

Doc. 300.1.2

Date: 10/10/2023

Higher Education Institution's Response

- **Higher Education Institution:**
KES COLLEGE

- **Town:** NICOSIA

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

In Greek:

Διοικητικός Λειτουργός Γραφείου (2 ακαδημαϊκά έτη,
120 ECTS, Δίπλωμα)

In English:

Office Management Administrator (2 academic years,
120 ECTS, Diploma)

- **Language(s) of instruction:** Greek or English
- **Programme's status:** Currently Operating
- **Concentrations (if any):**

In Greek: Concentrations

In English: Concentrations



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

A. 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
It is recommended to provide clearer articulation of the progression from one semester to the next and establish stronger connections between modules (e.g., when it comes to accounting modules).	<p>1.a. Progression across the courses: The team welcomes the recommendation made by the EEC and confirms that the structure of the programme of study was carefully built having in mind the prerequisites of each course. In particular, once Semester A is successfully completed, the students are introduced to a series of courses which are linked to Semester A courses. The same applies to Semester C courses and Semester D courses. The students become aware of such prerequisites through the course syllabus and therefore the progression is clearly communicated to students. In more detail:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Semester A course OFMA101 Introduction to Written Communication Skills is a prerequisite for Semester B course OFMA102 Business Communication Semester A course ACCT110 Introduction to Financial Office Administration is a prerequisite for Semester B course OFMA103 Technological Applications to Financial Office Administration Semester B course OFMA102 Business Communication is a prerequisite for Semester C course OFMA201 Social Media Management Semester B course OFMA103 Technological Applications to Financial Office Administration is a prerequisite for Semester C course ACCT209 Application of Accounting Practices in Business <p>Please see Appendix A which includes all the syllabi of the programme of study under evaluation. The syllabi of the aforementioned courses are also included therein.</p>	Choose level of compliance:
The programme's design does not include a mapping of learning objectives with program modules, resulting in a lack of clarity regarding the	<p>1.b. Course map: In response to this recommendation made by the EEC, the team proceeded with a careful mapping of the programmes' learning outcomes with the programme courses. Before doing so, the team agreed to undertake a process of reviewing and, where warranted, eliminating, replacing, integrating</p>	Choose level of compliance:

<p>(inter)relationships between modules. Developing a comprehensive mapping of programme objectives and skills development across the offered modules is advised. This mapping will aid students and staff in understanding how each module contributes to the overall program goals and the acquisition of specific skills</p>	<p>and rephrasing the programme's learning outcomes. Doing so, the team was certain that the proposed programme learning outcomes not only corresponded to the overall goal of the proposed programme of study, but also complied with the guidelines set by the CyQF as they relate to the diploma level of study (CyQF 5b). Please see Appendix B for the previous learning outcomes of the programme of study (both in Greek and English) and Appendix C for the revised programme learning outcomes (both in Greek and English). The course map is found in Appendix D.</p> <p>The team informs the committee that it has taken the necessary steps in adding new programme learning outcomes as they relate to the cross-cultural, legal and intercultural aspects (see thematic categories 1.d.). Said learning outcomes are seen in Appendix C (No11).</p>	
<p>The programme features 12 compulsory modules and no electives. It may be possible to offer industry/sector specific modules that aim to provide contextual training.</p>	<p>1.c. Elective courses: Following this recommendation made by the EEC, the team proceeded with the design and development of an elective course that will be offered to students during their second year and at the forth semester of their studies. The course "OFMA204 Office Administration for Health Professionals" has now been entered to the course structure of the proposed programme of study as an elective course, along with the course "OFMA202 Sustainability and Logistics in Office Administration", previously a compulsory course. Please see Appendix E for the original course structure, in Greek and English, and Appendix F for the revised course structure, both in Greek and English. The team believes that these two elective courses can satisfy the recommendation made by the EEC, in that they both aim at providing contextual training in what the team has identified as important skills and knowledge to be acquired by the prospective office administrators. The new elective course "OFMA204 Office Administration for Health Professionals" can be found in Appendix A, No12. ¹</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>
<p>There may be opportunities to do training internationally through collaborations abroad. To this end (and also considering that the local market is a diverse one),</p>	<p>1.d. cross cultural aspects and legal aspects: Following this recommendation made by the EEC, the team proceeded with identifying key courses of the proposed programme of study to which a crosscultural aspect could be added. To this end, the team has identified that the following course could be enhanced with the addition of a</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>

¹ Please see **Appendix L** for the qualifications and CV of Dr Vaso Stylianou.

<p>adding more crosscultural training could be a valuable addition.</p> <p>Similarly, more emphasis should be paid to the legal aspects related to office administration.</p>	<p>new thematic category that would cater for the crosscultural aspect, as mentioned by the EEC:</p> <p>1. OFMA203 - Administration and Office Operation Planning: As seen in Appendix A (No 11), the said course has now been enhanced with the addition of a cross-cultural aspect, whereby the students are expected to become acquainted with the importance of managing cultural diversity at the workplace.</p> <p>The team has identified that the following course could be enhanced with the addition of a new thematic category that would cater for the legal aspect of the role of the office management administrator, as mentioned by the EEC:</p> <p>1. OFMA100 Office Administration and Customer Relationship Management: As seen in Appendix A (No 1), the said course has now been enhanced with the addition of a legal aspect (the basics of data protection and GDPR), whereby the students are expected to become acquainted with data protection and the necessity of protecting personal information.</p>	
<p>Explicit attention is not given to English business communication and intercultural skills as learning objectives, although the management acknowledges their importance.</p>	<p>1.e. Intercultural skills:</p> <p>In continuation to the above comment, the team also proceeded with enhancing the content of the course OFMA203 - Administration and Office Operation Planning (No11) in such a way that the students now have the opportunity to expose themselves not only the idea of how cultural diversity can influence and determine the nature and style of team management, but also of the skills they themselves need to demonstrate in order to be able to work in a potentially cross-cultural environment. Following the suggestions of the EEC, the team added a few components that would help the students to demonstrate interpersonal skills, including cultural sensitivity and adaptability. The said course already included a strong component of intercultural skills, including time management, conflict management, and team work.</p> <p>This new intercultural aspect, along with the new cross-cultural and legal aspect (see thematic category 1.d.) are also made evident in the programme learning objectives and the course map.</p>	

Weaknesses in English communication skills were also observed when communicating with students.	1.f. English Business Communication: In response to this comment made by the EEC, it is important to note that English proficiency is an entry requirement for the <i>English version of the programme of study</i> . However, the team acknowledges that many of the students attending said programme of study, but also other Greek language programmes of study offered at KES College, might welcome English courses that would improve their communication skills. It is for this reason that the team has proceeded with designing complementary English language courses, on an optional, zero-credit basis, that would provide the students with the opportunity to invest in widening their English language skills. Appendix G includes the syllabi that have been developed for this case ² .	
In addition to the above points, the EEC notes that while quality assurance currently incorporates student feedback and input from external sources (like market feedback and alumni recommendations), there is room for a more structured and systematic approach. Currently, the program's connection with the job market and employers relies mainly on the personal connections of the program director. Establishing an advisory board could be beneficial in shaping the program's future and ensuring that graduates possess skills and experiences highly valued by employers and review changes in the professional requirements for office managers that can be considered in the design of the curriculum. Such an advisory board could serve	1.g. Advisory Board: The College welcomes this recommendation made by the EEC and responds adequately. The team has managed to structure an Advisory Board which is expected to contribute to the currency and quality of the programme of study, to enhance the reputation of the programme, its ability to meet market demands, and to facilitate the work placement of its graduates. The Advisory Board is expected to provide guidance and direction for the programme of study, making sure that the programme's offerings remain relevant to the market needs and trends. It is expected that the Advisory Board will meet once a year with the purpose of providing guidance, knowledge, skills and feedback as it pertains to the field of Office Management Administration and the evolving market needs and trends. Such meetings can be beneficial to the programme of study, not only during the curriculum design process, but also during curriculum evaluation. It is expected that the programme's alliance with industry experts would enable the programme to remain alert to any changes in the trends and needs of the market and, by extend, to deliver targeted advice to the programme driving towards its academic quality. Please see Appendix H for the composition of the Advisory Board.	

² Please see Appendix L for the academic qualifications of Mrs Semeli Louca

multiple related programmes which will ensure its feasibility and wider impact.		
---	--	--

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

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
Regarding assessment, the program utilizes both formative and summative assessments, encompassing a range of methods. However, there is a need for a clear assignment strategy to guide the use of practice-oriented assignments. Similar to the proposed mapping of program objectives and skills, conducting a mapping exercise for assessment types would be beneficial in formulating a comprehensive program-level assessment strategy. This mapping would ensure that assessments across modules align with the intended learning outcomes, providing a thorough evaluation of students' knowledge and skills. This is considered of great importance, considering the vocational nature of the Diploma. It would also enable the program team to diversify assessment methods and foster a more holistic and authentic approach.	<p>2.a. Programme-level assessment mapping: Having already developed a course map (please see thematic category 1.b. Course map) the team – following the recommendations made by the EEC – has also developed an assessment map, as found in Appendix I. The assessment map has helped the team to reconsider its various decisions as they relate to the assessment scenarios of the different courses and whether a different scenario might be more suited. The team has thus proceeded with altering the assessment scenarios of the following courses, as also hinted by the EEC relating to the practice-oriented assignment:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. OFMA100 Office Administration and Customer Relationship Management 2. OFMA101 Introduction to Written Communication Skills 3. OFMA102 Business Communication 4. OFMA104 Meetings and Event Planning 5. COMP209 e-Office 6. OFMA203 Administration and Office Operation Planning <p>Revising the assessment scenarios has been a great task for the team and it has helped with a more explicit articulation of the requirements upon students as they relate to the practice-oriented assignments and exercises and the expectations of delivery upon the teachers.</p>	Choose level of compliance:

In this regard, incorporating more group work in final assessments could be considered as part of the assessment mix.	As part of the aforementioned process, the team also proceeded with incorporating group assignments / projects as part of students' final assessments. Final group assessments have been added to the following courses of Year 2: 1. OFMA201 Social Media Management 2. OFMA203 Administration and Office Operation Planning	
More speakers from industry to give talks related to current office management best practices would be welcome	2.b. Speakers: Please see Appendix J for the list of external speakers for the academic years 2023-2024.	Choose level of compliance:
		Choose level of compliance:
		Choose level of compliance:

3. Teaching staff (ESG 1.5)

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
The programme coordinator provides support to teaching staff by discussing the module plans and overall programme delivery. The coordinator also considers student feedback and areas for improvement. There are also teaching observation sessions, but these are undertaken by a single reviewer. Although the above are commendable and to some degree reasonable, considering the size of the classes involved, decentralising the processes can be beneficial. For instance, teaching staff could observe a different colleague every year and reflect on different teaching methods applied.	The team of the College confirms that it has established the mechanisms that are expected to encourage a shared culture of collegiality among the teaching staff through peer observations. At the start of each academic year, the team of the College makes sure to inform any new members of the teaching staff of the benefits of taking part to a peer observation session with one of the existing teaching staff member of their choice. The new members are informed that such opportunities can benefit their teaching skills by allowing them to get a glimpse of good teaching practices and methodologies. Both the new and the existing teaching staff are encouraged to check out a Moodle page developed by the education officer, in which the teaching staff can find more information on peer observation and from which they can download a peer observation sheet (find in Appendix K). At the start of each academic year, the team disseminates to all the members of the teaching staff the student-centered guide that aims at informing them of the opportunities provided to them and the expectations placed upon them as they relate to the delivery of their course. Within said guide is information on peer observation opportunities. Please see Appendix K for a sample of said guide.	Choose level of compliance:
Student evaluations are conducted on the teaching staff. It is important for the results to be analysed and taken into account, particularly when planning training for the teaching staff. Providing teachers with direct access to feedback is recommended before they discuss the feedback with the programme coordinator	Following the relevant announcement published by the Cyprus Agency of Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Higher Education as it relates to the participation of students in the evaluation of teaching, the team confirms that there are procedures in place whereby the student questionnaires are utilised for the evaluation of teaching by students and for the betterment of students' teaching experience. In particular, the College disseminates two questionnaires at the end of each academic semester that aim at collecting students' responses as they relate to their experiences at the College and their learning experiences as they relate to each of their courses. The data are then analysed and sent to each member of the teaching staff with the aim of having those results acting as an event for the betterment of the teaching and learning process.	Choose level of compliance:

<p>The existing seminar series can be strengthened, both in terms of its structure and topic coverage, but also in terms of the speakers featured (as per the suggestion following)</p>	<p>The team confirms that the list of seminars for the academic year 2023-2024 has been strengthened both in terms of its structure and content. Please see Appendix J for the relevant list.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>
<p>On the one hand the College could support members of the teaching team to obtain pedagogic qualifications. On the other the College can make more effective use of the Erasmus programme and inviting international speakers. Similarly, it can encourage members of staff to visit partner institutions to gain valuable experiences.</p>	<p>Obtaining pedagogical qualifications:</p> <p>KES Training Center (KEK) @ KES College organises multi-business training programmes, sponsored by the Cyprus Human Resources Development Authority. Once a new training course has been approved by the HRDA and is ready to be launched at the KES College premises, the training officer of KEK @ KES College communicates any new training opportunities to the head of the Human Resource of KES College who, in turn, forwards this announcement to the members of the teaching and administrative staff. Interested members can participate to such training opportunities every semester. Successful completion of the training courses leads to the participating members being awarded a certificate of attendance. Please see below the full list of the training opportunities that are currently available.</p> <p>https://training.kes.ac.cy/</p> <p>More effective use of the Erasmus programme:</p> <p>KES College is a part of Erasmus+ programme and offers its students and staff the opportunity to work or study abroad through the European Funded Program Erasmus+. The Erasmus Programme gives the opportunity to academic and non-academic staff to undertake a teaching assignment or staff training at a partner institution or organisation. The purpose is to allow the beneficiaries to observe another European educational system, learn from the experiences, discover best practices, develop international networks and improve the skills required for their current job. The teaching and non-teaching staff is encouraged to participate to Erasmus+ opportunities.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>
<p>Click or tap here to enter text.</p>	<p>Click or tap here to enter text.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>

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

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
The EEC is overall satisfied with the way that the programme is operationalised. We recommend that more could be added in the student handbook in the section on the student's well-being. and there are no specific recommendations for this section.	The team thanks the EEC for the suggestion and confirms that it will take this into consideration for the handbook to be developed the following academic year.	Choose level of compliance:
Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Choose level of compliance:
Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Choose level of compliance:
Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Choose level of compliance:
Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Choose level of compliance:

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
Acknowledging the importance of mental well-being, the College could provide counselling support through specialized professionals. These experts could offer guidance and assistance to students who may require emotional or psychological support.	The College understands the importance of mental well-being. The Programme Coordinators are encouraged to communicate, among the academic staff, a culture of student-centeredness, not only as it relates to teaching but also to caring for the mental well-being of the students. In case the Programme Coordinators become aware of alarming occurrences or in case a student wishes to consult a mental health professional, the Programme Coordinators are instructed to refer the student to the department of Student Affairs and Welfare Services. The department can advise the student to utilise the range of psychological support services offered through the General Healthcare System.	Choose level of compliance:
A common challenge with small size organizations like KES is that they tend to operate in an informal/personal manner. Senior management can gradually start installing systems and procedures and processes, to follow, when it comes to the delivery of the programme that are often found in bigger institutions. On one hand it can help strengthen the delivery of the programme. On the other these can underpin the desired growth of the institution in a proactive manner.	The team would like to thank the EEC for this advice and confirms that this will be taken into a careful consideration as the College seeks for organisational growth.	Choose level of compliance:
		Choose level of compliance:
		Choose level of compliance:
		Choose level of compliance:

6. Additional for doctoral programmes (ALL ESG)

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Choose level of compliance:
Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Choose level of compliance:
Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Choose level of compliance:
Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Choose level of compliance:
Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Choose level of compliance:

7. Eligibility (Joint programme) (ALL ESG)

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
	Click or tap here to enter text.	Choose level of compliance:
	Click or tap here to enter text.	Choose level of compliance:
	Click or tap here to enter text.	Choose level of compliance:
	Click or tap here to enter text.	Choose level of compliance:
	Click or tap here to enter text.	Choose level of compliance:

B. Conclusions and final remarks

Conclusions and final remarks by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
Following the assessment carried out by the External Evaluation Committee, several aspects of the program have been highlighted. While acknowledging the potential of the revised program, the EEC has identified areas that would benefit from further improvement. By incorporating these recommendations, the program team can enhance the program's effectiveness by creating a more cohesive and meaningful learning experience for students, aligning modules with program objectives more effectively, and providing increased flexibility for specialization in pertinent industry sectors.	We thank the Committee for its recommendations. The actions taken by the College are seen in the preceding sections.	Choose level of compliance:
	Click or tap here to enter text.	Choose level of compliance:
	Click or tap here to enter text.	Choose level of compliance:
	Click or tap here to enter text.	Choose level of compliance:
	Click or tap here to enter text.	Choose level of compliance:

A. Higher Education Institution academic representatives

Name	Position	Signature
Dr. Vassias Vassiliades	Director of Academic Affairs	
Dr. Christina Yennari	Education and Curriculum Design and Development Officer	
Dr. Demetrios Sarris	Programme Coordinator- School of Environmental Studies	
Dr. Androulla Miliotou	Programme Coordinator – Medical Representatives and Pharmacy Assistant (Technician)	
Peter Nikandrou	Academic Registrar	
Panayiotis Hajisymeou	Head of Programme Coordinators – School of Culinary, Hospitality and Tourism	
Markella Shiarly	Programme Coordinator – Beauty Therapy	
Andri Sideri-Yiallouraki	Head of Students' Affairs and Welfare Services	
Marina Konstantinou	Programme Coordinator – Office Administration and Secretarial studies, Logistics	

Date: 10/10/2023

