ΔΙΠΑΕ CYQAA ΦΟΡΕΑΣ ΔΙΑΣΦΑΛΙΣΗΣ ΚΑΙ ΠΙΣΤΟΠΟΙΗΣΗΣ ΤΗΣ ΠΟΙΟΤΗΤΑΣ ΤΗΣ ΑΝΩΤΕΡΗΣ ΕΚΠΑΙΔΕΥΣΗΣ
CYPRUS AGENCY OF QUALITY ASSURANCE AND ACCREDITATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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Doc. 300.1.2

Date: 25.08.22

Higher Education Institution's Response

- **Higher Education Institution:
Aigaia School of Art & Design**

- **Town: Nicosia**

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

  In Greek:

  Εικαστικές Τέχνες Δίπλωμα (2 έτη, 120 ECTS,

  Short Cycle EQF 5)

  In English:

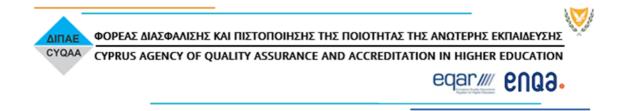 **Visual Arts Diploma (2 years, 120 ECTS, Short
Cycle EQF 5)**

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

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

- **Concentrations (if any):**

  **In Greek: n/a
In English: n/a**

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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
1.1POLICY FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE – ESG 1.1	Click or tap here to enter text.	Choose an item.
The Quality Assurance and Enhancement for Level 5 Second Cycle requires the same degree of clarity and care in its implementation as, say, the Pearson qualifications. Pearson is a standard - that includes a Common Marking Scheme/Rubric - that enables any institution to prove parity with another operating the same system of accreditation. Likewise, the Diploma requires that the institution understand and be able to prove parity with other institutions with validated Diploma level courses. This is where the Quality Assurance and Enhancement approach on the Diploma programme falls a little short.	We have reviewed the program and introduced the common marking scheme throughout all grading and assessment activities that the EEC suggests (Appendix 1, QAE Handbook page 13) according to Pearson qualifications.

Aigaia has been an approved PEARSON Educational center since its establishment with center number 90102, **link form PEARSON website:**

https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/support/support-topics/understanding-our-qualifications/find-a-pearson-centre.html?Country=Cyprus&City=Nicosia&QualificationFamily=BTEC

for Academic qualifications (IGCSE, GCSE, GCE A' Level) and all BTEC courses including the HND RQF Level 5 Higher National Diplomas in Art & Design which are all currently provided by Aigaia.
As such an External Examiner from Pearson is visiting Aigaia each year. The visits take place once or twice per year and the EE looks at samples of work, assessments and verifies the level of education provided according to Pearson Quality Assurance policies.

Due to this valuable interaction and collaboration with Pearson Education for all these years parity with other institutions with validated Diploma level courses like the HNDs, is secured.
Since the onsite visit from the EEC, Aigaia went through an External Verification process for the BTEC courses provided, at the end of June 2022, like every year with the PEARSON EE Mr. David Thornhill. During this process we discussed extensively about Quality Assurance and enhancement approaches, the policies and implementation. We discussed about internal and external verification. | Choose an item. |

| | Furthermore, we have extensively reviewed our Quality Assurance and Enhancement Handbook introducing among others, the External Examining principles, role, appointment selection criteria, induction and report, according to EEC recommendations (Appendix 1, QAE Handbook pages 26-29). As stated in the QAE Handbook within the role of these two EEs **is to** monitor the academic standards of awards at institution and specifically to confirm among others that (Appendix 1, QAE Handbook page 26):

"The standards for the courses/awards are comparable with similar courses/awards within the sector and parity with other institutions with validated Level 5 courses is proved";

Within this context, Aigaia contacted several candidates for the two positions of the EEs including the following Academics with experience in Quality Assurance:

Caroline Alexander, Senior Lecturer, Year Leader Kingston School of Art, Kingston University.
Elinor Renfrew, Honorary Professor, Course Director
Maria Chatzichristodoulou, Professor, Associate Dean Research, Business & Innovation, Kingston School of Art, Kingston University.
David Thornhill, PEARSON Senior EE
etc

We are currently in the selection process, discussing and negotiating in order to find the most appropriate EEs for our "Visual Arts" Diploma, Short Cycle, EQF Level 5 for the forthcoming Academic year. | |
| The Quality Assurance and Enhancement Policy (QAE) and related processes are not clear and, as they stand, seem to produce conflicts of interest. The institution has made a start on creating a Quality Handbook and related processes (but no Policy as yet). However, as it stands, | Aigaia has extensively reviewed our Quality Assurance and Enhancement Handbook according to EEC recommendations which now includes specific Quality Assurance and Enhancement Policy (APPENDIX 1 page 7) and clear related processes. Specifically, the QAE handbook includes (APPENDIX 1):

Introduction
Aigaia School of Art & Design (about)
Quality Assurance and Enhancement Policy
Design & Approval of New Programs of Study
Modification of Existing Programs of Study
Assessment
External Examining | Choose an item. |

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the Quality Handbook is compromised and unclear.	**Academic Integrity and Freedom - Vigilance against Academic fraud** **Student Engagement with Quality Processes / Complaints** **Recruitment and Development Policy** **Policy on Conflict of Interest** **Quality Surveys** Regarding the Conflict of Interest that the EEC mentions in the recommendations of this section, with the introduction of a special section in the handbook on Policy of Conflict of Interest, we address all possible related issues to assure that potential Conflict of Interest within the Institution, are promptly addressed and avoided. Specifically in this section we elaborate on our Policy, its purpose, the principles, relates definitions, the procedure determining a Conflict of Interest, disclosure of a Conflict of Interest and resolution of a Conflict of Interest. (Appendix 1, QAE Handbook pages 49-54).	
The Institution needs to do more to support the organisation of the quality assurance system through appropriate structures, regulations, and processes: For example, there is a major gap around Academic Integrity – the QAE Handbook / Academic Regulations do not mention how they ensure academic integrity and freedom or how the institution is vigilant against academic fraud. There isn't a fully-fleshed Academic Integrity policy. Plagiarism detection relating to the submission of practical work (as opposed to writing) -	Quality assurance is in the core of Aigaia's School of Art & Design mission to "*offer the highest quality of art & design tertiary education and produce excellent contemporary art & design in a unique friendly, warm and professional environment providing the society with artists of highest ethical standards, in order to be established as the leading specialised School of Art & Design in Cyprus*". Our QAE Policy, structure and developed regulations and processes as they are defined and determined in our newly developed QAE handbook fully support the organisation of the Quality Assurance system. A whole section is dedicated to Academic Integrity and Freedom and Vigilance against academic fraud which includes (Appendix 1, QAE Handbook pages 29-39): **Expectations** **Academic Integrity** **Academic Judgement** **Academic misconduct (Plagiarism, Self-Plagiarism, Collusion, Falsification or fabrication, Cheating, Contract Cheating)** **Introduction to good academic practice** **Academic misconduct procedure** In this section Plagiarism detection relating to the submission of practical and written work is clearly mentioned (Appendix 1, QAE Handbook page 30). Furthermore, all the different aspects of	Choose an item.

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for example - isn't mentioned. Plagiarism is rife in ADM, especially the re-submission of work that has already been assessed for credit (self-plagarism) and the submission of art/design work created by other artists and designers. This must be addressed.	Academic Misconduct including Self-Plagiarism (Appendix 1, QAE Handbook page 31) are addressed in detail.	
The Institution must remove all conflicts of interest from its QAE processes; consider adding external academic members of staff to its Course Review and Approval Panels.	As stated before on a similar EEC recommendation Aigaia has already addressed and removed from its QAE processes all Conflicts of Interest and consequently is in the process of appointing External academic members of staff to its Course Review and Approval Panels. Specifically, the role of the External Examiners is to (Appendix 1, QAE Handbook pages 26-28): *"External Examiners at Aigaia School of Art & Design are auditors of the assessment process and also mentor, support and offer their expertise for academic programs and course review. Their role is to monitor the academic standards of awards at institution and specifically to confirm that:* - *The standards for the courses/awards are set and maintained at an appropriate level;* - *The standards for the courses/awards are comparable with similar courses/awards within the sector and parity with other institutions with validated Level 5 courses is proved;* - *The structure and nature of the assessment permits students to demonstrate their level of achievement;* - *The processes for assessment, examination and the determination of awards are sound and fairly conducted; and* - *There is consistency between the institution regulations, ESG provisions and relevant national legislation and directives and guidelines of CYQAA* *Also contribute to academic programs and course review / preparation - validation of new academic programs".*	Choose an item.

While the Institution greatly values teaching, administrative staff and students, it needs to formally support them to take on their responsibilities in quality assurance and enhancement. Training of Staff -- and Student Representatives - in QAE should be part of every member of staff's contract and specified as a % of their workload.	Training of all students on QA is taking place at the Induction period at the start of every Academic year We recognise that students may not be familiar with QAE processes when joining Aigaia. All students will have: *"an introduction to academic integrity policy before they submit their first piece of work for assessment.* **This is scheduled to take place during the induction week of new students at Aigaia when all Quality Assurance and Enhancement matters will be analysed".** (Appendix 1, QAE Handbook page 32). Furthermore, QAE Handbook includes a separate section on Student engagement with quality processes (Appendix 1, QAE Handbook pages 39-45). All staff are allocated with paid training time with Internal and External training activities, throughout the Academic year. As far as the training of every member of Staff in QAE is concerned, this is provided as part of % of their workload (Appendix 1, QAE Handbook page 48).	Choose an item.
The institution supports the involvement of external stakeholders. However, it has no clear answer to how they get involved in the quality processes. Given how small the institution is, and given the conflicts of interest in its existing QAE processes, the institution must seriously consider routinely adding external academic members of staff to its Course Review and Approval Panels – perhaps even making this Policy. It is normal procedure for small institutions to have	Our reaction to the alleged "*given*" Conflicts of Interest in our existing processes has already been repeatedly stated, referenced and explained (Appendix 1, QAE Handbook pages 49-54). The recommendation of the EEC to appoint external academic members of staff to its Course Review and Approval Panels has been fully adopted and is in the process of being implemented to be applied in practice in the Academic year 22-23 starting now as repeatedly explained above in the previous sections. As already mentioned we have extensively reviewed our Quality Assurance and Enhancement Handbook introducing among others, the External Examining principles, role, appointment selection criteria, induction and report, according to EEC recommendations including engaging EE for Course review and in the approval process (Appendix 1, QAE Handbook pages 26-29). Furthermore the direct role and engagement of External Examiners for Course Review and/or introduction of new courses and/or programmes is clearly stated in the QAE Handbook under respective sections "Design & Approval of new Programmes of Study" (Appendix 1, QAE Handbook pages 8-9) and "Modification	Choose an item.

External Examiners or, at very least, External panel members in its Exam Boards to ensure that there are no conflicts of interest. Since this is a small family-run institution this is vitally important. The institution needs to include external expertise in quality assurance - such as an Academic Director from another validated University - to ensure that they can be certain that the academic standards are comparable with other institutions operating validated programmes at Level 5 Short Cycle (120 ECTS) or above	of existing programs of study" (Appendix 1, QAE Handbook pages 9-12)	
Once the institution has reviewed and successfully reformed its QAE process, it should, as a matter of urgency, review its Common Marking Scheme to create a Common Academic Framework (singular) and place the outcome in the institution's Academic Regulations. A key issue here is that the Programme	All recommendations of the EEC on Assessment including the creation of a Common Academic Framework (attached as Appendix 2) and review of the Common Marking Scheme have been fully adopted and our Assessment has been reviewed accordingly. The detailed Assessment implemented by Aigaia according to EEC relevant recommendations can be found in the attached QAE Handbook (Appendix 1, QAE Handbook pages 13-26). It is stressed out that as it is derived from the Aigaia's newly implemented Assessment, the calculation of the individual course grades as well as the overall qualification grade is based on a Common Marking Scheme that leads to Pass, Merit, Distinction. The calculation of the overall qualification grade is based on the student's performance on all Learning Outcomes of all Courses and in all Semesters. Students are awarded a Pass, Merit or	Choose an item.

has to clarify how many of the 120 ECTS credits are required to pass with a Diploma. Second Cycle Level 5 would suggest all 120 credits and not (only) the final capstone (as currently appears to be the case).	Distinction qualification grade using the points gained through all 120 ECTS, based on their achievement in each individual course and not only on the final capstone as it was before the review.	
1.2 Design, approval, on-going monitoring and review – ESG 1.2 & ESG 1.9 The programme of study needs to demonstrate improvement in the following areas: Designing overall programme objectives that are in line with the institutional strategy and have explicit intended learning outcomes. This really needs a clearer and more dynamic institutional strategy (or Mission) to happen. The intended learning outcomes should be made explicit at PROGRAMME level - in the Programme Handbook and on the website - and align clearly with Short Cycle EQF Level 5. The PROGRAMME level outcomes should also incorporate the four purposes of higher	The Overall program objectives have been reviewed, updated and amended (attached APPENDIX 3, PROGRAM HANDBOOK page 6) and are in line with Aigaia strategy and mission which are both dynamic and ambitious and in the core of all academic programs provided and of all Institution activities. The Intended Learning Outcomes of the Program of Study, have been reviewed, have been made explicit at program level, and clearly aligned with the Short Cycle, EQF Level 5. They are described at Level 5 and within the three set of descriptors indicating the learning outcomes relevant to qualifications at the level in any qualifications system: KNOWLEDGE/ SKILLS/ RESPONSIBILITY & AUTONOMY https://europa.eu/europass/en/description-eight-eqf-levels They also now incorporate the four purposes of Higher Education within the Council of Europe. The revised program level learning Outcomes can be found in the attached Program handbook (APPENDIX 3, PROGRAM HANDBOOK page 8) and published in our website in the following link: https://www.aigaia.com.cy/tertiary-education/visual-arts/?lang=en#1652443759521-019745b0-8438 the updated information will be published on this link by EOB 29 August 2022 The main purposes of the program including the four purposes of higher education are stated clearly as part of the purposes of the specific Program of study offered by our Institution (APPENDIX 3, PROGRAM HANDBOOK page 6):	Choose an item.

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education of the Council of Europe (preparation for sustainable employment, personal development, preparation for life as active citizens in democratic societies, the development and maintenance, through teaching, learning and research, of a broad, advanced knowledge base). For example - "preparation for sustainable employment" would mean attending carefully to how the programme does two things - a) post Diploma professional practice working as a freelancer or as an employee b) transition to a BA programme.	• preparation for sustainable employment. (Post Diploma professional practice working as a freelancer or as an employee or transition to a Degree programme.) • personal development, • preparation for life as active citizens in democratic societies "preparation for sustainable employment" is explained in **Progression opportunities** (APPENDIX 3, PROGRAM HANDBOOK page 30) stating that successful completion of the Program of study will enable students to: a) post Diploma professional practice working as a freelancer or as an employee b) transition to a BA programme. This important purpose of the Program is supported by the dedicated "Professional Development 1 & 2" Compulsory Courses offered in the program. All of the above can be confirmed from the attached APPENDIX 3, PROGRAM HANDBOOK and/or from our website https://www.aigaia.com.cy/students-rights-and-responsibilities/?lang=en **the updated information will be published on this link by EOB 29 August 2022**	
The programme appears to enable smooth student progression; but the programme design must ensure this. Only the implementation of an institutional level Common Academic Framework will enable this to happen.	Aigaia has adopted the EEC suggestion and implemented of an Institutional level Common Academic Framework in order for the programme design to ensure smooth student progression. The implemented Common Academic Framework is attached as APPENDIX 2.	Choose an item.
The programme curriculum, the exams and assignments - generally speaking - correspond to the level of the	Aigaia will respond to this statement about not correspondence of the "History of Art" course to the level of the programme later in this document when it is raised again by the EEC, by providing in details all decisions and actions taken.	Choose an item.

programme (Short Cycle EQF Level 5). There are issues with some courses not corresponding to the level of the programme (History of Art) that we will outline later in this document.	The "History of Art" courses has been replaced with "Contextual Studies" courses that use contemporary art historical tools and examples of current art and art theory (APPENDIX 4 REVIEWED, UPDATED & AMENDED COURSES) .	
The programme curriculum does not correspond to the number of ECTS (120). The courses are too small (3 ECTS on average) and ask too much of students in the short amount of learning time this affords them. The courses need to accurately reflect not just what is taught, but how it is taught. For example, if the small 3 ECTS Introductory Courses are taught and assessed holistically, then they should be combined into one single 15 ECTS course: e.g. Introduction to Visual Arts. An Introductory course that takes up half of the semester is one that allows flexibility with the briefs and the content. ECTS: While the courses are described in ECTS terms currently - the ECTS	Since the Program which was submitted for evaluation does correspond to 120 ECTS at the successful completion of the two years of study, we believe that the emphasis of this EEC statement is on the value of the Individual courses during the first semester of the Program. In this context, the recommendation of the EEC was adopted and the curriculum has been reviewed and amended accordingly. All 3 ECTS introductory courses offered during the first semester are now combined into two larger courses. These two courses offer the flexibility of working with different themes and processes according to the characteristics of the two distinct areas of Visual Arts: Fine & Applied Arts 1. Introduction to VISUAL ARTS/FINE ART, 10 ECTS 2. Introduction to VISUAL ARTS/APPLIED ARTS, 10 ECTS The amended Curriculum is attached as APPENDIX 5 REVIEWED, UPDATED & AMENDED CURRICULUM.	Choose an item.

are not correlated to the expected student workload. Students would have to work far longer than the amount of time allocated to each course - an average of 60hrs per course in Semester 1 - to complete the coursework they are given. Consolidation of courses (e.g. creating a 15 ECTS Introductory Courses would likely resolve this issue).		
The programme (Diploma) has been subject to a formal institutional approval process. However, the process itself is highly complex, convoluted, and confusing. There are multiple cases of conflict of interest that could easily emerge from the composition of the various committees. Given the varied standards presented in the course documentation submitted to the Cypriot QA Agency, the EEC do not quite yet have full confidence in the current formal institutional approval process. To fix this,	The formal Institutional approval process is mostly the Ministry of Education Sport and Youth and CYQAA concern and responsibility. All structures and procedures for administration and governance of our institution are aligned with Laws "*Οι περί Σχολών Τριτοβάθμιας Εκπαίδευσης Νόμοι του 1996 (67(1)/1996) έως 53(Ι) του 2013*" (page 22) as they are obtained from the CYQAA website. Link from CYQAA website: https://www.dipae.ac.cy/archeia/nomothesia/private_institutions_tertiary_education_law_en.pdf Specifically, there are 5 Committees under our organisational structure (attached APPENDIX 1 page 6): - Academic Committee - Administrative Committee - Disciplinary Committee - Admissions Committee - Internal Quality Committee The first three committees are provided by the existing Law "*Οι περί Σχολών Τριτοβάθμιας Εκπαίδευσης Νόμοι του 1996 (67(1)/1996) έως 53(Ι) του 2013*" as they are obtained from the CYQAA website. In this Law it is stated that internal regulations	Choose an item.

ΔΙΠΑΕ CYQAA ΦΟΡΕΑΣ ΔΙΑΣΦΑΛΙΣΗΣ ΚΑΙ ΠΙΣΤΟΠΟΙΗΣΗΣ ΤΗΣ ΠΟΙΟΤΗΤΑΣ ΤΗΣ ΑΝΩΤΕΡΗΣ ΕΚΠΑΙΔΕΥΣΗΣ
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the Institution must simplify and clarify its internal QAE process.	of every educational institution can provide for the establishment and operation of any committee but it **should** provide the establishment and operation of an/a: - Academic Committee - Administrative Committee - Disciplinary Committee According to the same Law, chair of these committees is the Director of the institution. Furthermore, according to CYQAA Council decision taken on its 34th session on the 10th and 11th September 2018, each institution / university should establish and operate an Internal Quality Committee with specific composition and responsibilities. Link to this decision: https://www.dipae.ac.cy/index.php/en/news-and-events/announcements/13-dipae-el/dipaeel/anakoinoseis/176-2018-10-08-systasi-epitropis-poiotitas-tmimatos The prementioned four committees of our Institution, their composition and responsibilities are a prerequisite and compulsory by the existing Law or CYQAA relevant decisions. Consequently, there is very little room here to consolidate any two or more of these committees (Academic, Administrative, Disciplinary, Internal Quality committee) into one as EEC recommends under identical recommendation in 3.5 later in their report. Although we see the rationale behind this EEC recommendation, we can't be sure that this can be implemented without violating either the existing legislation and / or relevant CYQAA decisions. The role of the one and only additional committee of the Institution – Admissions committee – is very straight forward and has been decided to be established for the smooth admission of students, examination of applications of candidate students, decide to offer or not a place to a candidate student, transfer of students etc. The composition of all our committees is incorporated into the guide of studies (ΟΔΗΓΟΣ ΣΠΟΥΔΩΝ) submitted yearly to the Ministry of Education Sport and Youth for approval.	

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	As stated before, Aigaia has extensively reviewed, simplify and clarify its internal QAE process. The totally new Quality Assurance and Enhancement Handbook which was amended according to EEC recommendations, includes our Quality Assurance and Enhancement Policy and simple and clear related processes including those related to policy on conflict of interest. By the introduction of a special section in the handbook on Policy of Conflict of Interest, we address all possible related issues to assure that potential Conflict of Interest within the Institution, are promptly addressed and avoided. In the section we elaborate on our Policy, its purpose, the principles, relates definitions, the procedure determining a Conflict of Interest, disclosure of a Conflict of Interest and resolution of a Conflict of Interest (APPENDIX 1 QAE HANDBOOK pages 49-54).	
The validated Diploma programme results in a qualification that is clearly specified and communicated and refers to the correct level of the Cypriot National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education (Diploma). It does not follow that it, consequently, relates clearly to the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area mainly since it does not refer to these terms specifically. The EEC note that the programme (and institution) would benefit also from describing itself as Short Cycle EQF 5 since the Framework for Qualifications of	The Institution fully agrees with the observation of the EEC that the program (and institution) would benefit also from describing itself as Short Cycle EQF 5, since the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area are going to be increasingly important when recruiting non- Cypriot students as in the Strategic Planning of the Institution. The term **Short Cycle, EQF Level 5** has been introduced in the title of the Program and the description of the Learning Outcomes as described in the EQF are fully adopted, as explained earlier in this document.	Choose an item.

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ΦΟΡΕΑΣ ΔΙΑΣΦΑΛΙΣΗΣ ΚΑΙ ΠΙΣΤΟΠΟΙΗΣΗΣ ΤΗΣ ΠΟΙΟΤΗΤΑΣ ΤΗΣ ΑΝΩΤΕΡΗΣ ΕΚΠΑΙΔΕΥΣΗΣ
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the European Higher Education Area are going to be increasingly important when recruiting non-Cypriot students (re: Strategic Planning).		
While the programme is regularly monitored, it is not monitored consistently (in all courses) in the light of the latest research in the given discipline. The EEC cannot be certain that the monitoring processes ensure that the programme is up to date, at least not, in relation to other Level 5 ADM Diplomas in EHEA.	Aigaia's monitoring processes have been reviewed in order to ensure that the provided programme of study is up to date. The new monitoring processes are incorporated into the reviewed QAE Handbook under Modification of existing Programs of study / On-going monitoring and periodic review of programmes section (APPENDIX 1 QAE HANDBOOK pages 10-12). The Academic Committee, in its Annual Programme Analysis considers specific Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) (APPENDIX 1 QAE HANDBOOK page 11) which among others include comparability – parity of the standards of the academic program with similar validated academic programs within the sector (i.e. other Level 5 ADM Diplomas in EHEA). In its reviewed Quality Assurance and Enhancement Handbook Aigaia has also introduced the External Examining principles, role, appointment selection criteria, induction and report, according to EEC recommendations (APPENDIX 1 QAE HANDBOOK pages 26-29). As stated in the QAE Handbook, within the role of the EEs is to monitor the academic standards of awards at institution and specifically to confirm among others that: "*The standards for the courses/awards are comparable with similar courses/awards within the sector and parity with other institutions with validated Level 5 courses is proved*" (APPENDIX 1 QAE HANDBOOK page 26) Last but not least Aigaia has been an approved PEARSON Educational center since its establishment with center number 90102, **link form PEARSON website:** https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/support/support-topics/understanding-our-qualifications/find-a-pearson-centre.html?Country=Cyprus&City=Nicosia&QualificationFamily=BTEC	Choose an item.

	for Academic qualifications (IGCSE, GCSE, GCE A' Level) and all BTEC courses including the HND RQF Level 5 Higher National Diplomas in Art & Design which are all currently provided by Aigaia. As such an External Examiner from Pearson is visiting Aigaia each year. The visits take place once or twice per year and the EE looks at samples of work, assessments and verifies the level of education provided according to Pearson Quality Assurance policies. Due to this valuable interaction and collaboration with Pearson Education for all these years, parity with other institutions with validated Diploma level courses like the HNDs, is secured.	
History of Art I course design simply does not correspond with the current provision in the Art History Discipline at the Diploma level within Art & Design/Media (ADM) in the EHEA or beyond. The 'survey course' approach is no longer used in ADM programmes; herein the focus is on contemporary art and emerging art historiography methods. Drawing on the conversations we had with students, the EEC unanimously felt that the 'survey course' approach is very evidently not preparing the students to understand and engage with either. An Introduction to visual culture that uses	Within the context of the annual review of the Program and as a consequence of the onsite visit of the EEC and its related recommendations, the Visual Arts Program of Study has been reviewed, updated and amended accordingly to secure comparability – parity of its standards with similar validated academic programs within the field of Visual Arts. In this context, the "History of Art" course has been replaced with "Contextual Studies" courses that use contemporary art historical tools and examples of current art and art theory according to EEC relevant recommendations which have been adopted and implemented. The Rampley, M. Exploring Visual Culture: Definitions, Concepts, Contexts, Edinburgh University Press, 2005 is also introduced in the Textbooks of the related learning resources of the courses. Contextual Studies are involved with the whole of the ADM field including Design and Media, present global perspective and are more centered on art historical and visual culture analytical tools. The Detailed description of the introduced Contextual Studies courses which replaced the History of Art courses are attached (APPENDIX 4 REVIEWED, UPDATED & AMENDED COURSES pages 2-16).	Choose an item.

contemporary art historical tools and examples of current art and art theory should be pursued. (e.g. Rampley, M. Exploring Visual Culture: Definitions, Concepts, Contexts, Edinburgh University Press, 2005 is an example of a 101 approach appropriate to this level of ADM.) Within the ADM field, Introduction to visual culture courses always include Design and Media (not just archaeology and Fine Art), present global (rather than an Italian Renaissance-bias) perspective and are more centred on art historical and visual culture analytical tools than on the ill-perceived need for 'coverage'. For example, some of the Introduction courses in the programme resemble the South Kensington system (c19th) - e.g. the still-life drawing studio - and show no hint of post-Bauhaus reforms. This would make them over 100 years behind the curve for comparable foundation courses. Some courses need more attention than		

others in this respect to make them up to date and relevant.		
While the programme documentation read by the EEC states that the programme is periodically reviewed, this is simply stated and not demonstrated.

The EEC saw no documented evidence to corroborate this statement. Any periodically review would surely pick up on the issues with the currency of the courses (see last paragraph) and the issues with the students' workload (the 3 ECTS attributed to most courses is not enough to account for the workload), and the ineffectiveness of some of the procedures used for the assessment of students? The programme should clearly document (minute) what changes they made and how successful they were; this is something that an Academic Director would oversee as a routine part of QAE. | Within the context of the annual review of the Program under the new and reviewed processes and as a consequence of the onsite visit of the EEC and its related recommendations, courses of the Visual Arts Program of Study have been formally reviewed, updated and amended accordingly as they are submitted to CYQAA under this document and constitute a documented evidence of these amendments (APPENDIX 4 REVIEWED UPDATED & AMENDED COURSES) .

Under the new revised procedure for on-going Monitoring and periodic review of programmes (APPENDIX 1 QAE HANDBOOK pages 10-12) the assessment of the success of the introduces changes together with the actual changes introduced form part of the minutes kept under the responsibility of the Academic Director (APPENDIX 1 QAE HANDBOOK page 10).

Minutes of the Academic Committee for the last review of the program of study dated 15/06/2022 are attached (APPENDIX 6 MINUTES).

As far as the review of the currency of the content and assessment of the courses (previous paragraph) and the students' workload (the 3 ECTS attributed to most courses is not enough to account for the workload) have already been thoroughly answered in the previous sections when the replacement of the History of Art courses with Contextual studies Courses of more attributed ECTS was documented (APPENDIX 4 REVIEWED, UPDATED & AMENDED COURSES).

Our position and response on assessment of students is thoroughly provided under section 2.3 STUDENT ASSESSMENT of this document.

The involvement of students and other stakeholders (when monitoring – reviewing programmes of study / courses is now clearly provided by the reviewed on-going monitoring and periodic review of programmes (APPENDIX 1 QAE HANDBOOK pages 10-12), by the introduction of external examining and the respective role of external examiners (APPENDIX 1 QAE HANDBOOK pages 26-29) and by the introduction of a separate section about student involvement with QAE processes (APPENDIX 1 QAE HANDBOOK pages 39-44). | Choose an item. |

The programme documentation read by the EEC uses a boilerplate statement that the programme is reviewed and revised regularly involving students and other stakeholders. However, again, this is stated but no evidence is given to corroborate this happening formally. (Again, please be careful to always minute all Committee decisions and keep this on file.)		
Clarify the Pass criteria for each course. As it stands, this is not clear in all of the courses. NB: The LOs and Pass criteria must align in course OR BE THE SAME. Fail criteria would = not achieving all of the LOs. Some courses are well written in this regard - they align and have a small number of LOs - others need some work. The EEC recommends that the institution reduce the number of LOs / create a limit (e.g. limit of 5 or limit of 3). This would make it clear and simpler. All LOs have to be demonstrated to pass a course.	The Curriculum and individual courses have been reviewed in context with the recommendations of the EEC and all learning outcomes align with the assessment criteria and are now clear for all courses, including their content, reduced number (limit of 5), language. They are clearly referring to the conditions for Pass, Merit, Distinction. Failure to pass all Learning Outcomes and consequently all assessment criteria results to **not achieving** (Fail) the assessed course and this is clearly stated in the syllabus of all courses (APPENDIX 4 REVIEWED, UPDATED & AMENDED COURSES).	Choose an item.

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The EEC recommends that the institution reconsider the composition of assessment panels to ensure that students are never only assessed by the course organiser/tutor. (i.e.remove all conflicts of interest) There must be a clear distinction between a) the assessor and the member of staff who moderates the assessment to check for parity.	As part of the reviewed QAE Handbook, Assessment processes have been reviewed in line with EEC recommendations (APPENDIX 1 QAE HANDBOOK pages 13-26). Considering the importance of assessment for the students' progression and their future careers, assessments are always carried out by more than one assessor - including verification by external examiners -in line with conflict of interest policy and procedures. As it is clearly stated "*assessments are always carried out by more than one assessor in line with conflict of interest policy and procedures*" (APPENDIX 1 QAE HANDBOOK page 14). This is secured by implementing assessment at various levels (APPENDIX 1 QAE HANDBOOK page 17, "The assessment team"): The role of External examiners is to verify among others that: - the structure and nature of the assessment permits students to demonstrate their level of achievement; - The processes for assessment, examination and the determination of awards are sound and fairly conducted; (APPENDIX 1 QAE HANDBOOK page 26)	Choose an item.
The EEC recommends that the institution introduces formal written feedback at the end of each course (summative feedback) that corresponds clearly with the assessment criteria. Additionally, the use of a pass/fail tick-box for the assessment criteria would help here.	Aigaia was providing its students with written feedback (additionally and as part of the PEARSON BTEC programs Assessment procedures as well). Aigaia has now reviewed, updated and amended all formal procedures according to recommendations of EEC and has given even more emphasis on the procedure of giving formal written feedback to the students at formative assessment stages and at the completion of each course (summative feedback) that corresponds clearly with the assessment criteria (APPENDIX 1 QAE HANDBOOK pages 17-18). This is also confirmed by external examiners as it is provided by their role (APPENDIX 1 QAE HANDBOOK page 26).	Choose an item.
The EEC recommends that the institution formally teach students research skills and information	Aigaia formally teaches students research skills and information management. The following are examples where Research Skills and/or information management are part of the teaching, learning and assessment process of the courses:	Choose an item.

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management. This relates to accessing peer-reviewed information in libraries and understanding how to manage such research data. As it stands, research in this sense is not taught.	For the full description of the courses see the attached courses syllabus (APPENDIX 4 REVIEWED UPDATED & AMENDED COURSES, page 7). Course name: "CONTEXTUAL STUDIES 2" L.O.1 Research and select information effectively and develop appropriate methods for collecting, organising and deploying knowledge. With essential Course content for the L.O.1: *Chosen pathways* *Targeted research* *Collect quality information* *Methods of recording information* *Methods for organising information* *Analysis of information* *Identify areas for further investigation* *Academic integrity/ Research methods & ethics* LO2 Read, analyse and interpret different kinds of documented knowledge, such as written texts, recorded sound or images, objects and artefacts. With essential Course content for the L.O.2: *Textual analysis* *Analysis of different kinds of documented knowledge* *Quality of content* *Accuracy* *Relevance* LO4 Demonstrate critical understanding of their own study, using a range of written forms of presentation, noting specific terms, languages, references, genres and audiences. *Writing in various forms* *Referencing and citations* *bibliography and reference list* *Referencing all documented knowledge* *Presenting* *Peer review* *Critical understanding* *Reflecting* *Specialised language and terminology* Course name: "RESEARCH, RECORD, SYNTHESIS IN VISUAL ARTS" L.O.1: Plan and conduct research for various topics from a wide range of sources, which can clearly challenge preconceptions to inform the development of personal research skills.	

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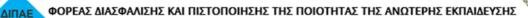|	Course name: "INTRODUCTION TO VISUAL ARTS: FINE ARTS" L.O.1: Examine the Fine Arts creative practices within historical and contemporary contexts Course name: "MULTIDIMENSIONAL APPROACH TO VISUAL ARTS" L.O.1: Analyse the use of art practices as a means of communication through contextual research in various different disciplines	
Monitoring: The EEC recommends that the institution anonymously collect, analyse and use student feedback. A system for data analysis should be adopted from a comparable higher educational institute.	Aigaia anonymously collect, analyses and uses student feedback: - Relevant Form in page 55-58 of APPENDIX 1 QAE Handbook: *Course / Teaching Evaluation Questionnaire for (Visual Arts Diploma 120 ECTS, Short Cycle EQF 5 Students)* - link of the form sent to our previous graduates: **AIGAIA_INSTITUTION SATISFACTION SURVEY** **https://forms.office.com/pages/designpagev2.aspx?lang=en-US&origin=OfficeDotCom&route=Start&subpage=design&id=I5A1024PTEa7jVuobXj6LQHsN-MCk8NLsIXJxPyAdqpUNURUOEs3VkNBQUIxUU8xNTVKWjRGNzVMVi4u&wdlor=c00EB8D22-1D57-A047-A849-09AA1DA3D613** **AIGAIA_STAFF SATISFACTION SURVEY** **https://forms.office.com/pages/designpagev2.aspx?lang=en-US&origin=OfficeDotCom&route=Start&subpage=design&id=I5A1024PTEa7jVuobXj6LQHsN-MCk8NLsIXJxPyAdqpUNlZaMTQxWUtRUE44RldBQkgxOEVZSlRXTi4u&wdlor=cA2EFA974-75DF-E64B-ADCF-CD9085F82C62** **AIGAIA_PROGRESSION INFORMATION SURVEY** **https://forms.office.com/pages/designpagev2.aspx?lang=en-US&origin=OfficeDotCom&route=Start&subpage=design&id=I5A1024PTEa7jVuobXj6LQHsN-MCk8NLsIXJxPyAdqpUMjdPRE9NRjFSWDZBNFIwMFhNVjVETVYyWi4u&wdlor=c6E4C0839-4508-3945-BE47-456FBD8D33C0** **AIGAIA_SPECIFIC COURSE CONTENT_SATISFACTION SURVEY** https://forms.office.com/pages/designpagev2.aspx?lang=en-US&origin=OfficeDotCom&route=Start&subpage=design&id=I5A1024PTEa7jVuobXj6LQHsN-MCk8NLsIXJxPyAdqpUM1hKTTBQVjRJQUtWV0JYSzRUNlRNVjVPSy4u&wdlor=cDA9938D9-9FB0-A742-8477-1654BC03E5B6	Choose an item.

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	Aigaia has registered in "Microsoft 365" for higher education and uses the provided platform as a data analysis tool. The Microsoft used platform, provides the required useful data analysis based on those data collected. It has also very powerful data visualization elements such as graphs and charts that provide data analysis in visual form.	
1.3 Public information – ESG 1.8 intended learning outcomes - need to be simplified/reduced, aligned with criteria in all courses. Should match the actual delivery of the course teaching rather than the speculative delivery.	Aigaia's response regarding the intended LOs was previously given above in similar observation by the EEC under section 1.2 Design, approval, on-going monitoring and review – ESG 1.2 & ESG 1.9 The Curriculum and individual courses have been reviewed in context with the recommendations of the EEC and all learning outcomes align with the assessment criteria and are now clear for all courses, including their content, reduced number (limit of 5), language. They are clearly referring to the conditions for Pass, Merit, Distinction. Failure to pass all Learning Outcomes and consequently all assessment criteria results to **not achieving** (Fail) the assessed course and this is clearly stated in the syllabus of all courses. Intended LOs match the actual delivery of the course teaching. See APPENDIX 4 REVIEWED UPDATED & AMENDED COURSES.	Choose an item.
qualification awarded - The validated Diploma programme results in a qualification that is clearly specified and communicated and refers to the correct level of the Cypriot National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education (Diploma). The EEC note that the programme (and institution) would benefit also from describing itself as Short Cycle EQF 5 since the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher	Aigaia's response regarding the qualification awarded was previously given above in similar observation by the EEC under section 1.2 Design, approval, on-going monitoring and review – ESG 1.2 & ESG 1.9 The Institution completely agrees with the observation of the EEC that the program (and institution) would benefit also from describing itself as Short Cycle EQF 5 since the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area are going to be increasingly important when recruiting non- Cypriot students as in the Strategic Planning of the Institution. The term **Short Cycle, EQF Level 5** has been introduced in the title of the Program and the description of the Learning Outcomes as described in the EQF are fully adopted, as explained earlier in this document.	Choose an item.

Education Area are going to be increasingly important when recruiting non-Cypriot students (re: Strategic Planning).		
teaching, learning and assessment procedures - See previous section: regarding need to clarify.	As part of the reviewed QAE Handbook (APPENDIX 1), teaching, learning and assessment processes have been reviewed in line with EEC recommendations (APPENDIX 1 QAE HANDBOOK pages 13-26 and APPENDIX 3 PROGRAM HANDBOOK pages 10-23), both attached.	Choose an item.
graduate employment information. Graduate Destinations: The EEC recommends that the institution collect data on, and understand, graduate destinations and how the programme supports graduates to achieve.	Aigaia anonymously collect, analyses and uses student feedback about graduate destinations and how the programme supports graduates to achieve: - Relevant Form in page 55-58 of APPENDIX 1 QAE Handbook: *Course / Teaching Evaluation Questionnaire for (Visual Arts Diploma 120 ECTS, Short Cycle EQF 5 Students)* - link of the form sent to our previous graduates: **AIGAIA_INSTITUTION SATISFACTION SURVEY** **https://forms.office.com/pages/designpagev2.aspx?lang=en-US&origin=OfficeDotCom&route=Start&subpage=design&id=I5A1024PTEa7jVuobXj6LQHsN-MCk8NLsIXJxPyAdqpUNURUOEs3VkNBQUIxUU8xNTVKWjRGNzVMVi4u&wdlor=c00EB8D22-1D57-A047-A849-09AA1DA3D613** **AIGAIA_STAFF SATISFACTION SURVEY** **https://forms.office.com/pages/designpagev2.aspx?lang=en-US&origin=OfficeDotCom&route=Start&subpage=design&id=I5A1024PTEa7jVuobXj6LQHsN-MCk8NLsIXJxPyAdqpUNlZaMTQxWUtRUE44RldBQkgxOEVZSlRXTi4u&wdlor=cA2EFA974-75DF-E64B-ADCF-CD9085F82C62** **AIGAIA_PROGRESSION INFORMATION SURVEY** **https://forms.office.com/pages/designpagev2.aspx?lang=en-US&origin=OfficeDotCom&route=Start&subpage=design&id=I5A1024PTEa7jVuobXj6LQHsN-MCk8NLsIXJxPyAdqpUMjdPRE9NRjFSWDZBNFIwMFhNVjVETVYyWi4u&wdlor=c6E4C0839-4508-3945-BE47-456FBD8D33C0**	Choose an item.

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	AIGAIA_SPECIFIC COURSE CONTENT_SATISFACTION SURVEY https://forms.office.com/pages/designpagev2.aspx?lang=en-US&origin=OfficeDotCom&route=Start&subpage=design&id=I5A1024PTEa7jVuobXj6LQHsN-MCk8NLsIXJxPyAdqpUM1hKTTBQVjRJQUtWV0JYSzRUNlRNVjVPSy4u&wdlor=cDA9938D9-9FB0-A742-8477-1654BC03E5B6 Aigaia has registered in "Microsoft 365" for higher education and uses the provided platform as a data analysis tool. The Microsoft used platform provides the required useful data analysis based on those data collected. It has also very powerful data visualization elements such as graphs and charts that provide data analysis in visual form.	
1.4 Information management – ESG 1.7 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs): The EEC recommends that the programme team develop KPIs, then use them (annually) to review their progress.	Aigaia has adopted EEC recommendation and has developed KPIs to be used by the Academic Committee to complete an Annual Programme review and analysis (APPENDIX 1 QAE HANDBOOK pages 11-12).	Choose an item.
students' satisfaction with their programmes. Current missing ways of gathering this data that are anon. and ethical – within GDPR Data Protection laws of the EU. Monitoring: The EEC recommends that the institution anonymously collect, analyse and use student feedback. A system for data analysis should be adopted from a comparable educational institute.	Aigaia's response regarding the anonymous and ethical collection, analysis and use of student feedback and the use of a system for data analysis, was previously given above in a similar observation by the EEC under section 1.2 Design, approval, on-going monitoring and review – ESG 1.2 & ESG 1.9. Specifically, Aigaia anonymously collects, analyses and uses student feedback about graduate destinations and how the programme supports graduates to achieve: - Relevant Form in page 55-58 of APPENDIX 1 QAE Handbook: *Course / Teaching Evaluation Questionnaire for (Visual Arts Diploma 120 ECTS, Short Cycle EQF 5 Students)* - link of the form sent to our previous graduates:	Choose an item.

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ΦΟΡΕΑΣ ΔΙΑΣΦΑΛΙΣΗΣ ΚΑΙ ΠΙΣΤΟΠΟΙΗΣΗΣ ΤΗΣ ΠΟΙΟΤΗΤΑΣ ΤΗΣ ΑΝΩΤΕΡΗΣ ΕΚΠΑΙΔΕΥΣΗΣ
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Students and staff are involved in providing and analysing information and planning follow-up activities: The EEC recommends that the institution anonymously collect, analyse and use student feedback. A system for data analysis should be adopted from a comparable educational institute once it starts to collect the data this way.	**AIGAIA_INSTITUTION SATISFACTION SURVEY** https://forms.office.com/pages/designpagev2.aspx?lang=en-US&origin=OfficeDotCom&route=Start&subpage=design&id=I5A1024PTEa7jVuobXj6LQHsN-MCk8NLsIXJxPyAdqpUNURUOEs3VkNBQUIxUU8xNTVKWjRGNzVMVi4u&wdlor=c00EB8D22-1D57-A047-A849-09AA1DA3D613 **AIGAIA_STAFF SATISFACTION SURVEY** https://forms.office.com/pages/designpagev2.aspx?lang=en-US&origin=OfficeDotCom&route=Start&subpage=design&id=I5A1024PTEa7jVuobXj6LQHsN-MCk8NLsIXJxPyAdqpUNlZaMTQxWUtRUE44RldBQkgxOEVZSlRXTi4u&wdlor=cA2EFA974-75DF-E64B-ADCF-CD9085F82C62 **AIGAIA_PROGRESSION INFORMATION SURVEY** https://forms.office.com/pages/designpagev2.aspx?lang=en-US&origin=OfficeDotCom&route=Start&subpage=design&id=I5A1024PTEa7jVuobXj6LQHsN-MCk8NLsIXJxPyAdqpUMjdPRE9NRjFSWDZBNFIwMFhNVjVETVYyWi4u&wdlor=c6E4C0839-4508-3945-BE47-456FBD8D33C0 **AIGAIA_SPECIFIC COURSE CONTENT_SATISFACTION SURVEY** https://forms.office.com/pages/designpagev2.aspx?lang=en-US&origin=OfficeDotCom&route=Start&subpage=design&id=I5A1024PTEa7jVuobXj6LQHsN-MCk8NLsIXJxPyAdqpUM1hKTTBQVjRJQUtWV0JYSzRUNlRNVjVPSy4u&wdlor=cDA9938D9-9FB0-A742-8477-1654BC03E5B6 Aigaia has registered in "Microsoft 365" for higher education and uses the provided platform as a data analysis tool. The Microsoft used platform provides the required useful data analysis based on those data collected. It has also very powerful data visualization elements such as graphs and charts that provide data analysis in visual form.	
career paths of graduates: The EEC recommends that the institution collect data on, and understand, graduate destinations and how the programme supports (or fails) graduates to achieve. The institution notes that	Aigaia's response regarding the collection of data on, and understand, graduate destinations and how the programme supports (or fails) graduates to achieve. was previously given above in a similar observation by the EEC under section 1.3 Public Information, ESG 1.8. Specifically, Aigaia anonymously collects, analyses and uses student feedback about graduate destinations and how the programme supports graduates to achieve:	Choose an item.

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ΦΟΡΕΑΣ ΔΙΑΣΦΑΛΙΣΗΣ ΚΑΙ ΠΙΣΤΟΠΟΙΗΣΗΣ ΤΗΣ ΠΟΙΟΤΗΤΑΣ ΤΗΣ ΑΝΩΤΕΡΗΣ ΕΚΠΑΙΔΕΥΣΗΣ
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| it is not doing this but might do so in future (post-BA). This has to happen now - weakens any case for a BA. | - Relevant Form in page 55-58 of APPENDIX 1 QAE Handbook: *Course / Teaching Evaluation Questionnaire for (Visual Arts Diploma 120 ECTS, Short Cycle EQF 5 Students)*
 - link of the form sent to our previous graduates:

 AIGAIA_INSTITUTION SATISFACTION SURVEY

 https://forms.office.com/pages/designpagev2.aspx?lang=en-US&origin=OfficeDotCom&route=Start&subpage=design&id=I5A1024PTEa7jVuobXj6LQHsN-MCk8NLsIXJxPyAdqpUNURUOEs3VkNBQUIxUU8xNTVKWjRGNzVMVi4u&wdlor=c00EB8D22-1D57-A047-A849-09AA1DA3D613

 AIGAIA_STAFF SATISFACTION SURVEY

 https://forms.office.com/pages/designpagev2.aspx?lang=en-US&origin=OfficeDotCom&route=Start&subpage=design&id=I5A1024PTEa7jVuobXj6LQHsN-MCk8NLsIXJxPyAdqpUNlZaMTQxWUtRUE44RldBQkgxOEVZSlRXTi4u&wdlor=cA2EFA974-75DF-E64B-ADCF-CD9085F82C62

 AIGAIA_PROGRESSION INFORMATION SURVEY

 https://forms.office.com/pages/designpagev2.aspx?lang=en-US&origin=OfficeDotCom&route=Start&subpage=design&id=I5A1024PTEa7jVuobXj6LQHsN-MCk8NLsIXJxPyAdqpUMjdPRE9NRjFSWDZBNFIwMFhNVjVETVYyWi4u&wdlor=c6E4C0839-4508-3945-BE47-456FBD8D33C0

 AIGAIA_SPECIFIC COURSE CONTENT_SATISFACTION SURVEY

 https://forms.office.com/pages/designpagev2.aspx?lang=en-US&origin=OfficeDotCom&route=Start&subpage=design&id=I5A1024PTEa7jVuobXj6LQHsN-MCk8NLsIXJxPyAdqpUM1hKTTBQVjRJQUtWV0JYSzRUNlRNVjVPSy4u&wdlor=cDA9938D9-9FB0-A742-8477-1654BC03E5B6

 Aigaia has registered in "Microsoft 365" for higher education and uses the provided platform as a data analysis tool. The Microsoft used platform provides the required useful data analysis based on those data collected. It has also very powerful data visualization elements such as graphs and charts that provide data analysis in visual form. | |

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
2.1 Process of teaching and learning and student-centred teaching methodology – ESG 1.3 There's really just one main learning style encouraged within the curriculum as it stands – teacher presence (50-75% contact time) or 'sitting-with-Nellie'. The fact that assessment methods are not as varied as they ought to be means that - in comparison with peers in other institutions - students are not as familiar with a full range of means by which to demonstrate the extent to which the intended learning outcomes have been achieved. Given that the institution is an art school, and that art schools use a wide range of assessment methods, it would be appropriate to include a broader range of assessment methods in the courses that constitute the programme. This might mean not always relying exclusively on the portfolio as the assignment for assessment. e.g. For the Major Project, students might work on publishing their work either online or as a printed catalogue. It is recommended that the programme deliberately introduce some different modes of delivery - such as peer-to-peer, workplace-based, problem-based or collaborative learning - and that the Learning Outcomes are always clearly tied to each mode of	As Aigaia is an Art & Design Institution and the staff teaching on the Higher Education and all other Programs are creative individuals with individual areas of interest and personal creative practice, they engage in different creative activities daily for their personal and teaching processes and methods. A creative individual like all of our teaching staff it is impossible in our opinion and is not according to our knowledge and daily interaction with our teachers – to have only one and only teaching style. Our methods involve different types of teaching and learning activities, constantly experimenting and investigating with new approaches, media, techniques materials and methods. Learning and teaching art cannot be approached any other way and the staff at Aigaia are never complacent or satisfied with lack of variety and especially not as mentioned in the comment of the EE 'sitting-with-Nellie', whatever that implies. It is stressed out that Aigaia has registered all of its teaching staff to attend the following courses, as EEC recommends (page 48 of APPENDIX 1 QAE Handbook): - Contemporary Approaches to University Teaching (HE) (38 hrs) offered by CAULLT – Council of Australian University Leaders in Learning and Teaching - Get Interactive: Practical Teaching with Technology, coursera, Offered by University of London, Bloomsbury Learning exchange (15 hrs). - Introduction to Teaching and Learning for RQF Higher Nationals, Pearson Education - Introduction to teaching and Assessing the RQF Higher Nationals in Art & Design, Pearson Education	Choose an item.

delivery in a specific way (not currently the case). For example, problem-based learning is happening with some of the design briefs, but it's not presented or understood as a form of problem-based learning presently. Being more aware of the learning styles would be very beneficial to both staff and students as a form of transferable knowledge/skills.

The teaching methods, tools and material used in teaching are not consistently contemporary, nor do they appear to be regularly updated or as effective as they could be.

- Assessment Planning and Assignment Writing Art Design RQF BTEC Higher Nationals, Pearson Education
- Grading Standardisation Workshop for BTEC Higher Nationals Art and Design (RQF), offered by Pearson Education

Attendance is part of their workload and as such is compulsory for all our teaching staff and a prerequisite for teaching on all our higher educational programs from academic year 2022-2023 (i.e page 48 of APPENDIX 1 QAE Handbook).

Personal contact with students happens on a daily basis, especially in the workshops making sure that everything runs smoothly and they get whatever they need to support their personal development and expertise. This in no case implies that we manipulate or "spoon-feeding" our students or their development processes. The total periods per academic semester mentioned in the curriculum does not correspond to contact time of students with teachers. It means the total time needed to complete each individual course, corresponds to both contact time and individual student learning time and total work load. It is calculated based on the number of ECTS allocated per course given that each one ECTS equals to 25-30 hours of workload (teaching and individual learning) (page 10 from the ECTS GUIDE 2005).

The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports greatly appreciates itself the variety of teaching and learning methods associated with our institution and trusts Aigaia to host yearly programs offered to primary and secondary education teachers for their training in teaching art & design with creative and innovative ways (SEE APPENDIX 7 VISUAL PROOF).

However, the curriculum - on which EEC appears to have been absolutely based for its relevant comments - has been reviewed, updated and amended accordingly, to include **in writing** the variety of teaching, learning and assessment.

	These can be verified in the attached APPENDIX 3 Program Handbook (pages 10-11), and the attached APPENDIX 1 QAE Handbook (pages 13-26) where among others different Assessment methods, procedures etc are analysed.	
In general, the course content is not as up to date as it should be. Some courses are more timely than others; while some do not adequately teach or support critical thinking. The resource lists / bibliographies are not up to date in many cases, nor do they represent diversity in the respective subjects. The EEC recommends that the institution review the resource lists / bibliographies from a decolonial perspective given the School's stated aim to become a leading provider in ADM in the MENA area.	Courses have been reviewed, updated and amended according to EEC recommendations. This review includes course content, resource lists / bibliographies in order to be up to date and to represent diversity in the respective subjects. Attached you will find content of the reviewed, in their detailed description, resource list / bibliographies, LOs, ACs, teaching methodologies (APPENDIX 4 REVIEWED UPDATED & AMENDED COURSES).	Choose an item.
In general, the course content is not making the best use of contemporary art galleries, museums and design institutions in the city. Such organisations are vital learning resources and should have a clear place in the curriculum to foster understanding of CURRENT art and design research in professional settings.	During all the years that Aigaia has been offering Art & design Education including Visual Arts (2 years Diploma), visiting museums and galleries has always been in our culture and in the core of our educational activities as a vital learning resource. Furthermore, Aigaia hosts and/or organises in its premises contemporary exhibitions, theatre plays, workshops, seminars collaborations with other organisations etc and our students attend and/or participate in the organization as part of their studies at Aigaia school of art & design. Relevant pictures of such organized visits from the last academic year in museums, art galleries etc and from exhibitions, theatre plays etc organized and/or hosted by Aigaia are provided attached (APPENDIX 7 VISUAL PROOF). According to EEC recommendations in the reviewed, updated and amended curriculum, these visits of our students is now also provided in	Choose an item.

	writing (APPENDIX 4 REVIEWED UPDATED & AMENDED COURSES) .	
There isn't particularly strong integration of digital technology with the programme; more could be done here to ensure digital media and relevant digital forms of communication are integrated with the programme. Learning Platform / Learning Management System (LMS) There's very little use of educational technologies, or the use of new technology in general in order to make the teaching process more effective and relevant. An LMS allows course content to be made public (Golden Copy) and to be updated on-the-fly where and when it can have pedagogical impact. What are the plans to generate more blended approaches; could the institution use this to support students who are in more remote locations in Cyprus? How might each course revise and bring its methods, tools and materials up to date? The creation of a highly effective self-hosted LMS doesn't have to have any costs beyond install and maintenance. For example, Commons-in-a-Box is free and runs on WordPress – it can work with other freeware and open-source tools. Staff and students in ADM need to learn how to use such open-source tech – it is vital to the profession. The LMS enables better communication with students around what they should be doing and opens up new possibilities for teaching.	During Covid pandemic and specifically during strict lockdowns, it was a one-way option not only for Aigaia school of art & design but for the majority of all other institutions in Cyprus and abroad, to continue operating by providing education remotely by the integration and use of digital technology and relevant digital forms of communication with our students and staff. The valuable accumulated experience helped us to integrate the use of online learning tools and LMS to make the teaching process more effective and relevant. Specifically, the online learning tools which are currently used by Aigaia, our staff and students are: - Microsoft 365 - Google Workspace - Zoom - Canvas LMS (has been introduced after EEC onsite visit and according to EEC recommendations) which currently better accommodate our institutions needs and open new possibilities for teaching.	Choose an item.

The criteria for the method of assessment are published in advance but they are not clear enough; please clarify what is assessed and how. The Institution does use marks (0-100% scale) but the institution does not have any marking criteria (i.e. it cannot tell us what 72% means). It needs to rationalise this by clarifying that it operates a straightforward pass/merit/distinction CMS – removing all references to % or numerical scales. The assessment process as it stands doesn't always allow students to demonstrate the extent to which the intended learning outcomes have been achieved since there's an inconsistent alignment between the LOs and the assessment criteria.	The assessment method of our institution has been reviewed and amended according to EEC recommendations and all marks (0-100% scale) and all references to % or numerical scales have been removed. Aigaia now operates in a straightforward pass/merit/distinction CMS as EEC recommends. As already mentioned responding on similar EEC recommendations on CMS under 1.1POLICY FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE – ESG 1.1 section, Aigaia's newly implemented Assessment, the calculation of the individual course grades as well as the overall qualification grade is based on a Common Marking Scheme that leads to Pass, Merit, Distinction. The calculation of the overall qualification grade is based on the student's performance on all Learning Outcomes of all Courses and in all Semesters. Students are awarded a Pass, Merit or Distinction qualification grade using the points gained through all 120 ECTS, based on their achievement in each individual course and not only on the final capstone as it was before the review. The detailed Assessment implemented by Aigaia according to EEC relevant recommendations can be found in the attached APPENDIX 1 QAE Handbook pages 13- 26. Within this updated Assessment, the alignment of LOs with assessment criteria is confirmed. This can also been confirmed in the attached detailed description of individual courses (APPENDIX 4 REVIEWED UPDATED & AMENDED COURSES). In addition, within the role of External examining is to verify that the structure and nature of the assessment permits students to demonstrate their level of achievement, i.e the extent to which the intended LOs have been achieved (APPENDIX 1 QAE Handbook page 26).	Choose an item.
Students are given feedback, but it's not clear what form this takes (is it verbal or written or both) or when it is given. An external examination panel need to be able	As has already been commented on similar EEC recommendation for written feedback under Section 1.2 Design, approval, on-going monitoring and review – ESG 1.2 & ESG 1.9 Aigaia was providing its students with written feedback (and	Choose an item.

to read or listen to examples of useful feedback for learning given to students in order to assess how effective it might be. Useful feedback has to be linked to advice on the learning process; this requires some work on the Learning Outcomes and criteria. See: EEC recommendation on written feedback.	as part of the PEARSON BTEC programs Assessment procedures as well). Aigaia has now reviewed, updated and amended all formal procedures according to EEC recommendations and has given even more emphasis on the procedure of giving formal written feedback to the students at formative assessment stages and at the completion of each course (summative feedback) that corresponds clearly with the assessment criteria (APPENDIX 1 QAE Handbook page 17, 18). This is also confirmed by external examiners as it is provided by their role (APPENDIX 1 QAE Handbook page 26). Our response on the alignment of the assessment with the respective LOs has been given to the immediate previous paragraph. The detailed Assessment implemented by Aigaia according to EEC relevant recommendations can be found in the attached APPENDIX 1 QAE Handbook pages 13- 26. Within this updated Assessment, the alignment of LOs with assessment criteria is confirmed. This can also be confirmed in the attached detailed description of individual courses where all Learning Outcomes are assigned with specific Assessment Criteria for Pass, Merit, Distinction. (APPENDIX 4 REVIEWED UPDATED & AMENDED COURSES).	
Students need more support on their general competencies and transferable skills; given the existing courses are already trying to do too much, a course focused on educational skills (learning- to-learn), information management, academic integrity and research methods/ethics really would help here. This would support the students' abilities to think critically.	This very general comment touches many categories of broad issues some of which have already been answered in previous sections. As already mentioned in previous section 1.2 Design, approval, on-going monitoring and review – ESG 1.2 & ESG 1.9 where it mentions: *"The EEC recommends that the institution formally teach students research skills and information management"*, Aigaia formally teaches students research skills and information management. The following are some examples where Research Skills and/or information management are part of the teaching, learning and assessment process of the courses: For example:	Choose an item.

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Course name: "CONTEXTUAL STUDIES 2"
L.O.1 Research and select information effectively and develop appropriate methods for collecting, organising and deploying knowledge.
With essential Course content for the L.O.1:
Chosen pathways
Targeted research
Collect quality information
Methods of recording information
Methods for organising information
Analysis of information
Identify areas for further investigation
Academic integrity/ Research methods & ethics

LO2 Read, analyse and interpret different kinds of documented knowledge, such as written texts, recorded sound or images, objects and artefacts.
With essential Course content for the L.O.2:
Textual analysis
Analysis of different kinds of documented knowledge
Quality of content
Accuracy
Relevance

LO4 Demonstrate critical understanding of their own study, using a range of written forms of presentation, noting specific terms, languages, references, genres and audiences.
Writing in various forms
Referencing and citations
bibliography and reference list
Referencing all documented knowledge
Presenting
Peer review
Critical understanding
Reflecting
Specialised language and terminology

Course name: "RESEARCH, RECORD, SYNTHESIS IN VISUAL ARTS"
L.O.1: Plan and conduct research for various topics from a wide range of sources, which can clearly challenge preconceptions to inform the development of personal research skills.

	Course name: "INTRODUCTION TO VISUAL ARTS: FINE ARTS" L.O.1: Examine the Fine Arts creative practices within historical and contemporary contexts Course name: "MULTIDIMENSIONAL APPROACH TO VISUAL ARTS" L.O.1: Analyse the use of art practices as a means of communication through contextual research in various different disciplines For the full description of the courses see APPENDIX 4 REVIEWED UPDATED & AMENDED COURSES where all above examples are included.	
It is not clear what the procedures are for dealing with students' complaints regarding the process of teaching and learning. How does a student make a complaint? What are the accepted grounds? Etc..	Aigaia School of Art & Design aims to provide a high standard and quality of service. However, we recognise that things can go wrong and when they do students may have legitimate reason to complain about provision of academic courses, facilities, services or staff. We aim to ensure that student complaints are treated seriously and dealt with promptly, fairly and consistently. We also aim to learn from the outcomes of complaint investigations in order to help improve the institution services and enhance the student experience. Wherever possible, students' concerns about their course, services provided by the institution or any other aspect of their experience at Aigaia should be dealt with promptly at the earliest opportunity. **The complaints principles, the procedure followed, grounds for complaint etc are included clearly and in details in the attached reviewed, revised and amended according to EEC recommendations APPENDIX 1 QAE Handbook in pages 40-44.**	Choose an item.
2.2 Practical training The institution doesn't have a clear method of understanding and verifying that staff have the	Aigaia is very aware of the strengths of each member on the Academic team and so we allocate each member of the Academic team to the most appropriate position suited to their knowledge and	Choose an item.

requisite skills and recognised qualifications (e.g. an MA or BA) to teach everything. For example, staff who are, perhaps, well-suited to work as technicians may not be academically qualified to teach students in the art and design aspects of their studies.	expertise including teaching and technicians in workshops. All CVs have been submitted to the CYQAA as part of the application for accreditation. Aigaia School of art & design has a clear and a very straight forward system to ensure the teaching competence of our teaching staff. In the attached APPENDIX 1 QAE HANDBOOK, section 10 refers to the "Recruitment and Development Policy" of our institution which among others covers in details our related recruitment policy including teaching staff, staff recruitment processes, job description and person specification, advertising, application processes, shortlisting, selection process, complaints (pages 45 – 49). Recalling from "Job Description and Person Specification of the same document (page 45): " …….. *In case of an academic staff post, Aigaia School of Art & Design will ensure by the appropriate Person Specification all successful applicants' competence:* - *as established researchers and/or practitioners in their ADM field* - *as experienced/trained teachers in ADM* - *to achieve the objectives and planned learning of the programmes of study offered by Aigaia and to ensure quality and sustainability of the teaching and learning.* ……………. " Our teaching staff are established practitioners which can be verified by the CVs which have been submitted to the CYQAA as part of the application for accreditation. Just to mention Eleni Panayidou, a very well known and respected printmaker – Director of the Hambis Printmaking Museum in Nicosia, Maria Papacharalambous an established Cypriot fine artist – co-founder of Artos Foundation	

with presentations in Cyprus and abroad who also teaches at Aegean University in Greece etc.

As mentioned by EEC in their conclusions & final remarks of this report (page 43), one of the strengths of Aigaia is that as an institution also provides education in EQF Levels 2, 3 & 4. Most of our staff begin and develop their teaching experiences starting at those levels and working their way up to Level 5, when it is assessed that they are competed to do so.

Aigaia currently employs 11 members of Academic staff for the Visual Arts, Short Cycle Diploma, EQF Level 5. Out of the 11 academic staff, 7 are full time, 2 part-time and 2 of them visiting lecturers.

Furthermore:

- Eight (8) Of the members of the academic team hold a Masters qualification
- One (1) member holds a Bachelor qualification
- One (1) member holds a BTEC HND (Higher National Diploma)
- One (1) member holds the 2-year Diploma of Visual Arts

All the above can be verified in the attached APPENDIX 5 REVIEWED, UPDATED & AMENDED CURRICULUM page 6.

As it is derived from the above, all of our teaching staff holds a degree which is at least on the same level that they teach – including our 2 Technical staff who only teach technical aspects of the responsible workshops that are appointed to - and 81.8% of our teaching Staff has a degree which is at least a level higher than the level they are teaching.

This is in line with the provisions of the respective national Law ("Οι περί Σχολών Τριτοβάθμιας Εκπαίδευσης Νόμοι του 1996 (67(1)/1996) έως 53(I) του 2013") as they are obtained from the CYQAA website. According to this law no less than 70% of the teaching staff should have an approved

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	degree that is a level higher than the level they are teaching to and the rest 30% of the same level. **However, to ensure that Aigaia fully conforms to all recommendations of the EEC** it is again stressed out that our institution provides comprehensive internal staff development and training opportunities for all its staff. Aigaia also supports and provides **remunerated** training time within workload plans for its staff, and has registered all of its teaching staff to attend the following courses, including those recommended by EEC. This will ensure that their teaching level and experiences are formally up to standard (APPENDIX 1 QAE HANDBOOK page 48): - Contemporary Approaches to University Teaching (HE) (38 hrs) offered by CAULLT – Council of Australian University Leaders in Learning and Teaching - Get Interactive: Practical Teaching with Technology, coursera, Offered by University of London, Bloomsbury Learning exchange (15 hrs). - Introduction to Teaching and Learning for RQF Higher Nationals, Pearson Education - Introduction to teaching and Assessing the RQF Higher Nationals in Art & Design, Pearson Education - Assessment Planning and Assignment Writing Art Design RQF BTEC Higher Nationals, Pearson Education - Grading Standardisation Workshop for BTEC Higher Nationals Art and Design (RQF), offered by Pearson Education Our teaching staff is also trained in practice by progressively being engaged in teaching at lower educational levels provided by Aigaia, before being ready and consistently adequate to teach at Visual Arts Diploma 120 ECTS, Short Cycle EQF 5 or on any other educational programme of higher level provided by Aigaia. As already said Aigaia is an approved PEARSON Educational centre since its establishment with centre number 90102, for	

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	Academic qualifications (IGCSE, GCSE, GCE A' Level) and all BTEC courses including the HND RQF Level 5 Higher National Diplomas in Art & Design which are all currently provided by Aigaia. The Visiting Lecturers are an asset for the Visual Arts education since they are active in their relevant industries and bring valuable experiences to their interaction with the students. Staff Mentoring Scheme is provided for all new staff, including a comprehensive induction and the early flagging of staff development needs. Training of every member of Staff in QAE is provided as part of contract (for new staff) and as a % of their workload. Training about professional development of the staff is also be a yearly compulsory activity from 22-23. Staff development as in APPENDIX 1 QAE HANDBOOK page 48.	
Practical and theoretical studies are NOT interconnected in ways that develop critical thinking. Practical and theoretical studies cannot be connected presently since the theoretical studies are focused on pre-Renaissance European culture, while the practical courses focus on contemporary ADM. Theoretical studies do not address Design or Media, since Design is largely an invention of the C19th, nor do they adequately address 'art' (a post-Renaissance invention). The practical courses do not provide theoretical instruction at the appropriate Level (EQF5). The institution should review theoretical studies in all of its	Courses have been reviewed, updated and amended according to the recommendations of the EEC, including the theoretical courses that are attached in APPENDIX 4 REVIEWED UPDATED & AMENDED COURSES. Contextual studies that have replaced the Art History course, now cover all contemporary issues associated with ADM including Design and Media. For example, in "Contextual Studies 1" allocated in the first semester of the program, the Introduction includes the following: "*Contextual Studies provides an historical, cultural and theoretical framework to allow us to make sense of art and design, as well as to consider how they may help us to understand the wider world.* *This course **introduces** students to key cultural developments, practices and movements related to*	Choose an item.

| courses and ensure that the art history courses focus on ADM with a particular attention to developments <u>since 2000</u>. | *the history of art, design, visual and popular culture since 1900, **with a particular attention to developments since 2000**. Emphasis will be placed upon developing a broad knowledge of art, design and media contexts, considering the technological, economic, social and aesthetic causes which have, and continue to, inform our understanding of art and design within the twentieth **and twenty-first centuries**.*

Students will be introduced to the theoretical methods with which to research and analyse works of art and design, helping them to understand the importance of being able to contextualise their own practice, as well as enhancing their understanding of the wider art and design landscape.

On successful completion, students will have developed their contextual knowledge and their conceptual tool kit by undertaking a contextual investigation of their own, linked to their subject specialism".

Also, in the attached APPENDIX 3 PROGRAM HANDBOOK page 8 where the Intended Learning outcomes of the program are described, they include among others:

"demonstrate a coherent and detailed body of knowledge with regard to the historical and contemporary contexts of the Visual arts"

"demonstrate a coherent understanding of the historical and critical models relevant to contemporary art and to your own work and its concerns"

For the full description of the courses and confirmation of the above see the attached APPENDIX 4 REVIEWED UPDATED & AMENDED COURSES. | |
| 2.3 Student Assessment | Aigaia has reviewed, updated and amended all Assessment framework and procedures according to the recommendations of the EEC. | Choose an item. |

There a large number of issues with assessment in relation to **ESG 2015**: The institution's stated procedures are still opaque (rather than transparent); meaning that assessment is not quite consistent enough. An example of a knock-on effect here, is that there are very different processes pursued in courses of = #ECTS in terms of LOs, workload, criteria, etc. The fact that the stated procedures are not crystal clear, makes it hard to ascertain if assessment is always fairly applied to all students.	In the QAE handbook (pages 13-26) which is attached as APPENDIX 1 and in the Program handbook (pages 12-23) which is also attached as APPENDIX 3, all Assessment and related procedures are described in detail. It is now crystal clear that Assessment is transparent and fairly applied to all students. The process of achieving each Learning Outcome is now clearly described in each individual course under Assessment for Learning Outcomes. For example, for the **"Contextual Studies 1"** course for the Learning Outcome 1 (LO1) which is described as: "**LO1** Discuss the social, historical and cultural context of key art, design and media movements, theories and practices" A student in order to achieve the LO1 has to achieve at least **Pass**. Pass is described as: "**P1** Discuss how key social, historical and cultural contexts relate to art, design and media movements, theories and practices". A student in order to achieve **Merit** has to achieve the Pass (P1) AC and the Merit (M1) AC which is described as: "**M1** Evaluate how social, historical and cultural contexts influence specific works of art and design". A student in order to achieve **Distinction** has to achieve Pass (P1) AC and Merit (M1) AC and Distinction (D1) AC which is described as: "**D1** Analyse the way in which the work of an artist or designer is influenced by broader cultural and social contexts". The detailed description of this course is attached in APPENDIX 4 REVIEWED UPDATED & AMENDED COURSES.	

The Assessment Framework is published in advance but is not comprehensively clear. The institution makes use of marks (0-100% scale) but this scale is contextless so it doesn't mean anything (e.g. the institution would not be able to explain what 72% means or how numerical grades are used to calculate ungraded/ pass/ merit/ distinction in the course or programme as a whole). This can be fixed easily by simply removing all references to 0-100% scale marks and instead only using theungraded/pass/merit/distinction as the Common Marking Schema (CMS) within the overall Assessment Framework. So, the EEA highly recommend that the institution remove the use of 0-100% scale and simply have ungraded/pass/merit/distinction framework as the CMS. The rules for calculating the overall pass/merit/distinction need to be published as part of the Assessment Framework for the institution - within a singular, definitive set of Assessment Regulations. This, along with the CMS itself, should be published as part of the institution's definitive set of Assessment Regulations and be upheld by the institution's QAE Policy.	As has already been stressed out on identical EEC recommendation under Section 2. Student – centred learning, teaching and assessment (ESG 1.3), the assessment method of our institution has been reviewed and amended according to EEC recommendations and all marks (0-100% scale) and all references to % or numerical scales have been eliminated and removed with concrete references. Aigaia now operates in a straightforward ungraded/pass/merit/distinction CMS as EEC recommends. References have already been provided repeatedly. As already mentioned, responding on similar EEC recommendations on CMS under 1.1 POLICY FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE – ESG 1.1 section, Aigaia's newly implemented Assessment, the calculation of the individual course grades as well as the overall qualification grade is based on a Common Marking Scheme that leads to Pass, Merit, Distinction. The calculation of the overall qualification grade is based on the student's performance on all Learning Outcomes of all Courses and in all Semesters. Students are awarded a Pass, Merit or Distinction qualification grade using the points gained through all 120 ECTS, based on their achievement in each individual course and not only on the final capstone as it was before the review. The detailed Assessment implemented by Aigaia according to EEC relevant recommendations can be found in the attached APPENDIX 1 QAE handbook pages 13- 26 and is published along with CMS in institution's website as part of Aigaia's definite set of Assessment regulations and upheld by the institution's QAE Policy (APPENDIX 1 QAE Handbook, page 7): *"3. Quality Assurance and Enhancement (QAE) Policy* *3.1 QAE Policy*	Choose an item.

	Aigaia's School of Art & Design Quality Assurance and Enhancement Policy is assuring quality related to learning and teaching in the institution by: - *promoting continuous improvement and enhancement,* - *promulgating good practice,* - *adopting a rigorous and robust approach to the academic standards of its programmes of study and awards* - ***Adopting and publishing a transparent, clear, singular and definite set of Assessment regulations*** - *ensuring quality of research and administrative services and* - *providing evidence of quality to stakeholders.* *This Policy relates to all actors within Aigaia including students and staff as well as external stakeholders such as external examiners and other external partners of Aigaia................"*	
Generally speaking, assessment does not allow students to demonstrate the extent to which the intended learning outcomes have been achieved - since the LOs and the Assessment Criteria/Assignments are not consistently aligned in every course. There are a number of courses where this does happen, and equal number where it does not. The EEC can provide examples to help here.	As repeatedly stated within several observations of the EEC, within the updated Assessment procedures and the reviewed, updated and amended courses, the alignment of LOs with assessment criteria is confirmed in all courses and assessment procedures. This can also be confirmed in the attached detailed description of individual courses (APPENDIX 4 REVIEWED UPDATED & AMENDED COURSES). In addition, within the role of External examining is to verify that the structure and nature of the assessment permits students to demonstrate their level of achievement, i.e the extent to which the intended LOs have been achieved (APPENDIX 1 QAE Handbook page 26).	Choose an item.
Students are given feedback, but it's not clear what form this takes (is it verbal or written or both) or when it is given. A panel of external stakeholders should be able to read	As has already been commented on similar EEC recommendation for written feedback under Section 1.2 Design, approval, on-going monitoring and review – ESG 1.2 & ESG 1.9b and under this section 2.3 Student Assessment,	Choose an item.

or listen to examples of useful feedback for learning given to students in order to assess how effective it might be. (This is something that might happen at the end of the programme to confirm the Diploma.) Useful feedback has to be linked to advice on the learning process; this requires some work on the Learning Outcomes and criteria.	Aigaia was providing its students with written feedback (and as part of the PEARSON BTEC programs Assessment procedures as well) (APPENDIX 1 QAE HANDBOOK pages 17, 18).

Aigaia has now reviewed, updated and amended all formal procedures according to EEC recommendations and has given even more emphasis on the procedure of giving formal written feedback to the students at formative assessment stages and at the completion of each course (summative feedback) and also at the end of the Program again at the Summative Assessment stage to confirm the achievement of the Diploma.
All assessment procedures and feedback corresponds clearly with the assessment criteria (APPENDIX 1 QAE Handbook pages 17-18).

This is also confirmed by external examiners as it is provided by their role (APPENDIX 1 QAE Handbook page 26).

Our response of the alignment of the assessment with the respective LOs has been given to the immediate previous paragraph. The detailed Assessment implemented by Aigaia according to EEC relevant recommendations can be found in the attached APPENDIX 1 QAE handbook pages 13- 26. Within this updated Assessment, the alignment of LOs with assessment criteria is confirmed. This can also be confirmed in the attached detailed description of individual courses where all Learning Outcomes are assigned with specific Assessment Criteria for Pass, Merit, Distinction. (APPENDIX 4 REVIEWED UPDATED & AMENDED COURSES). | |
| Assessment, where possible, is carried out by more than one examiner? It is not clear when or where this happens presently. This needs to be implemented at the Institutional Level as a singular set of Assessment Regulations. To ensure fairness, the examiner really should not be the tutor/Course organiser; there should be more | As part of the reviewed QAE Handbook, Assessment processes have been reviewed in line with EEC recommendations (APPENDIX 1 QAE handbook pages 13- 26).

Considering the importance of assessment for the students' progression and their future careers, assessments are always carried out by more than one assessor - including an internal verification process and also verification by external examiners | Choose an item. |

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than one examiner (a team or moderator at very least). The use of feedback and grading moderation and a Moderation Policy in the Assessment Regulations is needed here.	-in line with conflict of interest policy and procedures (APPENDIX 1 QAE handbook page 14). This is secured by implementing assessment at various levels (APPENDIX 1 QAE handbook page 17 The assessment team). *The role of External examiners (APPENDIX 1 QAE handbook pages 26) is to verify among others that:* - *the structure and nature of the assessment permits students to demonstrate their level of achievement;* - *The processes for assessment, examination and the determination of awards are sound and fairly conducted;* Also, the role of the Internal verifiers (moderators) is clearly stated as (APPENDIX 1 QAE handbook page 17): - **Internal Verifiers (IVs)** oversee all assessment activity in consultation with the Program Director. They check that assignments and assessment decisions are valid and that they meet all requirements. IVs will be standardised by working with the Program Director. Normally, IVs are also assessors, but they do not verify their own assessments. The Internal Verification (moderation) process is described in the QAE handbook which is attached as APPENDIX 1 (page 23-24).	
There is insufficient evidence to support the contention that all Assessors are consistently familiar with existing testing and examination methods or that they receive support in developing their own skills in this field. Staff who have studied at masters or degree level tend to be more familiar with existing testing and examination methods and should be enlisted	As stated in the Assessment regulations in APPENDIX 1 QAE handbook which is attached (page 13): "*The statements and procedures that follow, apply to all students undertaking the **Short Cycle EQF 5** Programs of study at Aigaia School of Art & Design. The assessment is based on a Common Marking (Grading) Scheme **CMS** that leads to Pass, Merit, Distinction.*	Choose an item.

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(perhaps as an Academic Director) to support and train junior staff. The institution has provided boilerplate on both topics but no empirical evidence of a) what assessors know b) what training, exactly, they have been given. The course docs show no real updated understanding of learning design such emerging Universal Design for Learning (UDL) standards.	*All staff involved in the delivery of the programs should be familiar with this document, and it is the responsibility of the Director of the Program of Study, to ensure that all relevant staff complies with these procedures and regulations.* The Director of the Program of study, is responsible to organise appropriate training at least once at the beginning of each semester to ensure that all assessors are familiar and able to deliver clear and fair assessment throughout the learning period of the courses they teach. This includes training on written feedback. *The programs are delivered in a way that encourages students to take an active role in creating the learning process, and so the **assessment of students** reflects this approach*". Also in APPENDIX 1 QAE HANDBOOK page 17: *"Assessors set or use assignments to assess students to the EQF required standards. Before taking any assessment decisions, assessors participate in standardisation activities led by the Program Director. They work with the Program Director and IVs to ensure that the assessment is planned and carried out in line with the set requirements. Placement assessments must be carried out by appropriately qualified assessors".* This is ensured by various activities that happen throughout the year, especially team assessments, and verification of the assignments to be fit for purpose and the verification of assessment decisions. The verification of assignments happens at the beginning of each academic year and/or semester if needed and definitely before the briefs are issued to the students, in order to safeguard that assignments, include all information a student needs (APPENDIX 1 QAE HANDBOOK pages 13-26). Aigaia agrees with EEC comment and recommendation that Staff who have studied at masters or degree level tend to be more familiar with existing testing and examination methods and should be enlisted to support and train junior staff.	

	Aigaia has the potential and fully implements this recommendation. As evidenced before, out of the 11 academic staff that is currently employed for Visual Arts, Short Cycle Diploma, EQF Level 5, 9 hold either an MA (8 members) or a degree (1 member). All CVs have been submitted to the CYQAA as part of the application for accreditation. TEACHING PERSONNEL, HIGHER QUALIFICATIONS, RANK included in the attached APPENDIX 5 REVIEWED, UPDATED & AMENDED CURRICULUM page 6.	
The EEC can't be sure if the Assessment Regulations consider mitigating circumstances. This should be stated clearly in Assessment Regulations.	The mitigating procedures are included in the attached APPENDIX 1 QAE HANDBOOK pages 19-22.	Choose an item.

3. Teaching staff
(ESG 1.5)

Areas of improvement and recommendations **by EEC**	Actions Taken by the Institution	For official use Only
3.1 Teaching staff recruitment and development Institutions ensure the competence of their teaching staff. The institution appoints staff without a clear system of ensuring their competence a) as established researchers/practitioners in their ADM field b) as experienced/trained teachers in ADM. The teaching staff qualifications are not consistently adequate to achieve the objectives and planned learning outcomes of the study programme, and to ensure quality and sustainability of the teaching and learning. a) proof of being an established researcher/ practitioner in ADM would be a prerequisite to teach at this level. Teachers should have a degree that is a level higher than the level they are teaching at. b) an experienced teacher in ADM would have worked in a number of academic environments over 5 years or more, and thus have solid comparative understanding of the QAE standards of trained teachers; failing this, they would have completed accredited training that	Aigaia School of art & design has a clear and a very straight forward system to ensure the teaching competence of our teaching staff. In the attached APPENDIX 1 QAE HANDBOOK, section 10 refers to the "Recruitment and Development Policy" of our institution which among others covers in details our related recruitment policy including teaching staff, staff recruitment processes, job description and person specification, advertising, application processes, shortlisting, selection process, complaints (pages 45 – 49). Recalling from "Job Description and Person Specification of the same document (page 45): " …….. *In case of an academic staff post, Aigaia School of Art & Design will ensure by the appropriate Person Specification all successful applicants' competence:* - *as established researchers and/or practitioners in their ADM field* - *as experienced/trained teachers in ADM* - *to achieve the objectives and planned learning of the programmes of study offered by Aigaia and to ensure quality and sustainability of the teaching and learning.* …………….. " Our teaching staff are established practitioners which can be verified by the CVs which have been submitted to the CYQAA as part of the application for accreditation. Just to mention Eleni Panayidou, a very well known printmaker – Director of the Hambis Printmaking Museum in Nicosia, Maria Papacharalambous an established Cypriot fine artist – co-founder of Artos Foundation with presentations in Cyprus and abroad who also teaches at Aegean University in Greece etc.	Choose an item.

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supports teaching in Higher Education. The institution has appointed some members of staff who do not yet hold a first degree in their teaching specialism; this is highly unusual.	As mentioned by EEC in their conclusions & final remarks (page 43), one of the strengths of Aigaia is that as an institution also provides education in EQF Levels 2, 3 & 4. Most of our staff begin and develop their teaching experiences starting at those levels and working their way up to Level 5, when it is assessed that they are competed to do so. Aigaia currently employs 11 members of Academic staff for the Visual Arts, Short Cycle Diploma, EQF Level 5. • Eight (8) Of the members of the academic team hold a Masters qualification • One (1) member holds a Bachelor qualification • One (1) member holds a BTEC HND (Higher National Diploma) • One (1) member holds the 2-year Diploma of Visual Arts As it is derived from the above, all of our teaching staff holds a degree which is at least on the same level that they teach – including our 2 Technical staff who only teach technical aspects of the responsible workshops that are appointed - and 81.8% of our teaching Staff has a degree which is at least a level higher than the level they are teaching. This is in line with the provisions of the respective national Law ("Οι περί Σχολών Τριτοβάθμιας Εκπαίδευσης Νόμοι του 1996 (67(1)/1996) έως 53(Ι) του 2013") as they are obtained from the CYQAA website. According to this law no less than 70% of the teaching staff should have an approved degree that is a level higher than the level they are teaching to and the rest 30% of the same level. On the contrary Aigaia cannot be sure that the EEC recommendation "*Teachers should have a degree that is a level higher than the level they are teaching at*" is in line with this law. Furthermore, Aigaia can't be sure that the EEC recommendation to appoint established researchers and "*proof of being an established researcher/ practitioner in ADM would be a prerequisite to teach at this level*" is in line with the same law. According to this law establish researchers	

	is a prerequisite to teach at a postgraduate level and not at EQF Level-5. Nevertheless, as stressed out before with specific examples, our teaching staff are established practitioners which can be verified by the CVs which have been submitted to the CYQAA as part of the application for accreditation. **However, to ensure that Aigaia fully conforms to all recommendations of the EEC** it is again stressed out that Aigaia provides comprehensive internal staff development and training opportunities for all its staff. Aigaia also supports and provides remunerated training time within workload plans for its staff, and has registered all of its teaching staff to attend the following courses, as EEC recommends (APPENDIX 1 QAE HANDBOOK page 48). This will ensure that their teaching level and experiences are formally up to standard: - Contemporary Approaches to University Teaching (HE) (38 hrs) offered by CAULLT – Council of Australian University Leaders in Learning and Teaching - Get Interactive: Practical Teaching with Technology, coursera, Offered by University of London, Bloomsbury Learning exchange (15 hrs). - Introduction to Teaching and Learning for RQF Higher Nationals, Pearson Education - Introduction to teaching and Assessing the RQF Higher Nationals in Art & Design, Pearson Education - Assessment Planning and Assignment Writing Art Design RQF BTEC Higher Nationals, Pearson Education - Grading Standardisation Workshop for BTEC Higher Nationals Art and Design (RQF), offered by Pearson Education As already mentioned, teaching staff is trained in practice by progressively being engaged in teaching at lower educational levels provided by Aigaia, before being ready and consistently adequate to teach at Visual Arts Diploma 120 ECTS, Short Cycle EQF 5 or on	

	any other educational programme of higher level provided by Aigaia.

Staff Mentoring Scheme is provided for all new staff, including a comprehensive induction and the early flagging of staff development needs.

Training of every member of Staff in QAE is provided as part of contract (for new staff) and as a % of their workload.

Training about professional development of the staff is also be a yearly compulsory activity from 22-23.

Staff development as in APPENDIX 1 QAE HANDBOOK page 48.

According to EEC recommendation (under strengths):

"There is some teaching innovation in relation to the use of field trips and live research projects as learning environments. Arguably the institution doesn't make enough of this as an asset. It should also draw more on its theatre teaching and its links with KE partners (particularly with schools)"

Aigaia regards theatre teaching and theatre plays organised either by the institution or in collaboration with external partners including professional theatre groups and organisations as a valuable innovative teaching asset which is used in a great extend. Students have the opportunity to be involved in different ways in the whole process like for costume and/or stage design etc.

(attached pictures in APPENDIX 7 VISUAL PROOF). | |
| Aigaia, like any other employer, needs to ensure that employment law is followed transparently and that there are no ethical conflicts of interest or hidden biases within its system of line management (annual performance review, staff | Aigaia School of Art & Design since its establishment and in all of its activities was always lawful and throughout all of the years of its operation and interaction with many external stakeholders in Cyprus and abroad including Ministries, governmental agencies, local municipal authorities, other educational institutions and universities etc nobody questioned this. | Choose an item. |

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training and staff promotion). This is particularly important to address across all aspects of the institution's governance since family members work together in the School.	The same applies when it comes to ethical values of our institution which are in the core of our mission to: "*Offer the highest quality of art & design tertiary education and produce excellent contemporary art & design in a unique friendly, warm and professional environment providing the society with artists of highest ethical standards, in order to be established as the leading specialised School of Art & Design in Cyprus*". At this level of institution evaluation, Aigaia feels that it is at least non constructive to questioning the lawfulness of our institution, its ethical values and standards and to imply that there are hidden biases within its system of line management just because family members work together in it. In any case, family members working together in the same family run private institution is not against the employment or any other law including the provisions of the respective national Law ("Οι περί Σχολών Τριτοβάθμιας Εκπαίδευσης Νόμοι του 1996 (67(1)/1996) έως 53(I) του 2013") which governs the establishment, organisation and operation of private institutions of tertiary education. **Nevertheless, to ensure that there can be no perception of conflict of interest** - either in good or bad faith - Aigaia has reviewed, updated and amended its conflict of interest Policy, outlining in details the purpose, principles, Definitions **including that of a relative or friend**, determination disclosure and resolution of a conflict of interest (APPENDIX 1 QAE HANDBOOK pages 49-54). With our reviewed, updated and amended Conflict of Interest Policy (APPENDIX 1 QAE HANDBOOK pages 49-54) together with our Recruitment and development policy (APPENDIX 1 QAE HANDBOOK pages 45-49) all issues that are directly commended on or implied by this EEC recommendation - like ensuring that employment law is followed transparently and that there are no ethical conflicts of interest or hidden biases within Aigaia's system of line management	

	(annual performance review, staff training and staff promotion) are now fully addressed.	
The teaching staff are regularly engaged in professional and teaching specialism-skills training (e.g. through Erasmus+), but not in training that relates more specifically to teaching in higher education.	Erasmus+ programs either organized and implemented by Aigaia or as part of collaborations and consortiums will continue to run as a yearly compulsory activity of the Institution.	Choose an item.
	However, to ensure that Aigaia fully conforms to all recommendations of the EEC it is again stressed out that Aigaia provides comprehensive internal staff development and training opportunities for all its staff.	
	Aigaia also supports and provides remunerated training time within workload plans for its staff, and has registered all of its teaching staff to attend the following courses, as EEC recommends (APPENDIX 1 QAE HANDBOOK page 48). This will ensure that their teaching level and experiences are formally up to standard:	
	- Contemporary Approaches to University Teaching (HE) (38 hrs) offered by CAULLT – Council of Australian University Leaders in Learning and Teaching - Get Interactive: Practical Teaching with Technology, coursera, Offered by University of London, Bloomsbury Learning exchange (15 hrs). - Introduction to Teaching and Learning for RQF Higher Nationals, Pearson Education - Introduction to teaching and Assessing the RQF Higher Nationals in Art & Design, Pearson Education - Assessment Planning and Assignment Writing Art Design RQF BTEC Higher Nationals, Pearson Education - Grading Standardisation Workshop for BTEC Higher Nationals Art and Design (RQF), offered by Pearson Education	
	Teaching staff is trained in practice by progressively being engaged in teaching at lower educational levels provided by Aigaia, before being ready and consistently adequate to teach at Visual Arts Diploma 120 ECTS, Short Cycle EQF 5 or on any other	

	educational programme of higher level provided by Aigaia. Staff Mentoring Scheme is provided for all new staff, including a comprehensive induction and the early flagging of staff development needs. Training of every member of Staff in QAE is provided as part of contract (for new staff) and as a % of their workload. Training about professional development of the staff is also be a yearly compulsory activity form 22-23. All the above are documented in Staff development section in APPENDIX 1 QAE HANDBOOK page 48.	
As a result of the above points, the EEC are not certain that transparent and clear processes for the recruitment of the teaching staff are in place that appoint staff on a competitive basis based on competence, qualifications and experience as would be the case elsewhere.	As was documented in our response to the immediate previous above EEC related points, Aigaia School of art & design has reviewed, updated and amended its "Recruitment and development Policy" and its "Conflict of Interest Policy" according to EEC recommendations and is secured that a transparent and clear processes for the recruitment of the teaching staff are in place and that staff is appointed on a competitive basis based on competence, qualifications and experience as would be the case elsewhere. For confirmation and verification see our response to the immediate previous related EEC recommendations in this section and our reviewed, updated and amended "Recruitment and development Policy" and "Conflict of Interest Policy" in APPENDIX 1 QAE HANDBOOK pages 45-54.	Choose an item.
More innovation in teaching methods and the use of new technologies should be encouraged.	In context with everything that is already mentioned in this and previous sections of the EEC report, all teaching and learning methods and the use of new technologies are encouraged in all courses and by all members of staff teaching on the Short Cycle, EQF Level 5 Visual Arts Diploma course and all other courses offered by Aigaia.	Choose an item.

	This is confirmed and verified by the content of the reviewed, updated and amended courses that are attached in APPENDIX 4, by the scheduled training activities that were listed repeatedly in previous sections:	
	- Contemporary Approaches to University Teaching (HE) (38 hrs) offered by CAULLT – Council of Australian University Leaders in Learning and Teaching - Get Interactive: Practical Teaching with Technology, coursera, Offered by University of London, Bloomsbury Learning exchange (15 hrs). - Introduction to Teaching and Learning for RQF Higher Nationals, Pearson Education - Introduction to teaching and Assessing the RQF Higher Nationals in Art & Design, Pearson Education - Assessment Planning and Assignment Writing Art Design RQF BTEC Higher Nationals, Pearson Education - Grading Standardisation Workshop for BTEC Higher Nationals Art and Design (RQF), offered by Pearson Education and by the Learning Outcomes of the APPENDIX 3 PROGRAM page 8.	
3.2 Teaching staff number and status The institution appoints a number of visiting staff (part-time) with fixed-term fractional contracts to teach specific courses related to their specialisms. This generates precarity for staff who are reliant on their 'elective' courses being chosen by enough students to determine that they will run. Visiting staff (part-time) with fixed-term contracts are thus disadvantaged by the course elective system.	As mentioned by the EEC in their conclusions & final remarks (page 43), one of the strengths of Aigaia is that as an institution also provides education in EQF Levels 2, 3 & 4. Most of our staff are also employed to teach at Levels 2, 3 & 4, therefore their employment status is not in any position uncertain or determined by the choice of elective courses by the Level 5 students. The Visiting Lecturers are an asset for the Visual Arts education since they are active in their relevant industries and bring valuable experiences to their interaction with the students. However, as recommended by the EEC all 3 ECTS courses (such as Introduction to… 3 ECTS) are consolidated.	Choose an item.

The consolidation of the courses (such as Introduction to... 3ECTS) would eliminate this issue and ensure that such staff could be employed on a permanent fractional contract.	The reviewed, updated and amended courses and the reviewed, updated and amended curriculum are attached as APPENDIX 4 and APPENDIX 5 respectively.	
The institution appoints a very small number of full-time staff. Full-time staff take on a broad range of institutional roles, teaching, administrating, and governing the institution. Administration and governance are – perhaps – understaffed, or stretched, in comparison with teaching and are not yet quite appropriate to offer the highest quality programme of study that the institution aspires to provide.	Aigaia School of Art & Design fully agrees with EEC's observation in Conclusions and final remarks of its External Evaluation Report (page 43) which addresses its concerns expressed here: *"The EEC felt that the School was doing a very good job of managing all of the student support elements that a large institution would have to put in place. The staff do this by taking on multiple roles (both academic and para-academic) as is often the case in small-to-medium enterprises (SMEs). They do this very professionally and the students are justifiably appreciative of their efforts."*	Choose an item.
As demonstrated above, teaching staff status (rank, full/part time) are not consistently adequate to achieve the objectives and planned learning outcomes of the study programme, and to ensure quality and sustainability of the teaching and learning. The EEC could not confirm if the visiting staff number exceeds the number of permanent staff.	Aigaia School of Art & Design currently employs 7 Full Time (permanent?) staff, 2 Part Time staff and 2 Visiting Lecturers for the Level 5 Short Cycle, EQF, Visual Arts Diploma course. In other words part-time staff/visiting Lecturers in no way exceeds full-time staff. To the above number of staff, If add all other members of staff employed for other courses and other duties, the total number employed by Aigaia is higher than the stated above and can be increased even more depending on all future needs of the Institution just like any other private business. Reviewed, updated and amended table: TEACHING PERSONNEL, HIGHER QUALIFICATIONS, RANK included in the attached APPENDIX 5 REVIEWED, UPDATED & AMENDED CURRICULUM page 6.	Choose an item.

![DIPAE CYQAA logo] ΦΟΡΕΑΣ ΔΙΑΣΦΑΛΙΣΗΣ ΚΑΙ ΠΙΣΤΟΠΟΙΗΣΗΣ ΤΗΣ ΠΟΙΟΤΗΤΑΣ ΤΗΣ ΑΝΩΤΕΡΗΣ ΕΚΠΑΙΔΕΥΣΗΣ
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10   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
4.1 Student admission, processes and criteria The EEC have no Areas of improvement or recommendations here.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Choose an item.
4.2 Student progression The EEC have no Areas of improvement or recommendations here.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Choose an item.
4.3 Student recognition Badge the Diploma as Level 5 to ensure coherent recognition across the EHEA?	The Institution completely agrees on identical EEC recommendation on Section 1.2 that the program (and institution) would benefit also from describing itself as Short Cycle EQF 5 since the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area are going to be increasingly important when recruiting non- Cypriot students as in the Strategic Planning of the Institution and to ensure coherent recognition across the EHEA. The term **Short Cycle, EQF Level 5** has been introduced in the title of the Program by the Institution according to EEC recommendation.	Choose an item.
4.4 Student certification The school should ensure that it produces a detailed EDS for each graduate. If the school implements a pass/merit/distinction approach to Diploma classification, it should supplement the EDS by writing short contextualising exit references for each graduate, stating where they would rank them in relation to the cohort	As EEC mentions under Strengths of 4.4 Student Certification "Students receive EDS (European Diploma Supplement) certification explaining the qualification gained, including achieved learning outcomes and the context, level, content and status of the studies that were pursued and successfully completed". As the institution adopted and implemented the pass/merit/distinction approach to Diploma classification, it has supplemented the EDS according to EEC recommendation as attached APPENDIX 1 QAE HANDBOOK pages 25-26.	Choose an item.

![ΔΙΠΑΕ CYQAA] ΦΟΡΕΑΣ ΔΙΑΣΦΑΛΙΣΗΣ ΚΑΙ ΠΙΣΤΟΠΟΙΗΣΗΣ ΤΗΣ ΠΟΙΟΤΗΤΑΣ ΤΗΣ ΑΝΩΤΕΡΗΣ ΕΚΠΑΙΔΕΥΣΗΣ
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11   Learning resources and student support
(ESG 1.6)

Areas of improvement and recommendations **by EEC**	Actions Taken by the Institution	For official use Only
5.1 Teaching and Learning resources The EEC have no Areas of improvement or recommendations here.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Choose an item.
5.2 Physical resources The EEC have no Areas of improvement or recommendations here.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Choose an item.
5.3 Human support resources As the School grows in size, it could benefit from appointing specially trained student counsellors, careers advisers, and qualified specialist administrative staff.	As the school grows in size needs in specially trained student counsellors, careers advisers, and qualified specialist administrative staff are expected to grow. All needs in staff are continuously assessed and immediate action is taken for the recruitment of staff when needed. In this respect, our students' recommendations are seriously taken into account. Currently, as the EEC mentioned: ""*The EEC felt that the School was doing a very good job of managing all of the student support elements that a large institution would have to put in place. The staff do this by taking on multiple roles (both academic and para-academic) as is often the case in small-to-medium enterprises (SMEs). They do this very professionally and the students are justifiably appreciative of their efforts.*" It is worth mentioning that currently, 2 members of the administration staff hold an MBA.	Choose an item.
5.4 Student support The EEC have no Areas of improvement or recommendations here.	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.

12 **Additional for doctoral programmes**
(ALL ESG)

Areas of improvement and recommendations **by EEC**	Actions Taken by the Institution	For official use Only
n/a	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.

7. Eligibility (Joint programme)
   (ALL ESG)

Areas of improvement and recommendations **by EEC**	Actions Taken by the Institution	For official use Only
n/a	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.

Conclusions and final remarks **by EEC**	Actions Taken by the Institution	For official use Only
D. Conclusions and final remarks Quality Assurance and Enhancement for Level 5 Second Cycle The main area for improvement lies in the design and maintenance of effective Quality Assurance and Enhancement. The Diploma requires that the institution understand and be able to prove parity with other institutions with validated Level 5 courses. This is where the Quality Assurance and Enhancement approach on the Diploma currently programme falls short. A number of measures can be put in place to rectify this Engaging with peer review by inviting in external stakeholders from academic and professional sectors would raise the educational standards of the institution and also enable it to make the most of its existing resources. Engaging external stakeholders / more experienced academic staff in other institutions to mentor, support and offer 'critical friendship' for Curriculum	QAE has been reviewed, updated and amended according to all relevant EEC recommendations included in its External Evaluation Report all of which have been adopted and implemented in detail. Aigaia has extensively reviewed its Quality Assurance and Enhancement Handbook (attached as Appendix 1) which includes specific Quality Assurance and Enhancement Policy and clear related processes. Specifically, the QAE handbook includes the following sections: Introduction Aigaia School of Art & Design (about) Quality Assurance and Enhancement Policy Design & Approval of New Programs of Study Modification of Existing Programs of Study External Examining Academic Integrity and Freedom - Vigilance against Academic fraud Students Engagement with Quality Processes / Complaints Recruitment and Development Policy Policy on Conflict of Interest Aigaia's parity with other institutions with validated Level 5 courses is secured: - with the provisions of the revised External Examining section (Appendix 1 QAE HANDBOOK pages 26 – 29) which provides engaging external stakeholders / examiners - by the accumulated knowledge and experienced gained throw the valuable interaction and collaboration with Pearson Education for all these years, as an approved PEARSON Educational center since its establishment with center number 90102, link: https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/support/support-topics/understanding-our-qualifications/find-a-pearson-centre.html?Country=Cyprus&City=Nicosia&QualificationFamily=BTEC	Choose an item.

ΔΙΠΑΕ CYQAA

ΦΟΡΕΑΣ ΔΙΑΣΦΑΛΙΣΗΣ ΚΑΙ ΠΙΣΤΟΠΟΙΗΣΗΣ ΤΗΣ ΠΟΙΟΤΗΤΑΣ ΤΗΣ ΑΝΩΤΕΡΗΣ ΕΚΠΑΙΔΕΥΣΗΣ
CYPRUS AGENCY OF QUALITY ASSURANCE AND ACCREDITATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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Design and Development is essential in such a small specialist school Small specialist institutions in the vast majority EHEA states are required by law to take such measures to ensure their quality standards and, in the majority of cases to validate their higher education programmes. Hence, the EEC feel that, at very least, the School must seek to formally engage external stakeholders (including more experienced academic staff) from other institutions in the QAE processes, including the review and validation of its courses and programmes.

Engaging 'external' examiners to review final projects would help raise the standards expected from students. External examiners must have academic expertise; a team might also have professional expertise (ideally both).

Implementing both externality measures would significantly raise confidence in the ability of the School to meet, maintain and enhance standards in the Diploma.

for Academic qualifications (IGCSE, GCSE, GCE A' Level) and all BTEC courses including the HND RQF Level 5 Higher National Diplomas in Art & Design which are all currently provided by Aigaia.

Specifically, as stated in the attached QAE Handbook (APPENDIX 1 page 26), within the role of these two EEs is to be auditors of the assessment process, mentor-support and offer their expertise for academic programs and course review, monitor the academic standards of awards at institution and to confirm:

- The standards for the courses/awards are set and maintained at an appropriate level;
- The standards for the courses/awards are comparable with similar courses/awards within the sector and **parity** with other institutions with validated Level 5 courses is proved;
- The structure and nature of the assessment permits students to demonstrate their level of achievement and they are related written feedback is provided;
- The processes for assessment, examination and the determination of awards are sound and fairly conducted; and
- There is consistency between the institution regulations, ESG provisions and relevant national legislation and directives and guidelines of CYQAA
- Contribute to academic programs and course review / preparation - validation of new academic programs.

Within this context, Aigaia contacted several candidates for the positions of the EEs with experience in Quality Assurance and we are currently in the selection process, discussing and negotiating in order to find the most appropriate EEs for our "Visual Arts" Diploma, Short Cycle, EQF Level 5.

Furthermore, an External Examiner from Pearson is visiting Aigaia each year. The visits take place once or twice per year and the EE looks at samples of work, assessments and verifies the level of education provided according to Pearson Quality Assurance policies.

Since the onsite visit from the EEC, Aigaia went through an External Verification process for the BTEC courses provided, at the end of June 2022, like every year with the PEARSON

	EE Mr. David Thornhill. During this process we discussed extensively about Quality Assurance and enhancement approaches, the policies and implementation and about internal and external verification. See detailed response of Aigaia about Quality Assurance and Enhancement for Level 5 Second Cycle, in relevant sections of this document.	
<u>Support for Academic Faculty: Learning and Teaching support and enhancement</u> Academic faculty are enthusiastic and dedicated and should be praised for the wide range of responsibilities they undertake. They need to be supported and trained in-service as teachers and researchers to ensure that their teaching and research matches the standard the School presents through its PR. There are many excellent, free, accredited courses that would also help to support and improve staff as teachers. The EEC highly recommend than all academic faculty complete the following free online courses in due course as part of their professional development training: Contemporary Approaches to University Teaching (HE) (38hrs) Course is offered by CAULLT - Council of Australasian University Leaders in Learning and Teaching. Get Interactive: Practical Teaching with Technology,	Aigaia fully conforms to all recommendations of the EEC to provide comprehensive internal staff development and training opportunities for all its staff. Aigaia also supports and provides remunerated training time within workload plans for its staff, and has registered all of its teaching staff to attend the following courses, including those recommended by EEC APPENDIX 1 QAE HANDBOOK page 48). This will ensure that their teaching level and experiences are formally up to standard: - Contemporary Approaches to University Teaching (HE) (38 hrs) offered by CAULLT – Council of Australian University Leaders in Learning and Teaching - Get Interactive: Practical Teaching with Technology, coursera, Offered by University of London, Bloomsbury Learning exchange (15 hrs). - Introduction to Teaching and Learning for RQF Higher Nationals, Pearson Education - Introduction to teaching and Assessing the RQF Higher Nationals in Art & Design, Pearson Education - Assessment Planning and Assignment Writing Art Design RQF BTEC Higher Nationals, Pearson Education - Grading Standardisation Workshop for BTEC Higher Nationals Art and Design (RQF), offered by Pearson Education Attendance is part of their workload and as such is compulsory for all our teaching staff and a prerequisite for teaching on all our higher educational programs from academic year 2022-2023 (i.e APPENDIX 1 QAE HANDBOOK pages 48). Furthermore, our teaching staff is trained in practice by progressively being engaged in teaching at lower educational levels provided by Aigaia, before being ready and consistently adequate to teach at Visual Arts Diploma	Choose an item.

coursera, Offered by University of London, Bloomsbury Learning Exchange. (15hrs) This would support and fill gaps in the School's use of learning technologies. Renumerated time should be allocated specifically for training in staff workload plans. (e.g. 38hrs spent on Contemporary Approaches to University Teaching must be remunerated at 38hrs.) Pastoral care is excellent in this small specialist school. As the school grows, it needs to grow its expertise in Quality Assurance and Enhancement, research and student support and begin to create specialist roles here, employing additional staff to focus exclusively on such work.	120 ECTS, Short Cycle EQF 5 or on any other educational programme of higher level provided by Aigaia. All needs in staff appointment are continuously assessed and immediate action is taken for the recruitment of staff when needed, including those needed to grow expertise in QAE, research and student support such as specially trained student counsellors, careers advisers. In this respect, our students' recommendations are seriously taken into account. Currently, as the EEC mentioned: "*Pastoral care is excellent in this small specialist school…………*" "*The EEC felt that the School was doing a very good job of managing all of the student support elements that a large institution would have to put in place. The staff do this by taking on multiple roles (both academic and para-academic) as is often the case in small-to-medium enterprises (SMEs). They do this very professionally and the students are justifiably appreciative of their efforts.*"	
Support for Academic Faculty: Researcher Development If a BA programme is on the horizon then the institution needs to begin to develop a research culture. Currently, there is no research culture. In short, without a research culture, it will not be able to run a BA programme. To create a research culture, the School should start by supporting (paying for) developing staff research competencies. The common	The Introduction of the BA program is in the heart of our 2 years development plan. As the EEC recommends, in order to create a research culture, as from the forthcoming academic year 2022-2023 all of our staff will be allocated remunerated time in order to work and research personal themes, topics, processes, techniques, issues and generally develop their personal interests and critically reflect on their personal practice (APPENDIX 1, QAE Handbook, page 48). They will also be working on curated research subjects given by Aigaia with the scope of publication and presentation. The provision by EEC of the common route in the EHEA to this effect, is more than welcome is really appreciated and will be followed immediate alongside with the above steps already on track for the forthcoming academic year 2022-	Choose an item.

route in the EHEA to this effect is as follows:

Consulting the EHEA Researcher Development Framework (RDF). The EHEA's RDF is upheld across Europe (including in many third countries such as Scotland and Georgia). The exemplar of what it includes is the Vitae Researcher Development Framework (UK). Consult this and then work on the following:

TNA - research training needs analysis of each member staff.
What training can be provided for free, at cost? What can the institution afford?

Supporting existing staff to complete higher degrees (Second Cycle, Masters degrees are normative for staff teachign BA students) while they continue to teach.

Hiring new staff with more advanced qualifications (Second Cycle, masters) and engaging more high profile visiting artists/designers specifically to raise the bar in terms of research culture.

Supporting micro-residents of this advanced calibre as researcher-in-residences at the school (with studio and accommodation support, plus an exhibition). | 2023, to begin developing a research culture as introducing a BA program.

All needs in academic staff appointment are continuously assessed and immediate action is taken for the recruitment of staff when needed, including those needed to introduce a BA program. It is noted that currently, out of the 11 Academic Staff of Aigaia 8 hold Masters degrees.

See detailed response about Support for Academic Faculty, in relevant sections of this document. | |

Programme of Study The EEC met with students to hear about the programme, the institution and their own work. While the students were highly enthused about the institution and their tutors, the EEC were not convinced that the students had a sufficient grasp of the current state of the field of ADM. Their contextual knowledge was not current and their frames of theoretical and practical reference were not adequate and up to date. This would severely hamper their educational progress if they were to transfer from their Diploma to a BA programme in Cyprus or, indeed, anywhere in the EHEA. The content and ambition of the courses needs to improve to ensure they are kept up to date with the latest developments in ADM so that students are adequately prepared for transition to work or further study. Replacing the extant History of Art courses is key to this; AND updated ADM theory provision (Visual Culture courses) that is focused on contemporary resources and debates are essential. The small scale, supportive family structure is clearly very appealing to the current cohort of students. However,	Aigaia fully adopted relevant EEC recommendations and reviewed, updated and amended accordingly the curriculum (attached as APPENDIX 5). In this context History of Art courses have been replaced and introduce "Contextual Studies" that aim (APPENDIX 4 REVIEWED UPDATED & AMENDED COURSES): *"to critically engage students in the history and theory of the **Visual Arts**, its scope and contexts, as well as the wider social and material context in culture and creative contemporary practice.* *The courses aim to prepare students as independent thinkers, capable of selecting appropriate topics and producing sustained pieces of independent studies.* *The course continues to place the student in the process of gathering and developing knowledge about their chosen pathway, its history, context and professional and ethical dimension.* *Students practice the analytical and discursive skills needed to gain knowledge of principles, objects and methods along the way, to understand the roles, locations and responsibilities of important players while considering the wider relevant ethical issues and becoming knowledgeable about current issues in their chosen pathway.* *This process may be approached from the point of view of the producer or consumer, the critic or the professional, the academic or the practitioner".* (From the Introduction of the "Contextual & Critical Studies", 3rd Semester course APPENDIX 4 REVIEWED UPDATED & AMENDED COURSES). The exclusive unique educational environment that distinguishes Aigaia from any other institution in Cyprus and probably elsewhere, has been proved to be in the best interest of our students throughout the years of our operation and since then has been continuously evolving and significantly improving. We will continue to do so taking into account all constructive recommendations either internally and/or from external stakeholders, especially those relevant recommendations from EEC under the evaluation process of CYQAA.	Choose an item.

ΔΙΠΑΕ
CYQAA

ΦΟΡΕΑΣ ΔΙΑΣΦΑΛΙΣΗΣ ΚΑΙ ΠΙΣΤΟΠΟΙΗΣΗΣ ΤΗΣ ΠΟΙΟΤΗΤΑΣ ΤΗΣ ΑΝΩΤΕΡΗΣ ΕΚΠΑΙΔΕΥΣΗΣ
CYPRUS AGENCY OF QUALITY ASSURANCE AND ACCREDITATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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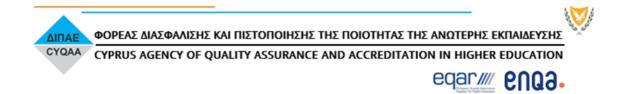
this kinship model is also a source of complacency among the student body regarding what they think they know and what they imagine they might need to learn. It creates a bubble that leads to a lack of accountability vis a vis the ADM field and in relation to QAE. Students need to be challenged (dissensus), this means they have to have their world-views	See detailed response about Program of Study, in relevant sections of this document.	
Administration The Institution should simplify its structures and procedures for administration, assessment and governance to ensure that they deliver what they say they deliver. The Institution must remove all conflicts of interest from its QAE processes; consider adding external academic members of staff to your Course Review and Approval Panels.	All recommendations of the EEC on Assessment have been fully adopted and our Assessment has been reviewed accordingly. The detailed Assessment implemented by Aigaia according to EEC relevant recommendations can be found in the attached APPENDIX 1 QAE handbook pages 13- 26. All structures and procedures for administration and governance of our institution are aligned with Laws "*Οι περί Σχολών Τριτοβάθμιας Εκπαίδευσης Νόμοι του 1996 (67(1)/1996) έως 53(I) του 2013*" as they are obtained from the CYQAA website and they perfectly match with the character of Aigaia as a small highly specialised art & design private institution. https://www.dipae.ac.cy/archeia/nomothesia/private_institutions_tertiary_education_law_en.pdf As repeatedly stated, Aigaia has already addressed and removed from its QAE processes all Conflicts of Interest and consequently is in the process of appointing External academic members of staff to its Course Review and Approval Panels. Specifically, the role of the External Examiners *(APPENDIX 1 QAE HANDBOOK pages 26-29)* is to: *"External Examiners at Aigaia School of Art & Design are auditors of the assessment process and also mentor, support and offer their expertise for academic programs and course*	Choose an item.

	review. Their role is to monitor the academic standards of awards at institution and specifically to confirm that:	
	- The standards for the courses/awards are set and maintained at an appropriate level;	
	- The standards for the courses/awards are comparable with similar courses/awards within the sector and parity with other institutions with validated Level 5 courses is proved;	
	- The structure and nature of the assessment permits students to demonstrate their level of achievement;	
	- The processes for assessment, examination and the determination of awards are sound and fairly conducted; and	
	- There is consistency between the institution regulations, ESG provisions and relevant national legislation and directives and guidelines of CYQAA	
	Also contribute to academic programs and course review / preparation - validation of new academic programs".	
	Furthermore, Aigaia has extensively reviewed its Quality Assurance and Enhancement Handbook (attached as APPENDIX 1). With the introduction of a special section in this Handbook about "Policy of Conflict of Interest", we address all possible related issues to assure that potential Conflict of Interest within the Institution, are promptly addressed and avoided and Conflict of Interest is removed from its QAE process. Specifically, in this section we elaborate on our Policy, its purpose, the principles, related definitions, the procedure determining a Conflict of Interest, disclosure of a Conflict of Interest and resolution of a Conflict of Interest. (Pages 49-54 of the attached APPENDIX 1 QAE handbook).	
	See detailed response about Administration, assessment, QAE processes and conflict of interest in relevant sections of this document.	

C.

ΔΙΠΑΕ CYQAA

ΦΟΡΕΑΣ ΔΙΑΣΦΑΛΙΣΗΣ ΚΑΙ ΠΙΣΤΟΠΟΙΗΣΗΣ ΤΗΣ ΠΟΙΟΤΗΤΑΣ ΤΗΣ ΑΝΩΤΕΡΗΣ ΕΚΠΑΙΔΕΥΣΗΣ
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D. Higher Education Institution academic representatives

Name	*Position*	*Signature*
ALEXIA HADJISTEFANOU	DIRECTOR	
Click to enter Name	Click to enter Position	
Click to enter Name	Click to enter Position	
Click to enter Name	Click to enter Position	
Click to enter Name	Click to enter Position	
Click to enter Name	Click to enter Position	

Date: 25.08.2022