



RESPONSE TO THE EXTERNAL EVALUATION REPORT

**Program of Study: Travel and Tourism
(Diploma) (2 Years/120 ECTS)**

15 September 2017

The College of Tourism and Hotel Management thanks the Quality Assurance Agency of the Higher Education of the Republic of Cyprus and, in particular, to the External Evaluation Committee for its constructive comments on improving the program of study Travel and Tourism (Diploma) (2 years / 120 ECTS). On this report, concluding remarks and suggestions, we submit our response as follows.

1. EFFECTIVENESS OF TEACHING WORK – AVAILABLE RESOURCES

Recommendations:

- The college must ensure that the information provided publicly is consistent with the reality of the current course delivery. This would include such things as the premises currently occupied, the names of staff teaching at the college, the name of the program coordinators, the name of the Academic Director, the structure of the program and the number of ECTS credits per module.
- To develop the Edmodo platform to cover all teaching modules and all teaching staff.
- To consider the most appropriate teaching methods and the most appropriate assessment strategies for the module content and learning outcomes being delivered.
- To update teaching materials to reflect current industry practice and recent publications.
- To provide a definitive list of academic staff and the modules they will deliver.
- To review the available resources in relation to the number of students being enrolled rather than the number identifies in the documentation.

Response

- The information is submitted to the Ministry of Education and Culture every semester includes the Academic Director and teaching staff. We recognize that this information was not updated on the website something which we have rectified by taking appropriate action.
- The Edmodo platform is developed to cover all teaching modules, something which has been done.
- Teaching methods and assessment are in place and are mentioned in each module.
- The College has included in the program, one year ago, the teaching of the internationally used by travel agents and airlines reservation system SABER, to familiarize students with the new systems which are used by the industry. The personal Communications and

presentation skills are included in the module ENG121 and ENG 122, which mainly deal with the writing and Communication in English.

- A revised Table 3 mentioning the academic staff and the modules they teach was handed to the Committee upon their arrival. This is revised again to include the new module as per the suggestion of the committee (encl).
- The College has a capacity of 412 students which is approved by the Ministry of Education. The documentation reflects to the minimum (15) number of students to secure the economic viability of the program. If there are students in excess of the numbers specified by the Agency, the college employs more lecturers to deliver the program.

2. PROGRAM OF STUDY AND HIGHER EDUCATION QUALIFICATIONS

Recommendations:

- To consider whether this program is better designated as a Vocational program rather than an academic program, this has implications for program learning outcomes, teaching and assessment methods.
- To review the program learning outcomes and to incorporate current technology and industry developments and personal communication and presentation skills.
- To review the relevance of all modules to the revised program learning outcomes and replace those that may be less relevant with those that may be more relevant, for example replace the 'Tourism Planning and Development' module with a module on 'Sales Techniques and Processes'.
- To review the ECTS credits assigned to each module.
- To develop a definitive course structure.
- To update the course web pages and the prospectus to reflect the revised program.
- To seek International collaboration that is directly relevant to this program.
- To develop links with local industry to support the delivery of the program.
- To develop role descriptions for program coordinators and to review the information they require and autonomy to make effective decisions.

Response

- The Travel and Tourism program is an academic program approved by the Ministry of Education for the last 25 years and this is how we wish to offer it. The program was accredited since 1992.
- The College has included in the program, one year ago, the teaching of the internationally used by travel agents and airlines reservation system SABER, to familiarize students with the new systems which are used by the industry.

The personal Communications and presentation skills are included in the module ENG121 and ENG 122, which mainly deal with the writing and Communication in English.

- We accept the Committees' recommendation and a new module on "Sales Techniques and Processes" was developed replacing the "Tourism Planning and Development" and it's herewith included (encl).
- The numbers of ECTS awarded to each module were revised and adjusted totaling 120 ECTS as shown in Table 1 & 2 (encl).
- Course web pages and prospectus can **only** be revised after the program is approved by the Agency.
- The College has a number of Collaborations with foreign colleges and Universities relevant to the program. We have agreements for various programs of the college including travel and tourism administration. The list of collaborators numbers 207 colleges and universities, including the U.K.
- Links with Industry are in place including travel agencies and airline companies. The director was in the travel and tourism industry for more than 23 years and has the best possible connections with travel agencies and airline companies. The lecturers have long experience of the industry which makes it easy for them to organize visits to travel agencies and airline companies.
- Role descriptions for the program coordinator are already in place and they are aware of them (enc).

3. ADMINISTRATION SERVICES, STUDENT WELFARE AND SUPPORT OF TEACHING WORK

Recommendations:

- To consider ways in which better use of the available space in the building can be facilitated to provide: office space for academic staff, space for students to consult books in the library.
- To provide all academic staff with additional resources (e.g. Computers in classrooms &/or laptops to faculty) to make better use of the technology that the college already provides, such as Edmodo, data projectors etc.

Response

- The College took measures to increase office space for academic staff and nominated a room of 20sq. meters. The Library is approved by the Ministry of Education and Culture and is considered sufficient for the capacity of the College. May be the committee has seen only the part at the entrance of the library and did not notice the other part which is behind the rows of books.
- The College has a number of Desktops and Laptops available to academic staff. The lecturers have the freedom to either use their laptops or the college's ones.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS OF THE EXTERNAL EVALUATION COMMITTEE¹

The program is currently recruiting around 70 students per year when the documentation suggests a recruitment of only 15 students per year. This places significant strains on the available academic staff and infrastructure.

We comment the College's attempt to introduce a virtual learning environment such as Edmodo, this will, however, require considerable further investment and development.

We remain concerned by the significant inconsistencies in the documentation we receive, the prospectus and the website and the answers we received from the staff we met.

Response

- The program had 36 students enrolled during Spring Semester and 38 students during Fall Semester. The College has the room capacity to cover the above numbers as it has an approved capacity by the Ministry of Education of 412 students.

The above mentioned two intakes exceptionally had a high number of students because of the change of policy of the government to allow students to enter Cyprus easily.

For information purposes only the applications for the summer intake were 15 and the estimated number of students to come is around 11.

If at any time the number of students exceed the approved by the Agency numbers the college has the ability to employ more lecturers to deliver the program.

The documentation gives the **minimum** number of 15 students in order to allow the economic viability of the program.

- The Edmodo platform was introduced eight months ago and each lecturer was developing it to cover all teaching modules, something which has already been done.
- The inconsistencies in the documentation submitted to the agency, the prospectus and the website of the college, were due to the fact that the website was not updated to reflect the current situation, something which has now been done

The College of Tourism and Hotel Management assures the External Evaluation Committee, as well as the Board of the Quality Assurance Agency of Higher Education, that it will faithfully implement the recommendations of the External Evaluation Committee as detailed in our present answer.

Sincerely Yours,
Savvas Adamides,
Director

Enc:

1. Revised table 3-Teaching personnel and courses
2. Course Outline of the new module on "Sales Techniques and Processes"

3. Revised Programme Structure (Table 1 & 2)
4. Role descriptions for the program coordinator
5. Measures implemented on the recommendation of the previous External Evaluation committee.
6. Quality Assurance Regulations
7. Student Handbook