Doc. 300.1.2

Date: Date.

Higher Education Institution's Response

- **Higher Education Institution:
Intercollege**

- **Town: Nicosia**

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

  In Greek:

  Λειτουργία Ξενοδοχειακών και Επισιτιστικών Μονάδων
  (2 Έτη/120 ECTS, Δίπλωμα)

  In English:

  Hospitality and Food Service Operations
  (2 Years/120 ECTS, Diploma)

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

- **Programme's status:** New

- **Concentrations (if any):**

  In Greek: Concentrations
  In English: Concentrations

ΚΥΠΡΙΑΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ
REPUBLIC OF CYPRUS

A. Guidelines on content and structure of the report

- *The Higher Education Institution (HEI) based on the External Evaluation Committee's (EEC's) evaluation report (Doc.300.1.1 or 300.1.1/1 or 300.1.1/2 or 300.1.1/3 or 300.1.1/4) must justify whether actions have been taken in improving the quality of the programme of study in each assessment area. The answers' documentation should be brief and accurate and supported by the relevant documentation. Referral to annexes should be made only when necessary.*

- *In particular, under each assessment area and by using the 2nd column of each table, the HEI must respond on the following:*

  - *the areas of improvement and recommendations of the EEC*
  - *the conclusions and final remarks noted by the EEC*

- *The institution should respond to the EEC comments, in the designated area next each comment. The comments of the EEC should be copied from the EEC report **without any interference** in the content.*

- *In case of annexes, those should be attached and sent on separate document(s). Each document should be in *.pdf format and named as annex1, annex2, etc.*

1. Study programme and study programme's design and development
(ESG 1.1, 1.2, 1.7, 1.8, 1.9)

Areas of improvement and recommendations **by EEC**	Actions Taken by the Institution	For official use Only
The EEC members appreciate the efforts of the college's team towards offering a competitive syllabus. However, the EEC suggests a change to the name of the programme, to be more aligned with the suggested course offerings. Currently, the course content and the learning outcomes are not fully aligned with the course title. For illustrative purposes, only the course "Introduction to hospitality and tourism" to a great extent focuses on food and restaurant enterprises. The course "Managing People and Organizations" should be renamed to Human Resources Management in Tourism and Hospitality (if they want to retain the current program title) The EEC members strongly suggest the integration to the programme of the following courses: -Local – traditional cuisine -Greek language and culture.	Following the committee's suggestion, the name of the programme has been changed from Hospitality Operations to Hospitality and Food Service Operations as to better reflect the overall learning outcomes. Further: • HSPO 202 - Cyprus Cuisine (**ANNEX I**) course has been added in replacement of HSPO-202 Food Service Supply Management and following the suggestion of the EEC for adding Local/Traditional Cuisine courses. • The course HSPO 115 - Managing People and Organizations is renamed to Human Resources Management in Tourism and Hospitality (**ANNEX II**) The addition of a Greek Language and Culture will be examined in the future when student numbers will allow for additional sections and elective courses.	Choose an item.
A further incorporation in the curriculum of a few lectures/seminars on ERS issues (ethics, social and corporate responsibility, inclusivity and sustainability) which are current crucial issues in today's tourism and hospitality industry is also considered necessary	We agree with the suggestion thus the course HSPO 211 - Bar Operations has been replaced with the HSPO 211 - Business Ethics Course which covers all the suggested thematic areas as recommended by EEC. (New course Syllabus attached as **ANNEX III**).	
The programme offers to the students only compulsory courses and not elective. That's a weakness of the curriculum.	Two-year diploma courses are typically designed to provide students with a specialized skill set that can be quickly applied in the workforce. As such, they do not have many elective courses, if any at all, due to the relatively short duration of the program. While many traditional four-year degree programs offer a wide range of elective courses that allow students to explore different areas of interest, two-year diploma programs are typically more focused. This is because the goal of these programs is to equip students with the skills and	

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	knowledge needed to enter a specific profession, rather than provide a broad-based education. In addition, the time constraints of a two-year diploma program mean that there is simply not enough time to include many elective courses. These programs are typically very intensive, with students completing a large amount of coursework in a relatively short amount of time. Adding additional courses would require either extending the duration of the program or reducing the depth of coverage in other areas, neither of which is desirable.	
There is a need to focus more on academic issues – academic quality of the programme	We thank the committee for their comment. At Intercollege, we ensure that academic quality is maintained via a range of strategies, including regular committees, peer reviews, industry collaborations, and more. One of the primary ways we ensure academic quality is through the use of committees. These committees are composed of faculty members, students and administrators who are responsible for overseeing different aspects of each of our academic programmes. For example, there are committees responsible for curriculum development, assessment, and accreditation. These committees meet regularly to review the program and make recommendations for improvement. Peer reviews are another important tool used to ensure academic quality. These reviews involve classroom observation by peers and providing feedback on strengths and weaknesses. This type of review can help identify areas for improvement. Industry collaborations are also critical to ensuring academic quality. By partnering with industry leaders and professionals (Advisory Committee), we gain insights into the skills and knowledge that are in demand in the workforce. This information is then used to update curriculums and programmes and ensure that Intercollege graduates have the skills and knowledge needed to succeed in their chosen field.	

	We are continuously evolving our existing processes and procedures as quality assurance is ever-evolving, adapting to changing student needs, and advancements in teaching and learning methodologies.	

2. Student – centred learning, teaching and assessment
(ESG 1.3)

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The title of the programme does not match the content that was presented in the application. The EEC would like Intercollege to consider a title that better aligns to the course content, or better reflect the course content to match the suggested title. Negative perceptions of students feeling that the course is not what they signed up to would affect their learning experience. Once the course title is reconsidered (for example to something closer to food service operations) the content and titles of courses should better be aligned to this new title. For instance, some of the courses need either new titles or refocusing of the content. For example, the 'Introduction to hospitality and tourism' does not encapsulate in content all the sectors in hospitality and tourism rather focuses on food service so its either a title such as 'introduction to food service' or the content needs rethinking	Following the committee's suggestion, the name of the programme has been changed from Hospitality Operations to Hospitality and Food Service Operations as to better reflect the overall learning outcomes.	Choose an item.
Assessment needs streamlining for all courses	The main assessment methods of each course are in accordance to Intercollege Internal Regulations and in compliance with Ministry of Education and CyQAA guidelines. Typical course assessments comprise of a continuous assessment (attendance, projects, midterms etc) and final examinations. Relevant guidelines are provided to all faculty members and the assessment methods are clearly indicated on each course syllabus available on Intercollege website. Faculty members have the freedom to adjust the overall percentages accordingly but always in accordance with the institutional and national policies and guidelines.	Choose an item.
Course reading list requires updating to ensure that each course has at least two reading sources published in the last 3 years. Referencing style of these sources needs to be consistent	A revised course reading list (**ANNEX IV**) has been provided, containing a minimum of two reading sources that have been published within the past three to four years. Information is now presented in a uniformed referencing style.	Choose an item.
The team needs to compile the list of all this new bibliography and deliver it to the librarian to ensure sufficient copies of textbooks are obtained	A list of the new textbooks (**ANNEX V**) will be delivered to the librarian in due time to ensure availability of those on time.	Choose an item.

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3. Teaching staff
(ESG 1.5)

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The delivery of the hospitality and food service elements seems to over-rely on one lecturer who covers ten courses and this is not learning and teaching best practices. We recommend that each tutor does not deliver more than five courses and that an extra specialist is added to the team	Two more lecturers have been assigned to teach hospitality and food service components in the program. The attached CVs (**ANNEX VI**) of these lecturers accompany this response. This ensures that no lecturer in the program will be teaching more than five courses. The addition of these new faculty members will impact the following courses: HSPO-113, which will be taught by Antonis Petrou, and HSPO-207, HSPO-213 and HSPO-213, which will be taught by Yianna Orphanidou. Furthermore, Table 2: Course Distribution per Semester and Table 3: Teaching Staff, Courses and Teaching Periods in the Programme of Study is amended (**ANNEX VII**)	Choose an item.
A system of internal moderation that includes ALL staff, not just new, needs to be developed and shown in the application	At Intercollege, internal moderation is a crucial aspect of ensuring the quality of education and services provided. The college employs a variety of methods to ensure that internal moderation is consistently provided and maintained. For example, via the Internal Quality Assurance committee in charge of the monitoring of the college's academic quality, included members from various departments (Academic, Administrative etc) who work together to identify areas of improvement. In addition, via Peer Reviews where faculty members or administrative members review each other's work to ensure that it meets the required standards. Furthermore, regular appropriate training is provided to staff and faculty to ensure that they are equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge to perform their duties effectively. Additional information is available in the Intercollege Internal Regulations : https://www.intercollege.ac.cy/admissions/useful-information/internal-regulations/	
A clear system of how staff can apply for staff development and conference funding needs to be devised	The College has a clear system of how staff can apply for staff development and conference funding needs. Faculty members wishing to apply for financial support from the College to attend a conference/seminar/training course, need to complete the "Faculty Development Application	

	Form". The general guidelines of this procedure are provided in **ANNEX VIII** Examples of professional development concepts that Faculty members can apply to attend are the following: Conferences, Specialized training workshops, Job Shadowing etc.	
The EEC recommends that the college engages with TURIN in the same way they have done for ERASMUS to enable staff development and exchange to continue with UK based institutions as well	Intercollege is already working towards joining the Turin programme in addition to the existing Erasmus+ student exchange programme. We believe that participating in both programs will provide our students with a wider range of opportunities to study abroad and gain international experience.	

4. Student admission, progression, recognition and certification
(ESG 1.4)

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Besides the necessary changes in the offered courses (reported in section 1) the teaching staff should consider improving the learning outcomes in several courses	Course syllabi attached as **ANNEX IX**, have been revised in terms of content, bibliography and learning outcomes have been enriched and improved.	Choose an item.
Teaching staff must expose its students more to academic literature. The free access to the library of the University of Nicosia is an opportunity towards this direction	As mentioned previously, the course syllabi have been revised to include more current references and bibliography with required and recommended reading sections. Additionally, Intercollege students have complete access to the University of Nicosia (UNIC) library both online and physically. The UNIC Library has a collection of around 100,000 print books covering all relevant fields of study, which can be accessed via the online catalogue UniCAT (Aleph). In terms of electronic resources, our students have access to over 100,000 print books, more than 500,000 e-books, over 30,000 journals, and over 100 databases offering access to various types of sources such as articles, conference proceedings, and chapters. They also have access to RefWorks, a reference management tool, as well as music scores and audiovisuals. On- and off-campus access to electronic resources is available through OpenAthens and Proxy Server authentication.	
The college should increase its students' participation in international exchange programmes	We recognize the value of these programs in providing our students with the opportunity to gain international experience, develop cross-cultural competencies, and broaden their perspectives. Therefore, we are constantly exploring new partnerships with institutions around the world to expand our students' options for international exchange. We will also continue to promote the existing programs, such as the Erasmus+ program, to our students and encourage their participation.	
The College mainly focuses on the Cypriot market - Cypriot students. This is an oxymoron for a country that attracts a large number of foreign students and has a great need to staff its tourism industry	The decision to focus the "Hospitality and Food Service Operations" programme on the Cypriot market and students is based on several factors. Firstly, we believe that there is sufficient demand in the local market to attract a satisfactory number of students. Secondly, given the current situation, it would be challenging for us to compete with other	

	higher-caliber institutions abroad that offer similar programmes. Due to the complex processes and certain restrictions for international non-European students to come to Cyprus and due to the challenges of attracting suitable international students, we prefer to allocate our resources into the local market at least at the beginning. However, we are constantly evaluating the situation and exploring opportunities to expand the programme's reach in the future.	
The administrative staff was not aware of the key statistics concerning the students (i.e. dropout rate etc.)	The specific report was requested during the visit and delivered along with all other reports and data discussed. However, we would like to clarify that this specific report (dropout rates) requires manual processing of data, distinguishing deferrals from discontinuations, and other related tasks. Since this report is not regularly used during accreditation visits, thus specific data had not been prepared to be readily available at hand.	

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5. Learning resources and student support
(ESG 1.6)

Areas of improvement and recommendations **by EEC**	Actions Taken by the Institution	For official use Only
The library, though comfortable and modern, needs to be supported by an injection of money resources to purchase updated literature for the program	There is no lack of resources towards acquiring updated literature for the program through the UNIC Library resources, which is one of the biggest libraries in Cyprus. In fact, we ensure the availability of educational resources, whether in physical or electronic form, as part of our annual programme evaluation process.	Choose an item.

6. Additional for doctoral programmes
(ALL ESG)

Areas of improvement and recommendations **by EEC**	Actions Taken by the Institution	For official use Only
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7. Eligibility (Joint programme)
(ALL ESG)

Areas of improvement and recommendations **by EEC**	Actions Taken by the Institution	For official use Only
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B. Conclusions and final remarks

Conclusions and final remarks **by EEC**	Actions Taken by the Institution	For official use Only
The EEC members appreciate the efforts of the college's team towards offering a competitive syllabus. However, the EEC suggests a change to the name of the programme, to be more aligned with the suggested course offerings. Currently, the course content and the learning outcomes are not fully aligned with the course title. For illustrative purposes, only the course "Introduction to hospitality and tourism" to a great extent focuses on food and restaurant enterprises. The course "Managing People and Organizations" should be renamed to Human Resources Management in Tourism and Hospitality (if they want to retain the current program title)	**Actions are indicated in Section 1**	Choose an item.
Assessment needs streamlining for all courses	**Actions are indicated in Section 2**	
Course reading list requires updating to ensure that each course has at least two reading sources published in the last 3 years. Referencing style of these sources needs to be consistent	**Actions are indicated in Section 2**	
The team needs to compile the list of all this new bibliography and deliver it to the librarian to ensure sufficient copies of textbooks are obtained	**Actions are indicated in Section 2**	
The delivery of the hospitality and food service elements seems to over-rely on one lecturer who covers ten courses and this is not learning and teaching best practices. We recommend that each tutor does not deliver more than five courses and that an extra specialist is added to the team	**Actions are indicated in Section 3**	
A system of internal moderation that includes ALL staff, not just new, needs to be developed and shown in the application	**Actions are indicated in Section 3**	
A clear system of how staff can apply for staff development and conference funding needs to be devised.	**Actions are indicated in Section 3**	
The EEC recommends that the college engages with TURIN in the same way they have done for ERASMUS to enable staff development and exchange to continue with UK based institutions as well	**Actions are indicated in Section 3**	
The college should increase its students' participation in international exchange programmes	**Actions are indicated in Section 4**	
The College mainly focuses on the Cypriot market - Cypriot students. This is an oxymoron for a country that attracts a large number of foreign students and has a great need to staff its tourism industry	**Actions are indicated in Section 4**	

| The administrative staff was not aware of the key statistics concerning the students (i.e. dropout rate etc.) | **Actions are indicated in Section 4** | |
| The library, though comfortable and modern, needs to be supported by an injection of money resources to purchase updated literature for the program | **Actions are indicated in Section 5** | |

C. Higher Education Institution academic representatives

Name	*Position*	*Signature*
Kyriacos Patsalides	Director of Academic Affairs	
Yiannis Kouis	Program Coordinator	

Date: 09/09/2023