Doc. 300.1.2

Date: 10.1.2024

Higher Education Institution's Response

- **Higher Education Institution:**
  European University Cyprus

- **Town:** Nicosia

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

  In Greek:
  Διεύθυνση Φιλοξενίας και Τουρισμού (4 Έτη/240 ECTS, Πτυχίο)

  In English:

  Hospitality and Tourism Management (4 Years/240 ECTS, Bachelor of Arts)

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

- **Programme's status:** Currently Operating

- **Concentrations (if any):**

  In Greek: Concentrations
  In English: Concentrations

The School of Business Administration of European University Cyprus and in particular the Department of Management and Marketing wishes to express its sincere gratitude to the *External Evaluation Committee (EEC)* for the evaluation of the undergraduate programme in Hospitality and Tourism Management (BA).

It is with great pleasure that we noted the positive feedback of the *EEC* and we appreciate its insightful recommendations, which provided us the opportunity to further improve the quality and the future implementation of the programme. In the following pages we respond in detail to all recommendations for improvement suggested by the *EEC* and we provide all relevant information to explain the actions taken to ensure that the proposed Programme is of high quality.
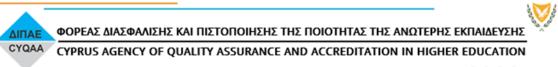
A. Guidelines on content and structure of the report

- *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
1. Introduce internal moderation of marked work.	We agree with this suggestion of the EEC as it is important to monitor the grades for enhancing the overall quality of the programme. Even though an Assignment Marking Scheme is currently used (please see in ANNEX I the Assignment Marking Scheme), we fully concur with the EEC's recommendation to develop a Marking scheme which clearly maps expectations across the students' academic progression. In this respect, as from the current semester a 15%-20% of all marked final exam papers will be also assessed by another faculty supporting the programme.	Choose level of compliance:
2. Rework Internship module outlines to reflect progression across the three.	In line with the EEC's recommendation, the internship syllabi have been revised to reflect the progression across Internships I, II and III. Specifically, - Internship in Hospitality and Tourism Enterprises **I** - now covers non-supervisory operational duties (front line employees); - Internship in Hospitality and Tourism Enterprises **II** now covers supervisory duties; and, - Internship in Hospitality and Tourism Enterprises **III** now covers junior managerial duties. (please see in Annex 2 the revised Syllabi; modifications made have been highlighted with yellow for the Committee's convenience).	Choose level of compliance:

3. Rework the Art of Gastronomy module outline to better reflect its content compared to Culinary Arts and consider including it earlier in the programme.	The Art of Gastronomy (HTM325) syllabus has now been revised to clearly reflect its content, i.e. mostly to cover theoretical aspects compared to the Culinary Arts course (HTM105), which mostly covers practical matters. In addition, in view of its more theoretical nature, the Art of Gastronomy in line with the EEC's recommendation is now offered in semester two, instead of semester seven (please see in Annex 3 the revised two syllabi)	Choose level of compliance:
4. Particularly in generic modules, ensure that sector-related content, for instance, case studies are used to bridge the theory-practice gap and expose students to situations they may experience in the workplace.	In the generic major modules, all tourism and hospitality instructors incorporate real-life case studies in order to bridge the gap between industry and academia, and expose students to real life scenarios. This practice will be further enhanced. Please see in Annex 4 the revised Syllabi of generic major modules (modifications made to respond to this recommendation have been highlighted with yellow for the Committee's convenience).	Choose level of compliance:
5. Consider the use of simulations in appropriate modules to increase engagement, and also increasing the number of practical modules.	A business simulation course (BUS420) that is already offered to Business Studies students has been adapted for hospitality and tourism management students. The students that choose this as an elective, will have a tourism/hospitality case. The primary objective of this course is to give students hands-on experience operating a business in a simulated environment. It provides an opportunity for students to gain experience in integrating business concepts, in evaluating the ethical implications of decisions, and in using analytical skills to make	Choose level of compliance:

	decision on issues relating to R & D, marketing, production, finance, HR, and operations of the firm. Students will engage in business practice and theory. The simulations may include but not limited to creating and presenting new products/services or businesses, writing business plans, researching foreign business cultures, importing and exporting products, dealing with HR issues, and ethical considerations. Emphasizes participation in all business decisions related to running a company.	
6. Consider involving students in student competitions and industry-led events to widen their horizons and networks.	Student competitions are an integral part of the students' learning experience. To this end the students of the programme, participate in various competitions, such as bartending competitions in both in Cyprus and abroad. In addition, hospitality and tourism management students have actively participated in various activities organized by the programme, the Department and the School. For instance, the ICOT2023 academic conference and the wine tourism symposium/exhibitions 'Oenognosia 2022' and 'Oenognosia 2023', organized by European University Cyprus, This is a practice that is generally followed as it gives the opportunity to students to meet and interact with professionals from the tourism and hospitality industries.	Choose level of compliance:
7. Review all module content to avoid repetition.	All module content has been reviewed in order to avoid repetition. Please see Annex 5 –	Choose level of compliance:

	Revised Syllabi (reviews made to respond to this recommendation have been highlighted with yellow for the Committee's convenience).	
8. Reflect on Learning outcomes in Programme specifications and module outlines in terms of level and number.	The learning outcomes of the following courses were revised: HTM105 Culinary Arts, HTM205 Facilities Management, HTM220 Revenue and Cost Control Management, HTM250 Internship in Hospitality and Tourism Enterprises I, HTM325 The Art of Gastronomy, HTM330 Managing Casino, Spa and Wellness Services, HTM350 Internship in Hospitality and Tourism Enterprises II, and HTM450 Internship in Hospitality and Tourism Enterprises III They now reflect each course's objectives, and it is ensured that the content corresponds to the appropriate level for each year of study. Please see Annex 6 - Syllabi revised learning outcomes.	Choose level of compliance:

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
9. Consider incorporating case studies, simulations, and on-site visits to expose students to practical issues they may encounter in their careers.	As mentioned above (Section I, point 4), case studies are incorporated in all major courses in order to bridge the gap between industry and academia, thus better equipping students for their future careers. Moreover, on-site visits are frequently incorporated in major courses such as Bar and Beverage Management, Events Management. For example, in December 2023 we had presentations for Irish and Scotch whiskies, for the national strategy on Cypriot tourism, and for the proper management of events in tourism from specialists of the sector and the industries. In addition, in the programme we organize off-site visits to wineries, craft breweries, hotels, restaurants and hospitality equipment exhibitions like gastronomia. These practices will continue.	Choose level of compliance:
10. Invest in an on-campus Hospitality and Tourism, Revenue Management/CRM simulation. The facilities are already there. Forge some kind of relationship with partners such as STR.	We concur with the EEC's recommendation, regarding the importance of and utilization of simulations in the program's curriculum. This is why we employ simulation systems provided by the University such as Hotel Academy. The Hotel Academy is a set of digital tools that allow trainees to develop different roles in the hotel industry with efficiency, provide a competitive advantage for professionals, can be easily	Choose level of compliance:

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	integrated into the regular practices, could address the contemporary challenges of the tourism and hospitality industries and is an innovative way in the education for hospitality and tourism themes. In addition, students will be able to enroll in a business simulation course (BUS420) and focus on hospitality and tourism management area. (please see Section I, Point 5).	
11. Develop internship guidelines and contracts that clearly outline expectations, pay structures, and working conditions to ensure fairness.	The internship guidelines are given to students via the course outlines when they register for the course and prior to the visit at the hotel site. Students are briefed on the trends, demands and conditions in hospitality and tourism industry, and we always try to cooperate with the leading hotels/tourism employers in the industry. This practice will continue also in the future.	Choose level of compliance:
12. Introduce a pre-internship orientation programme to prepare students for the challenges they may face during their internships, emphasizing problem-solving and adaptability.	We thank the EEC for this recommendation. Prior to internship we do organize face to face meetings with all students and explain the challenges and realities of the industry. This is something that we want to invest further as hindsight from current practice, it is evident that it prepares students to handle matters when they will be in the real-world environment. As such, instructors of the Internship courses provide the necessary communication and guidance in regards to practical matters and expectations that represent the industry, at the beginning of their practical training, through meetings with the students.	Choose level of compliance:

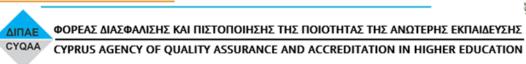|		
13. Introduce workshops, seminars, and role-play exercises that bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application.	This is something really valued in our programme. This is the reason that we have a tight cooperation with the research centers of the School, and in particular with the Center for Sustainable Management of Tourism, Sport and Events (CESMATSE). Work from these centers is presented in the content of the courses' delivery through case studies and exercises. Furthermore, guest speeches and organisation of events (such as job forums), are also communicated to students and their participation is highly encouraged by the instructors of the programme. For more information 'Oenognosia 2022/2023) events (see also Section I, point 6 above) offered also master classes to students (among other audiences) for their active participation in issues related to wine/spirits tasting. Generally, all hospitality and tourism instructors representing their own field of knowledge, provide activities such as case studies, guest speeches, fieldtrips, etc. to bridge the gap between education and hospitality.	Choose level of compliance:
14. Encourage more professors to integrate practical examples into their lectures and assignments to illustrate how theoretical knowledge is applied in the industry. We enjoyed the Beverage class we visited.	Thank you for your comment. The programme is represented by academics of various fields in management at any level (operational, tactical, and strategic) and different disciplines (e.g., marketing, accounting, languages, etc.). In this respect, each of them is instructed to actively engage students in their specialization's matters through assignments, case studies, discussions in	Choose level of compliance:

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	class, and/or presentations. Furthermore, the fact that the CESMATSE is supported by faculty of the programme provides the opportunity for better engagement of students with the applied world.	
15. Enhance hands-on training opportunities within the university, possibly through the expansion of practical labs. The kitchen that they use now is not enough.	A solid hands-on training experience is already offered through the internships. In addition, to further enhance such experience, more on-site visits are planned, which will have a hands-on nature and will be integrated in such courses as: (a) Managing and designing bar and beverage operations (b) Art of Gastronomy.	Choose level of compliance:
16. It is recommended that if not there yet, a dedicated internship support office be established to assist students in navigating internship-related issues, including payment disputes and mental health concerns derived from the workplace. This will enhance the CARE and student-centeredness the university promote.	At the moment the instructor in charge of the internship, is responsible to invigilate the students and solve any issues derived from the workplace. Nonetheless, there are several other supporting mechanisms for the students such as: Center of Applied Psychology and Personal Development (KEPSYPA). KEPSYPA was established to provide psychological services (Prevention-Assessment-Therapy) to students and staff of European University Cyprus. In addition, EUC established a committee for students with special needs (EFEEA), who identifies students with difficulties after the students has been officially registered. The Career Center offers students and graduates individualized sessions for advice on career	Choose level of compliance:

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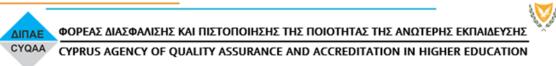
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	planning and development. However, we thank you for this recommendation and we will consider it as a future suggestion to the University's management team.	
17. It is recommended to establish a dedicated internship support office to assist students in navigating internship-related issues, including payment disputes and mental health concerns.	Same as point 16	Choose level of compliance:
18. If not in place, offer interview skills workshops covering topics such as resume writing, interview etiquette, and negotiation tactics.	Interview skills workshops covering topics such as resume writing, interview etiquette, and negotiation tactics are offered by the Office of Student's Affairs. This is something that happens in a periodic basis every semester as well as when a specific need is occurred. Furthermore, the Career Center organizes numerous specialized seminars, workshops and conferences for students and graduates, thus providing the opportunity for further development. Topics of the seminars include, but are not limited to, Digital Marketing, Interview Techniques, Research Opportunities, Entrepreneurship and Start-Ups. Please see in Annex 7, some indicative services provided by the Career Center.	Choose level of compliance:
19. Organize more frequent guest lectures, panel discussions, and industry visits to expose students to diverse aspects of the tourism sector.	This point has been addressed in previous comments. Please see Section I, points (4,6 & 9).	Choose level of compliance:

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3. Teaching staff
(ESG 1.5)

Areas of improvement and recommendations **by EEC**	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
20. The programme needs one or two more members of the staff with a PhD in tourism. The EEC is aware that the present number of students may not favour new contracts in the short run, but that is a priority that should be in the school's agenda.	We thank the EEC for this comment. In our effort to constantly enhance the quality of our programs, and in line with the University's procedures we systematically assess the faculty needs. Therefore, as recommended by the EEC, the hiring of new faculty in Tourism, has been discussed at the Department and School lever, and is to materialize when the student numbers are conducive. .	Choose level of compliance:
21. Increased efforts should be made to make sure that more collaborative work is done between tourism and hospitality academics and other colleagues from the business and administration areas, namely in terms of joint teaching, research and publications.	The collaboration among faculty is an important pillar in the Department and School. To this effect, at the Department level, to further enhance research synergies among faculty, research meetings are conducted each semester. This has resulted in a number of faulty collaborations with multi-disciplined research output. In addition to the Department's research meetings, within the Business School, four research centers are currently in place. One of these centers, i.e. CESMATSE focuses on Tourism and at present nearly half of the faculty have collaborated under its umbrella.	Choose level of compliance:
22. The work done by some members of the staff with the outside industry, should be more wisely incorporated in the	The work done by some members of the staff with the outside industry is incorporated in the form of teaching examples and best	Choose level of compliance:

teaching and in the research conducted in the school.	industry practices. The research centers (CESMATSE & SYSTEMA) of the School of Business promote and foster applied research. The last two years and especially post Covid-19 era, most of the hospitality and tourism enterprises in Cyprus face problems with staff shortages. Members of the programme will participate in Erasmus Youth programme, to write a proposal how to increase staff retention and reduce turnover in the hospitality industry of Cyprus.	

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
23. A more Personalized career guidance procedure to reduce drop-out rates as well as enhance better performance is encouraged.	A Personalized career guidance procedure is provided to students from the Student Advising Center of the university. The Career Center offers students and graduates individualized sessions for advice on career planning and development. Students can make an appointment to see a career counselor or be seen on a drop-in basis to receive timely, accessible and tailored advice for all stages of their career path. Each student is assigned an Advisor (called Student Advisor) by the Department of Enrollment, responsible for assisting the student in defining and developing realistic study goals, in keeping with his/her abilities, skills, interests, and career aspirations. Advisors are also responsible for ensuring the student is aware of university regulations and policies. Within each School and Department, students are guided and supported on purely academic issues by the coordinator of each programme of study. Programme coordinators are responsible to guide students on all academic matters concerning their programme of study (including academic difficulties in their coursework, issues forwarded to them by Student Advisors, low G.P.A. issues, etc.). Content-specific assistance and tutoring is provided by the faculty (instructors) teaching each course. Regular office hours (six hours per week) are available for students and are posted on the Blackboard page of each course. During these six hours	Choose level of compliance:

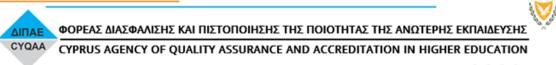|		
	all students attending a specific course may contact their instructor on a one-to-one or group face-to-face or online briefing. In addition, procedures for supporting students with low Grade Point Average have been developed, in order to address and reduce the phenomenon of students' low G.P.A. and its effects. An Internal Regulation has been established to help reduce the phenomenon.	
24. Guidance and resources for students to seek help and support if they experience anxiety or depression during challenging times can be made more explicit. The internship is a difficult period of the students' life and so more preparation mentally for this phase can help.	The students can seek help and support if they experience anxiety or depression during their internship from Committee for Students with Special Educational Needs (KEPSYPA). The University has established KEPSYPA which is committed to catering to the personal well-being of the EUC community. KEPSYPA was established to provide psychological services (Prevention-Assessment-Therapy) to students and staff of European University Cyprus. The center operates under the supervision of the Psychology Department of the School of Humanities, Social and Education Sciences and offers professional psychological services to all students and staff, free of charge. The committee advises at a semester basis each course instructor for cases of students that require attention.	Choose level of compliance:
25. Conduct regular career assessment tests, e.g. learning styles, behavioural styles such as MapsTell, Belbin, to help students identify their strengths and interests within the hotel and tourism sector.	A career assessment test is given to students from career advisors before they start studying at EUC. European University Cyprus is the sole provider of the "Ariadne" psychometric test on employment interests in Cyprus. The Ariadne test was adapted to the Cypriot educational, professional and social	Choose level of compliance:

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	circumstances to be scientifically suitable to the student population of Cyprus. It is the only test of its kind that is administered among the high school population of Cyprus, with special permission from the Ministry of Education and Culture.	
26. Encourage students to participate in industry-related extracurricular activities and networking events to gain exposure to various career paths. To make this more effective, aim to have at least one event each month specifically for students studying tourism and hotel management. This way, students can meet professionals and explore job opportunities more frequently.	Thank you for this comment. Students participated in industry related extracurricular activities and networking events such as ICOT2023, 'Oenognosia 2022/23' events or job forums. Nonetheless, we recognize that this is a continuous matter that should be on going.	Choose level of compliance:
27. Create a mentorship programme where Alumni or are assigned as mentors to guide students in their career paths.	The instructors are assigned as mentors to guide students in their career paths. 'Join the mentor programme' is a programme provided by the career office of EUC. It is a unique opportunity to inspire, motivate and support young professionals. https://euc.ac.cy/en/careers/alumni-contributions/	Choose level of compliance:
28. Provide opportunities for students to participate in industry conferences and competitions (Worldwide) to gain hands-on experience and build their portfolios. These opportunities may include barista and cooking competitions, but also Management Competitions, Young Hoteliers Summit, European Mise en-Place, Future Leaders Challenge. The university should	Thank you so much for this recommendation. As mentioned above (please see Section I, point 6), our students participated in industry conferences such as ICOT2023 and competitions in Cyprus and Europe as bartenders. This is something that we will continue to do in the future with several other events.	Choose level of compliance:

consider providing financial support to students by covering a portion of the transportation and accommodation expenses.		

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
29. An enhanced and improved relationship should be established between the tourism and hospitality staff and the business and management lecturers, leading to the launching of more joint teaching and research activities.	There is a close collaboration in terms of research and teaching between tourism and hospitality staff and business and management staff (i.e., Boukas & Ioannou, Boukas & Sourouklis, Marneros & Efstathiades, Marneros & Papageorgiou, etc.) Boukas, N., & Ioannou, M. (2020). Co-creating visitor experiences in cultural heritage museums: the avenue towards sustainable tourism development. International Journal of Tourism Policy, 10(2), 101-122. Marneros, S., Papageorgiou, G., & Efstathiades, A. (2020). Identifying key success competencies for the hospitality industry: the perspectives of professionals. Journal of Teaching in Travel & Tourism, 20(4), 237-261.	Choose level of compliance:
30. More effective links be created between those working with the industry and those oriented to academic and research matters. The potential arising from both groups is enormous, and therefore should be brought together and used as a tool to advance knowledge.	There is a close collaboration in terms of research and teaching between tourism and hospitality staff and business and management staff.	Choose level of compliance:
31. Graduates unveil a worrying gap between what they have learnt in the school and what the industry demands from them, owing to what were described as chaotic conditions in the industry. The school needs to be more aware of this and ensure they better prepare	The instructors are aware for the conditions, challenges and trends in the industry. They work closely with the best hotels (employers) in Cyprus in order to bridge the gap or match the students' skills and competencies with the needs and wants of the industry. A number of programmes (Join the "bridging the gap" programme; Invite students to	Choose level of compliance:

the students for the reality of the industry.	your workplace; Join the EUC business alumni business network; Create a CSM profile; Hire EUC graduates; Join the mentor programme and lifelong learning programme) offered from the career center aim to bring together graduates and students and share their experience with students. https://euc.ac.cy/en/careers/alumni-contributions/	

6. Additional for doctoral programmes
(ALL ESG)

N/A

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)

N/A

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
Introduction of internal moderation of marks	Even though an Assignment Marking Scheme is currently used (please see in ANNEX I the Assignment Marking Scheme), we fully concur with the EEC's recommendation to develop a Marking scheme which clearly maps expectations across the students' academic progression. In this respect, as from the current semester for the final exams a 15%-20% of all marked final exam papers of students will be also assessed by other faculty supporting the programme (please see our response in Section I, item 1).	Choose level of compliance:
To review some modules to ensure they represent the anticipated progression	The internship syllabi as well as those of the Arts of Gastronomy and Culinary arts have been reworked in such a way as to reflect the progression across them (please see our response in Section I, point 2).	Choose level of compliance:
To review level and number of learning outcomes for the programme and courses	Certain modules' syllabi have been reworked for covering this matter, as suggested (please see our response in Section I, point 8).	Choose level of compliance:
To consider the use of simulations where appropriate	Please see our response in section I, point 5	Choose level of compliance:
To reflect on the possibility of including more practical courses	Please see our response in section I point 5	Choose level of compliance:
More qualified staff with a PhD in tourism or hospitality is hired in the future.	Please see our response in section III point 20	Choose level of compliance:

Some subjects are taught in a repetitive manner.	Please see our response in section I point 7	Choose level of compliance:

C. Higher Education Institution academic representatives

Name	Position	Signature
Dr. Stelios Marneros	Program Coordinator	
Dr. Myria Ioannou	Chairperson, Department of Management and Marketing	
Dr. Pieris Chourides	Dean, School of Business Administration	

Date: 10/1/2024