Doc. 300.1.1

Date: 01/04/2021

External Evaluation Report

(Conventional-face-to-face programme of study)

- **Higher Education Institution:**

  Mesoyios College

- **Town:** Limassol

- **School/Faculty (if applicable):** School/Faculty

- **Department/ Sector:** Hospitality

- **Programme of study- Name (Duration, ECTS, Cycle):**
  Hotel Management - (3 Years/180 ECTS, Higher Diploma)

  In Greek:

  Διοίκηση Ξενοδοχείων

  In English:

  Hotel Management

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

- **Programme's status:** Active

ΚΥΠΡΙΑΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ
REPUBLIC OF CYPRUS

ΔΙΠΑΕ CYQAA ΦΟΡΕΑΣ ΔΙΑΣΦΑΛΙΣΗΣ ΚΑΙ ΠΙΣΤΟΠΟΙΗΣΗΣ ΤΗΣ ΠΟΙΟΤΗΤΑΣ ΤΗΣ ΑΝΩΤΕΡΗΣ ΕΚΠΑΙΔΕΥΣΗΣ
CYPRUS AGENCY OF QUALITY ASSURANCE AND ACCREDITATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Introduction

This part includes basic information regarding the onsite visit.

The Accreditation began with the introduction of the President of the Council of Mesoyios College Mr Theodoros Antoniou. The External Evaluation Committee (EEC) was shown a presentation in which some general facts, values and beliefs were introduced. Forecasts of future admissions were also showcased in the same presentation alongside some future financial provisions for the college's academic development. The Principal of Mesoyios College, Mr Theofilos Antoniou continued in presenting some more information like the facilities, the student related services and most importantly, the collaborations with hotels for students' internships, research or seminars. Mr Antoniou then introduced the quality control process in the College as well as its moderation process. After that, there was a discussion on the feasibility of the forecasts of the college and more specifically, if the College has the capacity to take on such an increase in admissions.

Continuing the evaluation, Mrs Fani Efhtymiadou the programme's coordinator presented the programme's standards, admission criteria for prospective students, the learning outcomes and ECTS, the content and the people involved in the program's design and development. Then Mr Akis Ioannides the Head of Planning and Training also filled the EEC in on some specifics on some more practical procedures like the student's training at restaurants and hotels.

Later, the meeting with the teaching staff took place which allowed the EEC to touch upon matters regarding their qualifications and their duties. On top of that, methodologies in their teaching had been discussed as well as learning outcomes and the contents of classes. Furthermore, daily problems in the classroom that had to be tackled were discussed. Another matter that was mentioned was the research to teaching balance of PhD candidates that are also teaching staff regarding the ways that they keep everything in check.

After the lunch break the evaluation proceeded with a meeting with some students. Several topics were brought up like their experience at the restaurants and hotels, their experience while taking courses and also their relations with the staff of the College. Students also talked about their future aspirations and their alignment of their goals with attending Mesoyios College and how their studies will help their employment in the future. Lastly, their experiences with Erasmus exchange mobility were discussed.

Another meeting took place, this time with administrative staff such as a librarian, a student's wellness affair officer as well as the admissions officer and Registrar. The topics that were discussed circled around the fairness of admissions and the diversity in the student's demographics as well as scholarships. Other than that, the ongoing process of creating a careers/alumni office was discussed and generally, a very motivated team of staff was pleased to hear suggestions from the experienced committee.

The external evaluation ended with a brief last meeting with the top management team of the College to answer any outstanding questions.

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B. External Evaluation Committee (EEC)

Name	Position	University
Professor Alexander Josiassen	Professor in Marketing and Tourism Management	Copenhagen Business School

Professor Anita Eves	Professor of Hospitality Management, Head of Hospitality Department, Director of Learning and Teaching	University of Surrey, UK
Professor Andreas Papatheodorou	Professor in Industrial and Spatial Economics with Emphasis on Tourism	University of the Aegean, Greece
Andreas Polykarpou	Undergraduate`	University of Cyprus

C. Guidelines on content and structure of the report

- *The external evaluation report follows the structure of assessment areas.*

- *At the beginning of each assessment area there is a box presenting:*
  - (a) *sub-areas*
  - (b) *standards which are relevant to the European Standards and Guidelines (ESG)* (c) *some questions that EEC may find useful.*

- *The questions aim at facilitating the understanding of each assessment area and at illustrating the range of topics covered by the standards.*

- *Under each assessment area, it is important to provide information regarding the compliance with the requirements of each sub-area. In particular, the following must be included:*

Findings

A short description of the situation in the Higher Education Institution (HEI), based on elements from the application for external evaluation and on findings from the onsite visit.

Strengths

A list of strengths, e.g. examples of good practices, achievements, innovative solutions etc.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

A list of problem areas to be dealt with, followed by or linked to the recommendations of how to improve the situation.

- *The EEC should state the compliance for each sub-area (Non-compliant, Partially compliant, Compliant), which must be in agreement with everything stated in the report. It is pointed out*

that, in the case of standards that cannot be applied due to the status of the HEI and/or of the programme of study, N/A (= Not Applicable) should be noted.

- *The EEC should state the conclusions and final remarks regarding the programme of study as a whole.*

- ***The report may also address other issues which the EEC finds relevant.***

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

> **Sub-areas**
>
> **1.1 Policy for quality assurance**
> **1.2 Design, approval, on-going monitoring and review**
> **1.3 Public information**
> **1.4 Information management**

1.1 Policy for quality assurance

Standards

- *Policy for quality assurance of the programme of study: o has a formal status and is publicly available*
    - o *supports the organisation of the quality assurance system through appropriate structures, regulations and processes*
    - o *supports teaching, administrative staff and students to take on their responsibilities in quality assurance*
    - o *ensures academic integrity and freedom and is vigilant against academic fraud*
    - o *guards against intolerance of any kind or discrimination against the students or staff*
    - o *supports the involvement of external stakeholders*

1.2 Design, approval, on-going monitoring and review

Standards

- *The programme of study: o is designed with overall programme objectives that are in line with the institutional strategy and have explicit intended learning outcomes*
    - o *is designed by involving students and other stakeholders o benefits from external expertise*
    - o *reflects the four purposes of higher education of the Council of Europe (preparation for sustainable employment, personal development, preparation for life as active citizens in democratic societies, the development and maintenance, through teaching, learning and research, of a broad, advanced knowledge base) o is designed so that it enables smooth student progression*

- o *is designed so that the exams' and assignments' content corresponds to the level of the programme and the number of ECTS*
- o *defines the expected student workload in ECTS*
- o *includes well-structured placement opportunities where appropriate* o *is subject to a formal institutional approval process*
- o *results in a qualification that is clearly specified and communicated, and refers to the correct level of the National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education and, consequently, to the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area* o *is regularly monitored in the light of the latest research in the given discipline, thus ensuring that the programme is up-to-date*
- o *is periodically reviewed so that it takes into account the changing needs of society, the students' workload, progression and completion, the effectiveness of procedures for assessment of students, student expectations, needs and satisfaction in relation to the programme*
- o *is reviewed and revised regularly involving students and other stakeholders*

1.3 Public information

Standards

- ● *Regarding the programme of study, clear, accurate, up-to date and readily accessible information is published about:* o *selection criteria* o *intended learning outcomes* o *qualification awarded*
  - o *teaching, learning and assessment procedures* o *pass rates*
  - o *learning opportunities available to the students*
  - o *graduate employment information*

1.4 Information management

Standards

- ● *Information for the effective management of the programme of study is collected, monitored and analysed:* o *key performance indicators* o *profile of the student population*
  - o *student progression, success and drop-out rates*
  - o *students' satisfaction with their programmes* o *learning resources and student support available*

○ *career paths of graduates*

- *Students and staff are involved in providing and analysing information and planning follow-up activities.*

You may also consider the following questions:

- *What is the procedure for quality assurance of the programme and who is involved?*
- *Who is involved in the study programme's design and development (launching, changing, internal evaluation) and what is taken into account (strategies, the needs of society, etc.)?*
- *How/to what extent are students themselves involved in the development of the content of their studies?*
- *Please evaluate a) whether the study programme remains current and consistent with developments in society (labour market, digital technologies, etc.), and b) whether the content and objectives of the study programme are in accordance with each other?*
- *Do the content and the delivery of the programme correspond to the European Qualifications Framework (EQF)?*
- *How is coherence of the study programme ensured, i.e., logical sequence and coherence of courses? How are substantial overlaps between courses avoided? How is it ensured that the teaching staff is aware of the content and outputs of their colleagues' work within the same study programme?*
- *How does the study programme support development of the learners' general competencies (including digital literacy, foreign language skills, entrepreneurship, communication and teamwork skills)?*
- *What are the scope and objectives of the foundation courses in the study programme (where appropriate)? What are the pass rates?*
- *How long does it take a student on average to graduate? Is the graduation rate for the study programme analogous to other European programmes with similar content? What is the pass rate per course/semester?*
- ***How is it ensured that the actual student workload is in accordance with the workload expressed by ECTS?***

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- *What are the opportunities for international students to participate in the study programme (courses/modules taught in a foreign language)?*
- *Is information related to the programme of study publicly available?*
- *How is the HEI evaluating the success of its graduates in the labor market? What is the feedback from graduates of the study programme on their employment and/or continuation of studies?*
- *Have the results of student feedback been analysed and taken into account, and how (e.g., when planning in-service training for the teaching staff)?*
- *What are the reasons for dropping out (voluntary withdrawal)? What has been done to reduce the number of such students?*

Findings

A short description of the situation in the Higher Education Institution (HEI), based on elements from the application for external evaluation and on findings from the onsite visit.

1.1 Policy for QA

The College has clear procedures for quality assurance, and these are laid out on the public-facing College website. The regulations are appropriate and show what is required of staff and students in terms of behaviour and commitment. There is a clear Organisational structure that supports quality assurance through Committees with specific remits and prescribed processes. For instance, the process to ensure assessment quality, from confirmation, by review, of exam questions through to ratification of marks achieved. Students can have one resit attempt per assessment, without penalty. It may be worth considering incentivising effort at first attempt by including a 60% cap on resit marks, unless there is evident mitigation to support a resit as first attempt.

A disciplinary process is in place to cover a range of disciplinary offences, including plagiarism. The nature and forms of plagiarism are laid out clearly in the regulations, but penalties could be explained in more detail. Currently, plagiarism is detected through module leaders identifying concerns. The College is looking at Turnitin as a method to detect plagiarism, and it is recommended that this, or a similar system, should be acquired. This also enables students to check their work prior to submission.

1.2 Design, approval on-going monitoring and review

The programme objectives align with the strategy of the College and the programme has clearly articulated learning outcomes, at an appropriate level for the target qualification. The College has established relationships with industry partners meaning work opportunities for students, hotel visits and inputs from the industry to the programme. Some of the programme learning outcomes are linked just to hotels and could maybe be broadened to the wider hospitality sector (at least including restaurants).

Some module learning outcomes make reference to 'real-life assessment/cases/etc'. In discussion it was clear that real life examples were evident through all modules and this should be clear throughout.

Student workloads are clear and allow students to work if they wish/need to. Requirements for progressions are clearly stated in public-facing regulations.

Students are involved in College Committees, including those approving modifications to modules. The procedure for change is through a formal Committee, which is appropriate to ensure the integrity of the programme of study. Modules are reviewed annually in-light of student feedback and advances in the discipline.

Students have the opportunity to undertake an internship. This is not compulsory as for overseas students securing a placement can be difficult. The placement does include an assessment of performance.

ECO100 (Introduction to Microeconomics) and ECO102 (Introduction to Macroeconomics) should be explicitly contextualized, and their contents should become hotel and tourism sector-specific. Therefore, the College is also encouraged to rename these modules to "Hotel and Tourism Microeconomics" and "Hotel and Tourism Macroeconomics" accordingly. It appeared that a large part of the students want to be hotel managers, and it may be

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expectations. One way could be to survey graduated alumni to understand what the job prospects are for graduates.

1.3 Public information

The College website provides comprehensive information about the programmes, admissions criteria, programme learning outcomes and aims. As a relatively new programme, data for pass rates would be limited as would graduate employment information. The College will need to address this going forward.

1.4 Information management

The College is in the process of establishing Key Performance Indicators.

The composition of the student population is well-known, and likely to change as a result of legal changes in Cyprus. This has been taken into account in marketing activities that are now targeting an increase in European students. Our impression is that many students are eager to go on exchange, and currently there are a few exchange agreements, one of which being in Poland. Success and progression rates are known and monitored, and students complete an end of module questionnaire for each module taken. The information from this is used to inform changes to modules, albeit that students use informal routes of feedback throughout their modules. The College may like to think about an end of programme evaluation to determine satisfaction at programme-level.

The College is currently considering the introduction of an Alumni Office, which, given the projected rise in student numbers, could be extended to become a Careers and Alumni Office.

Strengths
A list of strengths, e.g. examples of good practices, achievements, innovative solutions etc.

Clearly presented public-facing website containing all information needed by prospective and current students.

Clearly articulated QA procedures

Involvement of students in key Committees

Exchange programs are already directed towards Europe which aligns with the new recruitment strategy

Established collaborations with industry and academic partners Industry

experience of staff bringing context to learning

improvement and recommendations

A list of problem areas to be dealt with, followed by or linked to the recommendations of how to improve the situation.

Instigate a programme-level assessment of satisfaction.

Complete development and implementation of KPIs.

Focus more on plagiarism and make sure every student has been trained in the problem of plagiarism, how to avoid it, and informed that plagiarism is monitored.

Invest in Turnitin or a similar plagiarism detection system.

Clearly lay down the potential penalties for plagiarism.

For all modules, make clear that real-life examples, etc are included.

Consider including into an early module information about the job prospects that students can realistically expect.

Please select what is appropriate for each of the following sub-areas:

Sub-area		*Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant*
1.1	Policy for quality assurance	*Compliant*
1.2	Design, approval, on-going monitoring and review	*Compliant*
1.3	Public information	*Compliant*
1.4	Information management	*Compliant*

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

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Sub-areas

2.2 Process of teaching and learning and student-centred teaching methodology
2.3 Practical training
2.4 Student assessment

2.1 Process of teaching and learning and student-centred teaching methodology

Standards

- *The process of teaching and learning supports students' individual and social development.*
- *The process of teaching and learning is flexible, considers different modes of delivery, where appropriate, uses a variety of pedagogical methods and facilitates the achievement of planned learning outcomes.*
- *Students are encouraged to take an active role in creating the learning process.*
- *The implementation of student-centered learning and teaching encourages a sense of autonomy in the learner, while ensuring adequate guidance and support from the teacher.*
- *Teaching methods, tools and material used in teaching are modern, effective, support the use of modern educational technologies and are regularly updated.*
- *Mutual respect within the learner-teacher relationship is promoted.*
- *The implementation of student-centred learning and teaching respects and attends to the diversity of students and their needs, enabling flexible learning paths.*
- *Appropriate procedures for dealing with students' complaints regarding the process of teaching and learning are set.*

2.2 Practical training

Standards

- *Practical and theoretical studies are interconnected.*
- *The organisation and the content of practical training, if applicable, support achievement of planned learning outcomes and meet the needs of the stakeholders.* **2.3 Student assessment**

Standards

- *Assessment is consistent, fairly applied to all students and carried out in accordance with the stated procedures.*

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- *Assessment is appropriate, transparent, objective and supports the development of the learner.*
- *The criteria for the method of assessment, as well as criteria for marking, are published in advance.*
- *Assessment allows students to demonstrate the extent to which the intended learning outcomes have been achieved. Students are given feedback, which, if necessary, is linked to advice on the learning process.*
- *Assessment, where possible, is carried out by more than one examiner.*
- *A formal procedure for student appeals is in place.*
- *Assessors are familiar with existing testing and examination methods and receive support in developing their own skills in this field.*
- *The regulations for assessment take into account mitigating circumstances.*

You may also consider the following questions:

- *How is it monitored that the teaching staff base their teaching and assessment methods on objectives and intended learning outcomes? Provide samples of examination papers (if available).*
- *How are students' different abilities, learning needs and learning opportunities taken into consideration when conducting educational activities?*
- *How is the development of students' general competencies (including digital skills) supported in educational activities?*
- *How is it ensured that innovative teaching methods, learning environments and learning aids that support learning are diverse and used in educational activities?*
- *Is the teaching staff using new technology in order to make the teaching process more effective?*
- *How is it ensured that theory and practice are interconnected in teaching and learning?*
- *How is practical training organised (finding practical training positions, guidelines for practical training, supervision, reporting, feedback, etc.)? What role does practical training have in achieving the objectives of the study programme? What is student feedback on the content and arrangement of practical training?*
- ***Are students actively involved in research? How is student involvement in research set up?***
- *How is supervision of student research papers (seminar papers, projects, theses, etc.) organised?*
- ***Do students' assessments correspond to the European Qualifications Framework (EQF)?***
- *How are the assessment methods chosen and to what extent do students get supportive feedback on their academic progress during their studies?*
- *How is the objectivity and relevance of student assessment ensured (assessment of the degree of achievement of the intended learning outcomes)?*

Findings

A short description of the situation in the Higher Education Institution (HEI), based on elements from the application for external evaluation and on findings from the onsite visit.

2.1 Process of teaching and learning and student-centred teaching methodology

The College benefits from a number of staff with extensive experience of the industry. This allows theory and practice to be brought together, which is particularly important in a vocational programme such as this. Module outlines are structured to be generic in reference to teaching and learning methods and, to an extent, assessment practice. In discussion, however, it became clear that teaching sessions were interactive and student-centred, encouraging students to engage and take ownership of their own learning. In this staff were praised by students for their readiness to offer help and advice where needed. To date, although different learning preferences are undoubtedly present in cohorts, no students with specific learning difficulties had yet been encountered. The variety in delivery methods and range of assessment types within any one module should enable all current students to succeed.

2.2 Practical training

As indicated above, staff with industry experience are able to contextualise theory for the students. Students also have access to practical labs for rooms division and food and beverage management.

Links with industry also allow for hotel visits where students can observe a hotel operation in practice. Students can also apply for a month-long internship in Poland through the Erasmus scheme.

2.3 Student assessment

Assessments in each module are subject to internal review prior to use. Students are well-prepared for assessments and are aware of marking criteria ahead of submission. Assessment and its requirements are therefore transparent. Marking levels are articulated in the regulations, but the College may like to consider the introduction of generic grade descriptors that not only indicate the qualitative interpretation of a mark (e.g. good, very good) but also indicates what is expected of students to achieve marks in each mark band and at each level.

Feedback is provided continually through a student's programme through in-class exercises, homework, etc as well as through summative assessments. In the latter, coursework receives feedback to help students improve future work – the College may like to consider the introduction of standardised feedback sheet that includes marks against marking criteria, what the student did well, and how the student can improve in the future. Students are able to contact staff to discuss marks and feedback, including of exams.

A sample of assessed work is moderated internally by the programme lead to ensure consistency and fairness. If students feel their mark is incorrect they can contact the module leader to discuss, where the module leader can, exceptionally adjust marks (e.g. if a simple mis-calculation). The module leader formally records the change and rationale for it. If the student is still not satisfied, there is a written procedure to appeal the mark. The regulations do allow for mitigation, allowing, for instance, exams to be taken at a later date.

Staff are regularly invited to take part in pedagogic workshops to improve their teaching and learning skills. A portion of the budget is allocated to this.

Strengths

A list of strengths, e.g. examples of good practices, achievements, innovative solutions etc.

Staff with industrial experience able to draw together theory and practice

Approachable and helpful staff

Moderation procedures in place to ensure consistency and fairness of marks

Responsiveness to student feedback

Access to Erasmus placements

Engaging and interactive teaching sessions

Areas of improvement and recommendations

A list of problem areas to be dealt with, followed by or linked to the recommendations of how to improve the situation.

Develop generic grade descriptors that show students what they need to do to achieve particular grades at a particular level

Consider a generic feedback sheet for module assessments

Please select what is appropriate for each of the following sub-areas:

	Sub-area	Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant
2.1	Process of teaching and learning and student centred teaching methodology	*Compliant*
2.2	Practical training	*Compliant*
2.3	Student assessment	*Compliant*

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Teaching staff *(ESG 1.5)*

> **Sub-areas**
>
> 3.1 **Teaching staff recruitment and development**
> **3.2 Teaching staff number and status**
> 3.3 **Synergies of teaching and research**

3.1 **Teaching staff recruitment and development**

Standards

- *Institutions ensure the competence of their teaching staff.*
- *Fair, transparent and clear processes for the recruitment and development of the teaching staff are set up.*
- *Teaching staff qualifications are adequate to achieve the objectives and planned learning outcomes of the study programme, and to ensure quality and sustainability of the teaching and learning.*
- *The teaching staff is regularly engaged in professional and teaching-skills training and development.*
- *Promotion of the teaching staff takes into account the quality of their teaching, their research activity, the development of their teaching skills and their mobility.*
- *Innovation in teaching methods and the use of new technologies is encouraged.*
- *Conditions of employment that recognise the importance of teaching are followed.*
  - *Recognised visiting teaching staff participates in teaching the study programme.*

3.2 Teaching staff number and status

Standards

- *The number of the teaching staff is adequate to support the programme of study.*
- *The teaching staff status (rank, full/part time) is appropriate to offer a quality programme of study.*
- *Visiting staff number does not exceed the number of the permanent staff.*

3.3 **Synergies of teaching and research**

Standards

- *The teaching staff collaborate in the fields of teaching and research within the HEI and with partners outside (practitioners in their fields, employers, and staff members at other HEIs in Cyprus or abroad).*

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- *Scholarly activity to strengthen the link between education and research is encouraged.*
- *The teaching staff publications are within the discipline.*
- *Teaching staff studies and publications are closely related to the programme's courses.*
- *The allocation of teaching hours compared to the time for research activity is appropriate.*

You may also consider the following questions:

- *How are the members of the teaching staff supported with regard to the development of their teaching skills? How is feedback given to members of the teaching staff regarding their teaching results and teaching skills?*
- *How is the teaching performance assessed? How does their teaching performance affect their remuneration, evaluation and/or selection?*
- *Is teaching connected with research?*
- *Does the HEI involve visiting teaching staff from other HEIs in Cyprus and abroad?*
- *What is the number, workload, qualifications and status of the teaching staff (rank, full/part timers)?*
- *Is student evaluation conducted on the teaching staff? If yes, have the results of student feedback been analysed and taken into account, and how (e.g., when planning in-service training for the teaching staff)?*

Findings
A short description of the situation in the Higher Education Institution (HEI), based on elements from the application for external evaluation and on findings from the onsite visit.

3.1 Teaching staff recruitment and development.

The college provides seminars for staff members to develop (eg digital skills). Further, and applaudable, the college encourages (and pays for) staff members to do a PhD. A set proportion of the College budget is also designated for CPD activities, including teaching and learning-related workshops. For those undertaking PhDs, teaching and administrative tasks will be planned around the PhD commitments. In return the employee agrees to stay at least 3 years after completing the PhD with the college, and hopefully more, which also provides continuity in teaching provision. It was the EEC's impression that student evaluations do not have a very significant impact on the staff member's promotion, remuneration etc conditions.

3.2. Teaching staff number and status

There are 13 academic faculty members and 6 additional part time faculty members. Out of these are 4 PhD candidates, and more are likely to come. It will be a challenge to maintain these more than 3 years after they

graduate. However, it is the right approach as the ambition is to become a university. There are also 10 administrative staff members. A rather large part of the academic faculty members specialize in language courses only.

The college budgets with additional academic and administrative staff in connection with the plan to have more students, and a new building.

3.3. Synergies between research and teaching

The college encourages faculty members to do a PhD, and this will naturally tend to allow for better synergies between teaching and research. So far the college has been able to attract some visiting faculty from other schools and countries (Poland, India etc.). However, it is the impression of the EEC that the research level of these professors should be increased, especially given the aspiration to become a University. However, this is not an easy task and will be easier as more staff members get a PhD and produce research themselves. Only 2% of the budget is allocated for research. 20% of work hours are earmarked for research.

Strengths
A list of strengths, e.g. examples of good practices, achievements, innovative solutions etc.

The college is still small and enjoys the benefits of being small, such as staff members being able to fill in several roles. However, as the college grows it will likely become important to specialize and recruit more specialists.

The fact that management encourages, and to some degree seems to facilitate that, faculty members enrolling in a PhD is good and important.

Several members of the teaching staff have practical experience in the tourism and hotel industries.

Areas of improvement and recommendations
A list of problem areas to be dealt with, followed by or linked to the recommendations of how to improve the situation.

Gradually increase the budget allocated for research to also act as a motivation for faculty.

Gradually increase the hours for research as the college has more faculty with PhDs. With an aim to become a university, this is a central tangent along which to improve.

Seek to recruit more faculty members with a specialty in teaching hospitality/tourism subjects and modules (rather than languages).

Please select what is appropriate for each of the following sub-areas:

Sub-area	*Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant*

3.1	Teaching staff recruitment and development	*Compliant*
3.2	Teaching staff number and status	*Compliant*
3.3	Synergies of teaching and research	*Compliant*

4.

ΔΙΠΑΕ CYQAA **ΦΟΡΕΑΣ ΔΙΑΣΦΑΛΙΣΗΣ ΚΑΙ ΠΙΣΤΟΠΟΙΗΣΗΣ ΤΗΣ ΠΟΙΟΤΗΤΑΣ ΤΗΣ ΑΝΩΤΕΡΗΣ ΕΚΠΑΙΔΕΥΣΗΣ**
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Student admission, progression, recognition and certification *(ESG 1.4)*

> **Sub-areas**
>
> 4.1 **Student admission, processes and criteria**
> 4.2 **Student progression**
> 4.3 **Student recognition**
> 4.4 **Student certification**

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4.1 Student admission, processes and criteria

Standards

- *Pre-defined and published regulations regarding student admission are in place.*
- *Access policies, admission processes and criteria are implemented consistently and in a transparent manner.*

4.2 Student progression *Standards*

- *Pre-defined and published regulations regarding student progression are in place.*
- *Processes and tools to collect, monitor and act on information on student progression, are in place.*

4.3 Student recognition

Standards

- *Pre-defined and published regulations regarding student recognition are in place.*
- *Fair recognition of higher education qualifications, periods of study and prior learning, including the recognition of non-formal and informal learning, are essential components for ensuring the students' progress in their studies, while promoting mobility.*
- *Appropriate recognition procedures are in place that rely on: o institutional practice for recognition being in line with the principles of the*
    Lisbon Recognition Convention o cooperation with other institutions, quality assurance agencies and the national ENIC/NARIC centre with a view to ensuring coherent recognition across the country

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4.4 Student certification

Standards

- *Pre-defined and published regulations regarding student certification are in place.*
- *Students receive certification explaining the qualification gained, including achieved learning outcomes and the context, level, content and status of the studies that were pursued and successfully completed.*

You may also consider the following questions:

- *Are the admission requirements for the study programme appropriate? How is the students' prior preparation/education assessed (including the level of international students, for example)?*
- *How is the procedure of recognition for prior learning and work experience ensured, including recognition of study results acquired at foreign higher education institutions?*
- *Is the certification of the HEI accompanied by a diploma supplement, which is in line with European and international standards?*

Findings

A short description of the situation in the Higher Education Institution (HEI), based on elements from the application for external evaluation and on findings from the onsite visit.

4.1 Admissions Standards

The college has admissions criteria that are similar to other tertiary education institutions in relation to both educational attainment and language abilities (for overseas students). These are clearly laid out on the College website as part of the regulations of the college. The college makes both conditional and unconditional offers to students, depending on their academic background and current stage of education. A probational route identified in documentation (and the website of the college) does not, in practice, exist. Instead, students who are just short of required entry criteria are directed to a foundation programme to bring their abilities to the required level ahead of engaging in the programme, or if the deficit is in English language only, to a summer English programme. The progression requirements for entry from these programmes to the Diploma/Higher Diploma routes are clearly articulated in the regulations.

Students with Overseas qualifications form part of the college cohort. Qualifications held by these students are compared for equivalence to Cypriot qualifications using the UCAS manual. We are concerned that the admission standards are too flexible. One employee mentioned that the college believes in opportunity for all. This motto is great in most aspects, but should not be applied to academic potential/merit.

progression

The college has robust regulations that are made clear to students on entry. After accepting a place, incoming students are contacted by Student Affairs to invite them to Orientations week (the week prior to semester start). During that week students complete an enrollment agreement (subsequently countersigned by the College) that includes the regulations they will be expected to abide with. The agreement includes attendance requirements (minimum 70%) and progression requirements (e.g. pass marks). These criteria are also clearly laid out in the College Regulations, publicly available through the College website.

Where students are not attending they are followed up to establish why, similarly those not achieving the grades required to pass (and thus progress) are followed up and counselled to give them the best chance of success on a second attempt at the assessment(s). There is also provision to delay assessment at times of crisis, with the appropriate evidence. This is organised through the professor leading the module.

Each student is assigned an Academic Advisor who is available to support students. The College operates an opendoor policy of access to Advisors, which the students met appreciated.

The Education Committee acts as a forum to assess progress and identify students who are struggling. Current progression rates exceed 70%.

4.3 Student recognition

Where students come to the college with prior qualifications that may exempt them from some modules, these are assessed on a case-by-case basis by the Academic Committee and the module leader to ensure comparability. The module that may be exempted is compared with that taken by the potential student, comparing ECTS, content and level.

Those entering with experience, but who do not meet the normal entry criteria, will be assessed on a case-by-case basis to ensure that they will succeed in the programme of study. To date, those present had not had experience of dealing with such an eventuality.

4.4 Student certification

Marks awarded are thoroughly evaluated, initially through moderation of a sample of work by the Programme lead, and then through scrutiny by the Academic Committee. Marks are finally ratified for inclusion in a transcript by the Registrar. These processes are laid out in the regulations, publicly available on the College website.

The grading system is clearly laid out in regulations, including how grades are translated to GPA scores. Students can appeal grades through the Grade Petition process, if issues are not resolved through interaction with the teaching team.

Strengths

A list of strengths, e.g. examples of good practices, achievements, innovative solutions etc.

4.1

Thorough evaluation of candidates and a foundation route/English summer school that allows those just short of entry criteria to bring their skills up to those required to engage successfully in the programme.

4.2

Students are both well-prepared for success in their studies and, where necessary, well-supported in resit attempts.

Following up reasons for student absence/non-engagement

Staff who are readily available to advise students, which is recognised and appreciated by students

Provision exists to allow students to delay assessment at times of crisis. 4.3

Inclusive entry requirements that allow for recognition of prior learning 4.4

Robust system for ratifying marks awarded.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

A list of problem areas to be dealt with, followed by or linked to the recommendations of how to improve the situation.

4.2

Look to increase the progression rate between years to close to 80% or more. This will require a clear understanding of the reasons for non-progression (i.e. failed assessments or other reasons), and actions to mitigate these.

Consider centralising the process for accepting extenuating circumstances to ensure consistency in approach

Add to the regulations clear indications of what can and cannot be put forward as extenuating circumstances, and the evidence required to support an application

4.3

If not already in place, to have a clear approach to recognition of prior experience as an entry route to the programme.

4.4

Within regulations, state more clearly the size and composition of the sample to be moderated – this will become more important as cohorts grow. For instance, 10 – 25% of all assessed work, depending on cohort size, with a minimum of 10 (for example) pieces of assessed work. The sample should include work from across grades awarded.

Within regulations, state clearly the basis on which a grade petition can be made – e.g. bias, and the evidence that will be needed to support the petition.

Please select what is appropriate for each of the following sub-areas:

Sub-area		Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant
4.1 t	Student admission, processes and criteria	*Compliant*
4.2	Student progression	*Compliant*
4.3 t	Student recognition	*Compliant*
4.4 t	Student certification	*Compliant*

5.

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Learning resources and student support *(ESG 1.6)*

<u>**Sub-areas**</u>

    5.1 **Teaching and Learning resources**
    5.2 **Physical resources**
    5.3 **Human support resources**
    5.4 **Student support**

5.1 Teaching and Learning resources

Standards

- *Adequate and readily accessible teaching and learning resources (teaching and learning environments, materials, aids and equipment) are provided to students and support the achievement of objectives in the study programme.*
- *Adequacy of resources is ensured for changing circumstances (change in student numbers, etc.).*
- *All resources are fit for purpose.*
- *Student-centred learning and flexible modes of learning and teaching, are taken into account when allocating, planning and providing the learning resources.*

5.2 Physical resources

Standards

- *Physical resources, i.e. premises, libraries, study facilities, IT infrastructure, are adequate to support the study programme.*
- *Adequacy of resources is ensured for changing circumstances (change in student numbers, etc.).*
- *All resources are fit for purpose and students are informed about the services available to them.*

5.3 Human support resources

Standards

- *Human support resources, i.e. tutors/mentors, counsellors, other advisers, qualified administrative staff, are adequate to support the study programme.*

- *Adequacy of resources is ensured for changing circumstances (change in student numbers, etc.).*
- *All resources are fit for purpose and students are informed about the services available to them.*

5.4 Student support

Standards

- *Student support is provided covering the needs of a diverse student population, such as mature, part-time, employed and international students and students with special needs.*
- *Students are informed about the services available to them.*
- *Student-centred learning and flexible modes of learning and teaching, are taken into account when allocating, planning and providing student support.*
- *Students' mobility within and across higher education systems is encouraged and supported.*

You may also consider the following questions:

- *Evaluate the supply of teaching materials and equipment (including teaching labs, expendable materials, etc.), the condition of classrooms, adequacy of financial resources to conduct the study programme and achieve its objectives. What needs to be supplemented/ improved?*
- *What is the feedback from the teaching staff on the availability of teaching materials, classrooms, etc.?*
- *Are the resources in accordance with actual (changing) needs and contemporary requirements? How is the effectiveness of using resources ensured?*
- *What are the resource-related trends and future risks (risks arising from changing numbers of students, obsolescence of teaching equipment, etc.)? How are these trends taken into account and how are the risks mitigated?*
- *Evaluate student feedback on support services. Based on student feedback, which support services (including information flow, counselling) need further development?*
- *How is student learning within the standard period of study supported (student counselling, flexibility of the study programme, etc.)?*
- *How students' special needs are considered (different capabilities, different levels of academic preparation, special needs due to physical disabilities, etc.)? ● How is student mobility being supported?*

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Findings
A short description of the situation in the Higher Education Institution (HEI), based on elements from the application for external evaluation and on findings from the onsite visit.

5.1 Teaching and Learning resources

The College provides students and staff with infrastructure and facilities suitably adjusted to the functioning of the programme. The facilities are modern and comfortable. The methods of teaching follow international standards. The College has extensively relied on the Microsoft Teams platform to deal with both asynchronous and synchronous learning and teaching during the COVID-19 pandemic. Members of the top management team argued that the College also remained open during the pandemic to allow students to use its IT facilities and library. In any case, the College is advised to improve student-centred learning and flexible modes of learning and teaching when classes with physical presence resume. This is especially the case because many students at the College must work part- or even full-time to fund their studies; among others, the scheduling of lectures should explicitly consider this to increase attendance rates. As also discussed in a previous section of this report, the College should invest in plagiarism detection software (such as Turnitin) as part of assuring quality in its teaching and learning processes.

5.2 Physical resources

The IT infrastructure and hospitality-related mock-up rooms are suitable for the programme purposes. The library also offers good conditions, but it is recommended that additional books on tourism should be acquired by the College. This is because both hospitality operations and hotel management relate to tourism and students should familiarize themselves with key developments in the area. The College subscribes to the EBSCO Host electronic database and its library is linked with the libraries of the University of Cyprus and Technological University of Cyprus. The top management team of the College advised the EEC that the College plans to expand its physical facilities soon by adding a new building. This will accommodate the planned increase in the student intake and will enable the College to realize its strategic aspiration to become a (private) University in the following years.

Practical labs for Rooms Division Management and Food and Beverage Operations are available, and according to students, frequently used. The F&B lab comprises simulated front-of-house facilities.

5.3 Human support resources
The College operates a mentoring system as academic staff act as Academic advisors to the students. Moreover, the administrative staff is very professional and motivated. The number and qualifications of the administrative staff is adjusted to the needs. Staff perform both academic and integrative functions, which are critical for overseas students to adjust to the island. The College also provides counselling services (an external provider) and has special provisions for students with learning and mobility difficulties. Students seem to be aware of those services and expressed their satisfaction from the level of the College's provision.

5.4 Student support
The College has a process to recognize prior academic learning in other institutions to the benefit of student mobility across different tertiary education establishments. Moreover, the College encourages mature candidates to apply for admission into its programmes by recognizing the role of their work experience. The College offers students welcome sessions that allow them to gain knowledge about the services available and the way they can accommodate outside the school. During the meetings it was found that students are highly satisfied with the support provided by the College. Moreover, the College strongly encourages its students to participate in trips

abroad
through

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Erasmus+), capitalizing on its collaborations with institutions outside Cyprus. For example, some of the students expressed their satisfaction from their work experience in Poland, which was arranged by the College. Students with financial difficulties are also facilitated to pay their tuition fees over a larger number of instalments than what typically is the case. Scholarships are also offered based on academic merit. In any case, and as also previously discussed, even if the teaching methodologies include modern approaches (electronic platforms, power points and videos), student-centred learning and flexible modes of learning and teaching, should be utilised more in the future.

Staff contacts and College collaborations allow for careers advice and employment opportunities. As the College grows it is advised that a Careers and Alumni Office be created to formalise careers advice and provide employmentrelated support - e.g. CV writing.

Strengths
A list of strengths, e.g. examples of good practices, achievements, innovative solutions etc.

• teaching staff seem to be very caring (i.e.) students refer to staff as family;

• well-planned programmes in place for international students;

• availability of counselling and advisory services;

• well-qualified and experienced administrative staff.

• physical resources seem to be largely adequate

• IT infrastructure and online platforms are satisfactory

Areas of improvement and recommendations
A list of problem areas to be dealt with, followed by or linked to the recommendations of how to improve the situation.

· the College should invest in plagiarism detection software (such as Turnitin) as part of assuring quality in its teaching and learning processes;

· student-centred learning and flexible modes of learning and teaching should be utilised more frequently when physical classes resume.

· The plan to invest in the new building was made before covid19 happened based on projections of increasing student numbers. Strategic plans made before covid19 should be revisited as the underlying assumptions may have changed.

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appropriate for each of the following sub-areas:

Sub-area		*Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant*
5.1	Teaching and Learning resources	*Compliant*
5.2	Physical resources	*Compliant*
5.3	Human support resources	*Compliant*
5.4	Student support	*Compliant*

6.

ΔΙΠΑΕ CYQAA ΦΟΡΕΑΣ ΔΙΑΣΦΑΛΙΣΗΣ ΚΑΙ ΠΙΣΤΟΠΟΙΗΣΗΣ ΤΗΣ ΠΟΙΟΤΗΤΑΣ ΤΗΣ ΑΝΩΤΕΡΗΣ ΕΚΠΑΙΔΕΥΣΗΣ
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Additional for doctoral programmes *(ALL ESG)*

> **Sub-areas**
> 6.1 **Selection criteria and requirements**
> 6.2 **Proposal and dissertation**
> 6.3 **Supervision and committees**

6.1 **Selection criteria and requirements**

- *Specific criteria that the potential students need to meet for admission in the programme, as well as how the selection procedures are made, are defined.*
- *The following requirements of the doctoral degree programme are analysed and published:*
  - *the stages of completion*
  - *the minimum and maximum time of completing the programme* o *the examinations*
  - *the procedures for supporting and accepting the student's proposal* o *the criteria for obtaining the Ph.D. degree*

Standards

6.2 **Proposal and dissertation**

Standards
- *Specific and clear guidelines for the writing of the proposal and the dissertation are set regarding:* o *the chapters that are contained*
  - *the system used for the presentation of each chapter, sub-chapters and bibliography* o *the minimum word limit*
  - *the binding, the cover page and the prologue pages, including the pages supporting the authenticity, originality and importance of the dissertation, as well as the reference to the committee for the final evaluation*
- *There is a plagiarism check system. Information is provided on the detection of plagiarism and the consequences in case of such misconduct.*
- *The process of submitting the dissertation to the university library is set.*

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6.3 **Supervision and committees**

Standards

- *The composition, the procedure and the criteria for the formation of the advisory committee (to whom the doctoral student submits the research proposal) are determined.*
- *The composition, the procedure and the criteria for the formation of the examining committee (to whom the doctoral student defends his/her dissertation), are determined.*

- *The duties of the supervisor-chairperson and the other members of the advisory committee towards the student are determined and include:*
  - *regular meetings*
  - *reports per semester and feedback from supervisors* o *support for writing research papers* o *participation in conferences*

- *The number of doctoral students that each chairperson supervises at the same time are determined.*

u may also consider the following questions:

- *How is the scientific quality of the PhD thesis ensured?*
- *Is there a link between the doctoral programmes of study and the society? What is the value of the obtained degree outside academia and in the labour market?*
- *Can you please provide us with some dissertation samples?*

Findings

A short description of the situation in the Higher Education Institution (HEI), based on elements from the application for external evaluation and on findings from the onsite visit. Click or tap here to enter text.

Strengths
A list of strengths, e.g. examples of good practices, achievements, innovative solutions etc.

Click or tap here to enter text.

Areas of improvement and recommendations
A list of problem areas to be dealt with, followed by or linked to the recommendations of how to improve the situation.

Click or tap here to enter text.

Please select what is appropriate for each of the following sub-areas:

Sub-area		*Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant*
6.1	Selection criteria and requirements	*N/A*

| 6.2 | Proposal and dissertation | *N/A* |
| 6.3 | Supervision and committees | *N/A* |

D.

ΔΙΠΑΕ CYQAA ΦΟΡΕΑΣ ΔΙΑΣΦΑΛΙΣΗΣ ΚΑΙ ΠΙΣΤΟΠΟΙΗΣΗΣ ΤΗΣ ΠΟΙΟΤΗΤΑΣ ΤΗΣ ΑΝΩΤΕΡΗΣ ΕΚΠΑΙΔΕΥΣΗΣ
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Conclusions and final remarks

Please provide constructive conclusions and final remarks which may form the basis upon which improvements of the quality of the programme of study under review may be achieved, with emphasis on the correspondence with the EQF.

There are clear procedures for quality control on the website alongside appropriate regulations for behaviour. Disciplinary actions to be undertaken if necessary are also in place. The learning outcomes are clearly articulated. The weekly schedules of classes enable students to work while undertaking their studies, which is an important matter for the target market of the college. The college is amidst the process of establishing Key Performance Indicators and also considering introducing an Alumni/Careers office. A module feedback system is in place and a broader programme-level feedback system is advised. The teaching staff is clearly competent and experienced enough to provide quality knowledge to the students, and their approachability is valued by students. As for the practical training, students have access to mock-up hotel rooms and restaurants, but most importantly, are able to use the Erasmus placement programme for a minimum of 1 month. The sessions are engaging and interactive but development of generic grade descriptors is advised, as mentioned above.

Staff taking on different roles is feasible for now, but for growth to take place, more specialization will be needed. Staff who are PhD candidates are supported adequately so they can teach while completing their education. The strongest part of the college's staff is the practical know-how and experience. To improve, more emphasis and resources must be reallocated to research.

The admissions process has established criteria consistent with similar institutions to level the playing field for the different countries. Again, openly laid out on the website under regulations. Students who were just short of making the criteria are directed to a foundation programme or a summer English programme prior to the first semester. The college takes great care of incoming students by contacting them before arrival to sort accommodation, even though the college is not offering any, which is a great gesture in our perspective. In case students are not performing or attending classes, counselling is provided by administrative staff and the academic advisors.

Facilities and infrastructure are suitable and modern and the new building project is a great sign for future growth and improvement. Students are supported by the administrative staff and finally, the online library access is great to say the least.

E. Signatures of the EEC

Name	Signature
Professor Alexander Josiassen	*Alexander Josiassen*

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Professor Anita Eves	
Professor Andreas Papatheodorou	
Andreas Polykarpou	

Date: 1st of April 2021