

Doc. 300.1.2

Date: 14/06/2024

Higher Education Institution's Response

- **Higher Education Institution:**
CASA COLLEGE
- **Town:** Nicosia
- **Programme of study**
Cruise Ship Hospitality Operations (1 year, 60 ECTS, Certificate)

In Greek:

Διαχείριση Υπηρεσιών Φιλοξενίας σε Κρουαζιερόπλοιο (1 έτος, 60 ECTS, Πιστοποιητικό)

In English:

Cruise Ship Hospitality Operations (1 year, 60 ECTS, Certificate)

- **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 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 assessment methods are the same for all courses. The EEC suggests that different courses have different assessment methods relevant to each course's learning outcomes (still within the ministry-imposed assessment limitations).</p>	<p>The Academic Committee in cooperation with the faculty members has implemented different assessment methods for different modules.</p> <p>See Annex 1 – Assessment methods per Module (Updated)</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>
<p>Using a more reliable program against plagiarism (i.e., Turnitin) is highly recommended by the EEC.</p>	<p>The College uses the Plagiarism Checker X Professional software, which was updated in 2024. The College strongly believes that Plagiarism Checker X is a reliable programme against plagiarism. With Plagiarism Checker X, the College can ensure their content is 100% original by using tools such as side-by-side comparison, bulk cross-comparison, and plagiarism reports. The platform uses AI-powered deep search technology to identify any duplicate content or similarities and highlights these similarities in color-coded reports. Users are also provided with sources for duplicate or similar content so that they can compare the texts and edit or cite accordingly. Plagiarism Reports have been upgraded with a custom feedback feature. Seamlessly write your feedback for students and any writer right from the application and it will be integrated with the downloadable PDF report.</p> <p>See Annex 2 – Information about Plagiarism Checker X Professional software</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>
<p>The establishment of an external Advisory Committee could be beneficial for the college and the students, to capitalize the well-established relationships with the</p>	<p>Based on the EEC's positive comment that "the Program Monitoring and Review engages a great number of internal stakeholders. In the monitoring of the program the college cooperates</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>

<p>hospitality industry partners in Cyprus.</p>	<p>with external stakeholders in a rather informal way” and taking into consideration the suggestion of the external committee, the College established an external advisory committee consisting of professionals in the cruise hospitality industry and the hospitality industry in general. Members of the advisory committee will bring diverse expertise and experience relevant to the program. Their input will help to ensure that the program remains current, relevant, and aligned with industry standards and best practices.</p> <p>The Advisory Committee will be meeting on a regular basis at the beginning of every academic semester, thus twice every academic year. This regular schedule will allow for consistent monitoring and feedback on the programme's progress and any emerging issues. In addition to regular meetings, the advisory committee may convene ad hoc meetings as needed to address specific challenges, opportunities, or urgent matters related to the programme.</p> <p>Annex 3- The External Advisory Committee</p>	
<p>CSH113 can be adapted to “Health and Safety and Life Working on a cruise ship” and include more content about working life on a cruise ship.</p>	<p>Annex 4 – Module Outline for CSH 113: “Health and Safety and life working on a cruise ship”</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>
<p>PHIL111 Business Ethics to be refocused and renamed as Cruise ship sustainability and CSR.</p>	<p>Annex 5 – Module Outline for CSH - 120: “Cruise ship sustainability and CSR”</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>
<p>ENG112 English Language for Tourism, to be renamed as Professional Communication and English for Tourism to better reflect the content of the module</p>	<p>Annex 6 – Table 1: Distribution of Modules per Semester/ Renamed Module: Professional Communication and English for Tourism</p>	
<p>The optional CSH121 Improving Skills at Sea is to be renamed Internship/Practical training and</p>	<p>Annex 6 – Table 1: Distribution of Modules per Semester. The CSH121 is renamed to Internship/Practical</p>	



carry ECTS credits allowing students to do an internship at any hospitality or tourism operation.	Training and is added to the list of Elective Modules. The Module carries 5 ECTS.	
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Student-centered learning, teaching, and assessment

(ESG 1.3)

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
<p>The EEC gets the feeling that the hotel and restaurant industry's standards were the frame of reference for developing the course of study. Perhaps it is an idea to look at some best practices in the cruise shipping industry to ensure that the standards followed there are met as closely as possible.</p>	<p>In 2017, before the programme of study was designed, the Department of Hospitality of CASA College studied industry publications, reports, and case studies to ensure that the standards to be followed were appropriate. The design of modules resulted from Integrating insights from the best practices of the cruise ship industry, where students are prepared for successful careers in this dynamic and exciting sector.</p> <p>To enhance the quality of the Certificate program in Cruise Ship Hospitality Operations, the College used the following strategies:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Curriculum Review and Enhancement: Reviewing the existing curriculum of the certificate program to allow identifying areas where insights from the cruise ship industry can be integrated to enhance the content and relevance of the courses, ensuring they align with industry standards and practices. Focus on Service Excellence: Emphasising the importance of service excellence and guest satisfaction involves integrating modules or courses that specifically address customer service, guest experience management, and service innovation, reflecting the high standards upheld in the cruise ship industry. (see modules below) CSH – 112: Front Office Procedures on a Cruise Ship CSH – 115: Housekeeping on a Cruise Ship CSH – 114: Food Preparation on a Cruise Ship CSH-117 Event Planning, Animation & Cruise Operations CSH-118 Food & Beverage Service on a Cruise Ship Practical Training and Simulation: Incorporating practical training components that simulate the onboard experience of working in the cruise ship industry that helps familiarise students with the unique challenges and requirements of the industry, such as onboard dining simulations, and role-playing exercises. (see modules below) CSH – 114: Food Preparation on a Cruise Ship CSH-118 Food & Beverage Service on a Cruise Ship CSH-117 Event Planning, Animation & Cruise 	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>

	<p>CSH121 Improving Skills at Sea which is in the newly accredited programme renamed as Internship/Practical training</p> <p>The addition of Virtual Reality onboard experience for students through: https://www.dnv.com/maritime/webinars-and-videos/videos/digital-journey-cruise/ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Grfc9PazGXU https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4SABYbyofWQj https://virtual-tours.msccruises.com/MSC-Seaside/en-gl/index.html https://www.rssc.com/discover-more/virtual-suite-tours</p> <p>The European project of CMMI (The Cyprus Marine and Maritime Institute),” Sea of Experience” – Educating students through the VR experience.</p> <p>4. Safety and Emergency Preparedness: Placing a strong emphasis on safety and emergency preparedness to ensure that students are well-prepared to handle any situation onboard with confidence and competence by receiving training in safety protocols, emergency procedures, and crisis management. (see module below)</p> <p>Newly designed Module: CSH113 “Health and Safety and Life Working on a Cruise Ship”</p> <p>5. Cultural Sensitivity and Diversity Training: Integrating modules on cultural sensitivity and diversity training to prepare students for interacting with guests and colleagues from diverse backgrounds, reflecting the multicultural environment onboard cruise ships and promoting inclusivity and understanding. (see modules below)</p> <p>CSH – 114: Food Preparation on a Cruise Ship CSH-118 Food & Beverage Service on a Cruise Ship CSH-117 Event Planning, Animation & Cruise Operations CSH121 Improving Skills at Sea which is in the newly accredited programme renamed as Internship/Practical training Newly designed Module: CSH113 “Health and Safety and Life Working on a Cruise Ship”.</p> <p>6. Technology Integration: Exploring how technology is used in the cruise ship industry and integrating</p>	
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	<p>modules or courses on hospitality technology, digital guest services, and data analytics to equip students with relevant skills and knowledge to adapt to the evolving technological landscape of the industry. (see modules below)</p> <p>CSH-112 Front Office Services on a Cruise Ship - Use of ORACLE Hospitality, SUITE8 Software CSH-115 Housekeeping on a Cruise Ship – Use of ORACLE Hospitality, SUITE8 Software CSH-118 Food & Beverage Service on a Cruise Ship - Use of ORACLE Hospitality, SUITE8 Software CSH – 114: Food Preparation on a Cruise Ship - Use of ORACLE Hospitality, SUITE8 Software</p> <p>7. Sustainability and CSR integration: Integrating modules to address effectively key aspects of environmental stewardship, social responsibility, and ethical business practices within the cruise industry.</p> <p>Newly designed Module: CSH – 120 “Cruise ship Sustainability and CSR”.</p> <p>8. Industry Internships and Placement Opportunities: Establishing partnerships with cruise lines, travel agencies, and other industry stakeholders to provide students with internship and placement opportunities, allowing them to gain real-world experience onboard cruise ships and complement classroom learning.</p> <p>Internship Programmes https://www.casacollege.ac.cy/erasmus-3/</p> <p>CSH121 Improving Skills at Sea which is in the newly accredited programme renamed as Internship/Practical training</p> <p>9. Continuous Improvement and Feedback: Regularly soliciting feedback from industry professionals, alumni, and students helps evaluate the effectiveness of the program and identify areas for further improvement, ensuring that the curriculum remains current and relevant in a rapidly evolving industry landscape.</p> <p>The External Advisory Board: The College established an external advisory committee consisting of professionals in the cruise hospitality industry and the hospitality industry in general.</p>	
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	<p>Members of the advisory committee will bring diverse expertise and experience relevant to the program. Their input will help ensure the program remains current, relevant, and aligned with industry standards and best practices.</p>	
<p>New technology in teaching and learning to make the teaching and learning process more effective. Considering the average age of the students, more active use of technology, such as AI would help to improve learning.</p>	<p>https://www.dnv.com/maritime/webinars-and-videos/videos/digital-journey-cruise/</p> <p>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Grfc9PazGXU</p> <p>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4SABYbyofWQj</p> <p>https://virtual-tours.msccruises.com/MSC-Seaside/en-gl/index.html</p> <p>https://www.rssc.com/discover-more/virtual-suite-tours</p> <p>CMMI (The Cyprus Marine and Maritime Institute) - “Sea of Experience” Virtual Reality Tool.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>

2. Teaching staff (ESG 1.5)

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
<p>Faculty should be given opportunities to take advantage of programs such as ERASMUS+ in order to expand their teaching portfolio as well as bring back new ideas for the advancement of the college.</p>	<p>The College encourages all the lecturers from all programmes of study to participate in the mobilities organized by the ERASMUS+ programme. Every year more than half of our staff members have the chance to visit partner universities abroad for teaching and training, as well as attend seminars which are funded through the Erasmus+ programme. This way the staff members not only expand their knowledge and skills but also, bring back new ideas and best practices which they share with all the staff members of the College.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>

3. 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>The EEC suggests that more efforts must be placed on students' practical training onboard cruise ships.</p>	<p>1. Memorandum of Cooperation with the Cyprus Marine and Maritime Institute (CMMI) for practical and theoretical training</p> <p>Annex 7 - Memorandum of Cooperation between CASA College and the CMMI</p> <p>2. Internships/Practical Training through the Erasmus Programme</p> <p>The procedure for the Internship Programmes through Erasmus is as follows:</p> <p>The procedure followed by Casa College for students participating in internship programs through the Erasmus+ program typically involves several steps to ensure a smooth and successful experience:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Information Session: Casa College holds an information session to educate students about the Erasmus+ program, including its goals, benefits, and eligibility criteria. This session may cover details such as available destinations, duration of internships, financial support, and application procedures. 2. Application Process: Interested students are required to submit their applications for the Erasmus+ internship program within the specified deadline. Applications usually include personal information, academic records, language proficiency certificates, and a statement of purpose explaining their motivation for participating in the program. 3. Selection Procedure: After the application deadline, Casa 	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>

	<p>College evaluates the applications based on academic performance, language proficiency, relevance of the internship to the student’s field of study, and other criteria. Selected candidates are notified of their acceptance into the program.</p> <p>4. Pre-Departure Orientation: Prior to departure, participating students attend a pre-departure orientation session. This session covers important topics such as cultural adaptation, health and safety abroad, financial matters, and travel arrangements. Students also receive guidance on obtaining necessary visas and insurance coverage.</p> <p>5. Internship Placement: Casa College works closely with partner organizations and institutions in the host country to arrange suitable internship placements for the participating students. Efforts are made to match students with internships that align with their academic interests and career goals.</p> <p>6. Logistical Support: Casa College provides logistical support to students throughout the internship period. This may include assistance with accommodation arrangements, transportation options, and local amenities. Students are also provided with emergency contact information and support services in case of any unforeseen circumstances.</p> <p>7. Monitoring and Evaluation: During the internship period, Casa College maintains regular contact with both the students and the host organizations to monitor their progress and ensure a positive experience. Feedback is collected from</p>	
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	<p>students and host supervisors to evaluate the effectiveness of the program and identify areas for improvement.</p> <p>8. Post-Internship Debriefing: Upon completion of their internships, students participate in a debriefing session where they reflect on their experiences, share insights gained, and discuss how the internship has contributed to their personal and professional development. Casa College may also organize events or presentations where students can showcase their internship projects and experiences to the wider college community.</p> <p>9. Academic Recognition: Upon successful completion of the internship program, Casa College ensures that students receive academic recognition for their participation. This may involve the awarding of credits, transcripts, or certificates to acknowledge the learning outcomes achieved during the internship.</p> <p>By following these procedures, Casa College aims to provide students with valuable international experiences that enhance their academic learning, cultural awareness, and employability skills through the Erasmus+ internship program.</p> <p>Students of the Certificate in “Cruise Ship Hospitality Operations” have the option to choose one of the following companies:</p> <p>1. Royal Caribbean International: Royal Caribbean offers internship programs that may include cruises in the Mediterranean region. Interns have the chance to work in various departments onboard, gaining hands-on experience</p>	
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	<p>while traveling to destinations in the Mediterranean.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Carnival Cruise Line: While Carnival primarily focuses on cruises in the Caribbean, they also offer Mediterranean itineraries during certain seasons. Students participating in Carnival’s internship programs may have the opportunity to work on these Mediterranean cruises. 3. Norwegian Cruise Line: Norwegian Cruise Line operates cruises in the Mediterranean, and they offer internship opportunities for students interested in gaining experience in the hospitality and tourism industry. Interns may work onboard their ships, assisting with guest services, entertainment, and other departments. 4. Princess Cruises: Princess Cruises offers internships that may include cruises in the Mediterranean region. As one of the leading cruise lines, Princess provides opportunities for students to work onboard their ships and gain valuable experience in various departments. 5. Costa Cruises: Costa Cruises specializes in Mediterranean cruises, offering itineraries to destinations throughout the region. They provide internship programs for students interested in the hospitality industry, allowing them to work onboard and gain practical experience in a multicultural environment. 6. MSC Cruises: MSC Cruises offers internship opportunities for students interested in working on cruises in the Mediterranean. With a diverse range of itineraries in the region, MSC 	
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	<p>provides internships in departments such as guest services, entertainment, and onboard operations.</p> <p>7. Celestyal Cruises: Celestyal Cruises focuses on cruises in the Greek Islands and Eastern Mediterranean, offering internship programs for students interested in gaining experience in the cruise industry. Interns may have the opportunity to work onboard and explore destinations in the Mediterranean.</p> <p>For all students under the Hospitality Department of CASA College – Possible internships Tour Operators:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. TUI Group: TUI Group is one of the largest tour operators in Europe, offering a wide range of travel services including package holidays, flights, cruises, and hotel bookings. They may offer internships in areas such as tourism management, sales and marketing, destination management, and customer service. 2. Thomas Cook Group: Thomas Cook was a major tour operator in Europe before its collapse, but some of its brands and operations have been acquired by other companies. Depending on the region and brand, there may still be internship opportunities available in areas such as travel operations, sales, and customer service. <p>https://www.casacollege.ac.cy/erasmus-3/</p> <p>Appendix 1_Students Practicum – Log Book</p>	
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Simplify and streamline the assessment criteria for each course.	See Annex 1 – Assessment Methods per Module (Updated)	Choose level of compliance:
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3. Learning resources and student support (ESG 1.6)

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
The EEC notes that the college management is already considering investing in more flexible types of classroom furniture that allow for easy change of the class setup. The EEC strongly recommends that such investment is employed sooner rather than later as some classrooms employ a traditional linear setup that is not conducive to innovative teaching and learning methods of smaller cohorts.	The College’s management has already invested some thousands of euros to upgrade the infrastructure of its premises, including more flexible types of classroom furniture with advanced digital technologies. The new building was supposed to be built in 2020. Due to COVID-19 our plans were postponed. Attached you can find the architectural plans of the renovated building and the construction permit from Cyprus Department of Town Planning and Housing. Annex 8 - Architectural Plans (Κατόψεις), Construction Permit	Choose level of compliance:
More designated quiet rooms for studying in the library would be a benefit to the students.	The College has already established two new quiet/study rooms. First floor room 104 and second floor room 202.	Choose level of compliance:

4. Additional for doctoral programmes - NOT APPLICABLE
 (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) NOT APPLICABLE
 (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 programme design team needs to consider the suggestions made in section one (Areas of improvement and recommendations) of this report.</p>	<p>All the suggestions made in the section actions taken by the College are mentioned in this reply and are supported by all the Annexes 1 – 8.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>
<p>Consider the upgrade of the library's quiet areas and an earlier investment into modern classroom furniture that allows easier setup of innovative teaching spaces.</p>	<p>The College has already established two new quiet/study rooms. First floor room 104 and second floor room 202.</p> <p>CASA College is taking a significant step forward in educational innovation with the introduction of a new building equipped with state-of-the-art facilities and modern furniture. This initiative aims to create a learning environment that supports the latest pedagogical approaches, enhances student engagement, and fosters a collaborative and inclusive atmosphere.</p> <p>The College's management has already invested some thousands of euros to upgrade the infrastructure of its premises, including more flexible types of classroom furniture with advanced digital technologies.</p> <p>The new classrooms at CASA College feature modular furniture that can be easily reconfigured to accommodate various teaching methods and activities. This flexibility allows for seamless transitions between lectures, group work, and individual study. Lightweight, moveable desks and chairs enable quick rearrangement, facilitating dynamic and interactive learning experiences.</p> <p>The new building was supposed to be built in 2020. Due to COVID-19 our plans were postponed. Attached you can find the architectural plans of the renovated building and the</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>

	<p>construction permit from Cyprus Department of Town Planning and Housing. Lecturers, students, and administrators were involved in the planning and design of the new classrooms to ensure the facilities meet the diverse needs of the college community.</p> <p>Annex 8 - Architectural Plans (Κατόψεις), Construction Permit</p>	
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C. Higher Education Institution academic representatives

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>Signature</i>
Mrs. Ellie Petrou (Chair)	Academic Director of Studies - Member of the QA Committee	
Mrs. Elina Saveriades	General Manager - Member of the QA Committee	
Dr. Eleni Asprogenous	Programme Coordinator	
Mrs. Maria Yiannoullou	Quality Assurance Expert	
Mrs. Kakia Avgousti	Lecturer – Member of the QA Committee	
Mrs. Dorota Jedryka	Lecturer - Member of the QA Committee	
Mr. Viovelson Cortez	Student - Member of the QA Committee	

Date: 14/06/2024

