

Doc. 300.1.2.

Date: 21/05/2025

Higher Education Institution's Response

- **Higher Education Institution:**
Public School of Higher Vocational Education and Training - MIEEK

- **Town:** Nicosia

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

In Greek:

Ξεναγός (2 Χρόνια, 120 ECTS, Σύντομου Κύκλου)

In English:

Tour Guide (2 Years, 120 ECTS, Short-Cycle)

- **Language(s) of instruction:** Greek
- **Programme's status:** Choose Status
- **Concentrations (if any):**

In Greek: Concentrations

In English: Concentrations



The present document has been prepared within the framework of the authority and competencies of the Cyprus Agency of Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Higher Education, according to the provisions of the “Quality Assurance and Accreditation of Higher Education and the Establishment and Operation of an Agency on Related Matters Laws” of 2015 to 2021 [L.136(I)/2015 – L.132(I)/2021].

A. Guidelines on content and structure of the report

- *The Higher Education Institution (HEI) based on the External Evaluation Committee's (EEC's) evaluation report (Doc.300.1.1 or 300.1.1/1 or 300.1.1/2 or 300.1.1/3 or 300.1.1/4) must justify whether actions have been taken in improving the quality of the programme of study in each assessment area. The answers' documentation should be brief and accurate and supported by the relevant documentation. Referral to annexes should be made only when necessary.*
- *In particular, under each assessment area and by using the 2nd column of each table, the HEI must respond on the following:*
 - *the areas of improvement and recommendations of the EEC*
 - *the conclusions and final remarks noted by the EEC*
- *The institution should respond to the EEC comments, in the designated area next each comment. The comments of the EEC should be copied from the EEC report **without any interference** in the content.*
- *In case of annexes, those should be attached and sent on separate document(s). Each document should be in *.pdf format and named as annex1, annex2, etc.*

1. Study programme and study programme's design and development (ESG 1.1, 1.2, 1.7, 1.8, 1.9)

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
The programme is built on strong academic foundations and leads to a Level 5 Diploma in Tourist Guiding. It is designed in accordance with the practices and recommendations of the World Federation of Tourist Guide Associations. Its academic approach offers an innovative model for tourist guide training by effectively integrating practical, vocational, and academic components, equipping learners with a well-rounded and industry-relevant skill set.	The Programme Committee of the Tour Guide Programme of Study gratefully acknowledges the highly positive feedback provided by the External Evaluation Committee (EEC). The Committee particularly appreciates the recognition of the programme's robust academic foundations, which support the development of an innovative model for tourist guide education. This model effectively integrates practical, vocational, and academic elements, thereby equipping learners with a comprehensive and industry-relevant skill set.	Compliance
In terms of branding, consistency is essential. During the visit and related discussions, it became clear that the School is publicly perceived as "MIEEK," whereas its official identity is that of a Public School of Higher Vocational Education and Training. The interchangeable use of logos has resulted in brand confusion, affecting the School's identity, its staff, students, educational programmes, and key stakeholders.	The institution acknowledges the EEC's observation regarding the importance of branding consistency and the current ambiguity stemming from the interchangeable use of the "MIEEK" designation and the official title "Public School of Higher Vocational Education and Training." In response to this concern, concrete steps have already been initiated to ensure alignment and clarity in institutional identity. Upon the formal approval of the Council of the School and of the Council of Ministers, the institution will adopt and consistently use the title "Public School of Higher Vocational Education and Training - MIEEK" across all official communications and materials (see Appendix 5). This decision aims to reinforce a unified and recognizable brand identity that reflects the institution's mission and its role as a leading provider of higher vocational education in Cyprus.	Compliance (see appendix 5)



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CYPRUS AGENCY OF QUALITY ASSURANCE AND ACCREDITATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION



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

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
The programme is designed taking into consideration international tourist guide practices and academic excellence. The programme will be supported by the Deputy Ministry of Tourism and industry stakeholders	The Programme Committee of the Tour Guide Programme of Study warmly welcomes the EEC's very positive remarks regarding the programme's design. The Committee is particularly appreciative of the recognition that the curriculum reflects international best-practices in tourist guide training and upholds high standards of academic excellence. The ongoing support of the Deputy Ministry of Tourism and engagement with key industry stakeholders further enhance the programme's relevance and responsiveness to sectoral needs, reinforcing its strategic alignment with both national and international developments in the field.	Compliance
The allocation of ECTS credits should be revisited to ensure a structured and balanced distribution across all modules, aligned with the actual contact hours and learning workload. A total of 60 ECTS should be allocated per academic year, with careful consideration given to maintaining a balanced workload across both semesters. The EEC acknowledges that, due to the inclusion of internships in the second semester of each year, there may be a natural concentration of credits in the spring semesters.	The Programme Committee has revisited the allocation of ECTS credits to ensure a structured and balanced distribution across all modules. A total of 60 ECTS credits is now allocated per academic year, with careful consideration given to maintaining an equitable workload between the two semesters. While the inclusion of internships in the spring semesters may naturally result in a concentration of practical training during that period, the overall credit distribution has been carefully calibrated to reflect actual contact hours and student workload, in full alignment with ECTS guidelines. (Appendix 1)	Compliance Η εισήγηση υιοθετήθηκε
Given the specialised nature of the programme, it is recommended that new teaching staff be mentored and supported by experienced faculty members. This will help streamline the	The Programme Committee acknowledges the EEC's valuable recommendation regarding the mentoring and support of newly appointed teaching staff. In this context, it is noted that a well-	compliance

<p>onboarding process and familiarise new tutors with MIEEK's educational philosophy and studentcentred teaching approach.</p>	<p>structured mentoring and orientation model is already in effect. This model is operationalized through the Microsoft TEAMS platform, which serves as a central repository for orientation manuals, working agendas, and procedural guidelines, providing clear direction to new faculty members on expected actions and academic responsibilities. Additionally, the department is organized to ensure that Programme Coordinators and senior faculty members actively serve as mentors, offering both formal and informal guidance. Through this framework, both explicit and tacit knowledge are systematically transferred, enhancing new faculty members' preparedness and ensuring consistency in instructional quality across all teaching staff.</p>	
<p>When revising the Learning Outcomes (LOs), it is important to ensure that each outcome is linked to a corresponding assessment method. Conducting a thorough mapping exercise is advised to identify any potential overlaps, gaps, or redundancies in content and assessment, thereby enhancing coherence and alignment across the curriculum.</p>	<p>The Learning Outcomes (LOs) have been thoroughly revisited and revised to ensure clear alignment with corresponding assessment methods. A comprehensive mapping exercise was conducted to identify and address any potential overlaps, gaps, or redundancies across the curriculum. As a result, coherence and alignment between intended outcomes and assessment strategies have been significantly enhanced. (Appendix 2 & Appendix 3 & Appendix 4)</p>	<p>Compliance The learning outcomes have been revised and there is alignment with assessment methods</p>

3. Teaching staff (ESG 1.5)

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
<p>The diverse expertise of the teaching staff, including highly recognised industry practitioners, enriches the learning experience and ensures a well-rounded, balanced teaching programme.</p> <p>A consistent staff exchange programme has been maintained over the past five years, fostering collaboration with various institutions across Europe (this applies to all programmes offered).</p> <p>The Tourist Guide programme has already developed strong industry connections through the School's existing national collaborations, significantly enhancing its relevance and the employability prospects of its graduates. Key stakeholders, including the Deputy Ministry of Tourism, the Tour Guides Association, and the Travel Agents Association, have officially endorsed the new programme and will continue to support it through an ongoing partnership with the School.</p> <p>Staff across the School actively share best practices and collaborate on Quality Improvement strategies, promoting continuous enhancement of teaching and learning.</p> <p>There is excellent communication and coordination between the School (MIEEK) Coordinator, the Academic Quality department, and local branches, ensuring alignment and consistency across all locations</p>	<p>The positive stance of the EEC was particularly valuable and reaffirmed the strengths of the programme, especially in relation to staff expertise, industry collaboration, and quality assurance mechanisms. The Public School of Higher Vocational Education and Training - MIEEK remains fully committed to continuing its efforts to consistently share best practices across all branches and programmes. The School will further strengthen collaboration on Quality Improvement strategies, ensuring the continuous enhancement of teaching and learning. This approach will sustain alignment, innovation, and relevance across the curriculum, ultimately benefiting both students and stakeholders.</p>	<p>Compliance</p>
<p>The School employs a robust and comprehensive approach to staff recruitment and development,</p>	<p>Upon the accreditation of the programme, the School aims to actively maintain and further</p>	<p>Compliance sos</p>

which can be considered a good practice benchmark. In response to the specific requirements of the Tourist Guide programme, staff development opportunities can be expanded through collaborations with internationally recognised professional bodies, such as the World Federation of Tourist Guide Associations (WFTGA).	develop collaborations with internationally recognised professional bodies, such as the World Federation of Tourist Guide Associations (WFTGA). This strategic objective will support ongoing staff development, ensure alignment with international standards, and reinforce the programme's quality and global relevance.	
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4. 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
The School aligns the development of new programmes (such as the Tourist Guide programme) with the standards set by the European Qualifications Framework (EQF). This ensures that all new curricula are designed in accordance with established best practices and quality benchmarks. As a result, programme development consistently reflects a structured, outcomes-based approach that promotes transparency, comparability, and academic coherence across European higher education.	The Programme Committee acknowledges the observation of the EEC and reaffirms its commitment to aligning programme development with the standards of the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) and the guidelines set forth by CYQAA. Moving forward, all programme enhancements will continue to be guided by a structured, outcomes-based approach that ensures transparency, comparability, and academic coherence within the broader context of European higher education.	Compliance
No further comments or recommendations are deemed necessary regarding student admission processes and criteria, as the School has implemented a robust and well-established system. This approach has been consistently applied across all programmes and has been formally approved and reviewed by DIPAE, ensuring compliance with national academic quality standards and institutional policies.	The Programme Committee acknowledges the comment provided by the External Evaluation Committee (EEC) and affirms its commitment to the consistent implementation and ongoing enhancement of the established quality assurance system.	compliance

5. Learning resources and student support (ESG 1.6)

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
<p>The Local Coordinator for Student Welfare will be assigned a small group of students, allowing for personalised support and the ability to address each student's needs on an individual basis. This close supervision ensures that academic and personal challenges are promptly identified and effectively managed.</p> <p>Comprehensive student support will be available across different career stages, including those entering the field as a second career and those beginning their professional journey. Tailored guidance will help each student navigate their unique path through the programme and into the workforce.</p> <p>Participation in Erasmus+ programmes will not only enhance knowledge and skills acquisition for both students and staff but will also facilitate knowledge transfer from trained educators to the wider teaching team, fostering a culture of continuous improvement and international best practice. Importantly, this programme marks the first initiative of its kind in</p>	<p>The Programme Committee welcomes the EEC's positive recognition of the student support framework and international engagement strategy. The assignment of a small group of students to the Local Coordinator for Student Welfare reflects a student-centred approach, ensuring the provision of personalised support that addresses individual academic and personal needs. This model promotes early identification and effective management of potential challenges, thereby fostering student retention and success.</p> <p>Moreover, the availability of tailored guidance across diverse career stages—including career changers and entry-level professionals—demonstrates the programme's inclusivity and responsiveness to varied learner profiles. This approach enhances the relevance and accessibility of the programme, supporting a seamless transition from education to employment.</p> <p>Participation in Erasmus+ initiatives is another integral strength, facilitating cross-border knowledge exchange and capacity building among both students and staff. The integration of international best practices contributes to a culture of continuous improvement, pedagogical innovation, and professional development.</p>	<p>Compliance</p> <p>Significantly, this initiative marks the first programme of its kind in Cyprus dedicated exclusively to tourist guiding.</p>

<p>Cyprus dedicated to tourist guiding.</p> <p>It represents a significant step toward addressing the current shortage of qualified tourist guides and will contribute to strengthening the capacity and professionalism of the tourism sector nationwide</p>	<p>Significantly, this initiative marks the first programme of its kind in Cyprus dedicated exclusively to tourist guiding. It addresses a critical gap in the sector by enhancing the supply of qualified professionals and strengthening the overall capacity, standards, and professionalism of the national tourism workforce.</p>	
<p>Mentors: Given that some of the newly appointed teachers may bring valuable industry experience but lack familiarity with the specific culture and operations of the school, it would be beneficial to introduce a mentoring system. Existing members of the teaching staff can serve as mentors to support new colleagues, helping them navigate institutional procedures, align with the programme's teaching philosophy, and integrate more smoothly into the academic environment.</p>	<p>The Programme Committee acknowledges the valuable recommendation of the EEC concerning the mentoring and support of newly appointed teaching staff. In response, it is affirmed that a structured mentoring and orientation framework is already in place. This framework is supported by the Microsoft TEAMS platform, which functions as a centralized hub for essential resources, including orientation manuals, operational guidelines, and procedural documentation. These materials provide new faculty members with clear guidance on their academic roles and responsibilities.</p> <p>Furthermore, the department has established a system whereby Programme Coordinators and experienced faculty members actively assume mentoring roles. Senior staff are assigned responsibility not only for specific courses but also for supporting a defined group of new instructors. Their role extends beyond the dissemination of course content and teaching methodologies to include the communication of the programme's pedagogical philosophy and institutional culture. This dual-level mentoring approach—formal and informal—facilitates the effective transfer of both explicit and tacit knowledge, enabling new teaching staff to integrate smoothly into the academic environment and contributing to consistency and quality in programme delivery.</p>	<p>Compliance</p> <p>Mentoring system for newly appointed teachers</p>
<p>Media Representative: In light of current trends in digital media and the popularity of platforms such as TikTok, Instagram, and Facebook, appointing a student media representative could be a valuable initiative. This role would involve sharing and promoting the programme's activities, events, and achievements</p>	<p>The Programme Committee acknowledges the insightful recommendation regarding the appointment of a student media representative to enhance the programme's visibility and outreach through digital platforms. It is noted that, at a central level, the Directorate of Secondary Technical and Vocational Education and Training has recently appointed a dedicated individual responsible for managing communication and promotional activities across digital and social media channels (e.g. https://www.facebook.com/CyMoecDmteek?locale=el_GR)</p> <p>At the programme level, all Programme Coordinators actively utilize the official Facebook account</p>	<p>Compliance</p> <p>The digital media has been checked</p>

<p>through social media, enhancing visibility, engagement, and outreach among prospective students and the wider public.</p>	<p>(https://www.facebook.com/?locale=el_GR) to promote student and faculty activities both locally and nationally. These efforts include sharing achievements, events, and academic highlights, thereby contributing to increased public engagement and awareness. This means that the Programme Committee will oversee the sustainable use of social media accounts, while the elected class representative, in collaboration with their peers, will contribute content such as photos and videos showcasing daily students' achievements.</p>	
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6. Additional for doctoral programmes (ALL ESG)

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

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
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B. Conclusions and final remarks

Conclusions and final remarks by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
<p>The External Evaluation Committee (EEC) commends the programme team for the following:</p> <p>Robust Programme Design: The programme is comprehensive and well-structured, incorporating elements from a previously developed curriculum by another Higher Education Institution, while tailoring it to current needs.</p> <p>Alignment with European and National Standards: The curriculum is developed in accordance with the European Qualifications Framework, and is informed by both international best practices and national academic and vocational frameworks.</p> <p>Effective Stakeholder Consultation: Meaningful and productive engagement with key stakeholders — including the Deputy Ministry of Tourism, the Association of Tourist Guides, and the Travel Agents Association — has resulted in a programme that is well-aligned with the needs of the sector.</p>	<p>The Programme Committee sincerely appreciates the positive and constructive feedback provided by the External Evaluation Committee (EEC). The Committee's recognition of the programme's robust design, alignment with European and national standards, and responsiveness to industry needs affirms the quality and relevance of the initiative. The acknowledgement of effective stakeholder engagement and the professionalism of the academic and administrative teams further underscores the collective commitment to excellence. Moving forward, the Programme Committee remains dedicated to maintaining these high standards, continuously enhancing the curriculum, and fostering strong partnerships to ensure the ongoing success and impact of the Tourist Guide programme within the national and European tourism landscape.</p>	<p>Compliance</p>

<p>Professionalism and Commitment: The programme development and support team have shown a high degree of professionalism, enthusiasm, and commitment, which is evident in the quality and coherence of the programme.</p> <p>Industry-Relevant Curriculum: The curriculum is specifically designed to meet the current and future needs of the national tourism industry, particularly in the training and development of qualified Tourist Guides.</p>		
<p>To further strengthen the programme, the EEC recommends the following:</p> <p>Review and Recalculation of ECTS Allocation: The allocation of ECTS credits should be revisited to ensure consistency, fairness, and alignment with the learning outcomes and student workload across all modules. (This should be included in Section 5 of the report.)</p>	<p>The allocation of ECTS credits has been thoroughly reviewed and recalculated to ensure consistency, fairness, and alignment with the intended learning outcomes and the actual student workload across all modules. This process was undertaken to enhance the coherence of the curriculum and to ensure that credit distribution accurately reflects the academic demands of each component. The revised ECTS allocation is detailed in Section 5 of the report. (Appendix 1)</p>	<p>compliance</p>
<p>Clarify Programme Target and Description: A clear distinction should be made between the programme target (i.e., intended audience) and</p>	<p>A clear distinction is made between the programme target and the programme description (Appendix 3).</p>	<p>Compliance (appendix 3)</p>

the programme description. The current validation templates should be updated to reflect this distinction at both the programme and module levels. (This also applies to the forms used by DIPAE, which may require revision.)		
Use of Measurable Learning Outcomes: The language used in learning outcomes should be reviewed to ensure consistency and that all outcomes are measurable, using active verbs that clearly define expected competencies.	The language used in learning outcomes has been reviewed to ensure consistency and that all outcomes are measurable, using active verbs that clearly define expected competencies. (Appendix 2 & Appendix 3 & Appendix 4)	Compliance Η εισήγηση υιοθετήθηκε
Explicit Articulation of Skills and Competencies: Each module descriptor should clearly specify the skills, abilities, and competencies that students are expected to acquire upon successful completion. This section should be standardised across all modules. (This recommendation also applies to DIPAE's documentation templates.)	Each module descriptor clearly specifies the skills, abilities, and competencies that students are expected to acquire upon successful completion across all modules.	compliance
Student Media Representative: It is recommended to appoint a student representative responsible for promoting the programme's activities through social media channels. This would enhance visibility and engagement with both prospective students and industry stakeholders.	<p>The Programme Committee acknowledges the insightful recommendation regarding the appointment of a student media representative to enhance the programme's visibility and outreach through digital platforms. It is noted that, at a central level, the Directorate of Secondary Technical and Vocational Education and Training has recently appointed a dedicated individual responsible for managing communication and promotional activities across digital and social media channels (e.g. https://www.facebook.com/CyMoecDmteek?locale=el_GR)</p> <p>At the programme level, all Programme Coordinators actively utilize official Facebook account (https://www.facebook.com/?locale=el_GR) to promote student and faculty activities both locally and nationally.</p>	compliance

	These efforts include sharing achievements, events, and academic highlights, thereby contributing to increased public engagement and awareness. The combined central and programme-level actions ensure a cohesive and strategic approach to digital presence and communication, aligned with current media trends.	
<p>Final Remarks</p> <p>This programme creates a unique opportunity to develop the future generation of Tourist Guides in accordance with the international professional standards, considering national industry needs.</p> <p>It is imperative that the Key Stakeholders (Deputy Ministry of Tourism, Association of Tourist Guides and Travel Agents Association) support the School throughout the delivery of the programme to ensure the transition and continuity between the different delivery providers.</p>	<p>The Public School of Higher Vocational Education and Training - MIEEK recognises the critical importance of stakeholder input and collaboration in the success of all its programmes of study. To this end, regular meetings will be organised both at the institutional and programme levels to actively engage stakeholders. These interactions aim to enhance the overall quality of the programmes and strengthen graduates' preparedness for employment.</p>	<p>Compliance</p> <p>Το ίδρυμα δεσμεύεται σε τακτικές συναντήσεις με τους stakeholders</p>

C. Higher Education Institution academic representatives

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>Signature</i>
Dr Elias Margadjis	Director General	
Mr Kyriakos Kyriakou	Operations and Control Officer	
Mr Pantelis Zacharoplastis	Quality Assurance Officer	
Mr Giannos Katshis	District Director	
Mr Andreas Vasileiou	Assistant District Director	
Dr Michalis Anastasiou	Programme Coordinator	

Date: 21/05/2025

