# Internal Quality Assurance Policy
# European Institute of Management
# 2022-2023

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# Internal Quality Assurance Policy

## 0. Introduction

The guiding context for the formulation of EIM's Policy of Internal Quality Assurance consists of the following:

- ENQA, et al., 'Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG)' (Brussels: EURASHE, 2015);
- Huertas, Biscan, et al., 'Considerations for Quality Assurance of E-Learning Provision: Report from the ENQA Working Group VIII on Quality Assurance and E-Learning' 26 (Brussels: ENQA, 2018), and
- The National Quality Assurance Framework Standards for Malta (2017) and the step-by-step guide to internal quality assurance (2017).

# 1. Standards for Internal Quality Assurance

This Internal Quality Assurance Policy (IQA) is set up to define, monitor and improve the quality of our strategy, degree courses and research programs on the basis of our internal quality standards but also to comply with the Maltese and and European accreditation standards[1]. The policy seeks to secure the quality of the primary process of the degree courses and assist in the monitoring and improvement of our supporting institutional activities in terms of the institutional strategy, staffing policies and resources management. The policy will be made publicly available through the institutional website.

Our quality assurance policy defines:
- Quality monitoring and improvement processes
- Governance structure
- Financial probity
- Design and approval of degree courses
- Student-centered teaching methods and assessments
- Student admission
- Staffing policy
- Learning support and online support systems
- Information management policy
- Public information policy
- Internal monitoring and program adjustments
- External quality assurance

**Vision and Mission**
The education provider EIM Ltd. was founded in 2021. EIM Ltd. operates the European Institute of Management.

*Vision:* EIM envisions a distinctively different 21st-century online learning and research community where knowledge is judged worthy to the degree that it can be applied by its graduates to the immediate solutions on the job and in their life.

[1] Government of Malta (2015), National Quality Assurance Framework for Further and Higher Education; ENQA (2015), Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG), EURASHE; Huertas, Biscan, et al.(2018), Considerations for Quality Assurance of E-Learning Provision: Report from the ENQA Working Group VIII on Quality Assurance and E-Learning, ENQA

*Mission:* EIM provides an online community of career professionals with the opportunity to transform themselves as scholar-practitioners so that they can affect positive change on the job and in their life.

*Aims and Objectives*

EIM exists to promote academic excellence, broaden access to higher education, and guard entrepreneurial values. Learning at EIM is about building professional 21e century competencies that learners can apply immediately on the job and in their life. These competencies cover cognitive academic and methodological competencies together with enhancing the student´s affective social and personal competencies required to be competitive at the labor market now and in the future.

We apply personalized, learner-centered and highly interactive didactic methods delivered by an international faculty team with professors, lecturers, learning coaches, and field experts with relevant experience in teaching and research combined with extensive professional experience. To support the teaching and learning process, the institution uses integrated online learning technologies and methodologies to continuously improve learning experiences and outcomes of the learners. The faculty team is experienced in online teaching and learning technologies and didactic methods.

*Degree courses*

EIM will concentrate on courses in management, business and innovation with specific attention to entrepreneurship, sustainable business and digital innovation. These fields of study are chosen on the basis of growing demand for these specializations by our target group, the private and public sector and fits the expertise of our faculty team.

*Research activities*

The institution has a clear focus on the implementation of high quality academic teaching and learning programs starting with a Doctorate of Business Administration and Post Graduate certificate programs. To ensure that the faculty team stays abreast of the latest developments and trends in their academic fields of expertise, they are stimulated to continue research activities in study fields aligned with our study programs. The teaching staff already has extensive experience in academic and applied research. The teaching staff will therefore continue with research and publications as part of their work at the European Institute of Management. Management will agree with the expected number publications per year and lecturer as part of the contract arrangements.

**Monitoring processes**

The quality assurance processes at EIM make use of Key Performance Indicators at institutional level and program levels. The underlying data will be as much as possible based on data automatically generated by the digital learning platform and student information system. The resulting indicators are analyzed and described in the Institutional report and Academic report produced every semester. The Head of Institution is responsible for the preparation of the Academic Report with input and lecturers.

Secondly, the monitoring and improvements at the level of our institution and courses are secured by applying the improvement cycle of Deming[2]. The PDCA cycle of Deming assists in defining a structured and continuous approach quality control, assurance and improvement:

1. Plan: Establish direction and ambitions, develop and work out the details of policy in accordance with objectives, and plan activities based on a systematic analysis of the environment and the available resources
2. Do: Implement the planned activities
3. Check: Evaluate the implementation, measure the results, critically reflect on the results and compare the outcomes with the stated goals Act: draw conclusions and formulate points for improvement, modify plans where necessary and/or formulate objectives for the period ahead.

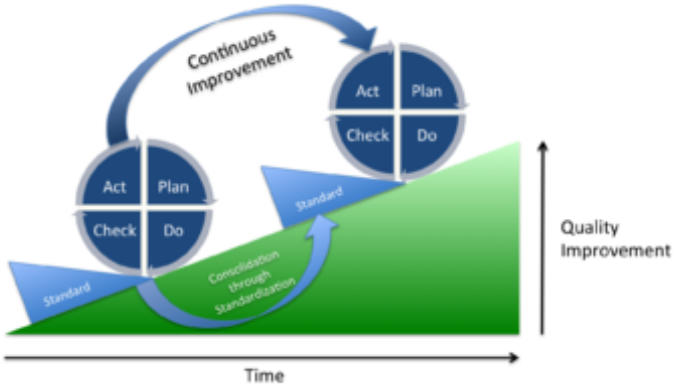



*Table 2: Deming PDCA Cycle*

The KPIs and PDCA cycle are applied and described in this document for the monitoring of the key activities of strategic development, program performance, teaching and learning methods and assessments, student admission and teaching staff performance.

[2] Deming, W. E. (1986). *Out of the crisis*. Cambridge, MA: Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Center for Advanced Engineering Study

## 2. Institutional probity

At institutional level the academic governance is the responsibility of the Executive Board. The Executive Board is the responsible body for the overall institutional strategy, financial management and compliance with regulatory standards. EIM will saveguard that all students that start with a course will be able to obtain their final course degree.

The institution is committed to ensure academic integrity, freedom and equal treatment of management, academic and administrative staff and students and has procedures for ensuring against intolerance of any kind or discrimination against staff and students. The institution will establish contractual conditions to secure integrity and quality assurance for third party services.

EIM seeks to offer a safe working and study environment for management, staff and students. Therefore the organization has established procedures against intolerance, discrimination, sexual harressment and fraud.

EIM has established procedures to verify the identity of prospective enrolled students. Student admissions will include a combination of documents submitted (including passport checks) and interviews via video conferencing to secure authenticity. Key bachelor and master diplomas of prospects will be checked through the MFHEA via https://services.mfhea.mt/CertificationApplication.aspx

Students will be guided in the development of their assignments and thesis development on a weekly basis through video conferencing, allowing the tutors to monitor progress and authenticity of the work developed by the student and avoid cheating. In all cases, students are to combine written assignments with presentations by video conferencing to ensure that they can explain the written assignments. Student information will be stored in a secure EIM student administration system where access is limited to authorized administrative staff. The institution has also established procedures to ensure the integrity, reliability, suitability and continuous availability of the digital platforms and systems.

# 3. Design and approval of programmes

All degree programs operated by the EIM strictly follow Malta Qualifications Framework (MQF) for the course structure, course level, course objectives and learning outcomes. Through the MQF, the programs are equally aligned with the standards of the European Qualifications Framework.

**Program content**
All degree program presented for accreditation will include the following program characteristics and information:

- Student target audience
- The minimum student selection criteria
- The minimum qualifications and competencies of the teaching staff for each program
- The structure of the curriculum of the program
- ECTS learning credits at program and modular levels
- Compliance of the program objectives and learning outcomes with corresponding MQF and EQF qualification levels in knowledge, skills, autonomy and responsibility for each program level
- Clear and uniform assessment forms and criteria for each module and for the final study assignment
- Didactic approaches are based on a tutorial teaching approach that supports student-centered teaching and learning approaches.
- Assigns to each program specific teaching staff for academic, technical and personal student support
- The institution offers secure and user friendly access to digital learning resources and a professional learning platform which complies with the European standards for privacy and data security

Degree programs are developed by the Executive Board with input from the Faculty staff and external experts. Required financial resources are made available by EIM. Every program is formally approved by the Executive Board. Each course program is coordinated and operated by a Dean who is responsible for the quality assurance at course level and reports to the Head of Institution. The program will clearly indicate the Faculty staff responsible for course and modular content development, the actual lecturing and coaching and for the support in administrative and digital aspects of the course.

The quality assurance of ongoing degree courses starts with the recollection and analysis of course data by course coordinators and lecturers resulting in an Academic Report developed by the Head of Institution. The semester-based results will be a primary input for improvement of the coherence of the curriculum and the feasibility of the study load based on data on academic performance, student satisfaction levels and recommendations by the faculty staff and students.

The EIM Council operates as an independent democratic body and is composed of all active verified faculty members and the head of institution (ex officio) and the chief executive officer (ex officio). The EIM Council particularly advises on academic quality assurance, enhancement, didactic approaches, digitalization and equality and diversity. The Council will use the Academic Report and its own observations to advise the Executive Board on improvements or adjustments in the content or teaching methods of degree programs.

Student feedback represents an important instrument for quality assurance. Their voice is secured by on-going consultations, satisfaction measurement and recommendations gathered through on-going surveys at the end of all modules. Students will participate each semester in exchange and learning workshops with staff and external stakeholders where they will discuss course planning, structure and quality and other topics related to quality assurance of the programs.

EIM will also set up an Advisory Board with the participation of professionals in the field of study and alumni. The Advisory Board will advise the management in the validation of program design and the curriculum with regards to the alignment with the demands in the European labor market in each study program area. Once programs have started, the opinion of the Advisory Board members will be gathered through an annual online questionnaire and an exchange workshop with the participation of lecturers, coaches, alumni and professionals. Lessons learned and recommendations will be integrated in the annual plan and study programmes.

Admission criteria are transparent and clearly communicated with prospective candidates. The minimum admission requirement consists of the MQF prerequisites for the course level. The limited class size limits the availability of study places and requires students to compete on the basis of further admission criteria including prior professional experience and formal and informal study experiences and motivation level. The admission process is based on the evaluation of the records of prior educational and professional achievements, motivation letter, one reference letter and an admissions interview with one of the faculty staff.

# 4. Student-centered learning, teaching and assessment

**Alignment Malta Qualification Framework and European Qualification Framework**
The degree courses all seek to support students in the development of their competencies to be able to operate in their future working environment at different operational or strategic positions. For these all students are to develop or improve their combined knowledge, skills and competencies. In search for effective competency based learning and to secure quality standards, our courses are closely aligned with the Maltese Qualification Requirements and the European Qualification Framework and its regulations on the required qualification levels for each Degree level. For each degree course, the course objectives and learning outcomes are defined in terms of the required levels of knowledge, skills and competencies.

In the context of MQF and EQF, the competencies include the acquisition of theoretical and factual knowledge in the area of study. In addition students are to develop their cognitive and methodological skills related to the development of logical, intuitive and creative thinking and practical manual dexterity and the use of methods, materials, tools and instruments.

The degree programs also support students to develop their affective social and personal competencies in terms of responsibility and autonomy. The levels of responsibility relates to the capacity to work at an professional level at individual level or at having the ability to manage others. Autonomy refers to the ability to operate in a more or less structured and predictable context.

The competence levels indicated by the MQF and EQF indicators the institution seeks to achieve for doctoral, master and bachelor courses are indicated below[3][4].

Doctoral degree courses : Level 8
- Knowledge: knowledge at the most advanced frontier of a field of work or study and at the interface between fields
- Skills: The most advanced and specialized skills and techniques, including synthesis and evaluation, required to solve critical problems in research and/or innovation and to extend and redefine existing knowledge or professional practice

[3] Government of Malta, Malta Qualifications Framework for Live-long Learning, S.L.327.4311 SUBSIDIARY LEGISLATION 327.43, 2021
[4] European Commission, European Qualifications Framework for Life-Long Learning, European Communities, 2008

- Competencies: Demonstrate substantial authority, innovation, autonomy, scholarly and professional integrity and sustained commitment to the development of new ideas or processes at the forefront of work or study contexts including research

Master degree courses: Level 7
- Knowledge: Highly specialized knowledge, some of which is at the forefront of knowledge in a field of work or study, as the basis for original thinking and/or research; Critical awareness of knowledge issues in a field and at the interface between different fields
- Skills: Specialized problem-solving skills required in research and/or innovation in order to develop new knowledge and procedures and to integrate knowledge from different fields
- Competencies: Manage and transform work or study contexts that are complex, unpredictable and require new strategic approaches; Take responsibility for contributing to professional knowledge and practice and/or for reviewing the strategic performance of teams

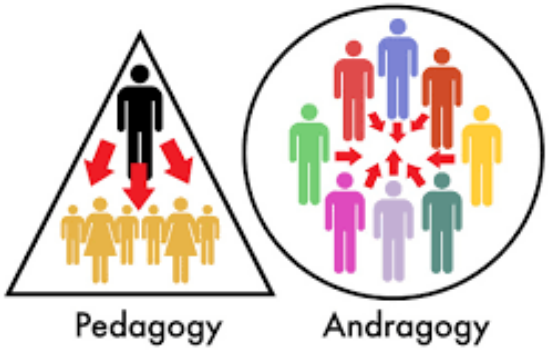
Bachelor degree courses: Level 6
- Knowledge: Advanced knowledge of a field of work or study, involving a critical understanding of theories and principles
- Skills: Advanced skills, demonstrating mastery and innovation, required to solve complex and unpredictable problems in a specialized field of work or study
- Competencies: Manage complex technical or professional activities or projects, taking responsibility for decision-making in unpredictable work or study contexts; Take responsibility for managing professional development of individuals and groups

**Student-centered didactic approach**

The institution uses an appropriate mix of teaching and learning methods that allow learners with different learning styles and abilities to successfully complete our degree courses. The institution aims to offer interactive and student centered teaching and learning methods that promote active participation of students. The didactic approach is based on a tutorial teaching and learning approach which is highly fit for student-centered learning.

*Constructivism*

The didactic approach is based on *constructivist* and competence-based teaching and learning. It uses Humanism and Knowles' Andragogy as learning theories[5]. According to these learner-centered theories, the experiences, the interests, and the knowledge of learners are considered as valuable resources for learning, which they are expected to use and to share with other learners (= peer learning) during this course.




This implies that the key role of lecturers, learning coaches and field experts is to support and guide students in their learning process during the full study program through providing students with a bird-eye overview of theory, offer up to date case studies, insights, feedforward and advice based on their own professional experiences and life-case studies and internships where students can gain their own experience. In their individual and group-based learning processes students are supported by learning coaches who will provide coaching of student teams in the development of case studies and projects. The coaching also covers individual guidance in the learning and research processes and executive coaching in their longer-term professional development process.

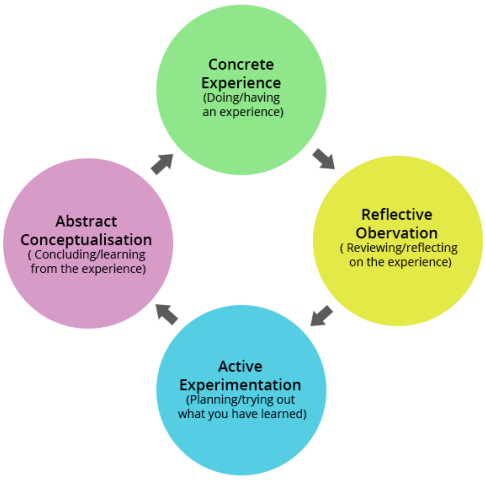
*Understanding by Design*

The Degree courses and modules are designed based on Wiggins and McTighe's Understanding by Design framework[6]. The assessments and the learning experiences (= course content) are designed based on the course objectives and the intended learning outcomes.

[5] Knowles, M.; Holton, E. F., Swanson, R. A. (2005). The adult learner: The definitive classic in adult education and human resource development (6th ed.). Burlington, MA: Elsevier.
[6] Wiggins, G. and McTigh, J. (2005) Understanding By Design 2nd Expanded Edition

*Kolb's experiential learning*

Another pedagogical method used in this course is Kolb's experiential learning cycle[7]. Students are exposed to concrete experiences for example in the form of case studies based on the direct professional experiences of the professors and field experts or live case studies in companies or institutions to improve the practical relevance of their learning outcomes. We then seek to apply knowledge and methods to the research or projects that directly contribute to the specific fields of study and the actual work environment of the learners.




*Oxbridge-style tutorials*

The core pedagogical method used in our degree courses consists of *Oxbridge-style tutorials* between the Professor or lecturer and a small group of learners[8]. Learner interaction plays a key role in the organization of each tutorial meeting, which focuses on a discussion of a learner's pre-submitted assignment. To ensure that the expected competency levels are reached the didactic approach seeks to combine in each module lectures about high quality and state of the art academic content and the latest methodological methods and its application through the development of case studies.

Tutorial teaching provides a highly personal learning experience because every tutorial discussion is tailored specifically to the interests, strengths, needs, weaknesses, and style of a small number of students. The learning is organized in small classes varying from 1 to maximum 10 students studying directly with a qualified lecturer. All courses indicate the maximum number of students per tutorial class.

The tutorial teaching method used by EIM is particularly fit for providing student-centered learning. Tutorial teaching provides a highly personal learning experience because every tutorial discussion is tailored specifically to the interests, strengths, needs, weaknesses, and style of a small number of students. Preparing for a single tutorial requires 2-3 days of work. A student must review about 200 pages of material (depending on the subject) and prepare a piece of written work – whether mathematical problems or an essay. The student must then be ready to discuss and defend their written work directly with a

[7] Lu, H.; Gong, S. and Clarke, B. (2007) The Relationship of Kolb Learning Styles, Online Learning Behaviors and Learning Outcomes. Journal of Educational Technology and Society. **10**: 187–196.
[8] Mills, D. and Alexander, P. (2013). Small group teaching: a toolkit for learning. York: The Higher Education Academy

professor for 75 minutes. At the end of the tutorial the student receives written feedback and a mark on the submitted work and associated discussion.

Tutorials are mentally demanding and personally engaging. Tutorial teaching produces high quality domain-specific learning outcomes because students must learn materials for themselves, before presenting their work to a professor in their own words for examination twice per week. By requiring students to describe and analyze topics in their own words, tutorials engage and extend a student's existing range of abilities.

The modular learning objectives and outcomes include integrated development of academic knowledge in the specific subject and skills and methods supporting independent thinking, logical analysis and problem solving. The modules also assist in developing the required affective competencies in autonomy focused on personal development and social awareness and responsibility, focused on teamwork and leadership.

Modules are organized in units of one or two months during which only one particular subject of the degree course is offered. This allows students to concentrate on one particular subject only. During the module students review scientific materials and prepare regular shorter formative assignments with active feedforward provided by the lecturer. The modules are evaluated by a combined summative assessment in the form of an individual or group-based academic paper, project or advisory report and a final oral discussion and defense of the end work. At the end of the tutorial the student receives written feedback and a mark on the submitted work and associated discussion. All assessments are corroborated by a second qualified lecturer or learning coach.

Standard tutorial teaching consists of small classes of students studying directly with a professor; classes are rigorous, and the learning outcomes include skills of independent thinking, logical analysis, problem solving, and intellectual flexibility. Teachers of tutorials are provided with guidance on tutorial teaching, and tutorials are periodically observed by a second faculty member; both the student and faculty member are notified in advance of tutorial observations. Next to the lecturer, students count with a professional coach which provides students with professional coaching during the full period of degree course.

Students will be informed about the specific modular study load, expected contact hours and assessment criteria including rubrics of each module before starting their module. The assessments system will be based on a combination of shorter weekly assignments. These partial assignments can be evaluated by different assessment forms which are

aligned with the expected learning objectives and learning outcomes of a module and can include case studies, research, oral presentations or debates. Students will receive regular feedforward on their assignments as an input for the final academic paper or project. These assignments are combined with a modular academic paper or project on a specific academic theme.

In seek of supporting a diverse student population with different backgrounds, EIM offers a highly personalized learning process and offers additional coaching which allows it to accomodate for a diverse student population with different needs. This is also facilitated by the international diversity of the Faculty team members itself, including advanced emotional and intercultural competences and the ability to support students in different languages.

EIM also seeks to support students with specific needs by jointly seeking both learning and technical solutions to enable effective participation in courses. Faculty staff has already developed some experiences with students with visual disabilities. Among the possibilities, EIM can offer students with disabilities the possibility to have longer periods for specific assignments and to assign more suitable examination forms, e.g. visual or oral presentations, written exams, etc. and can offer support and advice by tutors in finding adequate ICT tools to support reading of materials for students with visual limitations or the provision of visual materials for students with hearing limitations. The learning platform used by EIM also offers services to facilitate students with learning disabilities (see attached questionnaire online learning)

**Assessment processes**

The teaching staff members all have extensive experience in assessments, testing and examination methods required by the MQF standards and will seek continuous improvement and further professionalization of assessment processes and methods. Final written and oral assessments will be conducted by pairs of examiners. This way both the lecturers and students will ensure a fair and professional evaluation of examinations.

Students will be informed about the specific modular study load, expected contact hours and assessment criteria of each module before starting their module. The assessments system will be based on a combination of shorter weekly assignments. These partial assignments consist of different examination forms which are aligned with the expected learning objectives and learning outcomes of a module and can include case studies, research, oral presentations or debates.

Students will receive regular feedforward on their assignments as an input for the final academic paper or project. These assignments are combined with a modular academic paper or project on a specific academic theme.

All requirements for course progression are applied uniformly, stated in the course description, and students must acknowledge their understanding of the course description and its requirements before enrolling in the module and include a statement on cheating and plagiarism. All courses state the minimum grades required for progression, and all grades reflect the stated marking criteria and grade descriptors. Students who dissent from the marks or other complaints can follow the regulations established in article 4 of the Education and Examination Regulation

Students will be informed about their gradings within an agreed time frame for each module. Student records, including the official transcript of successfully completed modules and grades, are stored digitally in the EIM digital platform on the basis of strict privacy regulations.

Equitative application of assessment processes to all students, mitigating circumstances for individual students and student complaints and appeals are safeguarded in the Education and Examination Regulations and executed through the Examination Committee and EIM Council.

Procedures are in place for the verification of student identity, fraud and cheating in online assessments. Student documentation, assessments and records are stored in the Cloudbased Smartsheet system where data are fully mirrored and saved in backups. Student records will be downloaded from the system on a monthly basis and physically stored at the representative in Malta to safeguard physical access to student records.

Students who complete a course of study receive a degree course certificate and access to a copy of their transcript. Certificates and transcripts provide contextual information on the credit earned, including the Malta Qualifications Framework, the European Qualifications Framework and the course level learning outcomes in line with the MFHEA regulations stipulated in the Communication MFHEA/03/2021

# 5. Student admission, progression, recognition and certification

**Admission processes and criteria**

For all Degree courses, the selection and intake process is built on the following elements:

1. Verification of applicants formal Degree Certifications
2. Interview to check motivation and a diagnosis of social and personal competencies
3. Interview to check the required English language and digital competencies´ level

For all Degree courses, the selection and intake process will first consider a full verification of the entry degree certifications of the applicants. Student admissions will include a combination of documents submitted (including passport checks) and interviews via video conferencing to secure authenticity. Key bachelor and master diplomas of prospects with formal prior degree certifications will be first checked through the MFHEA via https://services.mfhea.mt/CertificationApplication.aspx. Prospects with other formal or non-formal prior experience or education can also apply for a Recognition of Prior Learning at EIM, following the procedures established in EIM´s Policy for Recognition of Prior Learning[9].

The applicant is also to participate in an interview to check required English language and digital competencies level. In addition, the institution will include a motivational interview to inquire on the students motivation and realize a diagnosis of the social and personal competencies based on an online competency questionnaire. The interviews will be conducted by the Head of Institution and the Dean of the study program.

In particular applicants are to comply with the following entry level requirements:
Doctoral degree courses:

- EQF Level 7 qualification or Master Degree
- A minimum of 5 years of professional experience
- Proficient working level of English in understanding and speaking, reading and writing
- Basic digital competencies to work with the institutions´ digital learning platform
- Excellent personal motivation

Master degree courses:

[9] The EIM Policy for Recognition of Prior Learning is sent separately and has been submitted to MFHEA for approval

- EQF Level 6 qualifications Bachelor degree program
- A minimum of 1 year of professional experience
- Proficient working level of English in understanding and speaking, reading and writing
- Basic digital competencies to work with the institutions´ digital learning platform
- Excellent personal motivation
- Excellent team work

Bachelor degree courses:
- EQF Level 5 qualifications
- Proficient working level of English in understanding and speaking, reading and writing
- Basic digital competencies to work with the institutions´ digital learning platform
- Excellent personal motivation
- Excellent team work

**Induction**
All students will be part of an individual onboarding and induction program supported by a Coach. The process will include an introduction to:
- The institutional vision and values
- The course content
- The learning methods
- The usage of the online learning platform
- The students study planning methods
- Introduction to the Faculty team and fellow students

**Student information on progression, recognition and certification**
All requirements for course progression are applied uniformly, stated in the course description, and students must acknowledge their understanding of the course description and its requirements before enrolling in the course; this includes a statement on cheating and plagiarism. All courses state the minimum grades required for progression, and all grades reflect the stated marking criteria and grade descriptors. Students who dissent from the marks they have received should follow the normal procedure through the EIM Council.

Information on student written and oral assignments are collected and stored in the cloud based online Google Workspace for Education learning platform. Information on gradings and study certificates are collected and stored online in the cloud based Smartsheet system. Gradings and certificates are printed on a monthly basis and stored physically at a secure place of the representative in Malta.

The methods used to recognise and validate student assignments and assessments apply specifically to online learning and include the capture of data on submission of weekly or final assignments, attendance at tutorial meetings, written feedback and gradings and the accumulation of relevant grades with an average meeting the stated requirement for successful course completion. Student records, including the official transcript of successfully completed modules and grades, are stored digitally.

At the end of the course program students will receive detailed digital certificates and access to a copy of the transcript aligned with MFHEA regulations including supporting evidence of the context and content of the program and individual modules, achieved programmatic learning outcomes, the equivalent MQF study program level, total number of ECs obtained by the program and by each module and average qualification of the program and qualification per module.

# 6. Teaching staff

At EIM, the teaching staff is the central link between the quality of teaching and learning. The institution will work with Professors, Lecturers and Coaches. This mix of academic staff is required to enable the transfer of knowledge, skills and professional experiences and to support students in the development of their social and personal competencies.

All teaching is under the authority and oversight of a Professor or Lecturer – including instructional design, tutorial meetings, and lectures. EIM supports co-teaching in most courses and modules, thereby allowing professors, lecturers and coaches to observe and learn from each other in terms of teaching and learning methods and the use of digital tools to enhance online learning methods.In cases where pre-recorded lectures are provided that contain external content, any such content is to be produced by lecturers who are experts with a research doctorate in the relevant domain, or where necessary, with at least seven years of industry-specific experience. Coaches support the modules in mentoring of team work and provision of coaching of individual students in their learning process and professional development process. Field experts provide specific insights in the field of expertise in business administration and management studies, including insights and feedback on student work during tutorial sessions. Learning coaches and field experts are under the direct authority of the faculty members or lecturers.

The teaching staff will seek continuous professional development in both content and learning methods through their direct connection with their other professional engagements as consultants, advisors or professional coaches and as academic researchers. EIM encourages all teaching staff members to enroll in the EIM Postgraduate Certificate in “Academic Research and Publication”, and “Technology-enhanced Teaching and Learning in Higher Education” to develop their relevant skills, competences, and knowledge. Furthermore, each semester workshops by academic staff, students and external stakeholders will be organized to exchange and evaluate experiences in teaching methods and supporting digital technologies and tools. These workshops will generate recommendations for the continuous innovation in teaching methods for future modules and courses. The quality and performance of Faculty staff will be monitored through the analysis of academic KPIs including alignment of the academic module content with the overall program, contact hours and student satisfaction. There will be an annual performance evaluation with the Head of Institution and the Dean of the study program.

# 7. Learning resources and support systems

EIM is committed to provide transparent and up to date information on information for prospective and registered students on selection criteria, MQF and EQF study levels of each course, course objectives and learning outcomes, overview of study credits, the curriculum and the career perspectives.

*Student support*
Incoming students will also be supported by an onboarding process by one of the learning coaches. This process includes an introduction to the study course and the didactic approach and a diagnosis of strengths and weaknesses to provide students with a starting point for their learning process and competence levels.

The diagnosis will be followed up by an annual self-evaluation and reflective interview about the progress in competence and personal development. Students will be supported by a coach who will support students during their full study period. Support consists of advice and coaching on the learning process to ensure that each student finds and develops its own learning patterns and style and is able to follow a focused learning process that contributes to the overall professional and academic competence development. In addition they are coached in the development of professional personal and social competencies that serve for the students current and future career development. The programs will also actively promote the development of a (online) learner's community, peer exchanges and peer reviews during the learning process and with alumni after graduation. This way students are stimulated to develop their own learning and professional alumni network in the longer term.

The core of the faculty team consists of highly experienced Professors, Lecturers and Coaches who are jointly responsible for the direct provision of student support. The tutorial learning methods - with small student groups and intensive weekly tutor-student contact - allows for highly individualized student support in terms of the adequate and flexible planning of meetings, resources and other forms of individualized student support. This support also includes the support to students with disabilities when needed. The faculty staff will continuously be encouraged to enhance their academic and technical competencies to improve student performance and satisfaction. For this, EIM will organize learning exchange workshops to further develop academic learning methods and digital learning tools among faculty staff with invited external experts. Furthermore, faculty staff will be offered the opportunity to participate in EIMs

Postgraduate Certificate in Technology-Enhanced Teaching and Learning in Higher Education.

*Learning resources*
The degree courses seek to offer highly actualized materials in English and include a combination of scientific books and articles and articles and studies from professional journals and publications from international organizations such as United Nations organizations. Learning content, assignments and literature are offered by the lecturers through the learning platform. Literature is based on scientific articles and professional articles such as Harvard Business review and Sloan Management Review and books and fully accessed in digital format. To facilitate students´ free access to scientific resources EIM will seek an institutional license to an internationally renowned digital scientific database or library.

*Online support systems*
The learning resources and support systems will be funded by EIM investments. The support systems are based on two online support systems for teaching and learning and for the student administration including the Google Workspace for Education platform as the key learning environment and Smart sheets for the management of student information.

Both systems are highly user friendly for staff and students and accessible through web and module. Yet, faculty staff will offer all required advice and training to colleagues and students that require support in the use of the digital facilities offered by EIM. Introduction and basic training in the use of platforms will be part of the induction program of new staff and students.

The continuity of the learning processes are guaranteed by the use of cloud-based professional services of renowned digital providers, in this case Google and Smartsheet. The use of large scale providers enables EIM to avoid that failure of software affects access to data by management, lecturers or students alike. In case of failing computers of lecturers or students, mobile devices can be used as an alternative source of access to material, assignments, grades and other information. Both Google and Smartsheet services include real-time mirroring of data and backups and allow EIM to download and print selected data to store at a physical location in Malta.

# 8. Information management

EIM will make use of two key digital platforms to secure transparent and efficient management of student information, for the effective management of our programmes and all other activities (for example MFHEA yearly statistics).

The courses will make use of the generic and integrated learning platform Google Workspace for Education Plus to support the teaching and learning processes https://edu.google.com/products/workspace-for-education/education-pl/. This platform is the latest service developed by Google to support education programs. It builds on the set of standard Google tools such as Email, Shared Drive and Meet and add-on features to support including secured long-term student data storage and secure email services. EIM will make use of the solution of Smartsheet.com https://www.smartsheet.com to develop a tailormade and secure student administration system. This system offers flexible and highly secure cloud-based solutions for student administration. The system is web and mobile based. The system will be developed by our faculty team members, who have extensive experience with the Smartsheet system.

Student and faculty records start with a verification of identity and credentials by a professional verification service provider. The identity of the student and faculty member is thereafter continuously confirmed through the use of (1) a private password and other digital gatekeepers, and (2) the regular confirmation through face-to-face video conference calls which are central to the personalized education provided. Digital student records are stored in the cloud on the smartsheet cloud, the EIM digital platform and regular backups are also archived in Malta to guarantee an availability of the content for 40 years. Archival data for storage of greater than 40 years is achieved through virtual tape storage and similar techniques, and provides a robust backup system for student records.

The information is analyzed by the head of institution and the EIM Council in order to formulate improvements in quality on the following key performance indicators:

- Up to date and transparent degree course and curriculum information
- Up to date and transparent degree qualification and potential labor opportunities
- Up to date course and examination time planning tables
- Efficient and reliable and secure online student grading information
- Effective and efficient student information
- Adequate and clear student information materia

## 9. Public information

EIM's will communicate the following information clearly, accurately, objectively, readily, and up-to-date on its website[10]. The Secretary of the Executive Board will secure provision of accurate public information:

- The selection criteria for all courses and programmes including formal and informal prior education requirements;
- The intended program objectives and modular learning outcomes;
- The qualifications, EIM awards, including information on the EQF/MQF level and ECTS/ECVET learning credits;
- The teaching, learning and assessment procedures used;
- The pass and outfall rates;
- The further learning opportunities available to their students;
- Information on possible career pathways available as a result of taking a course;

This information is displayed publicly and it is meant to be useful and sufficient for prospective applicants to be able to make an informed choice in terms of the knowledge, skills and competences they are likely to acquire on successful completion of the programme. EIM will develop a specific questionnaire to consult students on the quality of program information available.

[10] The institutional website can only be launched after the first provider and program accreditation processes are successfully completed

# 10. On-going monitoring and periodic review of programmes

EIM will implement the following quality cycle to monitor and to periodically review the programmes and courses aligned with our IQA policy and standards.

The goal of the on-going monitoring and periodic review of programmes and courses is

- To ensure that the objectives of each programme and course are achieved;
- To review and to update the content of each programme and course in the light of the latest research and practice;
- To respond to the changing needs of students and society;
- To continuously improve the programmes and courses.

In line with point 3, 4 and 5, on-going monitoring and periodic reviews are the responsibility of the Head of Institution and the EIM Council. External input and data is collected from EQA reports, student and faculty surveys, the members of the Advisory board, and from surveys, research, and other third party publications. The Head of Institution communicates all actions taken or planned to all those concerned. If the annual review calls for major adjustments in the program structure or content of MFHEA accredited programmes, EIM will ensure to submit this program for re-accreditation to MFHEA.

As explained in standard 1, EIM will monitor attainment of institutional and academic objectives by the establishment of Key Performance Indicators (KPI´s) in the different aspects of institutional and academic performance progress. This way EIM seeks to be a data-driven organization to constantly enhance and improve its services and academic quality. As can be seen in the former standards 1 to 6, KPI´s were identified for each key element of academic governance and course development as a method to report and monitor quality performance. These data and indicators will be collected permanently and analyzed and published on each semester and summarized in the Institutional Report and Academic Report.

The findings are a key input to inform our quality assessment process which is based on the PDCA improvement cycle of Deming. By defining the PCDA cycle for each of the relevant institutional and academic activities, as can be read in the earlier described standards 1 to 6, EIM is able to continuously monitor its progress and performance of

staff and students and assure a proper system for quality control, assurance and improvement.

## 11. Cyclical external quality assurance

EIM will undergo an external quality assurance on a cyclical basis (once every five years) following the guidelines of MFHEA to secure continuous quality assurance and related accreditation levels (compared to standard 10).