

Doc. 300.1.2

Date: 04/07/2023

Higher Education Institution's Response

- **Higher Education Institution:**

THE LIMASSOL COLLEGE – T.L.C.

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

In Greek:

ΔΙΑΙΤΟΛΟΓΙΑ ΚΑΙ ΔΙΑΤΡΟΦΗ, 4 ΕΤΗ ΠΤΥΧΙΟ (240 ECTS)

In English:

DIETETICS AND NUTRITION, 4 YEARS BSC (240 ECTS)

- **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 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>TLC should present the skills and knowledge acquired during the course and reflect the level of study.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Learning outcomes of the courses should be revised to reflect the level of delivery, expectations from students and performance. • Ideally, the Internship I & II should have specific competencies and skills that the students achieve to be competent for practice. A clear marking criteria and requirements should be provided, it is not clear if the Internship I&II is pass or fail. • The Thesis I &II should have clear assessment requirements for the students to achieve, probably to amalgamate the two module into one. The aim and objectives are not clear should be revised and the assignment should reflect those objectives. • The research methodology should also include extensive information on critical appraisal of articles, and the principles of systematic literature review, level of evidence to enhance the evidence base practice. 	<p>1.2 The learning outcomes of all subjects were reformulated and specified (4 in number per course) (see syllabus– Annex II).</p> <p>- We clarified the way of conducting, supervising and evaluating (evaluation report form student and employment agency Annex VI) the internship (see syllabus– Annex II).</p> <p>- We followed the recommendation of the Committee and merged the Diploma Thesis into one unit (Semester G). At the same time, we revised the criteria and the supervision of the writing progress, setting clearer goals (see syllabus– Annex II).</p> <p>-We revised, according to the Committee's recommendation, the syllabus of the course 'Research Methodology', which now includes extensive information on the critical evaluation of scientific literature, the principles of systematic, literature review, the design of a research paper and the basic principles of writing and presenting</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>

	<p>scientific papers (see syllabus–Annex II).</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The website of the programme should be reviewed and entry criteria should be clearly stipulated as currently the information is not available nor currently updated. ● The website is only available in Greek, however the BSc is also offered in English. It is important the website to be offered in English as well. ● The list of academics at the website is extensive, however the list should be reviewed on a regular basis to represent staff changes and current membership. ● The information on laboratory space should also reflect the multifunctional room provided ● Introduce more lectures on transferable skills (e.g. presentation skills). 	<p>1.3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - We updated and modernized the website of the Institution, while at the same time we developed the website in the English language. - We have updated and recorded the admission criteria on the Institution’s website. <p>All information is now available to the public.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - We revised and updated the list of academic staff on the Institution’s website, so that it reflects the changes in staff and the status of each member. - We defined, recorded and captured with clarity the multi-functional room that the Institution has. Regarding the recommendation of the committee to separate the Biochemistry laboratory from the Food laboratory, please note that the two areas are clearly separated by the existing sliding door that closes for each course. The laboratory is small with 5 workbenches of 2 people, but they serve the needs of our laboratory exercises because the large classes are divided into smaller groups of 10 people. - We incorporated in some courses (such as Diet Planning, Principles of Food Preparation etc) a sufficient number of lectures related to transferable skills (time 	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>



<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Topics on recent advances in nutrition and dietetics needs to be introduced (e.g. plant diet and global sustainability goals 2030).	<p>management, teamwork, critical thinking, communication).</p> <p>- We have created and integrated a new course, 'Nutrigenetics and Nutrigenomics', which is relevant to recent developments in nutrition and dietetics (see syllabus– Annex II).</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
<p>We encourage the team to create a Program Information Document. This should describe the course structure, ILOs, syllabus, assignment structure, assessment, marking criteria, student services, exam resits and other student related information and services.</p> <p>There is room for improvement of teaching methods to provide more evidenced-based teaching by staff members with PhDs in Nutrition and Dietetics. Furthermore, a higher degree of ensuring students practical skill not only by videos or demonstrations is important.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce assignments where students are encouraged to master their critical appraisal, thinking and reflection. <p>In regard to the standards of practical training:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practical and theoretical studies are interconnected. However, it seems like videos and demonstrations are used quite 	<p>2.2.</p> <p>-We created an information sheet that describes the structure of the program, the expected learning outcomes, the structure of the tasks, the evaluation methods, the grading criteria and all the information and services related to the students (attached - Annex IV).</p> <p>- Regarding the improvement of teaching, we assigned courses to 2 professors with PhD in Dietetics and Nutrition, who already teach in the postgraduate program of our Institution of Clinical Dietetics. Particularly, the subject “Nutrigenetics and Nutrigenomics” was assigned to Dr. Anna Papageorgiou and the “Research Methodology” course at Dr. Anastasia Perikou.</p> <p>During the meeting with the academic staff, the professors were informed about the need to include in their courses more assignments that encourage students' critical thinking.</p> <p>In most of the practical Dietetics courses, such as 'Diet Planning', students use all the Institution’s laboratory equipment. However, we also entered into collaborations with external laboratories (e.g. chemistry, food</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>

<p>frequently rather than students hands-on practicing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The content of the practical training provided as Internship I and II seems to be conducted 8 h/week throughout year 4 corresponding 2 x 12 ECTS rather than in a continuous time period. The two internship courses will most certainly support students' achievement of planned learning outcomes. It is noticeable that there is no difference in course purpose and objectives learning outcomes between Internship I and II. Furthermore, it is unclear if this meets the needs of the future stakeholders. 	<p>chemistry and biochemistry) to conduct additional experiments at a practical level. In addition, an additional practice that we follow and already apply in many parts of the program, are visits to laboratories and food production and processing industries, confectioneries, etc.</p> <p>The Internship will be conducted in two semesters (winter and spring of the 4th year) so that 208 hours are completed in total (13 weeks x 2 days x 4 hours per semester). Nevertheless, we revised the course syllabus in terms of learning outcomes, aims and objectives of the course. We have clarified how to conduct, supervise and evaluate the Internship (see syllabus– Annex II).</p>	
<p>It is unclear how the assessments are made transparent and objective and the college doesn't seem to be using a procedure of double-marking by different teachers. In the application for accreditation, it is stated that "At the beginning of the lectures, the teacher gives the students the course diagram, in writing, in which the objectives, the learning outcomes, the content, the bibliography and the way of assessment are written.". However, it is unclear how the students are made aware about assessment criteria for e.g. internship or a thesis and what criteria are regarded as pass with distinction, pass or fail. Thus, we cannot confirm that that</p>	<p>2.3.</p> <p>- We established transparency and objectivity in the way of evaluating and grading the students' Internship and Thesis (see syllabus– Annex II).</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>

<p>the criteria for the method of assessment, as well as criteria for marking, are clear for either staff members or students and published in advance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment, where possible, does not seem to be carried out by more than one examiner. • It is not clear how the college ensures that the assessors are familiar with existing testing and examination procedures and how they are trained to meet these standards. • It is not clear what assessment feedback (written or oral) is given to the students to support the development of their learning and reflection. Thus, we cannot confirm if students are given feedback that supports the learning process. • Students seems to rarely be actively involved in research 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In the specialty courses of the program, a 2nd evaluator was appointed. - We conducted an informational meeting with all the academic staff, in which the staff clarified and understood the existing assessment and examination processes to meet expected standards. Please note that an informative meeting is held at the beginning of each semester. -Although, we implement assessment feedback, we proceeded to improve this process following the recommendations of the committee. -Students have access to and can view their assignments, receive feedback and have full support of the learning process. -We instituted, as mentioned above, the evaluation by more than one examiner. <p>We strengthened the active participation of students in research, by establishing research/theses assignments.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The thesis that we have planned for our students to undertake in the coming academic year, are not only bibliographic works but have a research orientation (e.g. case 	
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	studies, systematic reviews, questionnaires, meta-analysis), that will encourage their critical assessment, thinking and reflection.	
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3. Teaching staff (ESG 1.5)

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<p>The department needs to invest more resource and staff-time on research and associated activities. The EEC does not expect this to be at high calibre level, and necessarily through competitive funding. The team may want to leverage research opportunities by ensuring that final year dissertation is carried out not on literature review but in original research. Some examples include secondary data analysis, primary research in assessment of nutritional status or habits of certain populations, surveys assessing general public opinions on the role of diet on a certain condition (e.g. obesity, or irritable bowel syndrome). Some of these research outputs might be published in good journals in the field of nutrition and dietetics.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The College needs to employ members of staff who hold PhD qualification and ideally significant post-doctoral experience in the area of nutrition and dietetics. This will enhance students' evidence-based learning and engagement in research activities. 	<p>3.1.</p> <p>-We established the implementation of the 4th year thesis as original research, with the aim of publishing the results of their research. At the same time, we imposed restrictions on the number of thesis that will be based on a bibliographic review (see syllabus–Annex II).</p> <p>We would like to point out that the percentage of academic staff who teaches in the program, and their qualifications are at least one level above the one awarded by the program, is 93.75% and exceeds the requirements set by the DIPAE. In particular, out of the 16 members of the academic staff who teach in the program, 15 are qualified of at least one level above that the one awarded by the program. In detail, 5 have PhD and 10 have MSc.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>

<p>The team may want to leverage existing opportunities to engage more with visiting professors from other Universities across Europe and elsewhere. The college is charging a significant teaching fee per year, half of 24 which is subsidized by the government.</p> <p>It would be fair for the college management to allocate some of their profit to achieve this target. Although this appears as a financial investment it will advance the quality of the course and make it even more competitive in the market and in comparison to other available courses.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff may benefit from attending regular training in academic, teaching and learning practices. 	<p>-Nevertheless, as mentioned above, we assigned courses to 2 PhD professors in Dietetics and Nutrition, who teach in the postgraduate program of our Institution in the program of 'Clinical Dietetics'.</p> <p>- It should be noted that the scholarship given by the State to the students does not constitute additional income for the Institution. Only students benefit from the scholarship, because part of their tuition is covered by the Cypriot state.</p> <p>- We have established for many years the granting of scholarships by the Institution to excellent school graduates, and students with financial problems, with a further reduction in tuition fees.</p> <p>-We have established additional procedures and mechanisms to encourage the participation of our academic staff members in conferences and training programs. Funding will be provided from the Institution's revenue, thus documenting our Institution's emphasis on the value of its academic staff participating in international conferences and its pursuit of continuous professional development.</p>	
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An external examiner to ensure quality standards might be an optional suggestion, although this is not mandatory nor endorsed by the local law. <p>It is important that any vacancies for academic staff are advertised globally, particularly when a few suitable Greek/Cypriot candidates may live abroad. www.jobs.ac.uk is a mainstream site where job opportunities are advertised.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is not clear if professional registration (from Cyprus Registration Board for Food Scientists, Food Technologists and Dietitians) of teaching staff is mandatory; if this the case registration records/numbers need to be provided to EEC. • The EEC requires to see copies of employment contracts/agreements of academic staff engaging to course teaching. 	<p>We further developed the already existing cooperation with external partners for training in academic, teaching and learning practices.</p> <p>As mentioned above, we solved the issue internally by assigning courses to 2 PhD professors in Dietetics and Nutrition who belong in our current academic staff and teach in our postgraduate program 'Clinical Dietetics'. In case of further need arise, we will contact to www.jobs.ac.uk.</p> <p>- For the recruitment of any professor of the specialty, it is a necessary condition to be a registered member of the Council of Registration of Scientists, Food Technologists and Dietitians of Cyprus (Copies of certificates are attached – Annex V).</p> <p>Copies of contracts and employment agreements of academic staff are attached (Annex III).</p>	
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4. Student admission, progression, recognition and certification (ESG 1.4)

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5. Learning resources and student support (ESG 1.6)

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<p>It was discussed that the chemistry laboratory skills that are developed are rather limited and in many cases the students do not have hands on experience, and mainly video demonstrations were provided to the students.</p> <p>● The College provides a hub where all provisions can be found at one point of contact.</p>	<p>-There is a lot of practical exercise during the laboratory courses. The video projection is small and complementary. Necessary laboratory equipment has already existed, which students use in the chemistry course.</p> <p>We have also entered into collaborations with external laboratories (e.g. chemistries) to conduct more experiments at a practical level.</p> <p>-In addition, an additional practice that we follow and already apply in many parts of the program, are visits to laboratories and food production and processing industries, confectioneries, etc.</p> <p>-As mentioned above, in the biochemistry laboratory, there is already a movable partition (sliding door). Also, as far as the chemistry benches are concerned, these benches are made of a different material and have a different color, completely distinct from the food laboratory benches.</p> <p>-We point out that the academic program of the course is designed in such a way that there are no students studying chemistry, biochemistry, principles of food preparation at the same time.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>

<p>● The list of books on nutrition and dietetics is limited and out of date, and often only provided in Greek which can be an issue for international students. Further resources should be provided as hard copies at the library, specifically in areas where there is a development in innovation, sustainability practices. Those subjects could also be included in the content of modules (course material).</p> <p>● The EEC did not have access to WiFi, and it was discussed that the system was down. The IT personnel however did not give access to us which questions the availability of the WiFi to the students.</p> <p>There are two areas (rooms) that are used as laboratories. o One is the wet lab (biochemistry) and kitchen preparation as well as the microbiology lab (very small two square meter room, adjacent to the 'biochemistry/food technology lab), the room could be partitioned with a moving partitioning door, however the distance between the benches that could be used for laboratory experiments and the cooking classes are the same. Also the benches are the same, for the two different purposes. It is known that this should not happen as it is a significant health and safety 33 issues. The wet lab does not have any equipment that the students could experiment alone.</p>	<p>-We reviewed the latest bibliography and ordered a number of new books to enrich our library.</p> <p>There was an inability to connect to WiFi, although the Institution's network was displayed. This was due to a failure of Cyta (Telecommunications Authority) network in the Institution's area on the day of the assessment.</p> <p>As mentioned above, in the biochemistry laboratory there is already a movable partition (sliding door). Also regarding the chemistry counters, these counters are made of a different material and have a different color completely distinct from the food counters. We point out that the timetable is designed in such a way that there are no students studying chemistry, biochemistry, principles of food preparation at the same time.</p> <p>We also point out that the students attending the workshops are divided into 5 groups of 2 people, because there are 5 workbenches and equipment for 10 people.</p>	
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<p>The other large room houses the equipment for the Ergometry and Energy Balance equipment in addition to equipment for the Aesthetic laboratory. It is important to manage the website of the TLC to reflect the physical resources available to students.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The library is a 20 square meters room (approximately) that has limited resources and books. Student access to the library has not been clarified as the TLC has not employed any librarian responsible to give access to the students. The library does not have computers to provide access, space and working conditions to the students <p>There is a frequent staff turn around as names of academic staff change. The TLC management reported that a member of staff had a bereavement on the day of the face to face validation, later on it was reported from another member of the management that she was engaged on a close relative operation, to declare at the end of the day that the academic staff has taken a governmental position as a teacher at secondary school.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The academic staff is important to engage as a long-standing member to ensure continuation and quality of teaching 	<p>-A correction was made to the website in the section regarding the availability of the laboratory to reflect its multiple functions.</p> <p>Regarding the size of the library, it is sufficient for the number of students we have.</p> <p>We point out that we have the same librarian the last 8 years, as an external collaborator, whose name is Vasia Charitou and she was absent for serious reasons on that particular day.</p> <p>Regarding the reason for the staff member's absence, there was probably some misunderstanding during the EEC visit. The actual reason was that the staff member was absent due to the death of a relative.</p> <p>Most members of the teaching staff have been employed at the Institution for over 10 years.</p>	
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	Only a small percentage of staff leaves due to their employment in the public sector.	
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6. Additional for doctoral programmes
 (ALL ESG)

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7. Eligibility (Joint programme) (ALL ESG)

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B. Conclusions and final remarks

Conclusions and final remarks by ΕΕC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
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D. Higher Education Institution academic representatives

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>Signature</i>
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