

Doc. 300.1.2

Higher Education Institution's Response

Date: Date.

- **Higher Education Institution:**
Intercollege

- **Town:** Nicosia

- **Programme of study**
Name (Duration, ECTS, Cycle)

In Greek:

Επισιτιστικές Τέχνες (2 Χρόνια, 120 ECTS, Δίπλωμα)

In English:

Culinary Arts (2 Years/120 ECTS, Diploma)

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

- **Programme's status:** Currently Operating

- **Concentrations (if any):**

In Greek: Concentrations

In English: Concentrations



The present document has been prepared within the framework of the authority and competencies of the Cyprus Agency of Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Higher Education, according to the provisions of the “Quality Assurance and Accreditation of Higher Education and the Establishment and Operation of an Agency on Related Matters Laws” of 2015 to 2021 [L.136(I)/2015 – L.132(I)/2021].

A. Guidelines on content and structure of the report

- *The Higher Education Institution (HEI) based on the External Evaluation Committee's (EEC's) evaluation report (Doc.300.1.1 or 300.1.1/1 or 300.1.1/2 or 300.1.1/3 or 300.1.1/4) must justify whether actions have been taken in improving the quality of the programme of study in each assessment area. The answers' documentation should be brief and accurate and supported by the relevant documentation. Referral to annexes should be made only when necessary.*
- *In particular, under each assessment area and by using the 2nd column of each table, the HEI must respond on the following:*
 - *the areas of improvement and recommendations of the EEC*
 - *the conclusions and final remarks noted by the EEC*
- *The institution should respond to the EEC comments, in the designated area next each comment. The comments of the EEC should be copied from the EEC report **without any interference** in the content.*
- *In case of annexes, those should be attached and sent on separate document(s). Each document should be in *.pdf format and named as annex1, annex2, etc.*

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

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For official use Only
<p>The program could further elaborate its key performance indicators to better monitor the quality of the education offered.</p>	<p>We appreciate the Committee's insights on the importance of elaborating our key performance indicators to better monitor the quality of the education offered in our "Culinary Arts" 2 Years Diploma program. The College has an existing framework of Quality Assurance Procedures for all programs, and in response to the committee’s feedback, we’ve proactively updated and enhanced our evaluation methods.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Program Evaluation Report (APER): We've updated this critical report to better capture and assess the factors that contribute to the success of our Diploma program. The revisited APER now carries a broader spectrum of key performance indicators, providing a comprehensive overview of the program's performance. It examines various facets of our program, such as student metric analysis, satisfaction survey results, faculty research publications, resource allocation and needs, quality assurance and multi-layered action plans. Each element is designed to systemically and analytically ensure reaching our educational goals - Attachment 1 <p>In addition to the above, our commitment to quality assurance is also reflected through several other established processes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programme Review Committee (PRC): A committee that meets once per semester and consists of the program’s faculty and students. The PRC is a communicative way to improve the program where lecturers and students can comment on the current situation and suggest further improvements. Based on the committee's findings, an action plan is created for the forthcoming semester and/or academic year to implement (if possible) any of the suggestions made. • Internal Programme Faculty Meetings: Meetings that take place on a regular basis every semester and are scheduled by the program coordinator. • Students Course Evaluation Questionnaire: This questionnaire is conducted once per semester after the midterm examination period, allowing students to evaluate their lecturers and provide their comments/feedback. 	<p>Choose an item.</p>

	<p>Based on the above, we believe that the College is in a strong position to properly monitor the quality performance of our "Culinary Arts" 2 Years Diploma program. "</p>	
<p>The number of students enrolled does not assure the program's feasibility.</p>	<p>We acknowledge the Committee's observation, and we understand the importance of maintaining a robust student body for the program's sustainability and success.</p> <p>In response to the current enrollment numbers that are low, we are planning to intensify our efforts to attract more students. Our strategy includes enhancing our marketing and promotional activities to raise awareness about the unique benefits and opportunities our program offers. We aim to leverage various channels, including digital platforms, education fairs, and partnerships with culinary institutions, to reach a wider audience of prospective students. Additionally, we will intensify our efforts on strengthening our ties with industry partners to promote the programme themselves as well as to continue providing our students with valuable practical experiences. We believe that these real-world experiences will enhance the appeal of our program and attract more students. Lastly, we assure the Committee that we are committed to adhering to the DIPAE guidelines concerning the minimum number of students for a program/course to be operational. These guidelines are crucial in maintaining the quality and feasibility of our educational offerings.</p>	
<p>The unit's website is attractive, but it should become easier to navigate.</p>	<p>We appreciate the Committee's feedback regarding the navigability of our website. We understand the importance of a user-friendly website that provides easy access to essential information for our students and other stakeholders.</p> <p>We would like to inform the Committee that our website is a newly launched platform, built using cutting-edge technology to create a more user-friendly experience. However, we acknowledge that it is still a work in progress, and we are continuously working on improving its functionality and navigability.</p> <p>We have a dedicated team working diligently on reviewing and enhancing the website's structure and design. This includes optimizing the layout and improving the menu structure.</p> <p>Our aim is to make our website as intuitive and easy to navigate as possible, ensuring that all necessary information is readily accessible. We are committed to making our website a comprehensive and reliable source of information for all parties involved.</p> <p>We assure the Committee that the final version of our website will significantly enhance the user experience and make it easier for prospective students, current students, and other stakeholders to find the information they need.</p>	

<p>The unit should make publicly available (on its website) all the essential information on the study programme, such as descriptions of the modules, learning goals, content, assessment methods as well as information on Erasmus Program.</p>	<p>We appreciate the Committee's feedback regarding the availability of essential information about the program on our website. The website, which was recently updated, now includes all the essential program-specific information, including descriptions of the modules, learning goals, content, and assessment methods. However at the time of the Committee's visit, this information may not have been fully available due to the recent launch of our new website.</p> <p>We assure you that we are committed to public transparency and we have a dedicated team that worked diligently on transferring and updating all relevant information to ensure the site is comprehensive and current. The project is still ongoing but we are confident that very soon our new website will be populated with all the necessary information.</p> <p>Regarding the Erasmus Programme, we are pleased to inform the Committee that information about our Erasmus bilateral agreements is publicly available and updated on a regular basis at: https://www.intercollege.ac.cy/erasmus-plus-intercollege/.</p> <p>We understand the importance of the Erasmus programme for our students and are committed to providing them with all the necessary information.</p>	
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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
Revision of Course Outline to clearly depict hours of theoretical and practical sessions per subject.	All syllabi of courses that include practical sessions have been adjusted to clearly depict the hour allocation between theoretical and practical sessions. Laboratory hours are also indicated on the attached Semester Breakdown (Attachment 2)	Choose an item.
Attendance of practical sessions should be mandatory and should be weighted in the student assessment criteria	We thank the Committee for emphasizing the importance of mandatory attendance in practical sessions. Intercollege already has a policy addressing this issue, as outlined in our Internal Regulations under paragraph 3.3.17. (Attachment 3 – Attendance Policy Extract). This policy highlights the significance of consistent class attendance, including laboratory and practical sessions, as a vital part of the educational experience. Students who do not meet these attendance requirements are subject to academic penalties including, potentially, course failure.	Choose an item.
ECTS should be ascribed to the workload of Internship	We thank the Committee for their suggestion to ascribe ECTS credits to the workload of Internship periods. Adhering to this recommendation, we have made the following adjustments to the program: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. For the 1st internship, 2 ECTS were reallocated from the FREN-101 French Language, reducing it from six (6) ECTS to four (4). We have carefully adjusted the course content and learning outcomes to align with this change, ensuring that the quality of education remains uncompromised - Attachment 4 2. Similarly, for the 2nd internship, 2 ECTS were shifted from the course IACCT-110 Accounting, which also has been reduced from six (6) ECTS 	Choose an item.



	<p>to four (4). Again, the course content and learning outcomes have been meticulously revised to accommodate this change - Attachment 5</p> <p>In addition, attached you may also find the updated programme semester breakdown - Attachment 2</p>	
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3. Teaching staff (ESG 1.5)

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For official use Only
<p>The teaching staff members shown on the website is different than that specified in the provided application file</p>	<p>We understand the importance of providing accurate and up-to-date information about our teaching staff.</p> <p>We would like to inform the Committee that this discrepancy was due to the timing of the launch of our new website, which occurred just a few days prior to the Committee's visit. During the transition to the new website, there may have been a brief period where the information was not fully updated.</p> <p>We assure the Committee that we have since updated the website with the correct information about our teaching staff for the "Culinary Arts" 2 Years Diploma program. All relevant information on the website is now comprehensive and current. The updated information about our faculty can be found at: https://www.intercollege.ac.cy/category/faculty-and-staff/culinary-arts-english-diploma-faculty/</p>	<p>Choose an item.</p>

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
<p>An electronic system for monitoring the student participation in the educational process may contribute towards a more efficient monitoring</p>	<p>We appreciate the Committee's suggestion for an electronic system to monitor student participation.</p> <p>We would like to inform the Committee that Intercollege already utilizes such a system. Specifically, student attendance is recorded electronically at the beginning of each course and monitored via the Intercollege Portal.</p> <p>Our Office of Academic Affairs continuously reviews these records as part of our early identification mechanisms. In cases where a student has unexcused absences, we proactively reach out to offer support and assistance. We strongly believe that proper maintaining of attendance records is a significant contributor to the overall course assessment.</p>	<p>Choose an item.</p>
<p>Indicators such as success rates in examinations, dropout rates, mean duration to graduation etc. should be monitored in a systematic way</p>	<p>We acknowledge and appreciate the committee's recommendation for more systematic monitoring of student-progress indicators.</p> <p>We continuously record and analyze examination success rates, grade distributions, student satisfaction surveys, dropout rates, and average time to graduation through our student information system, "Exelixis" and Student/Faculty Intranet "Portal".</p> <p>These indicators are thoroughly reviewed at both programmatic and institutional levels through the Annual Programme Evaluation Report (APER), which has recently superseded the AMER. APER provides an expanded range of key performance indicators to give a holistic overview of each academic program's performance, including metrics such as student progression, satisfaction levels, faculty research contributions, resource allocation, and the effectiveness of quality assurance processes.</p> <p>In addition to APER, the following established procedures and proposed enhancements are indicative of our commitment to maintaining and improving the quality of education we provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of an alert system to notify advisors of students whose grades or attendance drop below a specified threshold. • Regular surveys to measure student satisfaction and pinpoint areas for improvement. 	<p>Choose an item.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Programme Review Committee (PRC), which convenes once per semester and includes faculty and student representation, facilitates open dialogue for the continuous enhancement of our programs. • Internal Program Faculty Meetings, held each semester or as needed, enable faculty members to discuss program-related matters and student feedback in detail. • The Student Course Evaluation Questionnaire, conducted post-midterms each semester, allows students to evaluate their educational experience and provide constructive feedback. <p>These mechanisms, collectively, ensure that we are not only monitoring the academic journey of our students closely but are also positioned to respond proactively to enhance their educational environment in line with the EEC's recommendations.</p>	
<p>Internship should be included in the diploma supplement and should be ascribed ECTS</p>	<p>We would like to inform the Committee that we have ascribed ECTS to internships as described above, recognizing their integral role in providing our students with practical experience and industry exposure. Each internship is ascribed 2 ECTS.</p> <p>Furthermore, we acknowledge the Committee's recommendation to include internships in the diploma supplement. We agree with this suggestion and will ensure that internships are clearly indicated in the diploma supplement.</p>	<p>Choose an item.</p>
<p>Diploma Supplement should reflect the students' actual records</p>	<p>Thank you for your detailed review and the observations regarding the Diploma Supplement (DS) provided. We appreciate your vigilance in ensuring the accuracy and consistency of our academic documentation.</p> <p>I would like to clarify that at the University of Nicosia, the process of creating and issuing the Diploma Supplement is fully automated and digitalized. This system is designed to ensure the precise reflection of a student's academic journey, mirroring the courses listed in our program's curriculum accurately.</p> <p>Regarding the discrepancy you noted, particularly the absence of 'Internship II' in the DS sample reviewed, it appears that there may have been an unintentional oversight in the selection of the DS example presented. For demonstration purposes, a DS was likely generated for a student who had not yet completed all the required coursework, including 'Internship II'. We understand the importance of showcasing a complete</p>	<p>Choose an item.</p>



	<p>and accurate DS, and the instance you highlighted was an exception, not reflective of our standard practice.</p> <p>Please rest assured that our automated system regularly undergoes checks and updates to align with our curriculum changes, ensuring that every graduate's DS is a comprehensive and accurate record of their academic achievements.</p>	
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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
A list of institutions holding Erasmus bilateral agreements should also be made public	<p>We thank the Committee for emphasizing the importance of public transparency concerning our Erasmus bilateral agreements.</p> <p>We are pleased to inform the Committee that this information is publicly available. Our Erasmus bilateral agreements can be found on our website under the following link: Erasmus+ at Intercollege.</p>	Choose an item.



6. Additional for doctoral programmes (ALL ESG)

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For official use Only
N/A	N/A	Choose an item.
Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Choose an item.
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Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Choose an item.



7. Eligibility (Joint programme) (ALL ESG)

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For official use Only
Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Choose an item.
Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Choose an item.
Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Choose an item.
Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Choose an item.
Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Choose an item.

B. Conclusions and final remarks

Conclusions and final remarks by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For official use Only
Pursuit of a continuous monitoring of the quality of the education offered and elaboration of program's key performance indicators	Committee comment has been addressed above.	Choose an item.
Enrich the website with essential information on the unit's administrative structure and the curriculum	Committee comment has been addressed above.	Choose an item.
Revise the Course Outline to clearly depict hours of theoretical and practical sessions per subject	Committee comment has been addressed above.	Choose an item.
Ascribe ECTS to the workload of Internship	Committee comment has been addressed above.	Choose an item.
Revise Diploma Supplement to reflect the students' actual records	Committee comment has been addressed above.	Choose an item.



C. Higher Education Institution academic representatives

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>Signature</i>
Kyriacos Patsalides	Director of Academic Affairs	
Nicholas Orphanides	Program Coordinator	

Date: 10/11/2023

