications Framework. The program implements the ECTS system appropriately when it comes to student workload.

Information about the program study is available outlining the selection criteria, the intended learning outcomes, the qualification awarded, teaching and assessment procedures, and pass rates. All of these are provided in the student handbook. Such information is also publicly available via a number of channels (e.g. the University website).

Similarly, information for the effective management of the program of study is collected on a regular basis. As there are small numbers of students, the staff have a clear profile of the student population and follow student progression, success and drop-out rates carefully. Students typically graduate within the allocated time.

Strengths

Having to adhere to more than one quality assurance framework offers an opportunity to review a program offering in a more comprehensive manner. The University has operationalised policies in an effective and efficient manner.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

1) The MBA program learning outcomes should be revised to ensure that they are effectively phrased and that they are at the appropriate level.

2) UCLan UK has a policy of that modules are 20 credits (10 ECTS) minimum. This limits the number of modules that can potentially be offered which is important for a program like the MBA which aims to cover a broad range of business administration subject areas.

3) MBA should be strengthened by:
   - Repositioning research and study skills and management coaching skills as workshops and not credit bearing modules.

   - (Following on point 2 above) Splitting the existing 10 credit modules into two or three separate sections that address MBA module content such as Organisational behaviour, Marketing, Strategy, Leadership, Finance, CSR/Sustainability or Law/Ethics, Supply Chain Management, Operations, International management, Innovation, Entrepreneurship, Economics, Data Analytics, Knowledge Management, Human Resources Management and Human Resources Development etc.

   - Including opportunities for peer-to-peer interactive synchronous symmetrical learning.

   - Considering where the development of transferable skills (e.g. ability to manage change; communication; leadership; teamwork; dealing with ambiguity; negotiation; problem solving; critical thinking; values) could be nurtured.

4) External stakeholders (e.g. industry representatives) are not involved in informing and shaping the MBA curriculum.

5) Students' satisfaction with their modules is recorded. However, student participation in evaluation is rather low.

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**
> **2.4 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.*

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.*

Findings

When it comes to the e-learning delivery, the nature of the program is compatible with distance learning delivery. The methodology adopted is appropriate for the particular program of study.

The University's learning management system supports online teaching, learning and administrative processes. This is a Blackboard installation with all of the basic online services available. The platform specifically provides synchronous (through MS Teams) and asynchronous tools to support the interaction needs of students with the lecturers, the other students, and with the materials. The platform also provides e-assessment procedures through quizzes with automatic feedback in order to assess students' knowledge. The provision of more complex forms of e-assessment to assess complex competences and skills, such as critical thinking and teamwork, which were mentioned during the visit but not evidenced.

Collaboration among teachers and students (and among students) is conducted through the online subject forums and other forums which are created for ad-hoc events. In addition, collaboration among students is promoted (more detail would have been welcome when it came to the design, procedure and technical support for these activities). Each course has a variable number of hours of synchronous communication (video conferencing) between lecturer and students, and among students. Still, the location of international students across very different times zones reduces the attendance and the benefits of this form of collaboration.

Formative assessment of the majority of courses is based on essays and reports submitted. Personalised feedback is provided during the course for up to 40% of the final grade, while summative assessment is based on a mandatory final exam, which accounts for up to 50% of the final grade. In addition, there are a number of weekly online quiz-based assignments which account for 10% of the grade. Some courses have a different assessment strategy based on report-style portfolio. This features 5 exercises included in the weekly study guides, in order to offer a critical and reflective account. Assessment practices involve internal moderation, external review and in some cases double marking.

Strengths

The EEC considers the University's distance learning model to be in line with the specific profile of full and part-time students with professional and/or family duties, who need to learn effectively and in a timely fashion. The provision of personalised feedback in the assignments submitted and during the teleconference sessions, as well as the feedback based on rubrics and peer-assessment (not evidenced during the meeting), are considered best practice. In addition, the EEC recognises the many benefits of collaboration among students as promoted by collaborative activities and discussions organised in online teams. Finally, the weekly study guides, make it possible for students to determine the work to be achieved each, are also considered good practice. The EEC urges the University to keep up these strong elements of their distance learning model, reinforcing them where possible.

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Areas of improvement and recommendations

1) The EEC believes that continually evaluating the quality assurance of distance learning by non-mandatory external accreditation organisations is good practice. Therefore, the University is urged to apply for external and voluntary accreditations, such as EADTU and EFQUEL, to evaluate and keep improving its distance learning quality assurance.

2) The EEC would like to draw attention to the issue that onsite final exams may not be in line with the learning style of online students, and that formative continuous assessment during the course could be reinforced instead. In this sense, the formative assessment strategy based on different and complex instruments, such as portfolios, mid-term examinations, weekly activities and a variety of assignments, could be confusing for students across the different courses. The University is urged to clearly inform students about the learning benefits of this assessment ecosystem.

3) From the documentation provided and the information gathered in the meetings, it was not clear if gamification strategies are used to increase the student levels of motivation and engagement with the e-assessment process. Such innovations can be used to enhance the delivery of the program.

4) More sophisticated forms of feedback based on intelligent tutoring systems and conversational pedagogical agents are also encouraged to support immediate and automatic feedback to students and self-evaluate their progress.

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	Compliant
2.3	Student assessment	Compliant
2.4	Study guides structure, content and interactive activities	Partially 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.*

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- *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.*

Findings

The University aims to create a supportive working environment that is conducive to individual development for both academic and professional support members of staff. This is a small University with the experience and support of a larger well-established one. Through its partnership with UCLan UK, it has access to a well-established academic processes, procedures, systems and practices which has provided a strong professional foundation for research activities. For instance, UCLan Cy staff have been submitted to the UK REF exercise which sets a high/international benchmark for research and impact activities.

The University has invested in putting in place sufficient teaching resources to underpin the effective delivery of the program. All academic staff had qualifications well-above the program on-offer, with the majority (80%) having a doctorate degree in the area of business administration.

UCLan Cy has a good research trajectory with active pursuit of research funding. The University has achieved a good level of research output and ambition given the size of the team and its overall workload. Members of the teaching team are typically engaged in relevant research activities which can inform their teaching. Such spillovers can positively affect the student learning experience and offer a more up-to-date insights into the areas that the program covers. It was positive to see that the University recognises their efforts and has an established process for managing research time for those engaged with research.

Strengths

There is evidence of a strong commitment to students by faculty and staff with an emphasis on personalisation and support of the student learning experience.

There are staff development structures and support mechanisms. In particular, UCLan Cy provides opportunities for early career academics initially by offering opportunities to build their teaching experience with hourly teaching time. Then, for those who are interested in a career in academia there are opportunities to apply for fulltime teaching roles as they become available.

Areas of improvement and recommendations
1) The EEC would like to note that the University does not provide faculty staff with formal and organised training programs on distance learning in order for lecturers to maintain and improve their technological skills and abilities in supporting distance learning and improve the quality of online teaching. Therefore, the University is urged to provide technical training and support of distance learning to faculty members so that they can participate in training programs. It is recommended that these training programs are certified in terms of professional development relevant to distance learning.

2) The University has a very detailed workload policy document. Still, its operationalisation could have been underpinned by a more structured and transparent system.

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	Partially compliant
3.2	Teaching staff number and status	Compliant
3.3	Synergies of teaching and research	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.*

Findings

The admission criteria are in line with the EEC's expectations for such a program.

Student feedback was actively sought at the end of each course through online surveys.

The University's Blackboard platform provides a wide range of learning analytics tools for monitoring student progression and performance, based on collecting information related to students with lower grades, poor participation or with undelivered activities. This information is useful to identify students at risk, so that the lecturers can intervene with corrective measures.

The EEC would like to note that students benefit from a very good student-teacher ratio and student feedback is very positive.

Certification is in line with European and international standards.

Strengths

A relevant strength is noted around the low drop-out rate.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

1) The EEC would like to note the low response ratio of online surveys (15-20%), which raises doubts of the reliability of the feedback collected from students and in turn of the effectiveness of the specific measures for improvement and actions plans taken by the University. The evaluation form can be shortened, so that it is easier for more students to complete it.

2) More sophisticated forms of learning analytics mechanisms based on AI and specifically Machine Learning are encouraged to monitor and predict student performance and dropout in order to be able to provide timely corrective measures. This is strongly recommended in light of the University's plans to expand by increasing its academic portfolio and the number of online students.

3) Despite references to corrective measures during the meetings, the specific corrective measures were neither shown nor the positive impact in terms of improvement of student success.

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

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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.*

Findings

The EEC had an opportunity to meet with representatives from various academic support services, such as Academic Quality and Compliance, Admissions & Recruitment, Marketing, IT, HR, Library and Student Support. The EEC had also the opportunity to discuss such services from a student perspective. In addition, the committee's tour of the infrastructure evidenced the fact that UCLan Cy offers very good quality facilities across the board.

Teaching spaces of various sizes ensured that different teaching styles and cohorts could be accommodated. Library facilities were very good. UCLan Cy has access to the learning resources that UCLan UK has. ICT labs and connectivity were also sufficient. We also note the significant investment in student social experience. This was a good example of how the leadership of the University has responded to student requests and provided the necessary resources to upgrade existing facilities.

With regards to teaching resources, the proposed modules have a syllabus and a weekly study guide that includes relevant information: objectives, expected learning outcomes, materials to use (including lecturer's notes), activities to perform, complementary bibliographic references, and recommended study time.

The University's distance learning unit is responsible for providing pedagogical support for designing, creating, implementing and evaluating online courses. From the information collected in the meetings, the unit addresses the requirements for study materials, interactive activities and formative and summative assessment in accordance with international standards. The unit also provides a Course Handbook with guidelines for the development and delivery of distance learning that establishes the main characteristics a distance learning course should have. It is a good reference that guarantees the quality and homogeneity of the distance learning courses.

There are provisions for engaging with students who are in need of support or have special learning needs.

Strengths

The distance learning unit, even if not shown during the meeting, is considered best practice, due to its potential structure, resources, infrastructures and services devoted to enhanced distance learning. The EEC believes that it can be a powerful support mechanism for guaranteeing and maintaining the quality of the provided teaching, while providing a good foundation for faculty members involved in distance learning.

From the sample online classroom shown during the visit, the recorded teleconferences and video lectures looked usable and accessible, included the teacher in all the videos to provide non-verbal communication, and added subtitles for accessibility. The EEC would like to note this is also best practice.

Areas of improvement and recommendations
1) The EEC suggests that some considerations should be given to the provision of entire volumes as basic materials in some courses it is recommended that the relevant parts of these volumes be identified to students, in order to facilitate students who need to learn effectively and in a timely fashion.

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

D. Conclusions and final remarks

In this report, the External Evaluation Committee (EEC) provides feedback on the Masters in Business Administration program that is currently offered by the University of Central Lancashire Cyprus. The report outlines the key findings, identifies the program's strengths, and proposes actions for improvement. The EEC believes that the program team should carefully consider the recommendation made with regards to the program structure and content as per our feedback in section 1.

The EEC hopes that the feedback will be useful in shaping future developments and maintaining a strong program. The EEC wishes the best for the UCLan Cyprus team as they continue to improve the program. If the CYQAA needs clarification on any points raised in the report, the EEC is readily available. Finally, the EEC thanks the CYQAA coordinator for efficiently managing the evaluation process, and for his exemplary facilitation that ensured a smooth evaluation.

E. Signatures of the EEC

Name	Signature
Savvas Papagiannidis	
Christina Boutsouki	
Michele O'Dwyer	
Santi Caballe Llobet	
Maria Agathangelou	

Date: 1/2/2023