Doc. 300.1.2

Higher Education Institution's Response

Date: 11/03/2026

- **Higher Education Institution:** KES College
- **Town:** Nicosia
- **Programme of study**
  Name (Duration, ECTS, Cycle)

  In Greek:

  Βιολογική Αγροτική Παραγωγή (2 Ακαδημαϊκά Έτη, 120 ECTS, Δίπλωμα)

  In English:

  Organic Agricultural Production (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
The College should review the wording of the skills, competences, and knowledge, as there is overlap between these categories. Some elements appear in multiple sections, and the current wording does not reflect the appropriate level of study. An update on the references for each course should be also implemented.	The College has undertaken a thorough review, as per the EEC's recommendation, and proceeded with appropriate amendments. Please see the updated curricula in **Appendix 1** Additional bibliography has been added to courses. Please refer to **Appendix 2** for the list of new books.	Choose level of compliance:
The College should ensure that all safety regulations are implemented for the protection of the students. A shower room should be fitted close to the chemistry lab and also eye wash equipment should be close to the sinks for immediate use. The current facilities are fit for purpose.	The College has carefully considered the EEC's recommendations, while also reviewing the safety requirements for the demonstrations that take in the chemistry laboratory. Therefore, the College considers that the installation of a large safety shower in close proximity to the chemistry laboratory is not warranted, when taking into consideration the very limited scope of the demonstrations that take place there, which do not involve the types of activities (such as the handling of caustic chemicals) that necessitate such a safety measure. However, to further enhance safety measures in the laboratory, the College has purchased specialised **eye-wash equipment** that can be fitted directly to one of the laboratory sinks, ensuring immediate access in case of emergency. The College remains committed to implementing all necessary safety measures to ensure the protection and wellbeing of students and staff, and considers that the current	Choose level of compliance:

	laboratory facilities continue to be **fit for purpose**, as was also noted by the EEC. Please refer to **Appendix 3** for the purchase receipt of the eye wash equipment.	
More teaching staff members could actively engage in research.	Members of the teaching staff are currently actively involved in research initiatives and participate in funded projects, often in collaboration with students. These activities contribute to strengthening the research culture of the College and enriching the learning experience. Below are some key projects with academic staff and student involvement related to our program. **2023 "Vulnerable communities driving innovation and governance for sustainable food systems in European cities - FEED4FOOD".** Proposal Number: EP/DUT/0922/0001. Call: European Partnerships - Driving Urban Transitions - Sustainable future for cities. Funding source: **European Partnerships in Horizon Europe** and National Research Agencies. Project's P.I.: Prof. van Wesenbeeck L., Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam. Participating institutions: 10 institutions from 4 European countries (Netherlands, Romania, Cyprus, Greece). Duration: 3 years. Total Budget EUR 1,428,124. *Our academic staff Dr. V. Litskas, is the project's coordinator for Cyprus. Our programme's coordinator Dr. D. Sarris participates in its research activities together with our programme's students E. Christofi and C. Loizidou.*	Choose level of compliance:

	2022 "Regenerative approaches for building climate change resilience into EU agricultural regions prone to desertification - LIFE-AgrOassis". LIFE Ref. No: LIFE21-CCA-CY-LIFE-AgrOassis/101074744. Call: LIFE-Climate Change adaptation. Funding source: **LIFE Programme 2021-2027**. Project's P.I.: Dr. Dalias P. Agricultural Research Institute, Nicosia. Participating institutions: 10 institutions from 2 European countries (Cyprus, Greece). Duration: 51 months. Total Budget: EUR 2,326,710. *Our programme's coordinator Dr. D. Sarris, also coordinates one of the project's work packages, while our academic staff members C. Lois and C. Christodoulou have participated in the project's research activities together with our programme's 2023-25 students G. Koumides and S. Papacostas.* **2025 "Billion Bees Program CYPRUS"**. Conservation of the Cypriot honeybee and flora. Project's P.I.: Dr. Sarris D. KESRC. Funding Source: APIVITA's Billion Bees Program. *Our programme's coordinator Dr. D. Sarris coordinates the project, while our academic staff member C. Christodoulou has participated in the project's research activities together with our 2022-24 student M. Kouloumi.* *<u>Past projects</u>* **2018 Investigation of food safety provided by organic and conventional Bananas cultivated and sold in Cyprus.** Project's P.I.: Dr. D. Sarris, KES COLLEGE. Participating	

	institutions: Association of Organic Farmers in Cyprus, the Institute for Inspection and Certification in Organic Farming "LACON" and the Chemical Analysis Lab "Food Lab". Duration 12 months. KES COLLEGE research fund. *Our programme's coordinator Dr. D. Sarris coordinated the project', while our academic staff members C. Lois and I. Constantinou have participated in the project's research activities.* **Therefore, out of the 8 academic staff members, 5 key staff members have been or are currently actively involved in research activities.** The College will continue to encourage and support greater staff engagement in research and will actively seek opportunities to involve more teaching staff in funded research projects.	
The learning outcomes of the courses should be revised to reflect the delivery level, students' expectations, and performance standards. In particular, the learning outcomes should be revised to intended learning outcomes (ILOs), to ensure clarity and measurability (see section 2).	The College has undertaken a thorough review, as per the EEC's recommendation, and proceeded with appropriate amendments. Please see the updated curricula in **Appendix 1**	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
Learning Outcomes (ILOs) Revise current learning outcomes to intended learning outcomes (ILOs), ensuring clarity and measurability. Align ILOs with Bloom's Taxonomy, using appropriate action verbs that reflect the level of study. Standardise the number of ILOs per course to 3–6 well-defined outcomes.	The College has undertaken a thorough review, as per the EEC's recommendation, and proceeded with appropriate amendments. Please see the updated curricula in **Appendix 1**	Choose level of compliance:
Ensure that course content and assessments are explicitly mapped to ILOs, demonstrating how each outcome is achieved and evaluated.	All courses within the programme have been systematically mapped to the Programme Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs). Furthermore, the Intended Learning Outcomes of each course have been aligned with the corresponding course content, teaching and learning activities, and assessment methods in order to ensure constructive alignment across the curriculum. The detailed course-programme alignment is presented in **Appendix 8**.	
Course Content Structure Introduce a week-by-week teaching plan in each course specification, clearly outlining: Theoretical sessions, practical sessions, key learning activities Standardise the presentation format of course content across all specifications to ensure consistency and clarity.	The course syllabi have been revised to include a detailed week-by-week teaching plan. This clearly distinguishes between theoretical sessions and, where applicable, laboratory or fieldwork activities, specifying the content and learning activities to be covered each week. Please refer to **Appendix 1** for the revised course syllabi.	Choose level of compliance:
Review the weighting and proportioning of marks to ensure fairness, workload balance, and alignment with ILOs. Provide specific details on the number, type, and format of assessments (e.g., written assignments, reports, tests, projects). Include an assessment schedule (ideally in table format) with deadlines and	The course syllabi have been revised accordingly. Please refer to **Appendix 1.** A detailed course plan, prepared by the course leader, is made available to students at the beginning of the course. This course plan includes week-by-week indicative teaching content, learning materials, and	Choose level of compliance:

submission dates to help students plan their workload effectively. Moderate assessment briefs and marked work.	clearly specified assessment deadlines and submission dates. This ensures transparency and supports effective time management and engagement with assessment tasks. An example of the course plan is provided in **Appendix 4.** Assessment briefs are prepared by the lecturers and submitted to the Programme Coordinators for review to ensure content relevance and appropriateness for the course. They are also reviewed by the Education Officer to verify alignment with the intended learning outcomes. Following the assessment process, the Programme Coordinators moderate the marked examinations to ensure consistency and accuracy before the final marks are released to students. This process constitutes an **established College procedure**, ensuring the quality, fairness, and consistency of assessment practices across programmes. An example of assessment brief can be found in **Appendix 5.**	
Update and expand the reading lists to include more recent and internationally recognised sources, reducing over-reliance on Greek-language materials. Enrichment of the organic farming section of the library is highly recommended to enable students to have access to newly published books, articles and reports.	The College acknowledges the EEC's recommendation to further enrich the organic farming section of the library in order to ensure students have access to newly published books, academic articles, and research reports in this field. In this context, the College has recently completed the process of joining the Cypriot Libraries Consortium (CLC), which has significantly expanded the range of electronic and print learning resources available to faculty, students, and researchers across all subject areas, including organic farming. Through the Consortium, library users now have access to a	Choose level of compliance:

	wide collection of up-to-date academic databases, journals, e-books, and research publications, supporting both teaching and research activities. This development substantially strengthens library provision and ensures that students are able to engage with current, high-quality scholarly resources, thereby addressing the recommendation and enhancing the overall learning experience. In addition to this, more resources / international bibliography has been added to the course syllabi. Please refer to **Appendix 2** for the list of new books.	
Overall, a training session/workshop should be delivered to all teaching staff with guidance on improving these aspects of student assessment and course specifications.	Overall, the College recognises the importance of continuous professional development (CPD) in enhancing the quality of student assessment and course specifications. To this end, training sessions and workshops are delivered to all teaching staff, providing structured guidance on improving assessment design, alignment with learning outcomes, clarity of course specifications, and effective feedback practices. In addition, the College employs a full-time Education Officer who provides ongoing pedagogical support to teaching staff as needed. The Education Officer plays a central role in supporting academic quality by regularly organising internal workshops on a range of pedagogical and assessment-related topics, including classroom management, exam and assessment script creation, and the application of different pedagogical approaches in teaching and learning. Furthermore, the College facilitates external seminars and professional development activities on emerging	Choose level of compliance:

	and inclusive practices, such as Universal Design for Learning (UDL), the pedagogical use of artificial intelligence tools, and contemporary digital teaching practices. These initiatives ensure that teaching staff remain informed of current developments in higher education pedagogy and are equipped to continuously enhance the student learning and assessment experience.	

3. Teaching staff
(ESG 1.5)

Areas of improvement and recommendations **by EEC**	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
Increase the number of staff holding a PhD to further strengthen research opportunities and research-informed teaching.	The College acknowledges the recommendation to increase the number of staff holding a PhD in order to further strengthen research capacity and research-informed teaching. Currently, two out of the six academic staff members hold a PhD, contributing directly to the development of research activity, scholarly engagement, and the integration of research-informed perspectives into teaching and learning. The College maintains a clear commitment to recruiting and employing staff with PhD qualifications and/or demonstrated research experience wherever appropriate and feasible. At the same time, the vocational nature of the programme necessitates the active involvement of industry professionals who may not necessarily hold a PhD but possess extensive professional expertise and current industry knowledge. These staff members play a vital role in the delivery of the programme by ensuring that teaching remains practice-oriented, industry-relevant, and aligned with professional standards. Their involvement also contributes significantly to student employability, through the provision of real-world insights, industry connections, and opportunities for networking and work opportunities. This balanced staffing approach ensures that the programme benefits from both academic rigour and applied professional expertise, supporting high-quality teaching, relevant skills development, and	Choose level of compliance:

	strong links with industry, while the College continues to strengthen its research profile over time.	
Have a higher proportion of full-time staff rather than 50 % full time and 50 % part time.	Due to the vocational nature of many of our programmes and the diverse range of specialised expertise required, it is essential that we continue to engage industry professionals to teach certain specialised courses. Their current, hands-on experience enriches the learning environment and ensures that our programmes remain aligned with real-world practice. This professional involvement is an important component of our programme quality, even though it naturally results in a higher proportion of part-time instructors. We appreciate the EEC's guidance and will ensure that our approach maintains the right balance between strengthening the full-time faculty team and preserving the valuable professional expertise that supports the vocational relevance and quality of our programmes.	Choose level of compliance:
Although, an amount of 1,000 euros per staff member is provided to support applied research activities. This allocation should be increased to meet the needs of more demanding projects.	The College currently allocates €1,000 per staff member to support applied research activities. While this funding provides an initial incentive for research engagement, the College acknowledges that more demanding research projects may require additional resources. The College continuously strives to further strengthen research support, including exploring possibilities for increasing internal funding where warranted and encouraging staff to participate in externally funded research projects.	Choose level of compliance:

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
Student recognition: We recommend establishing a comprehensive and well-structured system of incentives and rewards specifically designed to recognise students who consistently demonstrate exceptional academic performance throughout their studies. The implementation of such a system can significantly and measurably boost student motivation levels, enhance overall engagement with the learning process, and substantially improve academic achievement across the student body. The rewards offered through this system may take various forms and include certificates of achievement, medals of distinction, financial scholarships, or special public recognition ceremonies at university events. By providing meaningful recognition for the hard work, dedication, and commitment that students invest in their studies, KES Colllege can effectively foster and nurture a robust culture of excellence, high standards, and continuous improvement throughout the institution.	The College fully recognises the importance of a comprehensive and well-structured system of incentives and rewards to acknowledge students who demonstrate consistent academic excellence, high levels of engagement, and exemplary conduct throughout their studies. Such recognition plays a key role in enhancing student motivation, academic achievement, and the development of a strong institutional culture of excellence. In this regard, KES College already implements a robust framework of academic recognition and financial incentives, beginning at entry level and continuing throughout the student lifecycle: **Academic Merit Scholarships** Students enrolling in the first year of studies for the first time are eligible for Academic Merit Scholarships based on their secondary education performance: • Students with a school average between 18/20 and 18.99/20 receive a 20% tuition fee scholarship for their first year. • Students with a school average of 19/20 and above receive a 25% tuition fee scholarship for their first year. Furthermore, students who achieve a general average of 90/100 or higher during their first academic year and who also demonstrate exemplary conduct are awarded a 20% tuition fee scholarship for the following academic year, provided they continue in the same programme of study. This	Choose level of compliance:

	mechanism ensures continued recognition of academic excellence beyond the entry year. **Scholarships and Financial Assistance** KES College also provides targeted financial support aimed at promoting both academic achievement and social inclusion: • **Annual scholarships through approved secondary schools**, awarded on the basis of both academic performance (minimum final grade of 15/20) and financial need, covering 15% of tuition fees for the entire duration of studies, subject to the maintenance of an average grade of 80/100 or higher. • **Tuition fee reductions** for students from large families, including additional discounts where siblings study concurrently at the College. • **Full or partial scholarships** offered in collaboration with municipalities, public and private organisations, semi-governmental bodies, and local communities, further broadening access while rewarding merit and commitment. **Public Recognition and Graduation Awards** In addition to financial incentives, formal public recognition of outstanding student achievement is embedded within institutional practice. During the Graduation Ceremony, awards are presented to students who have demonstrated exceptional performance and commitment, including: • **Awards for Outstanding Academic Performance**	

	(e.g. highest cumulative GPA per programme), • **Awards for Overall Student Achievement**, recognising academic performance alongside professionalism and conduct. These awards are accompanied by monetary reward and public acknowledgement, reinforcing the value placed on excellence, dedication, and continuous improvement. Overall, the existing system at KES College already provides a coherent, transparent, and multi-dimensional approach to student recognition, combining financial incentives, academic awards, and public acknowledgement. The College remains committed to ongoing review and enhancement of these practices to ensure that student achievement is consistently recognised and that a strong culture of excellence continues to be fostered across the institution.	
To further promote and strengthen this culture of academic excellence, we propose establishing an additional system that would allow students to improve their grades in chosen subjects. Under this framework, students could select between two and three subjects at the end of the spring semester to retake and re-assess. The main goal of this initiative is to support students in reaching their full academic potential, achieving their educational goals, and nurturing a lasting commitment to excellence in their academic pursuits.	The College acknowledges the proposal to further strengthen the culture of academic excellence by allowing students opportunities to improve their grades in selected subjects. In this respect, KES College already has an established and clearly regulated system in place that enables students to enhance their academic performance. Specifically, as outlined in the KES College Internal Regulations, under the section “Repeating a Final Examination for Grade Improvement”, students are entitled to repeat the written examination of a course they have already passed, with the explicit aim of improving their final grade. This option applies to courses examined during the January or May examination periods.	Choose level of compliance:

	The repeat examination for grade improvement: • May be taken once only, during the subsequent September examination period; • Requires payment of the applicable Repeat Examination fee; • Results in only the higher grade being recorded on the student's transcript, with the course marked with an "R" (Repeat) designation. It is noted that, in line with institutional policy, any grade improvement achieved through a repeat written examination does not count towards eligibility for academic performance scholarships awarded by the College. This established framework supports students in reaching their full academic potential, while maintaining academic integrity, fairness, and consistency across programmes. By offering a structured and transparent mechanism for grade improvement, the College effectively promotes continuous improvement, student responsibility, and a sustained commitment to academic excellence.	

Learning resources and student support

(ESG 1.6)

Areas of improvement and recommendations **by EEC**	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
Human Support Resources: The establishment and formation of a proper, formally structured External Stakeholder Committee is absolutely required and necessary, and should be implemented, put into place, and made operational as soon as possible in the near future. It is strongly advised and recommended that the institution establish, formalise, and sign comprehensive Memoranda of Collaboration, Understanding, and Cooperation with relevant private companies, agricultural enterprises, industry partners, and universities, both domestic and international, for the purpose of further interaction, ongoing dialogue, knowledge exchange, student placement opportunities, collaborative research initiatives, and mutually beneficial partnerships.	Thank you for this valuable recommendation. The College recognises the importance of strengthening external engagement and ensuring systematic collaboration with relevant stakeholders from academia, research institutions, and industry. In response, the College has initiated the establishment of a **formally structured External Stakeholder Committee**, which will support ongoing dialogue, curriculum relevance, student placement opportunities, and collaborative research initiatives. As part of this process, the following experts have been included in the **External Stakeholder Committee**: • **Dimitris Tsaltas, MSc, DIC, PhD**, Chair of the Department of Agricultural Sciences, Biotechnology and Food Science, Professor of Agricultural Microbiology and Biotechnology • **Panagiotis Dalias, PhD**, Agricultural Research Officer A', Agricultural Research Institute In addition, the College is actively exploring opportunities to establish and formalise **Memoranda of Collaboration and Cooperation** with relevant private companies, agricultural enterprises, industry partners, and universities, both at the national and international level. These collaborations aim to enhance knowledge exchange, student training and placement opportunities, research collaboration, and mutually beneficial partnerships.	Choose level of compliance:

	Furthermore, **KES College has a Memorandum of Cooperation (see Appendix 6) with the Christou-Steliou Ioannou Foundation**, and maintains an active and productive collaboration with the Foundation to date. External stakeholders have also provided feedback on the programme via a questionnaire (please refer to **Appendix 9**), confirming that it develops knowledge and practical skills that are highly relevant and important for organic agricultural production, ensuring that the programme remains aligned with the needs of the agricultural sector and professional practice.	
Teaching and learning resources: The list of books on Organic Agricultural Production is limited, and additional resources should be added.	Please refer to the College's response in Section 2	Choose level of compliance:

5. Additional for doctoral programmes

(ALL ESG)

Areas of improvement and recommendations **by EEC**	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
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7. Eligibility (Joint programme)

(ALL ESG)

Areas of improvement and recommendations **by EEC**	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
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B. Conclusions and final remarks

Conclusions and final remarks **by EEC**	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
Current Status: The programme objectives and learning outcomes exist but require refinement to fully reflect EQF Level 5 descriptors.	The College has updated the programme's objectives and learning outcomes to better reflect EQF Level 5 (CyQF Level 5b) descriptors. Please refer to **Appendix 7** for the Programme's revised objectives and ILOs	Choose level of compliance:
Urgently revise all learning outcomes to Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs) using Bloom's Taxonomy verbs appropriate for diploma-level study (e.g., "analyze," "evaluate," "synthesize" rather than basic recall verbs)	The Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs) for all courses have been reviewed and revised accordingly. Bloom's Taxonomy has been applied to ensure that the learning outcomes use appropriate action verbs that reflect the expected level of learning for diploma-level study, including verbs such as *analyse, evaluate,* and *synthesise*. This revision has been implemented across all course specifications to ensure clarity, consistency, and appropriate alignment with the level of the programme.	Choose level of compliance:
Standardize ILOs to 3-6 clearly measurable outcomes per course that explicitly demonstrate cognitive complexity expected at Level 5	The Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs) of all courses have been reviewed and revised to ensure they reflect the cognitive complexity expected at EQF Level 5 (CyQF Level 5b). The revised ILOs have been formulated using appropriate action verbs and aligned with the programme learning outcomes. The updated course syllabi are provided in **Appendix 1**.	Choose level of compliance:
Map ILOs systematically to assessment tasks and course content, ensuring transparent alignment	All courses within the programme have been systematically mapped to the Programme Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs). Furthermore, the Intended Learning Outcomes of each course have been aligned with the corresponding course content, teaching and learning activities, and assessment methods in order to ensure constructive alignment across the curriculum. The detailed course-programme alignment is presented in **Appendix 8**.	Choose level of compliance:
Distinguish clearly between knowledge, skills, and competences in programme specifications, eliminating current overlaps	All ILO's have been revised and can be found in **Appendix 1** (at course level) and **Appendix 7** (at programme level).	Choose level of compliance:

Update all course references to include contemporary, internationally recognized sources that reflect current best practices in organic agriculture	The bibliography in course syllabi has been updated to include more international bibliography. Please refer to revised syllabi in **Appendix 1.**	
Develop detailed assessment briefs that clearly articulate expectations, marking criteria, and weighting for all assignments, ensuring students understand how their work will be evaluated against Level 5 standards	Students are provided with assessment briefs at the beginning of each course to ensure they fully understand the expectations and evaluation criteria of assessment. An example of an assessment brief from the updated Ecology course is provided for reference in **Appendix 5.**	
Implement mandatory moderation of all assessment briefs before release and of marked assessments to ensure consistency, fairness, and appropriate academic level	The College has an internal process whereby all assessment briefs and examination scripts are reviewed by the relevant Programme Coordinators prior to being released to students. This review process ensures that assessments are clearly articulated, aligned with the intended learning outcomes, appropriately pitched at the academic level of the programme, and consistent across courses. In addition, marked examination scripts and assessments are subject to post-assessment review by Programme Coordinators, conducted in collaboration with and supported by the Education Officer. This process provides an additional layer of quality assurance, focusing on the consistency of marking, the appropriateness of feedback, and adherence to assessment criteria and marking schemes. Through this structured moderation approach, the College ensures the integrity, transparency, and academic standards of its assessment practices, while also supporting continuous improvement in assessment design and delivery.	
Publish comprehensive assessment schedules in table format showing deadlines, assessment types, and ILOs being assessed	The College implements a structured lesson plan for each course. Lecturers prepare a detailed weekly plan outlining the topics to be covered, bibliography, associated assessment deadlines, and the relevant Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs). Please refer to **Appendix 4** for a representative example.	

Review mark allocation across all courses to ensure appropriate weighting that reflects complexity and time investment	All assessments have been revised and where appropriate, relevant changes have been made. Please refer to the revised course syllabi in **Appendix 1.**	
Provide staff training on designing and marking assessments at diploma level to maintain academic standards	The College fully recognises the importance of staff training in the design and marking of assessments at diploma level as a key factor in maintaining academic standards and ensuring consistency, fairness, and alignment with learning outcomes. As noted in previous sections, the College employs a full-time Education Officer who provides ongoing guidance and pedagogical support to teaching staff. The Education Officer regularly organises training workshops focused on teaching, learning, and assessment practices, including sessions specifically related to the development of assessment briefs, marking criteria, and assessment planning appropriate to diploma-level study. In addition, the College has planned further targeted training to enhance assessment practice, including workshops on providing constructive, developmental feedback on student assessments. These initiatives aim to strengthen staff capacity in assessment design and marking, support reflective teaching practice, and ensure the continued maintenance of academic standards consistent with diploma-level expectations. Through this structured programme of professional development, the College ensures that teaching staff are well supported in delivering high-quality, academically robust assessment practices.	
Establish a formal recognition system for high-achieving students (e.g., Dean's List, certificates of distinction, academic awards) to foster a culture of excellence consistent with European higher education norms	The College fully endorses the importance of a formal recognition system for high-achieving students as a means of fostering a strong and sustainable culture of academic excellence, in line with European higher education norms and good practice. In this respect, KES College already operates a structured and multi-dimensional system of recognition that rewards academic excellence, consistency, and exemplary conduct throughout the student lifecycle. Specifically, students who	

	achieve a general average of 90/100 or higher during their first academic year, and who also demonstrate exemplary conduct, are awarded a 20% tuition fee scholarship for the following academic year, provided they continue in the same programme of study. This mechanism ensures continued recognition of academic excellence beyond the entry year, while encouraging sustained high performance. In addition to financial incentives, formal public recognition of outstanding achievement is embedded within institutional practice. During the Graduation Ceremony, academic awards are presented to students who have demonstrated exceptional performance and commitment, including: Awards for Outstanding Academic Performance, such as the highest cumulative overall grade per programme; Awards for Overall Student Achievement, recognising academic excellence alongside professionalism, engagement, and conduct. These distinctions are accompanied by monetary rewards and public acknowledgement, reinforcing the value placed on excellence, dedication, and continuous improvement. Overall, the existing framework at KES College provides a coherent, transparent, and comprehensive recognition system, combining financial scholarships, academic awards, and public recognition, and effectively fulfils the objectives of systems such as Dean's Lists, certificates of distinction, and academic honours. The College remains committed to the ongoing review and enhancement of these practices to ensure that student achievement is consistently recognised and that a strong culture of excellence continues to be nurtured across the institution.	
Implement a grade improvement opportunity allowing students to retake 2-3 subjects to enhance their performance, supporting the	Please refer to **Section 4** for the College's response.	

principle of student-centered learning		
Ensure transparent communication of progression requirements, ECTS credits, and how qualifications align with the National Qualifications Framework and EQF	The college has taken action to include on the revised programme website https://www.kescollege.ac.cy/courses/organic-agricultural-production/ information on the CyQF alignment of the Diploma (Level 5B) and inlcude a direct link to the CyQF website https://www.cyqf.gov.cy/index.php/en/diagram listing the different qualification levels.	
Increase the proportion of PhD-qualified staff to enhance research capacity and ensure teaching is informed by current research in the field	Please refer to Section 3 for the College's response.	
Increase research funding beyond the current €1,000 per staff member to support meaningful research that can be integrated into teaching	Please refer to Section 3 for the College's response.	
Strengthen the balance between full-time and part-time staff, ensuring core academic leadership is provided by permanent faculty while maintaining valuable industry connections through part-time practitioners	Please refer to Section 3 for the College's response.	
Encourage active research publication in peer-reviewed international journals relevant to organic agriculture and sustainability. Research-informed teaching is a cornerstone of Level 5 higher education and distinguishes it from purely vocational training.	The College recognises the importance of research-informed teaching in higher education and encourages academic staff to engage in research activities and scholarly dissemination, including publications in peer-reviewed journals relevant to agriculture and sustainability. The College supports staff participation in research initiatives and integrates relevant research developments into teaching, ensuring that students are exposed to current practices and innovations in organic agriculture and sustainability. The College will continue to support and encourage staff engagement in research activities and scholarly work that	

	contribute to the enhancement of teaching and the development of the field.	
Expand the library collection specifically on organic agricultural production, adding contemporary English-language textbooks, journals, and industry reports	Please refer to **Section 2** for the College's response.	
Diversify digital resources beyond EBSCO by establishing links with scientific databases (Elsevier, Wiley, Springer) relevant to agricultural sciences	Please refer to **Section 2** for the College's response.	
Ensure full compliance with laboratory safety regulations by installing required an adequate shower facility near the chemistry lab and accessible eye wash stations	The college has taken steps for full compliance with laboratory safety regulations and the installation of eye wash equipment. Please refer to **Section 1** for the college's response.	
Monitor laboratory capacity as student numbers grow, prepared to split groups if necessary to maintain appropriate practical training conditions	The College recognises the importance of maintaining appropriate laboratory capacity and optimal practical training conditions, particularly as student numbers increase. Laboratory capacity is monitored on an ongoing basis by the Programme Coordinator in collaboration with academic staff, taking into account enrolment trends, health and safety requirements, and the pedagogical needs of practical sessions. Where necessary, the College is prepared to split laboratory groups to ensure that student–equipment ratios, supervision levels, and learning outcomes for practical training are fully maintained. This flexible approach allows the College to respond proactively to changes in student numbers while safeguarding the quality, safety, and effectiveness of laboratory-based teaching and learning.	
Establish immediately a formal External Stakeholder Committee with representatives from:	The College recognises the importance of strengthening external engagement and ensuring systematic collaboration with stakeholders from academia, research institutions, and the agricultural sector. In	

• Agricultural enterprises and organic farming associations • Government agricultural departments • Professional bodies • Academic partners • Alumni	response, the College has initiated the establishment of a formal External Stakeholder Committee that will support programme development, curriculum relevance, and alignment with sector needs. As part of this process, the following experts have been included in the External Stakeholder Committee: • **Dimitris Tsaltas, MSc, DIC, PhD**, Chair of the Department of Agricultural Sciences, Biotechnology and Food Science, Professor of Agricultural Microbiology and Biotechnology • **Panagiotis Dalias, PhD**, Agricultural Research Officer A', Agricultural Research Institute The College will continue to expand the committee by including representatives from organic farming associations, relevant government agricultural departments, professional bodies, academic partners, and alumni, ensuring a broad and balanced representation of stakeholders. This committee will contribute to continuous dialogue with the sector and support the ongoing improvement of the programme.	
Formalize Memoranda of Understanding with key industry partners, domestic and international universities, and research institutions	KES College already maintains a formal Memorandum of Understanding with the Christos Steliou Ioannou Foundation, with which it has had an active and productive collaboration for several years. This partnership supports knowledge exchange and contributes to strengthening links between the College and the broader agricultural sector. At the same time, the College recognises the importance of expanding its network of partnerships and is actively seeking the establishment of additional Memoranda of Understanding and collaborations with industry partners, and research institutions in order to further enhance academic cooperation, research opportunities, and student learning experiences.	
Schedule regular committee meetings (minimum twice annually) to review curriculum	An initial meeting with external stakeholders has already taken place to discuss the programme, including its relevance to sector needs and current developments in the field.	

relevance, employment outcomes, and industry trends	The College recognises the value of maintaining regular communication with stakeholders and will organise additional meetings moving forward. The College will embed this practice within its quality assurance processes and plans to hold regular stakeholder committee meetings (at least twice annually) in order to review curriculum relevance, employment outcomes, and emerging industry trends.	
Document stakeholder feedback systematically and demonstrate how it informs programme development	The College has sought feedback from external stakeholders regarding the programme, and this input has been taken into consideration in the review and refinement of the curriculum. The College will continue to systematically involve external stakeholders in the review and improvement of the programme. It is also important to note that many members of the teaching staff are active professionals in the relevant sector, which facilitates continuous interaction with industry and professional stakeholders. As a result, valuable feedback is received informally throughout the academic year and contributes to the ongoing enhancement and relevance of the programme.	
Develop week-by-week teaching plans for all courses showing theoretical and practical sessions, readings, and learning activities	The College already implements week-by-week teaching plans for all courses. Lecturers are required to prepare detailed lesson plans outlining theoretical and practical sessions, assigned readings, and planned learning activities for each week. To ensure consistency and completeness, lecturers are provided with a standardised lesson plan template, which they are required to follow when preparing their course planning documentation. Please refer to **Appendix 4** for an example of lesson plan using the college's template	
Standardize course specification formats across the programme to ensure consistency and clarity	All course specifications have been revised. Please refer to **Appendix 1** for the revised syllabi.	
Explicitly state expected student workload for each learning activity (lectures, self-study, group work, practical sessions) to	The expected student workload, aligned with ECTS requirements, has now been explicitly specified for all learning activities (including lectures, practical sessions, assessment	

ensure ECTS allocations accurately reflect effort required	preparation and independent work) across all courses. This ensures that ECTS allocations accurately reflect the total student effort required. Please refer to **Appendix 1** for the revised course syllabi, where the updated workload distribution is presented.	
Review ECTS allocation for courses like 'Ecology' and 'Greenhouse Technology' to ensure they appropriately reflect student workload	The ECTS allocation for **Ecology** has been revised from 8 ECTS to 6 ECTS in order to more accurately reflect the expected student workload. The ECTS allocation for **Greenhouse Technology** remains unchanged. However, the course workload has been adjusted to ensure appropriate alignment with the 3 ECTS credit load.	

C. Higher Education Institution academic representatives

Name	*Position*
Dr Vassias Vassiliades	Director of Academic Affairs
Dr Dimitrios Sarris	Programme Coordinator
Dr Florentia Hadjiefthyvoulou	Education and Quality Assurance Officer

Date: 11/03/2026

5 Lemesou Avenue, 2112, Nicosia
T: + 357 22 504 340
F: + 357 22 504 392
e-mail: info@dipae.ac.cy