

Doc. 300.1.2

Date: 18/02/2025

## Higher Education Institution's Response

- **Higher Education Institution:**  
Intercollege

- **Town:** Nicosia

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

**In Greek:**

Αισθητική (4 ακαδημαϊκά έτη, 240 ECTS, Πτυχίο)

**In English:**

Aesthetics (4 Years, 240 ECTS, Bachelor)

- **Language(s) of instruction:** Greek & 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 2<sup>nd</sup> 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.*

### Introduction

We would like to thank the External Evaluation Committee (EEC) for their thorough and professional evaluation of the Aesthetics (4 Years, 240 ECTS, Bachelor) programme. We appreciate the time and effort dedicated to this comprehensive review and the collegial approach taken during the evaluation.

The External Evaluation Committee (EEC) conducted an evaluation of the Aesthetics programme on November 11, 2024, and found that the programme's content, teaching, assessment methods, and resources are effective in achieving its aims and learning outcomes. The EEC pointed out that the students and staff are aware of the expected learning outcomes, though the committee recommends making minor edits for balance. The EEC mentioned a lack of clarity regarding the allocation of ECTS points to the third- and fourth-year practical training courses.

Programme information was clearly available on the institution's website, and both industry and students participate in curriculum development. However, the EEC noted concerns about the high number of courses and suggested merging various courses and making the final year thesis compulsory.

The committee encourages increased research activity and institutional collaborations for staff. The programme meets professional registration requirements and aligns with its intended purpose and

outcomes. The EEC acknowledged that the admission requirements are proper, and students receive adequate curriculum information. The teaching methodology is deemed suitable. Lastly, the EEC indicated that the programme narrowly misses the 70% requirement for full-time teaching staff set by the CYQAA, with current full-time staff making up 64% of the programme.

The External Evaluation Committee identified several strengths in the Aesthetics programme. The programme is well-designed and implemented in alignment with its learning objectives, demonstrating a clear focus on achieving its educational goals. The staff shows responsiveness to feedback from both students and industry professionals, indicating a commitment to continuous improvement. Additionally, the programme benefits from robust quality policies and procedures, ensuring high standards in its operation. The EEC pointed out that the institution also provides efficient IT facilities that support effective teaching and communication, enhancing the overall educational environment.

## 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
Reducing the number of courses by consolidating their content	<p>Taking the comments and suggestions made by the committee, we have reviewed the courses and have made the various changes. We have consolidated the suggested courses and have re-written each course syllabi to meet the course and overall programme objectives, whilst keeping the quality of the content and programme at the required level.</p> <p><b>Appendix 1</b> shows the new programme structure breakdown by semester.</p> <p><b>Appendix 2</b> shows the corresponding table of the changes made given the suggestions by the EEC.</p> <p><b>Appendix 3</b> are the re-written course syllabi of the new (consolidated) courses.</p>	Choose level of compliance:
Keeping the thesis as a compulsory element of the final year and incorporating the contents of the two new electives into relevant courses	<p>We acknowledge the committee's perspective but remain confident that offering students a choice between a thesis and two targeted electives aligns better with our vocational mission and student needs. Many of our graduates enter the workforce immediately after completing their degree, and practical courses on Toxicology of Cosmetics and Aesthetics for Men can equip them with applied skills that increase their career readiness. Those intending to pursue postgraduate studies can still opt for the thesis, ensuring adequate preparation for further academic work.</p>	Choose level of compliance:

	<p>Allowing students to choose caters to varied learning styles and professional goals. Some excel in research, while others thrive by exploring broader subject areas. This tailored approach broadens skill sets, fosters creative and analytical thinking, and encourages well-rounded personal development. Electives such as the two proposed courses maintain academic rigor and challenge, reflecting the diversity of the Aesthetics field while providing practical value.</p> <p>Choice also demonstrates flexibility, supporting students who may have time constraints or face personal circumstances that make lengthy research projects difficult. In many recognized academic institutions, including prominent universities in Europe and North America, undergraduate programs incorporate or even replace the thesis with specialized courses. This practice has proven effective in maintaining academic standards and facilitating diverse learning pathways.</p> <p>We trust that this elective-based structure preserves educational quality and accommodates our students' vocational aspirations without compromising the integrity of our Bachelor in Aesthetics. Ultimately, it empowers each student to shape a path aligned with individual strengths and career plans.</p>	
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<p>It is not clear how are the ECTS points allocated to each course (e.g. 8 ECTS point for the 200-hour third year practical, and 20 ECTS points for the 400-hour practical in the final year).</p>	<p>We would like to thank the EEC for pointing out the ECTS allocation given the students workload and educational objectives. The third-year Practical Training credits 8 ECTS for 200 hours, where students engage in immersive, hands-on experiences. The course structure and assessments ensure they achieve specific learning outcomes and build practical skills. The fourth-year Practical Training allocates 20 ECTS for 500 hours, of which 450 hours are allocated to the actual practical training while 50 hours are utilized for the guidance of students by the faculty, enabling more extensive skill development and a deeper understanding of the field. This extended duration involves advanced methodologies and specialized exercises, ensuring students gain comprehensive practical experience. The above ECTS and allocated training hours follows the ECTS workload standards of 1 ECTS corresponding to 25 hours workload allowing the students to reach both practical and educational objectives within the set timeframe.</p>	
<p>Involvement in research activities, perhaps through collaborations with other institutions</p>	<p>In the academic year 2023-2024, the College introduced a new policy (already submitted to the EEC) to enhance our research and publications profile, while also continuing to build on the solid foundation of existing practices that have long supported scholarly activity among our faculty.</p> <p>Intercollege Research and Publication Policy: We have introduced a new policy designed to incentivize research and publication</p>	

	<p>among our faculty. With this policy, faculty members receive monetary rewards for eligible publications, which also contribute to their evaluation for promotion. This initiative is part of a broader strategy to deepen the research engagement of our academic staff and to visibly align with our commitment to academic excellence.</p> <p>Existing Research &amp; Professional Development Support: Alongside the new policy, we have a well-established system that supports faculty research, including:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Research Time Allocation: Faculty members can apply for research time release, ensuring they have dedicated periods to pursue scholarly work, which allows for a balance between their teaching duties and research ambitions.</li> <li>2. Performance Evaluations: Research activity has always been a key metric in our faculty promotion and ranking process, emphasizing the value we place on contributing new knowledge and pedagogical approaches.</li> </ol> <p>We believe that the combination of these new and existing measures establishes a strong and supportive environment for our faculty to engage in research and publication work. We will of course continue to explore additional incentives and support mechanisms, such as expanding research grants, fostering industry collaborations, and</p>	
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	<p>increasing opportunities for international research exposure.</p> <p>Our goal is to not only maintain but also to continuously improve the support for our faculty's research endeavours, ensuring sustained academic excellence and innovation.</p>	
Enhancing Erasmus mobility activities for staff and students	<p>The College continuously encourages and enhances Erasmus+ mobility activities for staff and students provides numerous benefits, such as fostering cross-cultural exchange, enhancing language skills, and broadening academic and professional perspectives. Through these mobilities we have found opportunities for collaborative research and educational innovation, leading to improved teaching practices and curriculum development.</p> <p>Additionally, these experiences could increase employability for students and expand professional networks for staff, ultimately enriching the academic community and elevating the institution's global presence.</p>	

## 2. Student – centred learning, teaching and assessment (ESG 1.3)

Areas of improvement and recommendations <b>by EEC</b>	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
Consider the establishment of an alumni association, in order to foster alumni engagement in the students' learning journey.	<p>The College has adjusted its alumni association procedures to enhance alumni engagement by;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organising a steering committee consisting of enthusiastic alumni and staff to guide the association's formation.</li> <li>• Conducting outreach to gather alumni contact information and build a comprehensive database.</li> <li>• Developing a more supportive role that will encourage supporting students, such as providing mentorship, networking opportunities, and guest lectures.</li> <li>• Encouraging the use of the college online platform to connect, share resources, and stay informed about college activities, open seminars and workshops.</li> <li>• Hosting events such as reunions, career advancement seminars to facilitate interaction between alumni and the college.</li> <li>• Communicating with alumni through newsletters and updates to keep them engaged and informed, fostering a sense of</li> </ul>	Choose level of compliance:

	community and partnership in supporting current students.	
Encourage students' mobility	<p>The College encourages its students to participate in Erasmus+ mobilities by implementing certain strategies, such as;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Raising awareness through informational sessions and workshops, and offering personalized advising to assist with application procedures and credit transfers</li> <li>• Financial support, such as scholarships and grants, can help make mobility more accessible</li> <li>• Integrating these programs into degree requirements ensures that credits earned abroad contribute to students' academic progress</li> <li>• Success stories and mentorship from former participants inspire students, while streamlined administrative processes reduce barriers to participation</li> <li>• Expanding partnerships with international institutions provides a variety of destinations and academic opportunities.</li> <li>• Lastly, engagement within our online portal with comprehensive resources</li> </ul>	Choose level of compliance:



	facilitates easy access to information about Erasmus options	
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### 3. Teaching staff (ESG 1.5)

Areas of improvement and recommendations <b>by EEC</b>	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
<p>Ensure that the number of full-time teaching staff meets the CYQAA requirement.</p> <p>Based on internal evaluation, it was reported to the EEC that the proportion of full-time teaching staff employed by the institution stands at 64%, which is just below from the CYQAA 70% requirement</p>	<p>In response to the EEC's comment to align with the CYQAA requirements for full-time teaching staff ratio, we would like to respond in that we are committed to ensuring that the balance between courses taught by full-time and part-time academic staff maintains and enhances the educational quality of our programme. Our faculty are dedicated and qualified professionals who possess the formal and substantive credentials required by CYQAA standards.</p> <p>We would like to point out that, numerous courses within our curriculum necessitate instruction by specialist Medical Doctors who possess unparalleled expertise in their respective fields. This is crucial for preserving the high-quality educational standards we uphold and ensuring our students gain a deep and comprehensive understanding of the material. These expert faculty members play a vital role in achieving the learning outcomes, providing students with knowledge that is both thorough and practically applicable. Unfortunately, these experts are not available for full-time employment by the college primarily due to financial reasons.</p> <p>Nevertheless, we are dedicated to continuous improvement and</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>

	are actively exploring avenues to increase our full-time staff percentage to reach the required 70% from 64%, while retaining our focus on exceptional educational quality and compliance with CYQAA standards.	
Initiate and support research activities of staff in the field of Aesthetics	<p>The College will support research activities of staff in the field of Aesthetics, by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing research funding and facilitating collaborations with industry partners and other institutions to enhance resource sharing and expertise.</li> <li>• Cultivating a supportive research culture through seminars, workshops, and conferences encourages staff engagement and innovation.</li> <li>• Implementing mentorship programs and offering training in research methodologies, grant writing, and publishing helps develop essential skills.</li> <li>• Allocating dedicated time for research within staff schedules ensures a balance with other responsibilities.</li> <li>• Additionally, providing access to necessary resources like research databases and specialized tools, along with recognizing and rewarding successful research efforts, effectively to motivate and</li> </ul>	



	sustain staff involvement in research activities.	
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#### 4. Student admission, progression, recognition and certification (ESG 1.4)

Areas of improvement and recommendations <b>by EEC</b>	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
Creating more opportunities for students to participate in exchange programmes with similar institutions in Europe	<p>The College aims to increase student participation in exchange programmes with international institutions.</p> <p>The College will strengthen its international awareness to expand and diversify its partnerships, establishing bilateral agreements to facilitate exchanges.</p> <p>Actively promoting these opportunities through information sessions and marketing can highlight their benefits.</p> <p>Streamlining administrative processes for applications and credit transfers can reduce barriers, while offering financial aid like scholarships or travel grants makes participation more accessible.</p> <p>Integrating exchange programmes into the academic curriculum ensures students can earn credits toward their degrees abroad, and establishing liaison offices provides support throughout the process.</p> <p>Engaging alumni to share their experiences and offering language support can further inspire and prepare students for successful participation in these programmes.</p>	Choose level of compliance:
Considering the provision of the programme in English, to increase	To attract a more diverse student population by offering the programme in English, our College	



<p>the diversity of student population</p>	<p>will take several strategic actions given the well-structured comprehensive curriculum, industry partners, stakeholder support and qualified academic staff are in place.</p> <p>The college will actively market the programme internationally through campaigns, partnerships with educational agents, and participation in education fairs.</p> <p>Offer scholarships and financial aid tailored for international students to make the programme more accessible.</p> <p>Providing language support and cultural integration services, alongside robust academic advising, can enhance the experience for non-native English speakers.</p> <p>Enhancing online visibility with detailed information on the English programme and forming international partnerships to increase the college's global reach.</p> <p>Organizing cultural events to fosters inclusivity and promote interaction between local and international students.</p>	
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## 5. Learning resources and student support (ESG 1.6)

Areas of improvement and recommendations <b>by EEC</b>	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
To secure a separate room and adequate health & safety measures for the laser and IPL- based equipment	<p>We would like to thank the committee for their suggestion. The facilities of the College are registered and approved to operate meeting required standards by Health &amp; Safety authorities allowing us to function as a College given the programmes of studies offered.</p> <p>To ensure a safe environment for laser and IPL-based equipment, the College will allocate a designated room that complies with health and safety regulations (<b>see Appendix 4</b>).</p> <p>Protective measures, such as user eyewear and barriers, are in place to prevent unauthorized exposure.</p> <p>In using this equipment, specialized training and certification for personnel, alongside regular maintenance and inspection of the equipment, maintain operational safety.</p> <p>Clear emergency protocols are in place and displayed, and access to this equipment are restricted to authorized/trained individuals.</p> <p>Routine audits and risk assessments ensure ongoing compliance and identify opportunities for safety improvements.</p>	Choose level of compliance:

## 6. Additional for doctoral programmes (ALL ESG)

Areas of improvement and recommendations <b>by EEC</b>	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
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## 7. Eligibility (Joint programme) (ALL ESG)

Areas of improvement and recommendations <b>by EEC</b>	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
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### C. Higher Education Institution academic representatives

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>Signature</i>
Kyriacos Patsalides	Director of Academic Affairs	
Marios Stylianou	Aesthetics Programme Coordinator	

**Date:** 18/02/2025

