



24 April 2017

Mr Nikos Komodromos, Educational Officer, DI.P.A.E.  
c/c Mr Andreas Papoulas, Senior Education Officer – Coordinator DI.P.A.E.

**Subject: Response to DIPAE External Evaluating Committee Report for Reaccreditation of our Diploma in Culinary at InterNapa College.**

The InterNapa College Internal Quality Committee in cooperation with our Culinary Arts Diploma Program Coordinator have reviewed the report prepared by the DIPAE external evaluating committee for the reaccreditation of our Culinary Arts Diploma. Our response to this report follows.

The aforementioned report has many positive aspects which are summarized in its concluding remarks. The positive aspects are the organization of our college and experience in offering vocational programs, good infrastructure both at the technical and administrative level, dedicated academic and administrative personnel and cooperation with professional and local fora in Cyprus.

Further, in their concluding comments the visiting committee recommend that the program needs improvements in the following areas: recruitment of faculty with experience in culinary arts, inclusion of material in the program for people with special dietary needs; greater depth in knowledge about wines and beverages. Last, greater attention should be given on food safety procedures and food hygiene in the areas of food preparation.

We are in agreement with the visiting committee and are implementing all their recommendations for the program's improvement:

**Recruitment of faculty:** For the new academic year three new part time faculty have been recruited with the appropriate qualifications to offer specialized culinary courses. The Culinary Arts Diploma program consists of ten major courses that are covered over a two year span and in general four such courses are necessary per semester with the current number of students. Therefore whilst these additional faculty will greatly benefit the program its viability must at the same time be taken into consideration.

**New courses:** The visiting committee suggest the addition of curriculum to cover special dietary needs. This is best met by changes to the existing requirement of the course in Nutrition. This course would become Nutrition & Special Dietary Needs. It would cover proper nutrition, protecting consumers from harmful illnesses and food safety, healthy lifestyle and include special dietary needs such as for vegetarians, gluten and lactose free products and balanced menu planning.

The other suggested course in wine and beverage appreciation to complement and enhance student culinary knowledge will be added as an additional hospitality requirement of the program. This will replace one general elective of the program. Syllabuses are being prepared for both courses and the changes will be incorporated in the program pathway for the new academic year.

**Hygiene and safety:** As regards greater care in hygiene and safety in the areas of food protection this has been dealt with already. These were minor requirements as described to us orally by the visiting team during their visit. A seminar to our faculty has been organized on key areas regarding preparation and handling of food materials. Signage has been added around the kitchen lab to inform students about such health and safety issues in the area. Also, at the beginning of the semester students from each course will receive an orientation to have their attention drawn to key hazards and risks in the kitchen area.

Further to the above visiting committee recommendations their evaluation of program quality assurance criteria and comments made regarding these contain some misinterpretations that we would like to clarify:

**1.1.3.1 The implementation of a specific calendar and its timely publication, Rating 2**

The academic calendar is published well in advance as was pointed out by our faculty and was/is available on the College web site.

**1.1.3.2 The disclosure of the program's curricula to the students, and their implementation by the teaching personnel, Rating 2**

As pointed out by our faculty, all students are given at the beginning of each semester for each taught course a course outline containing the course schedule, content, objectives and learning outcomes, reading material and assessment method.

The rating for this criterion is in contradiction to the committee's later evaluation of criterion 2.4.5 regarding information relating to the program of study being posted publicly. This covers seven criteria to do with making information available to students (including course descriptions, learning outcomes and assessment) the rating in all cases here is 4. Additionally, all syllabuses are now available on the College web site.

**1.1.3.3 The course web-pages, updated the relevant supplementary material, Rating 2**

As pointed out by our faculty in the last semester the College began to implement the Moodle software for many of its courses providing the necessary information to students. This system is now being fully implemented and will be available to all faculty and students in the new academic year.

A similar criterion 2.4.5.4 pertaining to information relating to the program of study are posted publically and include course descriptions was given a Rating of 4.

**1.1.11 The program of study applies an effective policy for the prevention and detection of plagiarism, Rating 1.**

The College as explained was in the process of acquiring software for effective prevention and detection of plagiarism. These efforts were previously met by setting of more practical assignments, particularly relevant for a vocational program such as Culinary Arts. Further, the College began last semester to collect assignments electronically allowing detection of plagiarism through the use of online open source programs. The College has chosen its plagiarism software and will henceforth be using Plagscan for this purpose. All faculty will be trained in its use and students will have their attention drawn to the College's policy on honesty and their obligations to submission of original work.

**1.1 Organization of teaching work**

In the comments section regarding this criterion the committee stated that they had requested examples of log books for internships, course outlines and final exams that were not provided to them. This was clearly a misunderstanding as the material was immediately taken to the conference room where the committee were meeting. The committee though had left to inspect the library and then directly to lunch. Clearly, we could not provide these during lunch and these

lay on my desk waiting to be handed over. As it turned out, the committee then decided that their work was completed and concluded their visit. We thence surmised that they no longer needed this material. All of the above continue to be available.

**1.3.1 The number of full-time academic personnel, occupied exclusively at the institution, and their fields of expertise, adequately support the program of study (and following comment). Rating 2**

The College has an adequate number of full time faculty to support its two year program in Culinary Arts with the present number of students. The College, as recommended by the committee has preceded to hire new faculty for the new academic year. The College will of course continue to expand its full time faculty.

**1.3.2.1 Subject specialization, preferably with a doctorate, in the discipline. Rating 2.  
1.3.2.2 Publications within the discipline, Rating 3**

All our faculty have specialization in the area they teach. The preference for a PhD is impossible to apply for a vocational Diploma program in Culinary Arts. The same goes for publications in the area in the following criterion. Evidence of the lack of faculty with PhD in this area is that the visiting accrediting committee itself were doctorate holders of related areas, but not of Culinary Arts (food technology and hospitality education in their case).

**2.2.8 The content of the program's courses reflects the latest achievements / developments in science, arts, research and technology, Rating 2**

Besides 1-2 minor points made on the need to teach special dietary needs and necessity for a course on wine appreciation no other comments were made orally or in writing that the program does not reflect latest developments. The College will implement the recommendations regarding these two courses.

**2.5.2 The program attracts visiting professors of recognized academic standing. Rating 1**

The College has already started taking initiatives in inviting visiting academics but also industry professionals a practice that will continue.

**2.5.3 Students participate in exchange programs. Rating 1**

The College is in the process of re-invigorating the Erasmus program and has already applied recently for the Erasmus Charter.

**4.3.2 The allocation of financial resources as regards to academic matters, is the responsibility of the relevant academic departments. Rating 3**

The allocation of financial resources as regards academic matters is solely the responsibility of the Academic Director. The Academic Committee of the College is a decision making body on all matters affecting it.

The rating for this criterion is contradicted by two later ratings by the committee. Firstly by a rating of 4 for criterion 2.3.4 (The academic hierarchy of the institution, (Rector, Vice-Rectors, Deans, Chairs and Programs' Coordinators, academic personnel) have the sole responsibility for academic excellence and the development of the programs of study) and secondly after criterion 4.3 on financial resources the comment below states that financial resources are the responsibility of the Academic Director.

**2.4.6 The award of the higher education qualification is accompanied by the Diploma Supplement which is in line with the European and international standards. Rating: Not Applicable**

As was explained by our faculty and is described in our application for reaccreditation/self-study the Diploma Supplement is given to all graduating students.

**2.4.8 The recognition and transfer of credit units from previous studies is regulated by procedures and regulations which ensure that the majority of credit units is awarded by the institution which awards the higher education qualification. Rating: Not Applicable**

As was explained by our faculty the College has a detailed procedure for recognition of transfer credits, this is described in our application for reaccreditation/self-study. This has now been added also to the College web site.

**4.1.3 The efficiency of these mechanisms (administrative) is assessed on the basis of specific criteria. Rating: Not Applicable**

The visiting Committee acknowledges the existence of such procedures but states that there is no method of appraisal of performance. The College implements an appraisal process for all administrative (and academic) personnel. The College has additionally implemented as of this semester a student satisfaction survey that its results will be discussed at the College Administrative Committee (with student members) and action plans will be implemented as necessary.

Dr Nicos Anastasiou  
Academic Director  
Chairperson of Internal Quality Assurance Committee