

## AUM Follow Up Visit March 2023 Evaluation and Judgements

<b>Standard 2: Institutional Probity</b>		
Recommendations	Action Plan	Analysis and Judgment on progress made
<p><b>R5.</b> It is recommended that the Sadeen Education Investment Limited undertake all the necessary managerial and financial steps to ensure its financial viability in the short term so as ensure its survival and continued operation in Malta and this for the benefit of its current and future student populations</p>	<p><u>Action to be taken/Timeframe:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Information about Sadeen Educational Investment Limited is available on the AUM website <a href="https://aum.edu.mt/about/overview/">https://aum.edu.mt/about/overview/</a></li> <li>2. Financial Support Planning as a part of Strategic Plan 2022-2027 (Timeframe: September 2022)</li> <li>3. Financial Support Planning (operational planning) including for members of staff, students, programmes, infrastructure etc. (Timeframe: September 2022)</li> </ol>	<p>This recommendation can no longer be completed since AUM is still working on the 2021-2025 Strategic Plan. Work on the following strategic plan was halted to focus its efforts on the current one</p> <p>Judgement: <b>Not Applicable</b></p>
<b>Standard 3: Design and Approval of Programs</b>		
Recommendations	Action Plan	Analysis and Judgment on progress made
<p><b>KR10.</b> The institution should, before the end of the 2021/2022 academic year, implement the new provisions on the design and approval of study programmes currently included in the Quality Assurance Policy</p>	<p><u>Action to be taken/timeframe:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To demonstrate implementation of programme design, approval, quality review procedures and documentation during audit interview (Time frame: October 2022)</li> <li>2. Internal Quality Review documentation is available on Institutional One Drive:</li> </ol>	<p>The panel noted that at this moment there is a clear provision for the design and approval of new study programmes. This is shared with everyone at university. Faculty members are all involved in some way or another in it.</p> <p>Judgement: <b>Action Completed</b></p>
<p><b>KR11.</b> The institution should, before the beginning of the 2021/2022 academic year, clarify the composition of the Committees</p>	<p><u>Action to be taken/timeframe:</u></p>	<p>There is a clear modus operandi for the selection of individuals to participate the various organs of the institution. When an</p>

involved in the design and approval of study programmes, and reflect it formally and consistently in its documentation;	Curriculum Development Committee Link: <a href="#">Curriculum Development Committee</a>	individual joins a committee s/he is made aware of the role that committee serves within the institution's structure. The selection takes place depending on the role within the committee and the function of the aforementioned.  Judgment: <b>Action Completed</b>
<b>KR12.</b> The institution should, before the beginning of the 2021/2022 academic year, ensure that study programmes curriculum include discipline to support students in acquiring research competences, such as Research Methods or Academic writing	<u>Action to be taken/timeframe:</u>  Research Methods and Academic Writing Modules included into newly accredited programme such as: MBA <a href="https://aum.edu.mt/programs/graduate-program-2/mba/">https://aum.edu.mt/programs/graduate-program-2/mba/</a> and EMBA in Tourism and Hospitality Management (under vetting), BSc Game Development (under vetting), general Education Courses (under vetting)	Study programmes are now inclusive of modules on research. This was appreciated by the learners who enrol in courses with little or no background in research.  Judgment: <b>Action Completed</b>
<b>Standard 4:</b>		
<b>Recommendations</b>	<b>Action Plan</b>	<b>Analysis and Judgment on Progress Made</b>
<b>KR14.</b> The institution should, within 12 months of the publication of the present report, recognize and enable the students to assume a partnership and co-creator role in designing different institutional aspects, and especially the learning and teaching policies and processes	<u>Action to be taken/timeframe:</u>  1. Students Involvement in QA Policy and Procedures is available at the AUM website: <a href="https://aum.edu.mt/about/quality-assurance/">https://aum.edu.mt/about/quality-assurance/</a> and Institutional One Drive: <a href="#">Students Involvement in QA</a> 2. Student Handbook Section "QA and Students Involvement" (update) (August 2022)	Learners are now directly involved in practically all organs and at all levels of the university. This also includes QA related processes. There are essentially two learner organs who feed and participate directly in the main decision-making processes of the institution.  Judgement: <b>Action Completed</b>
<b>R6.</b> The institution could strengthen course review reports by integrating them with a professional	<u>Action to be taken/timeframe:</u>	No additional evidence was provided for consideration

development approach which would serve to improve teachers' competences needed to properly carry out self-assessment and continuously improve the course content and methods which course review reports deal with	To demonstrate during the interview ( <i>Timeframe: October 2022</i> )	
<b>R7.</b> The institution could collect data about potential vulnerability factors of the student body in a way that this data can be correlated with academic success and progression of students. This can then be used for researching specific vulnerabilities and early detection of potential barriers for individual students.	<u>Action to be taken/timeframe:</u> To demonstrate during the interview (timeframe: October 2022) Effective database system with Student Profile	Data is being collected. Once a number of cohorts has been registered at the institution a correlation exercise will take place under the charge of Student Affairs  Judgment: <b>Action completed</b>
<b>Standard 5:</b>		
Recommendations	Action Plan	<b>Analysis and Judgment on progress made</b>
<b>R8.</b> The institution could carry out more in-depth analysis of student enrolment, progression and successful completion factors (e.g. previous education, socio-demographic elements or any other characteristic which might have an impact). in order to support AUM in developing evidence-based policies for the entire student life cycle	<u>Action to be taken/timeframe:</u> 1. To demonstrate during the visit ( <i>Timeframe: October 2022</i> ) Effective database system with Student Profile	No additional evidence was provided for consideration  This is still work in progress
<b>Response to Mandatory recommendations made by the Peer Review Panel</b>		
<b>Standard 1:</b>		
Recommendations	Action Plan	<b>Analysis and Judgment on progress made</b>

<p><b>MR3.</b> The institution shall, before the beginning of the 2021/2022 academic year, publish the Quality Assurance Policy and Policies and Procedures Manual to be accessible on the institutional website by all interested parties</p>	<p><u>Action to be taken:</u></p> <p>Internal platform access - Institutional One Drive link: <a href="https://auom-my.sharepoint.com/:f/g/personal/institutional_aum_edu_mt/EpekCkj2K69Dt-cJ512wMh0Bujm8P9sJx8ZNU_I6IG6kww?e=FwnQat">https://auom-my.sharepoint.com/:f/g/personal/institutional_aum_edu_mt/EpekCkj2K69Dt-cJ512wMh0Bujm8P9sJx8ZNU_I6IG6kww?e=FwnQat</a></p>	<p>QA policy and related documentation has now been uploaded to the Institution's internal system. The current QA folder for the year 2021-2022 contains the following documents:          Academic Quality Manual          AUM Academic Regulations          Internal review guidelines          QA Policy</p> <p>Judgment: <b>Action completed</b></p>
<p><b>Standard 4:</b></p>		
<p>Recommendations</p>	<p>Action Plan</p>	<p><b>Analysis and Judgment on progress made</b></p>
<p><b>MR13.</b> The institution shall, before the end of the 2021/2022 academic year, develop the learner autonomy through a higher level of flexibilization and individualization of studies allowing for, for example, a higher variety of learning methods and assessment methods, or opportunities to integrate study mobility and competences acquired outside of formal education in the curricula</p>	<p><u>Action to be taken /Time frame:</u></p> <p>Course reviews available at</p> <p>Class observations and meetings with lecturers will be available during Audit Panel visit (<i>Timeframe: October 2022</i>)</p>	<p>Following interviews with various stakeholders and class observations, the panel concluded that the various initiatives taken by the institution are addressing this mandatory recommendation. Examples of these initiatives include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Job Exposure</li> <li>• Internships</li> <li>• Strategies in class to increase learners' critical thinking</li> <li>• Links with the Erasmus Network</li> <li>• An andragogy in class which is conducive to increased learner autonomy.</li> <li>• Career's fest (amongst other things)</li> </ul> <p>Judgment: <b>Action completed</b></p>

<p><b>MR16.</b> The institution shall, before the end of the 2021/2022 academic year, establish different types of training for teachers which would help them develop their competences in managing and innovating the learning and teaching process, assessing student competences and integrating generic competences in the curricula</p>	<p><u>Action to be taken and Timeframe:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Centre of Excellence – documents are available at Institutional One Drive – link</li> <li>2. The activity of the Centre of Excellence will be demonstrated during the audit visit (<i>Timeframe: October 2022</i>)</li> </ol> <p>Training/upskilling for lecturers is a recurrent theme in MR</p>	<p>AUM has taken various initiatives to upskill its Faculty. Amongst these, the panel noted the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual funds for personal development for each lecturer</li> <li>• Responsiveness of the office of the Vice President to matters related to upskilling and training</li> <li>• The efforts of the Centre for Excellence are synergising AUM’s efforts in this regard</li> <li>• Regular meetings amongst Faculty members centered on Learning and Teaching.</li> </ul> <p>Judgement: <b>Action Completed</b></p>
<p><b>MR17.</b> The institution shall, before the beginning of the 2021/2022 academic year, ensure that the students are aware of and there is a clear visibility of the formal appeals procedure; students should be encouraged to pursue this option without fear of repercussion.</p>	<p><u>Action to be taken:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To add to Student Handbook a paragraph about Student Appeal and Misconduct Committee and describe the procedure (<i>Timeframe: August 2022</i>)</li> </ol> <p>Reports and minutes- link: <a href="#">Student Appeal Misconduct Committee</a></p>	<p>Learners are well informed about the appeal’s procedure, including the steps they need to undertake if they need to log one. This is now part of their student Hand Book.</p> <p>Judgement : <b>Action Completed</b></p>
<p><b>MR18.</b> The institution shall, before the end of the 2021/2022 academic year, strengthen its reaction mechanisms of the course-level survey by increasing the transparency of results and providing students with</p>	<p><u>Action to be taken/Time frame:</u></p> <p>Will be available during the visit (<i>Timeframe: October 2022</i>)</p>	<p>The results of all surveys are shared with students in meetings set up for the purpose of discussing these matters. Students have the option to either attend for the meeting physically or online. Stakeholders informed the panel that all feedback from all the</p>

information on what was changed based on previous survey results		<p>university's stakeholders is discussed and worked upon in the various for a, depending on the matter.</p> <p>Judgement : <b>Action Completed</b></p>
<b>Standard 6</b>		
<b>Recommendations</b>	<b>Action Plan</b>	<b>Analysis and Judgment on progress made</b>
<p><b>MR19.</b> The institution shall, before the end of the 2021/2022 academic year, provide and facilitate more support activities dedicated to teaching staff in order to expand teaching skills and be updated to the new pedagogies.</p>	<p><u>Action to be taken/ Time frame:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Centre of Excellence, Professional Development Plan (<i>Timeframe: September 2022</i>)</li> <li>2. Will be demonstrated during the audit visit (<i>Timeframe: October 2022</i>)</li> </ol>	<p>The policy provided informs and regulates continuous professional development at the institution. The Centre of Excellence (CoE) which is coordinated by the Vice-President has been implemented.</p> <p>The panel noted that</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the CoE works with a three-year-plan of workshops and seminars,</li> <li>• the topics are chosen based on surveys among faculty and include writing learning outcomes, assessment methodologies, research skills, etc.,</li> <li>• since the end of the pandemic six seminars/workshops were organized.</li> </ul> <p>The panel noted also that faculty meets on a regular basis to discuss questions around teaching and learning.</p> <p>Judgement: <b>Action Completed</b></p>
<p><b>MR20.</b> The institution shall, before the end of the 2021/2022 academic year, develop and implement effective policy and practice for staff development</p>	<p><u>Action to be taken/Time frame:</u></p>	<p>In line with the outcome of MR 16 and 20, AUM has developed processes which are clear and shared for staff development. Tangible</p>

	<p>Will be available and demonstrated during the audit visit (<i>Timeframe: October 2022</i>)</p> <p>Staff Upskilling</p>	<p>initiatives are in place and are producing results.</p> <p>For faculty: same as under MR 19 For administrative staff, the staff development activities are organised by HR and offered on a needs basis. The panel noted that especially new administrative staff such as the librarian received training.</p> <p>Judgement : <b>Action Completed</b></p>
<p><b>MR21.</b> The institution shall, before the end of the 2021/2022 academic year, develop and regularly implement peer observations and other forms of teaching staff performance evaluation;</p>	<p><u>Action to be taken /Time frame:</u></p> <p>Will be demonstrated during the Audit Panel visit (<i>Timeframe: October 2022</i>)</p>	<p>Observations are being carried out every semester by AUM's top management.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• deans or the provost conducting class observations on a semesterly basis,</li> <li>• peer observations by faculty.</li> </ul> <p>A template has been developed to assess various criteria. Peer observations are also taking place within the various faculties. Data which is collected through these observations is being used to inform decision related to the quality of learning and teaching at AUM} These observations are being carried out in the spirit of support and are not related to any performance appraisal system by AUM. Faculty members appreciated these visits and find them useful. The Provost reports overall findings to the Academic Council.</p>

		<p>Furthermore, HR carries out formal staff appraisals in cases of promotion and renewal of contracts.</p> <p>Judgement: <b>Action Completed</b></p>
<p><b>MR22.</b> The institution shall, before the end of the 2021/2022 academic year, ensure that the teaching staff is sufficiently trained to supervise diploma thesis</p>	<p><u>Action to be taken/ Time frame:</u></p> <p>Interviews with Faculty and thesis supervision will be organised during the Audit Panel visit (<i>Timeframe: October 2022</i>)</p>	<p>Staff has been provided training with regard to supervising research projects/thesis. AUM has also changed the system of how project supervisors are allocated. In case a learner needs to change supervisor, this request is discussed internally and if there is a more valid replacement it is consented to.</p> <p>The group of eligible supervisors was enlarged by including assistant professors.</p> <p>Judgement: <b>Action Completed</b></p>
<p><b>MR23.</b> The institution shall, before the end of the 2021/2022 academic year, support effective research skills development of the staff and create realistic conditions for their research activity to be realized;</p>	<p><u>Action to be taken/ Time frame:</u></p> <p>Interviews will be organised during Audit Panel visit (<i>Timeframe: October 2022</i>)</p>	<p>Funds are provided to lecturers for their personal upskilling. The panel noted that research skills development is addressed by the Centre of Excellence (CoE) in its seminar programme; recently, for example a seminar on statistics for social sciences was organized.</p> <p>Re “realistic conditions”: The panel noted that AUM allocates 1500€ p.a. for each faculty member to attend conferences etc. Furthermore 3000€ p.a. are available for each faculty member on a case by case basis to support publications etc.</p>



		<p>The regular teaching workload of four units for a FTE faculty member has been determined to allow for research activities which are defined as regular obligation on the staff contracts. The panel noted a research-friendly atmosphere.</p> <p>They are encouraged and empowered by the institution to undertake research, publish and attend conferences.</p> <p>Judgement: <b>Action Completed</b></p>
<p><b>MR24.</b> The institution shall, before the end of the 2021/2022 academic year, encourage and support research activities of the staff</p>	<p><u>Action to be taken /Time frame:</u></p> <p>Interviews will be organised for Audit Panel members (<i>Timeframe: October 2022</i>)</p>	<p>Funds are provided to lecturers for their personal upskilling. They are encouraged and empowered by the institution to undertake research, publish and attend conferences.</p> <p>Judgement: <b>Action Completed</b></p>
<p><b>MR25.</b> The institution shall, before the end of the 2021/2022 academic year, support the development of links between teaching and research</p>	<p><u>Action to be taken /Time frame:</u></p> <p>Available at Institutional One Drive: College of Business – Course Review Portfolio -MGT 610 Research Methods link:</p>	<p>Funds are provided to lecturers for their personal upskilling. They are encouraged and empowered by the institution to undertake research, publish and attend conferences.</p> <p>Judgement: <b>Action Completed</b></p>
<p><b>MR27</b> The institution shall, before the end of the 2021/2022 academic year, ensure the sufficiency of its library offerings both in terms of diversity covering the main reading lists of the programmes, as well as in terms of the number of copies</p>	<p><u>Action to be taken/Time frame:</u></p> <p>Visit to library and interviews with students will be organised during the Audit Panel visit (<i>Timeframe: October 2022</i>)</p>	<p>AUM has invested directly in the library and its services. The Librarian has been provided training, and on a yearly basis she is requested to propose a budget related to library services. A number of online platforms are now available for the various faculties to download</p>

		<p>academic material for their classes and their own research efforts. A considerable number of eBooks is also available for peruse.</p> <p>Acquisitions are regularly organized at the beginning of each semester through a regular request to all faculty to submit acquisition requests, and also on a case-by-case basis. The panel noted that librarian and faculty are satisfied with the acquisition policy.</p> <p>Stakeholder confirmed that the library is generally open until 8:00 pm. Nevertheless, there are times during the course of the week when specific library services are not available. This is because the librarian is lecturing while the Asst Librarian who is a student herself has classes of her own. AUM informed the panel that a part-time librarian will soon be employed to cover those slots when current personnel is not available.</p> <p>The panel wants to note room for improvement regarding the staffing of the library.</p> <p>A part-time librarian and part-time student employee lack the capacity to guarantee access Monday to Friday from 9 to 20hrs. To facilitate access a student employee has to cover one day and student helpers volunteer for the period from 17 to 20hrs.</p> <p>Judgement: <b>Significant progress made.</b></p>
--	--	--

<p><b>MR28.</b> The institution shall, before the beginning of the 2021/2022 academic year, cater for personal and psychological counselling by qualified staff, in other to suitably attend a more diverse range of non-academic student needs</p>	<p><u>Action to be taken/Time frame:</u></p> <p>The system for counselling services will be established (Timeframe: September 2022)</p>	<p>AUM has recently employed a Head of Student Affairs. His role is to coordinate all matters related to learner well-being and university life. His office is currently in the process of employing a full-time counsellor to provide learners with additional services.</p> <p>Judgement: <b>Significant progress made.</b></p>
<p><b>MR29.</b> The institution shall, before the beginning of the 2021/2022 academic year, further enhance its career development support in terms of</p> <p>availability and number of placements and employment opportunities; also, career counselling should be more systematically and actively provided;</p>	<p><u>Action to be taken /Time frame:</u></p> <p>Career counselling will be demonstrated during the visit of the Audit Panel and interviews will be organised (Timeframe: October 2022)</p>	<p>AUM now provides the services of career advisors. Learners can avail themselves of internships, Job Shadowing and on-campus activities such as Career Fests.</p> <p>The panel noted that for the time being the situation has improved significantly by the recently employed Head of Student Affairs.</p> <p>Judgement: <b>Action Completed</b></p>
<p><b>MR32.</b> The institution shall, before the beginning of the 2021/2022 academic year, make available opportunities for the professional development of the administration and other support staff</p>	<p><u>Action to be taken/ Time frame:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Centre of Excellence documents are available at Institutional One Drive</li> <li>2. Centre of Excellence, Professional Development Plan (Timeframe: September 2022)</li> <li>3. Interviews will be organised during Audit Panel visit (Timeframe: October 2022)</li> </ol> <p>Training of support staff</p>	<p>A number of support staff/admin staff has been provided with training depending on the area they work in.</p> <p>Recent training include –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Career Advisory</li> <li>• Admin/HR software training</li> <li>• Library software/services</li> </ul> <p>Judgement: <b>Significant progress registered</b></p>

<b>Standard 9:</b>		
<b>Recommendations</b>	<b>Action Plan</b>	<b>Analysis and Judgment on progress made</b>
<b>MR35.</b> The institution shall, within a month of the receipt of this report, ensure that the website landing page Privacy Policy/Consent Management is properly configured;	<u>Action to be taken:</u>  Done <a href="https://aum.edu.mt">https://aum.edu.mt</a>	Judgment: <b>MR was completed</b>
<b>Standard 10:</b>		
<b>Recommendations</b>	<b>Action Plan</b>	<b>Analysis and Judgment on progress made</b>
<b>MR37.</b> The institution shall, before the end of the 2021/2022 academic year, implement clear systems and processes for the monitoring and periodically reviewing of their programmes in order to ensure that they achieve the objectives set for them, to review the content of the programme in the light of latest research/practice in the sector to ensure that the programme is up to date, and to respond to the changing needs of students and society;	<u>Action to be taken /Time frame:</u>  Faculty Evaluation Process will be developed ( <i>Timeframe: September 2022</i> )  Will be demonstrated during the Audit Panel visit ( <i>Timeframe: October 2022</i> )  Review of Programmes – QA Cycle	<p>Clear systems and processes are now in place to regulate and monitor processes at AUM. While the QA cycle in place is considerably centralised, it is leaving a positive mark on the institution. The various committees have checks and balances to ensure that their processes remain effective and that the output of the university remains a quality one. Members of staff are aware of those processes, and they know what is expected from them is-à-vis the quality culture which is being instilled at the institution.</p> <p>AUM applies a monitoring and review policy that is determined in detail (responsibilities, tools, reporting, timelines) in the Academic Quality Handbook. The panel noted that the policy includes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• an <i>annual review</i> of study programmes which monitors the</li> </ul>

		<p>implementation of all courses by collecting feedback through all kinds of surveys and by analysing student data (enrolment, progression, etc.). The dean submits the review report to the Academic Council through the Quality Assurance Unit. The panel noted that AUM was preparing for the next annual review which is due in April 2023.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• an <i>internal review</i> of the study programmes (five-year cycle) which consists of a review by a panel.</li> </ul> <p>Judgement: <b>Action Completed</b></p>
<p><b>MR38.</b> The institution shall, before the end of the 2021/2022 academic year, put in practice the policies for the on-going monitoring and periodic review of programmes and actually implement the proposed annual programme level review</p>	<p><u>Action to be taken/Time frame:</u></p> <p>QA meetings and minutes are available at Institutional One Drive:</p> <p>Interviews will also be organised during Audit Panel visit (<i>Timeframe: October 2022</i>)</p>	<p>There is a clear policy and standard operating procedure for the monitoring of programmes. Data collected through various sources is analysed and informs future decision-making about the programmes themselves.</p> <p>Judgement: <b>Action Completed</b></p>
<p><b>MR39.</b> The institution shall, before the end of the 2021/2022 academic year, involve stakeholders in the on-going monitoring and periodic review of its programmes, both in terms of engagement in different organisational structures charged with curriculum development, as well as engagement in feedback</p>	<p><u>Action to be taken/Time frame:</u></p> <p>QA meetings and minutes are available at Institutional One Drive:</p> <p>Meetings and Minutes presentations:</p>	<p><b>Same as for MR 38</b></p> <p>AUM involves internal stakeholders including students in all steps of developing, monitoring and reviewing study programmes, namely through the <i>review panel</i> for approval of new</p>

<p>collection exercises that are later on using their inputs to inform improvement</p>	<p>Interviews will also be organised during Audit Panel visit (<i>Timeframe: October 2022</i>)</p>	<p>courses, through consultation in case of an amendment to existing courses, Through membership in committees such as the Course Development Committee</p> <p>AUM involves external stakeholders in the QA Review Panel for developing new courses.</p> <p>Stakeholders are involved in the QA cycle. Their contribution is a significant one and the data collected is worked upon.</p> <p>Judgement: <b>Action Completed</b></p>
--	--	---

Report Compiled by:



Dr Robert Cassar (Ph.D)



Dr Achim Hopbach (Ph.D)

Date: 5<sup>th</sup> April 2023