

Doc. 300.1.2

Date: 28/07/2023

Higher Education Institution's Response

- **Higher Education Institution:**
College of Tourism and Hotel Management
- **Town:** Nicosia
- **Programme of study**
Name (Duration, ECTS, Cycle)

In Greek:

Ξενοδοχειακή Διοίκηση (2 ακαδημαϊκά έτη, 120 ECTS, Δίπλωμα)

In English:

Hotel Administration (2 academic years, 120 ECTS, Diploma)

- **Language(s) of instruction:** English
- **Programme's status:** Currently Operating
- **Concentrations (if any):** n/a

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
Make the quality assurance policy publicly available on the College website.	The quality assurance policy has been made publicly available. Link: https://www.cothm.ac.cy/quality-assurance	Choose level of compliance:
Clarify and streamline its policy regarding plagiarism.	The college's policy regarding plagiarism is clarified and is or will be included (with the new version) in all relevant documentation (Prospectus, Student Handbook, Quality Assurance Handbook) as well as our website on the below link: https://www.cothm.ac.cy/student-rights-responsibilities-ethics It is included on this report as Annex 1 .	Choose level of compliance:
Revise and streamline programme and course learning outcomes to be consistent.	Following individual meetings between the academic director, the course coordinator and lecturers, both the programme and course learning outcomes have been revised and streamlined as per the report's comments and are included as Annex 2 .	Choose level of compliance:
Devise generic grade descriptors for each level of study to improve marking consistency and guide students in expectations.	Generic grade descriptors have been devised. These apply for all levels of study and are included as Annex 3 .	Choose level of compliance:
Include a programme-level measure of student satisfaction	A programme-level measure of student satisfaction has been added to the questionnaire which is now edited as per Annex 4 .	Choose level of compliance:
Devise appropriate KPIs for the programme.	Appropriate KPIs have been designed for the programme and these will be monitored by the administration staff (please see Annex 5).	Choose level of compliance:

<p>Involve alumni in further revisions to the programme to ensure it is fit for purpose.</p>	<p>An email was sent to alumni members requesting their input for revisions to their respective programme of study by assessing the relevance, appropriateness and effectiveness of the individual modules and programme as a whole to their work experience through specific targeted questions combined with more general open questions. Their responses will be reviewed and discussed by the Internal Quality Assurance Committee to take necessary action where required. A similar email will be sent periodically as new alumni members emerge.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>

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
<p>Introduce changes to the curriculum to reduce the emphasis on writing style courses and increase the focus on courses directly related to the subject of the Diploma programme.</p>	<p>As evident by our actions and replies throughout the report, the EEC’s recommendations are appreciated and taken into consideration. However, we respectfully feel that, - given the majority of our students ethnic background and the importance of languages and especially the English language – we should not introduce the specific changes referred to in this section.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>
<p>Further develop the student-centred learning approach.</p>	<p>A total of five staff members this year registered for the certification of the Human Resource Development Authority of Cyprus (ANAD). Three staff members are already ANAD-certified. The ANAD certification is based on the ADDIE model which is a student-centered-learning method and the goal is for all staff to increasingly employ such methods. Relevant instructions are planned to be given to all teaching staff and subsequent feedback will be requested. In addition to this, as noted, the college is actively promoting participation in seminars and conferences relating to this; 3 staff members (subject to limits imposed) participated in a relevant 2-day conference organised by the CyQAA, Harvard University and the University of St. Gallen a few months ago.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>
<p>Further use its industry contacts to provide guest lectures or fieldtrips, enriching the student experience</p>	<p>An email has been sent to all teaching staff urging them to plan for guest lecturers and fieldtrips with the help of our admin staff where necessary. We will follow-up and log such events, as well as making sure to collect feedback from both staff and students. College management has initiated</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>

	<p>communications with 4 hotels and a well-known catering company to make preliminary arrangements for site visits. It has also arranged with specialists in sustainable tourism, alternative tourism and a wine connoisseur and blogger to act as guest lecturers. Further contacts will be approached following and depending on the feedback of our teaching staff.</p>	
<p>Review all learning outcomes to ensure they are at the appropriate level and are written appropriately.</p>	<p>Following individual meetings between the academic director, the course coordinator and lecturers, all course outlines have been reviewed and written in a way that better summarise each module's learning outcomes rather than as a list of course content that will be covered. These have been attached as Annex 2 to this report.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>

3. Teaching staff (ESG 1.5)

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
<p>To undertake an effort to help existing members of staff to upgrade their educational level.</p>	<p>The college actively encourages staff members to upgrade their educational level; Two teaching staff members are at an advanced stage of completion of their PhD and DBAs, while another one is currently looking for a university to do her PhD.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>
<p>To support and coordinate research activities based on solid KPIs and to encourage publication in industry/trade and peer-reviewed academic journals of a certain calibre.</p>	<p>The college very actively encourages research activity by its teaching staff. The college accepts a reduction of 3 teaching hours per week by teaching staff involved in research with no effect on pay. The list presented to the EEC on research activity by teaching staff was by no means conclusive; A more conclusive list is included on this report as Annex 6 including both full-time and part-time lecturers and in some cases research that has taken time long ago but which showcases the continuous involvement of the lecturers in research-related activities.</p> <p>The KPIs we intent to use are as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Research Output: Number of research publications produced by the college's researchers (journal articles, conference papers, books, and book chapters) in industry/trade and peer-reviewed academic journals. 2. Research Impact: Impact of the college's research by 	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>

	<p>tracking citations of research publications.</p> <p>3. Research Collaborations: Number of research collaborations established by the college with other institutions, both nationally and internationally (joint research projects, co-authored publications, and collaborative funding initiatives).</p>	
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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
Implement a more detailed process for reviewing transcripts and other documents.	The process for reviewing transcripts and other documents has been made more detailed, the relevant staff have been informed of these changes and a note has been made for these to be included in the college's next prospectus and student handbook. Please refer to Annex 7 for the Admissions Procedure which includes the process for reviewing transcripts and other documents.	Choose level of compliance:
The College could consider offering additional support services for students who may struggle with the English language, such as language tutoring or language-specific study groups during the semester.	As noted in <i>Part 2. Student – centred learning, teaching and assessment (ESG 1.3)</i> , we feel that given the majority of our students ethnic background and the importance of languages and especially the English language – we should not introduce the specific changes referred to in that section. This renders language tutoring or language-specific study groups redundant.	Choose level of compliance:
Continue tracking progression rates of students in the	We do plan to continue tracking progression rates of students in the	Choose level of compliance:

<p>programme regularly, and to also make plans to increase or maintain progression levels, and to evaluate why targets were (not) met.</p>	<p>programme regularly with an aim to increase progression levels. Although largely out of our hands, it is to this end that we are trying to increase the currently low ratio of other students to 3rd country students in the college overall as progression levels are higher for other students.</p>	
<p>Add to the College regulations clear indications of what can and cannot be put forward as extenuating circumstances, and the evidence required to support an application.</p>	<p>We have added the required to College regulations and have amended all relevant documentation accordingly (Prospectus & Student Handbook which are also available through our website). It is included on this report as Annex 8.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>
<p>State the basis on which a grade petition can be made – e.g., bias, and the evidence that will be needed to support the petition.</p>	<p>In making an appeal, the student must allege bias or caprice in grading, a departure from grading procedures as indicated by the instructor, or refusal to clarify the basis for a grade on the part of the instructor.</p> <p>The evidence that will be needed to support the petition will be the paper in question which will be compared to answer key with grade weights (if available) and/or grading policies as stated on the respective course outline. If deemed necessary by any party the paper can also be compared against similar graded papers by other students.</p> <p>In all cases, a grade petition must be accompanied by the Grade Petition Form.</p> <p>Students wishing to dispute their semester grades have up to one month after the announcement of the grades to contact their School and complete this form. This petition is examined by the Faculty Member, the Course Coordinator and the Academic Director.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>

	<p>The above procedure and form have been added to the College's website on the below link:</p> <p>https://www.cothm.ac.cy/grade-petition</p> <p>The procedure has also been noted to be added on the next issued versions of the Student Handbook and Prospectus.</p>	
<p>The College should formalize how learning of soft skills is facilitated at the College and through the educational process.</p>	<p>Two teaching staff members have taught a number of seminars on various soft skills through the Human Resource Development Authority of Cyprus (ANAD). Our goal is to continue to provide professional development opportunities for faculty members to enhance their knowledge and skills in teaching and assessing soft skills by offering workshops, training sessions, or resources to equip instructors with effective strategies for promoting soft skill development in the classroom.</p> <p>Although a number of soft skills is already included in the curricula of many modules, lecturers have been informed that special emphasis should be placed on the inclusion of soft skills in the educational process. The procedure as sent to them is attached as Annex 9.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>

5. Learning resources and student support (ESG 1.6)

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
Based on the discussions held between the EEC and the students, the College is advised to improve its IT facilities from both a quantitative and a qualitative perspective. Among others, hotel, and other simulation platforms relevant to the hospitality sector and other hospitality-related systems used in the industry should be introduced in the College.	As a first step, the College has made an application under the Recovery And Resilience Plan 2021-2026 (Business Digital Upgrade Plan) with the Ministry of Energy, Commerce and Industry with a view to upgrading the College's software and hardware. Following the recommendation by the EEC, part of the funds will be used to introduce simulation hospitality platforms in our curricula. In the meantime, the software on our computers has been upgraded and will continue to be upgraded with new software versions.	Choose level of compliance:
The College should consider expanding the library's hours to include evenings and weekends, as many students have busy schedules and may not be able to access the library during regular business hours.	The College administration has decided that, the library hours are now set as 09:00 – 17:00 Monday to Friday. In addition, upon request by any student, the library will be open on Tuesdays and Thursdays afternoon all the way to 22:00. Students will be appropriately informed of this option through an announcement, a notice in the library door, and changes of information on the website and student handbook.	Choose level of compliance:
The College should consider offering flexible tutoring hours or alternative methods of tutoring (e.g., online tutoring) to make it easier for students to access this service.	As noted above, the College has made an application under the Recovery And Resilience Plan 2021-2026 (Business Digital Upgrade Plan) with the Ministry of Energy, Commerce and Industry with a view to upgrading its software and hardware. Following this, we will proceed with an application to offer the programme online.	Choose level of compliance:
The College should work on creating a more vibrant college	The College organises a welcome party within 3 weeks of	Choose level of compliance:

<p>life for students by organizing more social and extracurricular activities on campus (including dining options)</p>	<p>commencement of classes to welcome new students. It also organises an annual trip to Troodos in the 3rd week of February and other field trips, while as noted above in <i>Part 2. Student – centred learning, teaching and assessment (ESG 1.3)</i>, further field trips will be organised by lecturers as these serve social as well as educational purposes. The college also organises annual backgammon and chess competitions while chess boards and backgammon boards are available in the administration and are being used by students. In addition, the college maintains an agreement with Elenion School, under the terms of which, college students are free to use the sports grounds of the school. A 3x3 basketball tournament is planned by the college for November, which will be organised by the Academic Affairs Officer Elias Elia, who is an International FIBA referee and has organised similar events in the past. Lastly, a ping pong table has been acquired by the college for the cafeteria.</p>	
<p>The College should consider ways to increase Cypriot student enrolment.</p>	<p>We are currently in the process of preparing two applications for new programmes of study at the Diploma Level (namely Office Administration and Legal Assistant) which are targeting exclusively (or almost exclusively) Cypriot Students. We also had some enquiries of our running Mediterranean Diet, Nutrition and Tourism Masters’ Degree. Finally, we are also deliberating to introduce short courses with the Cypriot students again being the main target market.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>
<p>The College should make efforts to address the challenge of balancing competing student needs and interests, such as by</p>	<p>A student union representative is included in the College Council, the Academic Committee, the Administrative Committee, the</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>

<p>seeking input from students on priorities and implementing policies or initiatives that address the most pressing issues</p>	<p>Social Events Committee and the Internal Quality Committee. Both at committee level as well as in the classroom and administration, students are encouraged – as dictated by management – to express views and concerns that are in fact discussed when these arise, and are subsequently reflected in the relevant policies and documentation of the college whenever possible.</p>	
<p>The College should facilitate and encourage the establishment of an alumni association to further relations between current students and graduates of the College.</p>	<p>At present, we have a register of alumni members. However, following the recommendation by the EEC, we have commissioned a specialist company to set up an online platform for which we will send email invitations to former students to join, so as further relations between current students and graduates of the College. The platform, among other things will include a searchable alumni directory, announcements made by College, news and updates by alumni members, career opportunities and advice, continuing education programs at COTHM or through affiliates, volunteer opportunities, social media integration, discussion board and photo gallery.</p>	

6. 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
<p>The College should formalize and explicitly identify how the different learning pedagogies and assessment methodologies link to Learning Objectives, of which there was informal proof: rationalize the number of learning goals and objectives, while at the same time more explicitly linking those Learning Objectives and Learning Goals with respect to sustainability/resilience, diversity, inclusion, etc. - in short, the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals.</p>	<p>As noted in <i>Part 1: Study programme and study programme's design and development</i>, following individual meetings between the academic director, the course coordinator and lecturers, both the programme and course learning outcomes have been revised and streamlined to be consistent. Also, as noted in <i>Part 2. Student – centred learning, teaching and assessment</i>, all course outlines have been reviewed and written in a way that better summarise each module's learning outcomes rather than as a list of course content that will be covered. In addition, the learning objectives of both the programme as a whole as well as of individual modules have explicitly been linked to the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals. Please refer to Annex 2 for Learning Objectives and Goals.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>
<p>The College should assist academic staff to produce professional/trade and research outputs of added value through the newly established Research Centre. Moreover, the College should carefully redesign its curriculum to increase the number of courses that are explicitly related to the subject of the Diploma programme.</p>	<p>Both issues have been addressed above. Kindly refer to <i>Part 3. Teaching staff</i> for the research issue and <i>Part 2. Student – centred learning, teaching and assessment</i> for the curriculum issue.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>

C.



D. Higher Education Institution academic representatives

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>Signature</i>
Savvas Adamides	Director	
Antonis Thrassou	Academic Director	
Andreas Christoforou	Course Coordinator	
Elena Stavrou	Administration Representative	

Date: 28/07/2023

