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Date: 11/10/2025

External Evaluation Report (Conventional-face-to-face programme of study)

- **Higher Education Institution:**
KES College
 - **Town:** Nicosia
- **School/Faculty (if applicable):** N/A
- **Department/ Sector:** Environmental Studies
- **Programme of study- Name (Duration, ECTS, Cycle)**
In Greek: Βιολογική Αγροτική Παραγωγή (2 Έτη / 120 ECTS)
In English: Organic Agricultural Production (Two Year study / 120 ECTS)
- **Language(s) of instruction:** Greek
- **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. Introduction

This part includes basic information regarding the onsite visit.

On behalf of the Cyprus Agency of Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Higher Education, we, the panel of the External Evaluation Committee (hereafter referred to as the EEC), met physically on Thursday, 9th October 2025, to evaluate the full application of KES College for the provision of a Degree in Organic Agricultural Production, offered through their School of Environmental Studies. We adhered to the preset agenda and conducted our meeting at the premises of KES College with the Head of the Institution, members of the Internal Evaluation Committee (IEC), heads of relevant departments, the Programme Coordinator, faculty members, students, and administrative staff. The EEC had the opportunity to tour the College's facilities. As a committee, we reviewed the application documents submitted both individually and collectively to gain a thorough understanding of the programme under review. Additionally, the committee met before and after the evaluation to ensure the objectivity of our decisions. We suggested changes to the Organic Agricultural Production programme; KES College reviewed some of the recommendations and conditions, considering our initial discussions. The committee is pleased to have conducted a comprehensive review of the programme and is impressed by the dedication, enthusiasm, and positive feedback from all involved. In the following sections, we have further detailed the aspects of the evaluation process we followed to reach our conclusions and recommendations.

The site visit took place according to the following schedule:

09:00 – 09:10: A brief introduction of the members of the EEC

09:10 – 10:00: A meeting of the EEC with the Head of the Institution and the Director of Academic Affairs and with the members of the Internal Evaluation Committee

Petros Stylianou, Director General

Dr Vassias Vassiliades, Director of Academic Affairs

Dr Dimitrios Sarris, Programme Coordinator / Director of KES Research Centre

Dr Florentia Hadjiefthyvoulou, Education and Quality Assurance Officer

10:00 – 11:10: A meeting of the EEC with the Coordinator of the programme

Petros Stylianou, Director General

Dr Vassias Vassiliades, Director of Academic Affairs

11:10 - 11:20: Coffee Break

11:20-11:50: A meeting of the EEC with members from the Administrative Staff

Andri Sideri – Yiallouraki, Head of Student Affairs and Welfare Services

Elena Charalambous, Human Resource Manager

Fotini Philippou, Administrative Officer

Demetra Michael, Communications and Digital Content Coordinator; Raghid El Natour, IT Officer

11:50-14:00: Visit to Christos-Stelios Ioannou Foundation

14:00-14:30: Lunch Break

14:30-15:15: A meeting of the EEC with External Stakeholders

Christina Christodoulou, President of the Cyprus Organic Farmers' Association
Konstantinos Loes, Head of Organic Farming Division, Lambrou Agro Ltd.

15:15- 16:15: A meeting of the EEC with members of the teaching staff

Dr Dimitrios Sarris, Lecturer / Program Coordinator
Chrysi Tomouzou, Lecturer
Konstantinos Lois, Lecturer
Eve Konstantinou, Lecturer
Christina Christodoulou, Lecturer

16:15-16:30: Coffee Break

16:30-17:20: A meeting of the EEC with students

Andreas Koliantris
Robert Marin
Alexandros Strouthou
Emmanouela Christofi
Dimitris Kafouris
Elefteria Karsouman

and graduates
Giannis Koumidis

17:20-18:00: A visit to the premises of the institution (library, computer labs, teaching rooms, research facilities) and discussion of the main issues with IT Manager, Course Leader and Director of Academic Quality and Compliance

Petros Stylianou, Director General
Dr Vassiliades Vassias, Director of Academic Affairs
Dr Dimitrios Sarris, Program Coordinator
Raghid El Natour, IT Officer
Christiana Argyrou, Librarian
Elena Charalambous, Human Resource Manager
Andri Sideri – Yiallouraki, Head of Student Affairs and Welfare Services

18:00-18:15: Coffee Break

18:15-18:45: Exit Discussion of the EEC with the Head of the institution, the Director of Academic Affairs and the coordinator of the programme

Petros Stylianou, Director General

Dr Vassias Vassiliades, Director of Academic Affairs

Dr Dimitrios Sarris, Program Coordinator

Dr Florentia Hadjiefthyvoulou, Education and Quality Assurance Officer.

B. External Evaluation Committee (EEC)

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>University</i>
Weih Martin	Professor of Plant Ecology and Ecophysiology of Agricultural Crops	Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences (SLU), Uppsala, Sweden
Cannon Nicola	Professor of Agriculture	Royal Agricultural University, United Kingdom
Tsiamis George	Professor of Environmental Microbiology	University of Patras

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:*
 - *is a part of the strategic management of the program.*
 - *focuses on the achievement of special goals related to the quality assurance of the study program.*
 - *has a formal status and is publicly available*
 - *supports the organisation of the quality assurance system through appropriate structures, regulations and processes*
 - *supports teaching, administrative staff and students to take on their responsibilities in quality assurance*
 - *ensures academic integrity and freedom and is vigilant against academic fraud*
 - *guards against intolerance of any kind or discrimination against the students or staff*
 - *supports the involvement of external stakeholders*
 - *is developed with input from industry leaders and other stakeholders (i.e. industry leaders, professional bodies/associations, social partners, NGO's, governmental agencies) to align with professional standards.*
 - *integrates employer surveys to adapt to evolving workplace demands.*
 - *regularly utilizes alumni feedback for long-term effectiveness assessment.*
 - *is published and implemented by all stakeholders.*

1.2 Design, approval, on-going monitoring and review

Standards

- *The programme of study:*
 - *is designed with overall programme objectives that are in line with the institutional strategy and have explicit intended learning outcomes*

- *Aligns course learning outcomes with student assessments using rubrics to ensure objectives are met.*
- *Connects each course's aims and objectives with the programme's overall aims and objectives through mapping, aligning with the institutional strategy.*
- *is designed by involving students and other stakeholders*
- *benefits from external expertise*
- *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)*
- *is designed so that it enables smooth student progression*
- *is designed so that the exams' and assignments' content corresponds to the level of the programme and the number of ECTS*
- *defines the expected student workload in ECTS*
- *includes well-structured placement opportunities where appropriate*
- *is subject to a formal institutional approval process*
- *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*
- *is regularly monitored in the light of the latest research in the given discipline, thus ensuring that the programme is up-to-date*
- *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*
- *is reviewed and revised regularly involving students and other stakeholders*
 - *collaborates with industry experts for curriculum development.*
 - *conducts joint reviews with external academic specialists to maintain academic rigor.*
 - *performs periodic assessments with external stakeholders to ensure continuous alignment with market needs.*
 - *establishes collaboration with international educational institutions or/& other relevant international bodies for a global perspective.*
 - *conducts regular feedback sessions with local community leaders for societal relevance.*

1.3 Public information

Standards

- *Regarding the programme of study, clear, accurate, up-to date and readily accessible information is published about:*
 - *selection criteria*
 - *intended learning outcomes*

- *qualification awarded*
- *teaching, learning and assessment procedures*
- *pass rates*
- *learning opportunities available to the students*
- *graduate employment information*

In addition, the program has established mechanisms of transparency & communication to ensure that

- Professional bodies validate program descriptions and outcomes.
- Community leaders actively participate in ensuring that the program's public information is relevant and resonates with the local and societal context.
- External auditors review public information for accuracy & consistency vis-à-vis the actual implementation of the program.
- Industry-specific & societal information is regularly updated with expert inputs.
- Alumni testimonials are included for a realistic portrayal of program outcomes.

1.4 Information management

Standards

- *Information for the effective management of the programme of study is collected, monitored and analysed using specific indicators and data i.e:*
 - *key performance indicators*
 - *profile of the student population*
 - *student progression, success and drop-out rates*
 - *students' satisfaction with their programmes*
 - *learning resources and student support available*
 - *career paths of graduates*
 - *industry trend analysis.*
 - *feedback mechanisms from external partners/stakeholders*
 - *data exchanges with professional networks*
 - *employer insights concerning career readiness*
- *Students and staff are involved in providing and analysing information and planning follow-up activities.*

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.

Based on the application documentation, the on-site visit, and extensive discussions with staff, students, and administrators, we find that the Organic Agricultural Production programme meets the needs of the industry and addresses the high demand for this profession in Cyprus. KES College has a long history and tradition in providing Environmental Sciences studies. The programme's purpose, objectives, and goals were clearly presented. The diplomas knowledge, skills, and

competences are presented in detail in the programme specification. However, some elements overlap, and there is no clear distinction between the three categories in the programme specification.

1.1 Policy for quality assurance

In discussions with the management, the EEC confirmed that the programme's quality assurance aligns with the procedures used for other programmes at KES College. The department is well-organised and maintains appropriate documentation. The following procedures ensure the quality of the study programme:

- Executive Committee
- Faculty and Administrative Committee
- Disciplinary Committee
- Programme Coordinator
- Student Affairs Committee
- Internal Quality Assurance Committee
- Programmes Committee
- KES Research Centre
- Erasmus Committee
- Student Representatives participating in quality committees

1.2 Design, approval, ongoing monitoring and review

The programme and subject design meet the skills, competences, and knowledge required for graduates to become skilled professionals.

- The overall programme objectives reflect the expected learning outcomes at undergraduate level. However, the wording of some programme and course learning outcomes could be rephrased to better reflect the critical analysis and synthesis expected at this diploma level.
- The programme provides diploma level and in-depth knowledge of the subject. It includes key elements that offer sufficient background knowledge of the sciences and the skills required for organic agricultural production.
- KES College has external partners from the farming industry, ensuring student employment opportunities —as reflected in student discussions. The department also organises events to enhance student experience, bringing professionals to demonstrate practices and innovations in the industry.
- KES College acknowledges the challenges facing the sector and its internal challenges regarding limited research outputs. However, KES created a Research Centre and provides seed funding to promote research initiatives.
- The ECTS for all subjects reflect the work required, although minor adjustments might be necessary, i.e. for the courses 'Ecology' and 'Greenhouse Technology'.

1.3 Public information

The EEC committee has reviewed the relevant course information, and all details are published on the website. The selection criteria, learning outcomes, and qualifications awarded are available. More specifically, the following are published:

- *selection criteria*
- *learning outcomes*
- *qualification awarded*
- *teaching, learning and assessment procedures*
- *pass rates*
- *learning opportunities available to students*
- *graduate employment information*

The programme's purpose and objectives are clearly outlined on the website. The programme aims to provide students a comprehensive understanding of the organic agricultural production sector, equipping them for employment opportunities in the field. The goals are also described in detail. The website features testimonials from graduates who shared their experiences and offered insight into the programme's approach and effectiveness. These testimonials illustrate the programme's success in training and preparing students for careers in the agricultural industry.

1.4 Information management

All information related to the management of the programme was satisfactory. Students and staff are given opportunities to participate in providing and analysing information and planning activities.

KES College demonstrated the processes for monitoring student progression and success, student satisfaction with the programme, and access to library resources. The link with EBSCO enables students to access electronic resources remotely. It is also encouraged to establish links with other scientific databases (Elsevier, Wiley, Springer, etc)

Strengths

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

- The College maintains connections with the industry and will continue to strengthen links with professional bodies.
- They support students' professional development and introduce them to the farming industry.
- The opportunities provided for professional growth are of importance to the College.
- Established quality assurance processing as per other provisions.
- The academic staff provides a good level of student communication and opportunities for discussions.
- The College invested heavily to improve the electronic platform for student, administration, and marking facilities.
- There is very good evidence of emphasis on training and development.

- The collaboration with the Ioannou Foundation is highly valuable and beneficial, as it provides students with the opportunity to participate in well-organised, structured practical sessions that enhance their hands-on learning experience.
- The upgrade and enhancement of the teaching laboratories represent significant progress and demonstrates a commitment to improving the educational infrastructure and learning environment for students.

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.

1. 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.
2. 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.
3. More teaching staff members could actively engage in research.
4. 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).

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

Sub-area		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>
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)

Sub-areas

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

2.2 Practical training

2.3 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.*
- *Detailed schedules in course materials are included, explicitly stating the expected hours for lectures, self-study, and group projects, ensuring transparency in time allocation.*
- *A system is integrated where each learning activity is assigned a weight proportional to its importance and time requirement, aiding in balanced curriculum design.*

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.*
- *The expected hours for different components of practical training, such as lab work, fieldwork, and internships are clearly documented in the training manuals*

- *A weighting system is applied to various practical training elements, reflecting their significance in the overall learning outcomes and student workload.*

2.3 Student assessment

Standards

- *Assessment is consistent, fairly applied to all students and carried out in accordance with the stated procedures.*
- *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.*
 - *The time allocation for each assessment task is explicitly stated in course outlines, ensuring students are aware of the expected workload.*
 - *A balanced assessment weighting strategy is implemented, considering the complexity and learning objectives of each task, to ensure fair evaluation of student performance.*

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

KES College ensures the quality and sufficiency of student resources to enable satisfactory teaching through an internal quality assurance procedure, which involves continuous communication between Programme Coordinators, the Director of Academic Affairs, and KES College Management.

Library Resources: The College library provides a welcoming environment and has a section for the organic agriculture diploma students. Students and staff have access to the EBSCO eBook Academic Collection, offering over 260,000 electronic books for download or online use which can help develop student centred learning and teaching.

Learning Environment: Lecture rooms are air-conditioned and equipped with computers, internet access, and LCD projectors, smart screens, ensuring a modern and supportive teaching environment. The laboratories (microscopy, biology and chemistry) have been recently refitted and whilst small, they are functional and meet the needs of this diploma by allowing students to develop relevant skills.

Programme-Specific Materials: Course specification needs to improve the quality of the learning outcomes and align these to Bloom taxonomy by incorporating appropriate verbs for the level of study and to change the learning outcomes to intended learning outcomes (ILOs). It is recommended that 3-6 ILOs are developed per course and move away from the current format. It would also be worthwhile considering aligning the course content to the ILOs and then detail in the assessment section how each ILO is assessed. The course content is partly inconsistent in presentation between the course specifications and it is recommended that a week-by-week table is incorporated with theoretical and practical class details to improve the structure of the course specific delivery. The bibliography is slightly outdated and the list is heavily biased towards Greek resources with only limited resources recommended in English. It is advisable to move from bibliography to recommended reading and this needs to be regularly reviewed to enable students to engage with the most up to date information relevant to the course.

2.2 Practical training

The physical laboratories are small, but they are appropriate for the teaching requirements of the diploma and the number of students currently enrolled. If student numbers were to increase, groups may need to be split to ensure adequate space.

KES College has formalised its longstanding collaboration with the Christos Stelios Ioannou Foundation through an agreement that supports joint efforts in education, training, research, and the promotion of their activities. As part of this partnership, the Foundation provides essential infrastructure for students, including around 6,000 m² of certified organic farmland. This comprises a 730 m² vegetable garden, a 4,200 m² olive grove, a 630 m² orchard, and a 600 m² greenhouse, along with the necessary agricultural machinery to facilitate hands-on learning and practical agricultural work. This resource is essential for the delivery of this diploma.

2.3 Student assessment

The assessment proportioning of marks should be evaluated to make sure it is representative of the work required and the ILOs assessed. The assessment section should be far more specific about the number and type of assessments in the section 'written assignments, reports, tests' (note, the exact wording varies course to course). It will help the students plan their workload if they know the deadlines for assessments and therefore the assessment dates should be included, ideally in table for clarity.

Adopting an improved assessment brief will help ensure assessment briefs are clear and that the learner understands the assessment requirements. It is recommended that all assessment briefs, tests, practicals etc are moderated before they are released to the student to ensure clarity and avoid biasing assessments towards particular students' preferences. Assessments are currently

submitted through Turnitin to allow for plagiarism detection. An improved process of mark moderation should be implemented to improve equality and help spread methods of best practice. There are appropriate procedures in place for the student appeals procedure. Processes are in place for mitigating circumstances and retake opportunities.

Strengths

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

- Good practical facilities at the Christos Stelios Ioannou Foundation.
- A dedicated and enthusiastic team of teaching and support staff to provide a nurturing and supportive learning environment for the students.

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.

1. 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.

Ensure that course content and assessments are explicitly mapped to ILOs, demonstrating how each outcome is achieved and evaluated.

2. 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.

3. Student Assessment Design and Transparency

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 submission dates to help students plan their workload effectively.

Moderate assessment briefs and marked work.

4. Learning Resources and Bibliography

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.

Overall, a training session/workshop should be delivered to all teaching staff with guidance on improving these aspects of student assessment and course specifications.

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	Partially compliant

3. 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).*
- *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.*

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

There is a structured recruitment and selection process in place aimed at attracting the most qualified teaching staff candidates. Recruitment requests are first approved by the College's Director General through the completion of the *Authority to Recruit Employee Form*. Once the job description is finalized, the vacancy is advertised across recruitment agencies, both internally and externally, to ensure a wide pool of applicants. As an Equal Opportunity Employer, KES College welcomes applications from both internal and external candidates.

Applications are considered provided that candidates submit their CVs within the specified deadline. For each recruitment process, an Evaluation Committee is established, consisting of the Academic Director, the relevant programme coordinator, and the HR Manager Elena Charalambous. The Committee reviews all CVs, verifies the accuracy of the information provided, and compiles a shortlist of the most suitable candidates based on their knowledge, skills, and experience, aligned with the job description. A key requirement for applicants is the appropriate qualifications and an active involvement in research activities, particularly those related to the programmes they will be teaching. The process is overseen by an Internal Quality Committee aligned with national and European standards and is composed of highly qualified teaching staff, plus student and administrative representatives to ensure compliance with legislation and European Standards (ESQ 2015), and is used to oversee and approve applications submitted to CYQAA for accreditation/evaluation. The teaching staff members are all qualified to at least Masters levels

Staff members are encouraged to attend professional development opportunities which are circulated using the KES College email system.

The EEC interpretation did not observe evidence of visiting teaching staff within the programme.

3.2 Teaching staff number and status

The teaching staff, their qualifications and experience is summarised in the table below (the EEC met the staff names the EEC met in bold):

Name	Qualifications	Experience
Yerokostas Costas	MBA; BSc in Marketing Management (University of Florida Metropolitan)	Deputy Academic Director (2016–2017); Head of Marketing & Subscriptions, CreditInfo Cyprus (2004–2008); Marketing Executive, Leptos Group (2000–2002); Lecturer at KES College in Marketing.
Konstantinou Eve	MSc in Food Quality Management (Wageningen University, NL); BSc in Food Technology (TEI Karditsa)	Lecturer at KES College since 2016; External Consultant at Q-Point BV (since 2015) on food quality assurance.
Dr. Vasilis Litskas	PhD in Veterinary Medicine; MSc & BSc in Agricultural Science (Aristotle University of Thessaloniki)	Teaching Associate at KES College (since 2021); Research Associate at Open University of Cyprus & Technological University of Cyprus; >45 research papers; expertise in climate change, sustainability, eco-innovation.
Lois Constantinos	MSc in International Rural Development (Royal Agricultural College, UK); BSc in Crop Production Technology (A.T.E.I. Thessaloniki)	Lecturer at KES College since 2016; Agricultural Scientist in private sector since 2009, specializing in organic agriculture.
Dr. Demetrios Sarris	PhD in Biological Sciences (Univ. of Patra & Univ. of Basel); MSc in Ecology & Environmental Management; Biologist	Extensive academic & research roles: Assistant Professor (Univ. of Cyprus), Research Fellow (EUC), Programme Coordinator (KES College); Postdoc at Univ. of Basel & Patra; >60 publications, 30+ projects; Editorial Board Member.

Name	Qualifications	Experience
Tomouzou Chrysi	MSc in Chemistry (Analytical Lecturer at KES College since 2023; Worked Chemistry, Univ. of Cyprus, in education since 2017; Employed at State 2021); BSc in Chemistry General Chemistry (2021–2022); Active in (Biological Chemistry, Univ. of chemistry education seminars in Cyprus and Cyprus, 2017)	abroad.
Christodoulou Christina	BSc & MSc in Agriculture (Aristotle Univ. of Thessaloniki, Plant Protection); MSc in Environmental Conservation & Management (Open Univ. of Cyprus, 2018)	Lecturer at KES College; Senior Agricultural Scientist at Centre of Apiculture of Cyprus; Accredited Agricultural Scientist for Rural Development Projects; Senior Scientist at Cyprus Agro Industry Centre (2015–2019); Former President, Association of Organic Farmers of Cyprus.
Filokyprou Kypros	BSc & MSc in Agriculture (Aristotle Univ. of Thessaloniki, 2005–2010)	Lecturer at KES College; Qualified Auditor in organic agriculture since 2016; Specialist in organic production management.

The 8 academic staff members are all qualified to at least Masters level and 2 also hold PhDs. This list shows a diversity of teaching staff, about 50 % are full time and about 50 % part time. There is a benefit of having part time staff as they have other jobs which make them more closely connected to the organic agricultural industry. There was no evidence of further visiting staff.

3.3 Synergies of teaching and research

The teaching staff at KES College are playing an important role in advancing agricultural research in Cyprus, particularly in sustainable farming, organic production, and climate change adaptation. Through the KES Research Centre and projects like LIFE-AgrOassis, it contributes to combating desertification, improving soil health, and promoting eco-innovation in agriculture. The TUI Field to Fork Cyprus project is running 2024–2026 with partners including the TUI Care Foundation, Cyprus Environment Foundation, KES College (through its Research Centre), and the Christos Stelios Ioannou Foundation. The focus of the project is to promote regenerative agriculture in Cyprus to support both sustainable farming and sustainable tourism. The students are actively involved in field data collection and the Tui Care Foundation meetings providing a useful insight into improving agricultural production in Cyprus helping to create research informed teaching. Several teaching staff members have publications relevant to their subject specialisms and the diploma. The staff seems to have adequate time to run the research projects and linking them to their teaching helps support both activities.

Strengths

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

- Robust recruitment process ensuring fairness, transparency, and alignment with European standards.
- Highly qualified staff (all at Master's level or above, with PhD holders contributing significant research expertise).
- Balanced staff composition (full-time and part-time), with part-time staff providing valuable industry links.
- Strong integration of teaching and research, with several staff members engaged in EU-funded projects and applied agricultural research. Contributing to national and international research networks, particularly in sustainability, organic farming, and climate change adaptation
- Student involvement in research projects, enhancing experiential learning and linking theory to practice.
- Commitment to professional development, supported by internal communication and training opportunities.
- An amount of 1,000 euros per staff member is provided to support applied research activities.

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.

1. Increase the number of staff holding a PhD to further strengthen research opportunities and research-informed teaching.
2. Have a higher proportion of full-time staff rather than 50 % full time and 50 % part time.
3. 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.

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

Sub-area		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>
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. 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**

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:*
 - *institutional practice for recognition being in line with the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention*
 - *cooperation with other institutions, quality assurance agencies and the national ENIC/NARIC centre with a view to ensuring coherent recognition across the country*

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.*

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. Student admission

The student admission requirements are publicly available, effective, and ensure the institution admits qualified students. These include academic qualifications—such as grades and standardised test scores—and non-academic criteria, such as extracurricular activities and community service. However, it is unclear whether the institution will apply a scoring system to evaluate excess applications, which could create uncertainty for prospective students.

4.2. Student progression

The Secretariat maintains comprehensive digital records of academic performance for current students and graduates. This data supports trend analysis and programme-related decisions. Students must achieve a passing grade of 60% to progress through the programme.

The programme provides academic support and resources to help students navigate challenges during their studies. Students are encouraged to meet with the programme coordinator and course leaders for advising and counselling. These sessions offer feedback on academic performance and guidance on achieving goals. The programme also provides social support, recognising that a supportive community is crucial to student success.

The organisation has established several committees to facilitate communication and collaboration. The Programme Committee discusses programme content, delivery, and issues raised by students and staff. All committee discussions and actions are carefully recorded for review and analysis.

4.3. Student recognition

This programme is classified as equivalent to level 5b education within the broader European educational framework and system of qualifications. It requires and mandates four full semesters of dedicated full-time study, with each semester comprising 14 weeks of structured teaching and instruction, which includes the final examination period at the conclusion of each term. Throughout the duration of the programme, students accumulate and earn a total of 120 ECTS credits, which are fully transferable and recognised by other institutions and universities within the European Union, facilitating academic mobility and continuation of studies. The curriculum and structure of the

programme encompasses and incorporates both theoretical and practical courses, modules, and learning activities, whilst also providing students with valuable opportunities for engaging in research projects and undertaking professional internships in relevant industry settings. The minimum pass grade required for successful completion of individual courses and progression through the programme is established at 60 %. The EEC notes a concern regarding the absence of incentives or recognition mechanisms for high-achieving students, particularly those in the top 5 % of academic performance. This lack of motivation and reward for excellence may hinder the development of a culture that encourages and celebrates outstanding achievement amongst the most capable students.

4.4. Student certification

The institution has established and published regulations governing student certification. These regulations provide clear guidelines and ensure fair, consistent evaluation of all students. The regulations are regularly reviewed and revised to remain current and relevant to student needs. The institution is committed to providing a high-quality, rigorous certification process for all students.

Strengths

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

The admission system is well defined and aims to select the most qualified students by establishing clear and effective admission criteria. These criteria consider academic performance, extracurricular activities, community involvement, and personal characteristics. The institution has established a variety of processes and tools for monitoring student progression. These range from using student performance data to identify areas of concern to implementing instructional interventions to address them. Additionally, the institution has developed mechanisms for collecting and analysing feedback from students and staff to continuously improve these processes and tools. As a result, the institution provides targeted support to struggling students and ensures that all students progress towards their academic goals.

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.

1. 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 College can effectively foster and nurture a robust culture of excellence, high standards, and continuous improvement throughout the institution.

2. 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.

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

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

5. Learning resources and student support (ESG 1.6)

Sub-areas

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.*
- *Students receive support in research-led teaching through engagement in research projects, mentorship from research-active faculty, and access to resources that enhance their research skills and critical engagement with current studies.*

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

KES College uses Moodle as a platform to upload teaching materials and communicate with students. The EEC has been informed that the College is investing in new software to integrate all services, improve student access to grades, and reduce administrative workload and errors.

- All resources are fit for purpose. Academic and administrative staff follow a student-centred learning approach and provide flexible modes of learning and teaching, focusing on practical skills required for the profession.
- The College provides a central hub where all provisions can be accessed at one point of contact.
- Students have access to the library, which provides adequate number of computers and books, as well as access to EBSCO (either via library computers or remotely).
- Students are provided with notes, further reading, and other sources via the VLE (Moodle).
- The list of books on Organic Agricultural Production is limited. Additional resources on Organic Agricultural Production could be added.

5.2 Physical resources

- The department provides computer rooms and lecture rooms equipped with computer connections and recording facilities.
- Facilities include computer rooms, a Microscopy-Botany lab, a Plant Physiology-Soil Science lab, and a Chemistry lab.
- All labs are fit for purpose but quite small. KES College states the laboratories accommodate 8 students, though the limited space suggests fewer students would be more appropriate. These labs, despite their size, must follow all safety regulations to ensure students can fully utilise them.
- Collaboration with the Ioannou Foundation provided KES College with appropriate access to greenhouse facilities and experimental plots for practical training.

5.3 Human support resources

- All human support resources, practices, and policies are in place. The College provides excellent support for students' wellbeing, academic experience, student life, and learning. However, the EEC notes that whilst the College has demonstrated engagement with external stakeholders through informal channels and ad hoc consultations, there is currently no formally established and proper External Stakeholder Committee in place. The absence of such a structured committee represents a significant gap in the programme's governance and quality assurance mechanisms. A formal External Stakeholder Committee would provide systematic input from industry professionals, agricultural enterprises, government bodies, and other relevant stakeholders, ensuring that the programme remains aligned with evolving industry needs, labour market demands, and professional standards. The establishment of this committee would facilitate regular, structured dialogue between the institution and the agricultural sector, enabling timely curriculum updates, enhanced placement opportunities, and stronger links between academic training and professional practice. The EEC strongly recommends that the College prioritise the formation of this committee as a matter of urgency to strengthen the programme's external engagement and ensure its continued relevance to the agricultural industry in Cyprus.

5.4 Student support

- Students are informed about all existing policies in the student handbook and at events organised by administrative support staff, particularly during orientation at the beginning of the semester. International students receive similar support, with additional assistance for immigration processes, accommodation, and other needs.

Strengths

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

- The College demonstrated strong financial stability and maintains adequate resources to support its operations, whilst simultaneously providing comprehensive and well-structured support services dedicated to promoting and safeguarding student welfare, wellbeing, and overall quality of life throughout their academic journey.
- The College's future strategic plans and vision are notably ambitious in scope and demonstrate careful alignment with current government projections, forecasts, and policy directions regarding the anticipated number of farmers entering the profession, established agricultural development targets, and the specific skills and competencies that graduates will require for successful employment in the evolving agricultural sector.

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.

1. 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.
2. Teaching and learning resources: The list of books on Organic Agricultural Production is limited, and additional resources should be added.

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

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

6. 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

Standards

- *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*
 - *the examinations*
 - *the procedures for supporting and accepting the student's proposal*
 - *the criteria for obtaining the Ph.D. degree*

6.2 Proposal and dissertation

Standards

- *Specific and clear guidelines for the writing of the proposal and the dissertation are set regarding:*
 - *the chapters that are contained*
 - *the system used for the presentation of each chapter, sub-chapters and bibliography*
 - *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.*

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
- support for writing research papers
- participation in conferences
- The number of doctoral students that each chairperson supervises at the same time are determined.

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.

Not applicable.

Strengths

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

Not applicable.

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.

Not applicable

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

Sub-area		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>
6.1	Selection criteria and requirements	Not applicable
6.2	Proposal and dissertation	Not applicable
6.3	Supervision and committees	Not applicable

D. 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.

Conclusions and Final Remarks

Overall Assessment

The **Organic Agricultural Production programme** at KES College demonstrates considerable merit and meets the fundamental requirements for a Level 5 (short-cycle) qualification within the European Qualifications Framework. The External Evaluation Committee commends the institution for its commitment to providing quality education in a sector of growing importance to Cyprus and the wider region. The programme successfully addresses genuine industry demand and provides students with practical, employment-oriented training in organic agricultural production.

Alignment with European Qualifications Framework (EQF Level 5)

The programme appropriately corresponds to **EQF Level 5** (short-cycle qualification within higher education), requiring students to develop:

- **Comprehensive, specialized knowledge** in organic agricultural production
- **Cognitive and practical skills** to devise solutions to specific problems in the agricultural field
- **Competences** to manage complex technical activities and take responsibility in unpredictable work contexts

However, to further enhance and strengthen EQF alignment, the following improvements are essential:

1. Learning Outcomes and Programme Design

Current Status: The programme objectives and learning outcomes exist but require refinement to fully reflect EQF Level 5 descriptors.

Recommendations:

- **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)
- **Standardize ILOs** to 3-6 clearly measurable outcomes per course that explicitly demonstrate cognitive complexity expected at Level 5
- **Map ILOs systematically** to assessment tasks and course content, ensuring transparent alignment

- **Distinguish clearly** between knowledge, skills, and competences in programme specifications, eliminating current overlaps
- **Update all course references** to include contemporary, internationally recognized sources that reflect current best practices in organic agriculture

This revision will ensure the programme demonstrably achieves the critical analysis, problem-solving, and autonomous learning competences characteristic of EQF Level 5.

2. Assessment Strategy and Academic Standards

Recommendations:

- **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
- **Implement mandatory moderation** of all assessment briefs before release and of marked assessments to ensure consistency, fairness, and appropriate academic level
- **Publish comprehensive assessment schedules** in table format showing deadlines, assessment types, and ILOs being assessed
- **Review mark allocation** across all courses to ensure appropriate weighting that reflects complexity and time investment
- **Provide staff training** on designing and marking assessments at diploma level to maintain academic standards

These improvements will ensure assessments effectively measure achievement of Level 5 learning outcomes and maintain comparability with other European qualifications.

3. Student Recognition and Academic Excellence

Recommendations:

- **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
- **Implement a grade improvement opportunity** allowing students to retake 2-3 subjects to enhance their performance, supporting the principle of student-centered learning
- **Ensure transparent communication** of progression requirements, ECTS credits, and how qualifications align with the National Qualifications Framework and EQF

This will enhance student motivation and ensure the programme actively promotes achievement of the highest standards.

4. Teaching Staff Development and Research Integration

Recommendations:

- **Increase the proportion of PhD-qualified staff** to enhance research capacity and ensure teaching is informed by current research in the field
- **Increase research funding** beyond the current €1,000 per staff member to support meaningful research that can be integrated into teaching
- **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
- **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.

5. Learning Resources and Infrastructure

Recommendations:

- **Expand the library collection** specifically on organic agricultural production, adding contemporary English-language textbooks, journals, and industry reports
- **Diversify digital resources** beyond EBSCO by establishing links with scientific databases (Elsevier, Wiley, Springer) relevant to agricultural sciences
- **Ensure full compliance** with laboratory safety regulations by installing required an adequate shower facility near the chemistry lab and accessible eye wash stations
- **Monitor laboratory capacity** as student numbers grow, prepared to split groups if necessary to maintain appropriate practical training conditions

The collaboration with the Christos Stelios Ioannou Foundation is exemplary and should continue as a core strength of practical learning.

6. External Stakeholder Engagement and Quality Assurance

Current Status: Informal stakeholder engagement exists but lacks formal structure (marked as **Partially Compliant**).

Recommendations:

- **Establish immediately a formal External Stakeholder Committee** with representatives from:
 - Agricultural enterprises and organic farming associations
 - Government agricultural departments
 - Professional bodies

- Academic partners
- Alumni
- **Formalize Memoranda of Understanding** with key industry partners, domestic and international universities, and research institutions
- **Schedule regular committee meetings** (minimum twice annually) to review curriculum relevance, employment outcomes, and industry trends
- **Document stakeholder feedback systematically** and demonstrate how it informs programme development

This formalization will ensure the programme remains responsive to evolving industry needs and maintains its professional relevance—a critical requirement for Level 5 qualifications that prepare students for specific employment sectors.

7. Course Structure and Transparency

Recommendations:

- **Develop week-by-week teaching plans** for all courses showing theoretical and practical sessions, readings, and learning activities
- **Standardize course specification formats** across the programme to ensure consistency and clarity
- **Explicitly state expected student workload** for each learning activity (lectures, self-study, group work, practical sessions) to ensure ECTS allocations accurately reflect effort required
- **Review ECTS allocation** for courses like 'Ecology' and 'Greenhouse Technology' to ensure they appropriately reflect student workload

The EEC expresses confidence that KES College has the capacity, commitment, and resources to implement these improvements and looks forward to seeing the programme's continued development and success.



E. Signatures of the EEC

Name
Martin Weih
Nicola Cannon
George Tsiamis
Click to enter Name
Click to enter Name
Click to enter Name

Date: 2025-10-14