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Date: 13/1/2023.

External Evaluation Report (Conventional-face-to-face programme of study)

- **Higher Education Institution:**

AUB Mediterraneo

- **Town:**

Paphos

- **School/Faculty (if applicable):**

Faculty of Arts and Sciences (FAS)

- **Department/ Sector:**

Philosophy, Politics and Economics

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

In Greek:

Programme Name

In English:

Bachelor of Arts in Philosophy, Politics, and
Economics (4 years, 240 ECTS)

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

- **Programme's status: New**

- **Concentrations (if any):**

In Greek: Concentrations

In English: Concentrations

The present document has been prepared within the framework of the authority and competencies of the Cyprus Agency of Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Higher Education, according to the provisions of the “Quality Assurance and Accreditation of Higher Education and the Establishment and Operation of an Agency on Related Matters Laws” of 2015 to 2021 [L.136(I)/2015 – L.132(I)/2021].

A. Introduction

This part includes basic information regarding the onsite visit.

The External Evaluation Committee (EEC) visited the premises of the American University of Beirut Mediterraneo on Monday 9th and Tuesday 10th of January 2023. During this visit the EEC had the opportunity to meet with the President Fadlo Khuri, the Rector Wassim Haji, the Senior Vice President for Advancement and Business Development Imad Baalbaki and the Vice Rector Prof. Arne Dietrich

The visit started with a welcome from the founders and academic staff and continued with a briefing at the Rector's office. It followed a meeting with the Head of the Institution and the Head or/and members of the Internal Evaluation Committee. Then there was an Institutional Evaluation/ Presentation followed by a constructive discussion with Members of the Department.

The visit continued with short presentations of the programme's feasibility study and the curriculum (i.e. philosophy, allocation of courses per semester, weekly content of each course, teaching methodologies, admission criteria for prospective students, student assessment, final exams).

An extended discussion took place concerning the CVs (i.e. academic qualifications, publications, research interests, research activity) followed with an interactive discussion on duties other than teaching and research in the iDepartment's PPE programme or teaching obligations in other programmes.

Following the completion of our discussion a tour was offered to us to the premises of the institution (current and future -under construction)

B. External Evaluation Committee (EEC)

Name	Position	University
Senior Professor Matthias Kettner	Chair	University of Witten/Herdecke, Germany
Professor Kyriaki Kosmidou	Member	Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece
Professor Michael Bruter	Member	London School of Economics & Political Science, UK
Professor Dimitris Papadimitriou	Member	University of Manchester, UK
Niki Makri	Student Member	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*

- o *includes well-structured placement opportunities where appropriate*
- o *is subject to a formal institutional approval process*
- o *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*
- o *is regularly monitored in the light of the latest research in the given discipline, thus ensuring that the programme is up-to-date*
- o *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*
- o *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:*
 - o *selection criteria*
 - o *intended learning outcomes*
 - o *qualification awarded*
 - o *teaching, learning and assessment procedures*
 - o *pass rates*
 - o *learning opportunities available to the students*
 - o *graduate employment information*

1.4 Information management

Standards

- *Information for the effective management of the programme of study is collected, monitored and analysed:*
 - o *key performance indicators*
 - o *profile of the student population*
 - o *student progression, success and drop-out rates*
 - o *students' satisfaction with their programmes*
 - o *learning resources and student support available*
 - o *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 PPE programme to be launched by the AUB-M's Faculty of Arts and Sciences has been designed on the basis of a comprehensive market research of other PPE programmes existing in and outside of Europe. At present, in its initial state of content-design, the content of the PPE programme is recognizably similar to those of many other mainstream PPE programmes, which might help potential incoming students from other countries to orient themselves.

The programme's entire student workload of 240 ECTS is distributed adequately so as to allow students a smooth progression with sufficient time, mentoring and feedback from their course instructors so as to make dropouts unlikely and make the successful completion of their last-year BA thesis likely. The PPE programme's overall design is sound, as far as can be estimated before it will actually face the test of practice.

The standard structure of the programme's course descriptions provides actual and prospective students with clear and sufficient information about the content, purpose and objectives of the respective courses, their intended learning outcome, prerequisites, teaching methodology, and modalities of assessment.

Strengths

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

Thorough quality assurance procedures:

Concerning the policy for quality assurance of the planned PPE programme, the department will implement a fully formalized multi-input procedure for review: The programme's educational objectives will be periodically reviewed by alumni who graduated 3 years earlier, by employers (later on), and by the external advisory board which provides feedback on program objectives via annual meetings. Privacy protected information from the regular feedback of students' evaluations of their courses and their teachers will provide additional input that can prove useful within the quality assurance cycles for the purpose of readjusting and modifying the content of courses as well as the overall design of the PPE syllabus.

Alignment of PPE programme with liberal arts education:

The strong institutional nexus of the PPE department with the faculty's (non degree-granting) *Institute of the Liberal Arts* is a significant asset for the PPE programme (and will probably prove valuable for all other departments as well). The institute will offer a broad range of seminars and other formats under the categories of its three general goals, namely teaching "communication and digital literacy", fostering "understanding our world and quantitative reasoning", and "understanding ourselves and our role in the world". Comprising almost half of the PPE programme's ECTS, liberal arts content figures prominently within this programme. Clearly, the PPE programme's stated purpose and objectives - 1. preparing students for graduate studies in various disciplines (e.g. development studies, economics, politics and moral/political philosophy) and for careers in public service, international organizations, business, and others), 2. promoting freedom of thought and respect for diversity, 3. enhance critical thinking, 4. protect personal integrity, and 5. encourage civic engagement - require students cherishing intellectual curiosity and interest in matters political, reason responsiveness, deliberation in diverse normative domains, and appreciation of major cultural practices besides those of science and philosophy (e.g. literature and other forms of art, religion) The Institute of the Liberal Art can help students to live up to these high ideals pertaining to PPE as a multidisciplinary

programme that strives to offer a comprehensive approach to social, economic and political issues and challenges facing our contemporary world.

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.

Relation of compulsory/elective courses:

The PPE syllabus, in its present initial design, has a very high number of compulsory courses plus a number of compulsory general education courses, and a very low number of genuinely elective courses (18 ECTS out of 240) that would allow PPE students freedom of choice for differentially concentrating on one of the three disciplines comprising PPE. It may well be in the interest of prospective students to have more freedom of choice within the PPE syllabus.

Obligatory course in logic:

Logic, in the sense of normative methods supporting consistent and coherent thinking, are universally useful and, in scientific practices, even necessary. The PPE syllabus, in its present initial design, devotes an entire obligatory course to logic. However, it would seem to be worthwhile to consider placing logic into the range of courses offered in the general education curriculum that is provided by the faculty's *Institute of the Liberal Arts*. Alternatively, PPE's own obligatory logic course could be tailored more specifically to the needs of PPE students by amplifying its substance and title to focus more on critical thinking, and the assessment of argumentation in real life communication (natural language argumentation, political rhetoric etc.).

Profiling the programme:

The PPE programme and its syllabus have a potential, not yet fully realized in its present initial state, of substantiating the AUB-M's important claim to provide economic, political, and moral issues and challenges facing our world in general "and the eastern Mediterranean in particular" (Mission Statement). Considering that the General Education part of the curriculum has a brief AUB-Beirut residency requirement for all AUB-Mediterranean students, plus a language requirement to devote two courses to learning Arabic, the PPE programme could develop in the future a marked area of PPE competence for the MENA region. This could raise the AUB-M's PPE programme's attractiveness in comparison to many mainstream PPE programmes elsewhere. Especially for prospective students in other European countries looking for PPE programmes outside their home country such a profile of competence could become an attractor.

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

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

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

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

Standards

- *The process of teaching and learning supports students' individual and social development.*
- *The process of teaching and learning is flexible, considers different modes of delivery, where appropriate, uses a variety of pedagogical methods and facilitates the achievement of planned learning outcomes.*
- *Students are encouraged to take an active role in creating the learning process.*
- *The implementation of student-centered learning and teaching encourages a sense of autonomy in the learner, while ensuring adequate guidance and support from the teacher.*
- *Teaching methods, tools and material used in teaching are modern, effective, support the use of modern educational technologies and are regularly updated.*
- *Mutual respect within the learner-teacher relationship is promoted.*
- *The implementation of student-centred learning and teaching respects and attends to the diversity of students and their needs, enabling flexible learning paths.*
- *Appropriate procedures for dealing with students' complaints regarding the process of teaching and learning are set.*

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

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

You may also consider the following questions:

- *How is it monitored that the teaching staff base their teaching and assessment methods on objectives and intended learning outcomes? Provide samples of examination papers (if available).*
- *How are students' different abilities, learning needs and learning opportunities taken into consideration when conducting educational activities?*
- *How is the development of students' general competencies (including digital skills) supported in educational activities?*
- *How is it ensured that innovative teaching methods, learning environments and learning aids that support learning are diverse and used in educational activities?*
- *Is the teaching staff using new technology in order to make the teaching process more effective?*
- *How is it ensured that theory and practice are interconnected in teaching and learning?*
- *How is practical training organised (finding practical training positions, guidelines for practical training, supervision, reporting, feedback, etc.)? What role does practical training have in achieving the objectives of the study programme? What is student feedback on the content and arrangement of practical training?*
- ***Are students actively involved in research? How is student involvement in research set up?***
- *How is supervision of student research papers (seminar papers, projects, theses, etc.) organised?*
- ***Do students' assessments correspond to the European Qualifications Framework (EQF)?***
- *How are the assessment methods chosen and to what extent do students get supportive feedback on their academic progress during their studies?*
- *How is the objectivity and relevance of student assessment ensured (assessment of the degree of achievement of the intended learning outcomes)?*

Findings

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

For all full-time faculty members of the PPE department, their responsibilities include student advising and mentoring (minimally 2 to 3 hours per week), implying student confidentiality and presupposing a high degree of professionalism. With an internationally attractive PPE programme, it can be expected that there will be many students with different life experiences, social and cultural backgrounds, values and abilities. The PPE department requires of its academic staff a readiness to assist students with whatever problems may emerge from this diversity

Strengths

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

Course-Instructor Evaluation Form:

The course-instructor evaluation form pertaining to the PPE programme's teaching assessment procedures is elaborated and can have significant feedback value concerning both the substance of courses taught as well as the pedagogical methods and teaching-relevant social skills of the teachers.

Required English courses:

Among the courses offered by the Institute of Liberal Arts, PPE students will have to take two English courses for cultivating their competence in scientific reading, writing and speaking, and for raising their proficiency level. This is particularly helpful for PPE students, since so far, most of the literature in the PPE field is in English.

Transparency of Student Assessment:

Every information that students have a legitimate interest in knowing beforehand when they compose their course of study is transparent and publicly accessible in the course descriptions.

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.

Practical training:

For the next phase of progressive syllabus design it might be worthwhile to consider including formats of practical training. Some other PPE programmes elsewhere already include internships and/or field studies. How such formats contribute or fail to contribute to the objectives of PPE programmes is, of course, an open empirical question. The Office of Student Affairs which the AUB-M is going to have can probably play a pivotal role in experimenting with practical training formats for PPE students.

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

Sub-area		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>
2	Process of teaching and learning and student-centred teaching methodology	compliant
2.2	Practical training	partially compliant
2.3	Student assessment	compliant

3. Teaching staff (ESG 1.5)

Sub-areas

3.1 Teaching staff recruitment and development

~~3.2~~ Teaching staff number and status

3.3 Synergies of teaching and research

3.1 Teaching staff recruitment and development

Standards

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

~~3.2~~ Teaching staff number and status

Standards

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

3.3 Synergies of teaching and research

Standards

- *The teaching staff collaborate in the fields of teaching and research within the HEI and with partners outside (practitioners in their fields, employers, and staff members at other HEIs in Cyprus or abroad).*

- *Scholarly activity to strengthen the link between education and research is encouraged.*
- *The teaching staff publications are within the discipline.*
- *Teaching staff studies and publications are closely related to the programme's courses.*
- *The allocation of teaching hours compared to the time for research activity is appropriate.*

You may also consider the following questions:

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

Findings

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

The applicants have identified a pool of 38 members of staff from the parent institution in Beirut that could potentially be transferred to the AUB-M. During the presentation to the evaluation committee a total of four (4) staff were identified as "being committed" to join the AUB-M if the accreditation process is completely satisfactorily. An additional five (5) members of staff have made a similar pledge for the Institute for Liberal Arts which will also service some of the teaching. However, our understanding is that no formal contracts have yet been issued for most of the identified staff to be transferred to the AUB-M.

Given the pioneering nature of establishing the new university, such arrangements are not exceptional or particularly worrisome. However, there are risks in connection with the delivery of teaching (as this is presented in the application form) and the credibility of promises made to potential new students. These will need to be mitigated as soon as possible to facilitate internal planning and preserve external reputation.

The quality of identified teaching staff is internationally competitive with strong pedagogical credentials and research profiles. The established internal processes of evaluating academic staff (some of whom will be transferred to Paphos) offers additional reassurance on quality. The balance between permanent and contract (or part time) staff is very good and the mix of seniority of those delivering teaching is appropriate. Given the strong research profile of staff, the availability of research-led teaching is to be welcomed.

The mother institution has an established procedure of evaluating teaching, which includes student-led evaluation. There is some evidence to suggest that the student-led evaluation process in the AUB-M needs to be made more robust and influential than it is in the mother institution. For the AUB-M, the small number of students envisaged in the first few years will necessitate careful consideration of how student-led evaluation remains confidential in practice and what are the most appropriate channels for following up student concerns.

Strengths

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

- Evidence of the strong pedagogical commitment of members of staff to ensure a more personalised educational experience
- Strong research profile of staff allowing for the delivery of research-led teaching (although this might be limited by the small number of staff based in the AUB-M in the first years of operation.)
- Small student-staff-ratio that fits the pedagogical ideals in the mission of the university. Commitment of the institution to sustain this ratio as student number expand over the next few years
- Established record of the parent institution in delivering student-focused teaching based on the US Liberal Arts College tradition.
- An (annual?) *Teaching Excellence Award*, based on evidence of teaching effectiveness and contributions to advancement of the university educational programs, will be installed, as well as a *Teaching with Technology Award*, based on evidence of the creative use of new instructional technologies and tools with a demonstrated positive impact on student learning, will function as an incentivisation for teaching excellence. This is well aligned with the spirit of a liberal arts idea of cultivating teaching excellence, much better than a money-based incentives system would be.

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 list of staff who will be transferred to the AUB-M needs to be finalized as soon as possible and the appropriate employment contracts should be signed.
- Special care should be taken in the advertisement of the new programme to ensure that potential students are not misled about the availability of seminar units listed in the syllabus.
- It should be expected that the first years of operating the new university may generate a higher number of student complaints, as the new structures bed in. The leadership of the university should embrace this challenge by designing student evaluation processes that are temporarily even stronger than the routine processes without compromising anonymity while allowing the department to 'learn' quickly from its mistakes.
- It is not entirely clear to the members of the evaluation committee whether all units listed in the programme of study can be serviced effectively by the number of staff who have 'committed' to join the AUB-M. There may arise capacity problems: The teaching staff at present is sufficient in terms of quality and rank for the start of the PPE programme of study. As planned, around 50% of the teaching staff will be of professorial rank: Professor, Associate Professor, Assistant Professor. The other 50% of the teaching staff will be Lecturers and Instructors, full-time and part-time, such that no more than 30% of the total teaching staff are part-timers, in due accord with the relevant Cypriot legal requirements regulating staff composition in universities. However, as the number of PPE students will increase to the projected total of 75 enrolled students, and as students' awareness of the value of choice among offered alternatives for seminars will

probably increase, the teaching staff will have to increase significantly in terms of numbers. The faculty and the department are aware of this necessity. According to the recruitment plan of the department, a minimum of four new lines (priority recruitment areas being political theory, international politics, economic policy design, economics and ethics, and political philosophy) is needed to support the first two years of PPE programme. This is ambitious, even more so when one considers that for potentially interesting and interested job candidates *not* from Beirut the prospects of the new department and programme of study, and together with this also the prospects for advancing their careers, could appear uncertain to some extent. With this uncertainty in view, the department might want to consider drawing up an intensive programme of visiting scholars to give workshops or compact seminars, thus helping to take stress out of the urgent but difficult fulfillment of the ambitious recruitment goals.

- It is an expressed desideratum of the faculty that the academic staff that is operating the PPE programme will strive to establish collaborations with other PPE departments and research groups in universities in Asia, Africa, Europe, and America. Faculty and students exchange programs will also be sought. Such collaborations will prove vital for progress in developing a PPE research profile with which the teaching staff can truly identify (which will increase chances for recruiting high-potential new staff) as well as for bringing AUB-M PPE students in contact with, and into networks of, PPE students within the EU and beyond. The EEC recommends striving to realize this desideratum as soon as feasible.

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

Sub-area		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>
3	Teaching staff recruitment and development	Compliant
3.2	Teaching staff number and status	Partially 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.*

You may also consider the following questions:

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

Findings

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

Pre-defined, precise and published regulations for admissions will be implemented. Where admission is competitive (e.g. concerning High School Records and SAT scores, or test results concerning Readiness for University Study in English (RUSE)), the balancing relation of different sorts of scores is predefined and transparent for prospective candidates..

Recognition of academic achievements of incoming foreign students is ensured by the department's compliance with international grade equivalents schemes.

Strengths

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

Students can monitor their performance in the progress of their curriculum: Grades are being aggregated to indicate the status of the student's progress, the prerequisites that have been met, the overall term average, and the overall cumulative average. This information is available for students in their permanent student record.

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 had no opportunity to inspect templates of the certificates that students will finally receive upon graduation.

In case students leave the program before completion, it would be advantageous for them to be able to demand a Transcript of Records at any time.

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

Sub-area		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>
4	udent admission, processes and criteria	compliant
4.2	Student progression	compliant
4.3	udent recognition	compliant
4.4	udent certification	compliant

5. Learning resources and student support (ESG 1.6)

Sub-areas

5.1 Teaching and Learning resources

5.2 Physical resources

5.3 Human support resources

5.4 Student support

5.1 Teaching and Learning resources

Standards

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

5.2 Physical resources

Standards

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

5.3 Human support resources

Standards

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

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

5.4 Student support

Standards

- *Student support is provided covering the needs of a diverse student population, such as mature, part-time, employed and international students and students with special needs.*
- *Students are informed about the services available to them.*
- *Student-centred learning and flexible modes of learning and teaching, are taken into account when allocating, planning and providing student support.*
- *Students' mobility within and across higher education systems is encouraged and supported.*

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 establishment of the AUB-M is backed by a strong investment (50million US dollars) by the parent institution (AUB) over the next few years. This backing will foreseeably facilitate a very good level of teaching and learning resources for students and staff.

The new university will benefit from the substantial library provision of the parent institution, whose extensive resources will be available electronically. The new university has also pledged to connect with the rich collection of the University of Cyprus Library which will enhance the availability of local material for students.

Sufficient funds are allocated to key services for the students' well being (including a counseling service and staff mentoring), the development of its staff (also supporting their research activities) and, importantly, the financial support for eligible students who cannot afford the high tuition fees charged.

There are adequate provisions for the periodic review of the strategic plans at all levels of operations (University, Faculty, Department).

The university is currently operating from a temporary (but very well equipped) facility in Paphos which can comfortably accommodate the student population for the next couple of years as the development of the AUB-M's campus is completed. The investment allocated to the construction of the new campus is substantial and expected to provide first class facilities for students and staff as well as providing substantial benefits for the local economy and society.

Strengths

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

- Strong financial support for the establishment of the new university.
- Generous provision of teaching and learning resources, both physical and virtual.
- Non profit institution with a generous commitment to staff and student welfare
- Established HR procedures in the parent institution that can be replicated in the AUB-M (with a degree of adjustment to account for the EU legal framework)

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 high level of tuition fees may adversely affect accessibility for disadvantaged students, despite the availability of generous financial support. Such support needs to be promoted and communicated very clearly to mitigate accessibility risks.
- HR practices will need to account for the EU legal framework which may be different from that of Lebanon or the US.

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

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

6. Additional for doctoral programmes (ALL ESG)

Sub-areas

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

6.1 Selection criteria and requirements

Standards

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

6.2 Proposal and dissertation

Standards

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

6.3 Supervision and committees

Standards

- *The composition, the procedure and the criteria for the formation of the advisory committee (to whom the doctoral student submits the research proposal) are determined.*

- *The composition, the procedure and the criteria for the formation of the examining committee (to whom the doctoral student defends his/her dissertation), are determined.*
- *The duties of the supervisor-chairperson and the other members of the advisory committee towards the student are determined and include:*
 - *regular meetings*
 - *reports per semester and feedback from supervisors*
 - *support for writing research papers*
 - *participation in conferences*
- *The number of doctoral students that each chairperson supervises at the same time are determined.*

You may also consider the following questions:

- *How is the scientific quality of the PhD thesis ensured?*
- *Is there a link between the doctoral programmes of study and the society? What is the value of the obtained degree outside academia and in the labour market?*
- *Can you please provide us with some dissertation samples?*

Findings

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

Click or tap here to enter text.

Strengths

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

Click or tap here to enter text.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

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

Click or tap here to enter text.

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

Sub-area		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>
6	Selection criteria and requirements	NA
6.2	Proposal and dissertation	NA
6.3	Supervision and committees	NA

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 EEC was impressed by the amount of preparation that went into the programme design, careful thinking about creating a truly interdisciplinary programme with some genuinely interdisciplinary PPE courses, and the pedagogical commitment of staff.

The project, backed by strong feeding departments of economics, philosophy, and political studies at the mother institution has the potential to result in an attractive PPE programme capable of attracting students from diverse backgrounds.

Nevertheless, the EEC has identified a number of potential risks and challenges that should be considered:

- Beyond the first two years the academic and staff plan is underspecified. This affects the long-term planning of the programme's outlook, teaching provision, and research profile, in quantitative and qualitative terms.
- Tuition fees are disproportionately higher than those of local competitors in Cyprus and other EU countries, notably for EU students. This pricing strategy involves financial risks for the department as well as putting off potentially interested EU students. This could affect recruitment diversity and the intellectual environment of the department.
- The PPE syllabus, in its present initial design, has a very high number of compulsory courses plus a number of compulsory general education courses, and a very low number of genuinely elective courses (18 ECTS out of 240) that would allow PPE students freedom of choice for differentially concentrating on one of the three disciplines comprising PPE.
- The relatively low student intake in the first years of operation raises some concern over student evaluation of the programme, particularly with regard to preserving anonymity and confidentiality. Furthermore, the novelty of the programme makes it essential that student feedback is taken seriously and can lead to programme modifications if necessary. This will require putting in place robust follow-up procedures.

E. Signatures of the EEC

<i>Name</i>	<i>Signature</i>
Senior Professor Matthias Kettner	
Professor Kyriaki Kosmidou	
Professor Michael Bruter	
Professor Dimitris Papadimitriou	
Niki Makri	

Date: 13/1/2023