

Doc. 300.1.1

Date: Date.

External Evaluation Report

(Conventional-face-to-face programme of study)

- **Higher Education Institution:** College of Tourism and Hotel Management
- **Town:** Nicosia
- **School/Faculty (if applicable):** School/Faculty
- **Department/ Sector:** Department/Sector
- **Programme of study- Name (Duration, ECTS, Cycle)**

In Greek:

Μεσογειακή Δίαιτα και Τουρισμός (Ένα έτος, 90 πιστωτικές μονάδες, Μεταπτυχιακό)

In English:

MSc Mediterranean Diet and Tourism

- **Language(s) of instruction:** Greek and English
- **Programme's status:** Currently Operating
- **Concentrations (if any):**

In Greek: 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].

In English: Concentrations

A. Introduction

On the behalf of the Cyprus Agency of the Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Higher Education, we the panel of the External Evaluation Committee (EEC) met on Monday 22 January 2024 to evaluate the MSc Mediterranean Diet and Tourism provided by the College of Tourism and Hotel Management.

The agenda was followed, and we met at the premises of the College of Tourism and Hotel Management.

The EEC met the Head of the Institution and the members of the internal committee, where the head of institutions talked about the history of the College and how it developed until now.

Savvas Adamides (Head of the Institution)

Antonis Thrassou (Programme coordinator)

Andreas Christoforou (Senior Lecturer and Member of the Quality Assurance)

Dr Lefteris Colocassides (Senior Lecturer and Member of the Quality Assurance)

Elena Stavrou (Head of Administration)

Chrysostomos Adamides (Senior Lecturer)

The Programme Co-ordinator Antonios Thrassou presented the programme philosophy, allocation of courses per semester and the teaching methodology, admission criteria for the prospective students, and assessments followed. The Programme co-ordination is shared with Eliza Makridou, where she talked about the programme as well, as an expert to the nutrition element of the provision. The EEC is satisfied to have had a comprehensive review of the programme and the commitment, enthusiasm and positive feedback from all.

The College presented the methodology and equipment used in teaching and learning, presenting the SWOT analysis and degree of compliance with the CYQAA standards. The EEC had an extensive discussion about the content of each course.

The following professionals were present at the meeting

Antonios Thrassou

Dr Ioannis Pangalos

Dr Maria Hassapidou

Eliza Makridou

Chrysostomos Adamides

Constantinos Adamides

The EEC met the three students attending currently the course, which was validated five years ago and it was only in the current academic year (AY 2023-24) that three students with nursing background joined the programme.

The EEC met some of the members of staff and discussed their area of expertise and research activities with the following:

Antonios Thrassou

Dr Ioannis Pangalos

Dr Maria Hassapidou

Eliza Makridou

Chrysostomos Adamides

Constantinos Adamides

The administration of the College presented their contribution to the structure and processes of the programme and the College. The staff was the following:

Elias Elia

Elena Stavrou

Koula Milidoni

The EEC visited the library, computer lab and classrooms with the following members|:

Antonios Thrassou

Constantinos Adamides

Filippos Filippou

Finally, the EEC presented an overview of the experiences of the presentations to the Head of the Institution and programme coordinators.

B. External Evaluation Committee (EEC)

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>University</i>
Amalia Tsiami	Associate Professor	University of West London
Dorina Maria Buda	Professor	University of Essex
Evangelia (Lia) Marinakou	Principal Lecturer	Bournemouth University
Niki Makri	Student	University of Cyprus
Name	Position	University
Name	Position	University

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

Sub-areas

- 1.1 Policy for quality assurance
- 1.2 Design, approval, on-going monitoring and review
- 1.3 Public information
- 1.4 Information management

1.1 Policy for quality assurance

Standards

- *Policy for quality assurance of the programme of study:*
 - *has a formal status and is publicly available*
 - *supports the organisation of the quality assurance system through appropriate structures, regulations and processes*
 - *supports teaching, administrative staff and students to take on their responsibilities in quality assurance*
 - *ensures academic integrity and freedom and is vigilant against academic fraud*
 - *guards against intolerance of any kind or discrimination against the students or staff*
 - *supports the involvement of external stakeholders*

1.2 Design, approval, on-going monitoring and review

Standards

- *The programme of study:*
 - *is designed with overall programme objectives that are in line with the institutional strategy and have explicit intended learning outcomes*
 - *is designed by involving students and other stakeholders*
 - *benefits from external expertise*
 - *reflects the four purposes of higher 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)*
 - *is designed so that it enables smooth student progression*
 - *is designed so that the exams' and assignments' content corresponds to the level of the programme and the number of ECTS*
 - *defines the expected student workload in ECTS*

- *includes well-structured placement opportunities where appropriate*
- *is subject to a formal institutional approval process*
- *results in a qualification that is clearly specified and communicated, and refers to the correct level of the National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education and, consequently, to the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area*
- *is regularly monitored in the light of the latest research in the given discipline, thus ensuring that the programme is up-to-date*
- *is periodically reviewed so that it takes into account the changing needs of society, the students' workload, progression and completion, the effectiveness of procedures for assessment of students, student expectations, needs and satisfaction in relation to the programme*
- *is reviewed and revised regularly involving students and other stakeholders*

1.3 Public information

Standards

- *Regarding the programme of study, clear, accurate, up-to date and readily accessible information is published about:*
 - *selection criteria*
 - *intended learning outcomes*
 - *qualification awarded*
 - *teaching, learning and assessment procedures*
 - *pass rates*
 - *learning opportunities available to the students*
 - *graduate employment information*

1.4 Information management

Standards

- *Information for the effective management of the programme of study is collected, monitored and analysed:*
 - *key performance indicators*
 - *profile of the student population*
 - *student progression, success and drop-out rates*
 - *students' satisfaction with their programmes*
 - *learning resources and student support available*
 - *career paths of graduates*
- *Students and staff are involved in providing and analysing information and planning follow-up activities.*

Findings

Based on the application documentation and the on-site visit, extensive discussions took place with the members of staff, students and administration. The Masters programme in Mediterranean Diet and Tourism is compliant with regulations.

The aim of the programme is to provide high-level scientific training with specialized knowledge, to be implemented in the management and planning of dietary interventions at the individual and group level.

From discussions with the College directors and staff, the plan is to provide interdisciplinary training to improve collaboration with professionals from different disciplines both in Greek and in English. Graduates will be able to position themselves in key public and private sector in diet, nutrition, and tourism and work as freelancers to promote health and research.

The written aim of the programme is quite generic and does not include the words: 'nutrition', health and specific connections to tourism. The word and concept of tourism seems to be used as a place of practice, rather than understanding of the role of the practitioner within the wider umbrella of 'tourism' and/or 'hospitality' organisations. As the practitioner works with stakeholders it is important to have sufficient knowledge of the subject of tourism that seems to be a key element in this programme.

1.1 Policy for quality assurance

During the discussion with the members of the management, the EEC found that the quality assurance of the programme follows the procedures required. There is an Executive Committee; Faculty and Administrative Committee; Programme Coordinator (shared responsibility); Disciplinary Committee with procedures and policies; Internal Quality Assurance Committee (QAC); Erasmus Committee.

It was not clear if the students were participating to the QAC, the group is rather small (i.e. a cohort of 3 local students) as well as the college and communications are at a personal level.

Plagiarism is checked using the google platform, AI aspects were not discussed in depth as they did not present an issue for such a small student cohort. The College however should take the opportunity to develop further this site of plagiarism and develop processes to discuss and check AI with the students.

1.2 Design approval, on-going monitoring and review

The design of the programme and subjects suggested fits the skills, competences and knowledge required for the graduates to practice as nutritionist, however the connection to the tourism field of studies is rather tenuous and needs to be more teased out in the provision of this programme. Upon discussions it emerged that some links to tourism and hospitality are presented to students in some courses but the differentiation between tourism studies, tourism management, hospitality studies should be tackled when re-thinking the programme design. It was apparent that links were discussed within the course material in specific exercises, however this is not captured within the content, neither learning outcomes.

The overall programme objectives reflect the Learning Outcomes (LOs) of the programme. The wording however should reflect the level 7 using the Blooms Taxonomy. More details as an example may be found here: [Intended learning outcomes | Staff | Imperial College London](#)

The programme includes all elements required for the Mediterranean diet emphasis, however the tourism element stipulated at the programme title is not clear and overlaps significantly with wider understandings of hospitality. The programme would benefit public health and support healthier lifestyle for consumers that would seek the help of those graduates.

Another part of the Programme 'Nutrition informatics' NUTR2, is repeated in 'application format' in 'Advanced topics in nutrition and Mediterranean diet' NUTR3, as the students in order to complete the assignment have to know the programme introduced to the NUTR2. As the two are delivered in the same semester and the same weeks. The introduction to the programme could be done at course NUTR3, avoiding repetitions and the students can benefit from the application rather than studying a stand-alone course. The EEC recommends removal of the course (NUTR2) from the programme.

The College has extensive networks to promote graduates in hospitality industry, however the existing students are all employed in hospitals and do not seek employment in another sector. Possible future graduates of the English version of this programme might benefit from such connections.

The programme prepares students for sustainable employment and personal development meeting the four purposes of higher education of the Council of Europe. As mentioned above the elements of tourism and hospitality are unclear and should be further emphasised to align with the claimed title of the programme.

The assignments proposed align with the level of study, however the time allocated for study does not align with the ECTS, higher number of hours should be used as total hours of study rather than the face-to-face provision.

Job market demand for those positions was discussed, the robust data though about job opportunities were not presented for the sector. The employment in the tourism and hospitality industries increasing, and healthy lifestyles are increasingly important, however, the trends were not presented.

The Thesis part of the programme is an integral part and a way for the students to work in more depth on a special topic with their supervisor. This is heavy weighted, and the supervision is undertaken by an established and experienced academic at the rank of professor. The ethics element of the thesis, when undertaking research with human participants that should accompany the project, is not in place. Currently, this is not very problematic with the small cohort, but it needs to be set up as the Masters Programme will be upscaled and offered in English as well. The Course 'Research Methodology' should include lectures on the ethics process, and the establishment of an ethics committee that would check those processes, other than the supervisor.

The thesis also indicates that there are 6 hours (periods) per week, which the EEC find out that those are not formal lecture time, neither block teaching. The contact hours are related to

supervision time, which in total per students is 6hrs. The course material and the programme documents should reflect the delivery mode and teaching mode.

1.3 Public Information

The EEC have sighted the relevant programme and each course information that is published on the College website. The name of the Programme on the website reflects the name on the documentation (MSc Mediterranean Diet and Tourism), however the presentations included the work 'Nutrition'. The College should be careful to use the exact words.

The selection criteria are posted, those include the disciplines at the paperwork that the EEC received, however it includes also professionals from Culinary Arts that would not have robust background to engage with the programme. The website should change to include only the background as described at the current documentation.

The qualification awarded is also included.

The Website includes the courses and hours of attendance per week as well as the ECTS, however the outline of the course, learning outcomes, competencies, assignments are not included, neither the name of the academic that delivers the course. An outline of each course and the academic that is associated with the course should be included as well as the assignments as required by EQAR.

Testimonials from the students are not presented.

1.4 Information Management

All the information related to the effective management of the programme of the study was satisfactory. Student progression should be monitored as there are prerequisites courses, and if a student fails the module they have to wait for the resit (September) and having an extra year to wait for the course to be offered and complete the work. The students are able to access EBSCO online platform for their learning resources. As there are only three students the ration of student to staff is favourable. The projection to future students provides the required balance.

As some of the key academic staff are contracted from Greece and learning is achieved in block teaching, this model of delivery should be stipulated at the documentation and the website of the College. Students certainly derive great benefit from such experienced researchers.

Strengths

- The College has links with the hospitality and dietetics industries and support graduates and support students to link with the professional body, especially in nutrition and dietetics
- Established quality assurance process
- The academic staff provides excellent student communication and opportunities for discussion
- There is an electronic access to EBSCO and resources that would support learning and evidence base practice.
- The programme is unique in Cyprus that focusses on Mediterranean Diet and Tourism
- The College contracts well renown staff from Greece to enhance the subject expertise of teaching staff

Areas of improvement and recommendations

- The College should review the wording of the programme and courses Learning Outcomes to be in line with the Level 7 of the study (Masters level).
- The subjects that are prerequisite should have either a resit opportunity to allow student progress, timely to attend the following module, or take out the link.
- The tourism element within the material and course content should be highlighted, and the interdisciplinary link between diet, nutrition, and tourism. This should be as an integral part of the subject and the students should understand tourism connected to dietetics and nutrition. Academics should reflect on the tourism or hospitality element to make it as a part of the course rather than use it as a buzzword in the Programme title.
- The course NUTR2 could be removed from the programme.
- Public information should be monitored to reflect practice, i.e. further information of the content summary, assessments, entry criteria.
- The ethics should be discussed and presented at the research methodology, and ethics committee should be created to be used by the students as part of learning, even though in some cases the topic might not have any ethical implications, the students would become familiar with the research ethics process.
- Block teaching should be advertised as part of the course, in order the students to be aware of those teaching methods that might be attractive to some professionals.
- The thesis should include the teaching delivery mode, which is the tutorial with the supervisor. The course description should reflect the mode and time of delivery. Students do not get as currently presented a total of 60 hrs of lectures for their thesis.
- The prerequisites and opportunity for progression between semesters should be provided.

Please select what is appropriate for each of the following sub-areas:

Sub-area		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>
1.1	Policy for quality assurance	Compliant
1.2	Design, approval, on-going monitoring and review	Partially compliant
1.3	Public information	Compliant
1.4	Information management	Compliant

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

Sub-areas

2.1 Process of teaching and learning and student-centred teaching methodology

2.2 Practical training

2.3 Student assessment

2.1 Process of teaching and learning and student-centred teaching methodology

Standard

- *The process of teaching and learning supports students' individual and social development.*
- *The process of teaching and learning is flexible, considers different modes of delivery, where appropriate, uses a variety of pedagogical methods and facilitates the achievement of planned learning outcomes.*
- *Students are encouraged to take an active role in creating the learning process.*
- *The implementation of student-centered learning and teaching encourages a sense of autonomy in the learner, while ensuring adequate guidance and support from the teacher.*
- *Teaching methods, tools and material used in teaching are modern, effective, support the use of modern educational technologies and are regularly updated.*
- *Mutual respect within the learner-teacher relationship is promoted.*
- *The implementation of student-centred learning and teaching respects and attends to the diversity of students and their needs, enabling flexible learning paths.*
- *Appropriate procedures for dealing with students' complaints regarding the process of teaching and learning are set.*

2.2 Practical training

Standards

- *Practical and theoretical studies are interconnected.*
- *The organisation and the content of practical training, if applicable, support achievement of planned learning outcomes and meet the needs of the stakeholders.*

2.3 Student assessment

Standards

- *Assessment is consistent, fairly applied to all students and carried out in accordance with the stated procedures.*

- *Assessment is appropriate, transparent, objective and supports the development of the learner.*
- *The criteria for the method of assessment, as well as criteria for marking, are published in advance.*
- *Assessment allows students to demonstrate the extent to which the intended learning outcomes have been achieved. Students are given feedback, which, if necessary, is linked to advice on the learning process.*
- *Assessment, where possible, is carried out by more than one examiner.*
- *A formal procedure for student appeals is in place.*
- *Assessors are familiar with existing testing and examination methods and receive support in developing their own skills in this field.*
- *The regulations for assessment take into account mitigating circumstances.*

Findings

2.1. Process of Teaching and Learning and student-centred teaching methodology

The programme under evaluation falls at level 7 of studies (90 ECTS) and offers a Masters degree. This is the first year of delivering the programme of study. The Cyprus Dietetic and Nutrition Association has confirmed that graduates from the programme may be registered as members at the association upon review of academic qualifications. The committee noted that the process of teaching and learning are student-centred, which as noted in the SWOT analysis is a weakness as it is still at an early stage of implementation. Nevertheless, they practice it and provide support both academically and personally to students to complete their studies and accomplish their goals. Block teaching is offered which suited both the teaching staff as well as students as classes usually took place over Friday and Saturday, however the documentation does not include this information. It attends to diversity issues and the student needs as they are mature students currently employed in the health care sector. Some online delivery is offered mainly for support sessions. Students are encouraged to participate in a variety of events and activities to support and inform the society about nutrition and the value of the Mediterranean diet. They also participated in an international conference and a public health campaign.

Students actively engage with the teaching and learning; for example, they downloaded a number of applications relevant to their courses such as Yazio which they used for in-class activities and discussion. They also conducted research to prepare for the health campaign among others.

For their thesis, students are provided supervision by a professor who specializes in nutrition and has long experience in supervision. Weekly online meetings are provided as well as feedback on drafts to support students enhancing their work and complying with the requirements of such work at level 7. Topics are discussed and agreed with the supervisor. A thesis handbook is currently prepared to include information and instructions to the students. Students are involved with research as already discussed for example for the public health campaign, as well as for their assignments and thesis. A Research Methodology course

(NUTR1) is offered to familiarize students with research design, methodology, data collection and analysis techniques among others. There is no ethics procedure which is important for all research projects. The committee would recommend an ethics policy to be developed and a committee to evaluate the applications.

Different modes of delivery are available, which cover the programme learning outcomes, including field trips, guest lectures, group and individual work, formative assessment and feedback. More details are available in the programme handbook (p.11) where different competences and skills are used to show how they are delivered with a variety of teaching and learning techniques. Google forms and Google classroom are used for uploading teaching material, notes, as well as to communicate with students. All material is regularly updated to include any changes or new topics relevant to the programme of study. Examples were shared with the committee showing the Google classroom from a course. Students are encouraged to use technology and support is provided to enhance their skills. The programme coordinator monitors the teaching and learning by checking the course material. Moreover, there is a peer review process where the teaching methodology is evaluated and then discussed as part of the academic quality assurance system and staff appraisal. Finally, the Academic committee and the Course committees are looking at the courses before the beginning of the semester to ensure they match the requirements and the learning outcomes.

There is mutual respect and understanding as the teaching staff is well experienced and have the expertise in the field hence well respected from the students. At the same time staff provide support to students. They aim at creating independent thinkers who can practice what they learn.

There is a number of support and evaluation procedures. Students feel comfortable to discuss issues with their lecturers. There is also a chat group where they can ask questions. Moreover, there is system in place for course evaluation (the questionnaire has been provided). At the end of the semester each course is evaluated. An excel shows the evaluation summary. Comments and feedback from students is used and discussed between the lecturer and the programme coordinator. If any actions are taken then these are communicated to students as well. Currently is a very small programme with only 3 students hence the satisfaction is high as the teaching and learning are very personalized.

2.2 Practical training

The programme includes practical training. There is no course outline to show how the practical training is incorporated in the programme or matches the programme learning outcomes. According to the programme structure (application p.59) the practical training is not credited. Therefore, it is not clear what the LOs are, how they meet the programme learning outcomes with the training and the knowledge gained and skills developed by students.

Students as per the application (p.43) are supposed to do a “3-month practical training in four and five star hotels in Nicosia as well as other cities”. The programme includes tourism in the title hence it does make sense to include hotels for the training. However, tourism and hospitality in general are wider and offer a number of businesses and types of businesses that could potentially offer the context for students’ placements.

Nevertheless, as per the additional material shared during the validation event there is an 'internship coordinator' who coordinates with students and employers. Visits are scheduled to monitor students' progress and ensure that the purpose of the training is met.

A log is used to record weekly self-assessment and supervisor's comments, final evaluation of student by supervisor, the site evaluation by student and the evaluation of the student by the coordinator. The log includes the learning outcomes are included in the log (which should be revised to match the framework and the level). Instructions are also provided. The log finally is signed by the coordinator, the student and the supervisor.

2.3 Student assessment

The assessment policy is available in the application form. Details are provided on the evaluation criteria, the grading system etc. The assessment strategy includes a variety of methods used such as coursework, poster presentations, written exams. The pass grade is 50%. There is clear policy on exams, repetition of work, appeals procedure, and academic dishonesty – plagiarism with relevant disciplinary procedure. Duplichecker.com is used to check assessment for plagiarism.

There is also reference to mitigating circumstances, which are also presented at the Final Assessment Board.

Assessment is carried in accordance to procedures. Briefs are developed by lecturers which they discuss with the programme coordinator, to ensure they meet the LOs and to monitor the submission deadlines to ensure there is balance with students load. The criteria for assessment are given to students and are also uploaded on google classroom. The criteria is also part of the document, however general assessment criteria are part of the course description which the committee would suggest to remove. Such criteria are generic and do not reflect the LOs or the aim of the course; hence they should be adapted. The assessment allows students to achieve the LOs, feedback is provided within 15 working days (maximum as per the policy). Comments are provided only if students ask for it. Feedback process is not consistent and depends on the lecturers. Generic feedback is discussed during class time to inform students on how they can improve their skills. A feedback form may be developed to be used for all courses to provide consistency and transparency in the marking and the comments provided.

It would be helpful for students to receive some sessions on study skills during the induction week so that they become familiar with the requirements of the programme.

All marks are discussed and approved at the Final Assessment Board.

Formative assessment takes place however the lecturers were not sure about this practice. The EEC proposed ways to implement Formative assessment and feedback.

Strengths

- Support to students
- There is a Virtual Learning Environment used to support students' learning
- Participation at events and activities outside the classes to engage with the course and the society

- Expert support for the thesis
- Practical training

Areas of improvement and recommendations

- Develop a thesis handbook
- Develop ethical approval procedures for the thesis part, and within the research methodology module (NUTR1)
- Develop a course outline for practical training
- Review the places/businesses where students may do their practical training as so far this seems to happen in hotels only
- Remove evaluation criteria from course descriptions
- Add study skills during induction
- Add evaluation criteria in the assessment brief provided to students, such criteria should meet the requirements of the level of study, the learning outcomes and the content of the course.
- Develop a feedback form
- Develop a formative assessment and feedback strategy
- Develop an ethics policy and evaluation committee

Please select what is appropriate for each of the following sub-areas:

Sub-area		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>
2.1	Process of teaching and learning and student-centred teaching methodology	Compliant
2.2	Practical training	Partially compliant
2.3	Student assessment	Partially compliant

3. Teaching staff (ESG 1.5)

Sub-areas

- 3.1 Teaching staff recruitment and development**
- 3.2 Teaching staff number and status**
- 3.3 Synergies of teaching and research**

3.1 Teaching staff recruitment and development

Standards

- *Institutions ensure the competence of their teaching staff.*
- *Fair, transparent and clear processes for the recruitment and development of the teaching staff are set up.*
- *Teaching staff qualifications are 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 teaching staff is regularly engaged in professional and teaching-skills training and development.*
- *Promotion of the teaching staff takes into account the quality of their teaching, their research activity, the development of their teaching skills and their mobility.*
- *Innovation in teaching methods and the use of new technologies is encouraged.*
- *Conditions of employment that recognise the importance of teaching are followed.*
- *Recognised visiting teaching staff participates in teaching the study programme.*

3.2 Teaching staff number and status

Standards

- *The number of the teaching staff is adequate to support the programme of study.*
- *The teaching staff status (rank, full/part time) is appropriate to offer a quality programme of study.*
- *Visiting staff number does not exceed the number of the permanent staff.*

3.3 Synergies of teaching and research

Standards

- *The teaching staff collaborate in the fields of teaching and research within the HEI and with partners outside (practitioners in their fields, employers, and staff members at other HEIs in Cyprus or abroad).*
- *Scholarly activity to strengthen the link between education and research is encouraged.*
- *The teaching staff publications are within the discipline.*

- *Teaching staff studies and publications are closely related to the programme's courses.*
- *The allocation of teaching hours compared to the time for research activity is appropriate.*

Findings

3.1 Teaching staff recruitment and development.

For recruitment of staff particularly relevant to this Masters programme, the College contracts two international academics. One academic at the rank of professor teaches 3 courses: Advanced Topics in Nutrition and Mediterranean Diet I & II, and Thesis. The second contracted international academic teaches one course in Nutrition Informatics. The rest are full time employees of the College.

The EEC notes that teaching staff in tourism studies are not well represented in this programme even though Tourism is a core element. This could be regarded as problematic since the focus is mainly on diet and nutrition without much regard to tourism studies, and the interdisciplinarity between diet, nutrition, and tourism is rather tenuous. The EEC strongly suggests the College invests efforts to recruit more teaching staff in tourism, and particularly those with interdisciplinary background to include diet and nutrition.

In regards to development of teaching staff, two lecturers are enrolled in doctoral degrees which the college supports. Attending conferences and membership of professional bodies are aspects which the College support.

3.2. Teaching staff number and status

For this particular 1-year Masters degree, the college employs 8 members of staff (4 PhD holders, 2 doctoral candidates, and 2 Masters degree holders), out of which 2 teaching staff contracted from the International Hellenic University in Thessaloniki, and Alexander Technological Educational Institute Thessaloniki, respectively, both PhD holders and only one at the rank of professor, however one of which does not have a background in Nutrition. It is advisable to employ a PhD holder in nutrition/dietetics or relevant discipline.

The EEC strongly advises that the College should undertake every possible effort to help existing members of staff to enrol into PhD programmes, and to recruit tourism scholars.

3.3. Synergies between research and teaching

The international academic contracted from the International Hellenic University in Thessaloniki at the rank of professor maintains an active research profile in clinical dietetics and nutrition which is directly connected to the provisions of this Masters programme. Also, one of the teaching staff is a registered clinical dietician and conducts doctoral research in synergy with the provisions of this

Masters programme. The other doctoral candidate's research concerns issues around circular economy, so not directly connected to this 1-year Masters programme in Diet, Nutrition and Tourism.

The EEC commended the College for establishment of the journal "Tourism Today", and welcomed the news that the College invests efforts for this journal to be indexed in Scopus. The EEC advice the setting up of a Research Committee to maximise the potential of this journal, and to ensure the interdisciplinarity of diet, nutrition, and tourism is well capitalised on; at the moment the tourism part of the programme is largely de-emphasised, poorly misunderstood and represented more as hospitality.

Strengths

- The College is savvy in contracting a well-established academic in diet and nutrition from neighbouring Greece, which is particularly important since this seems to be the first programme of its kind in Cyprus.
- The College has a tourism journal Tourism Today with a good Editorial Board to be indexed in Scopus. During discussions the Programme Director could not give us more details about a timeline for such plans. The EEC encourages the College to pursue this indexation in Scopus as a matter of priority.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

- The EEC strongly advises that the College should undertake every possible effort to help all existing members of staff to enrol into PhD programmes as well as to employ new academics who hold a doctoral degree in tourism studies. In this context, the EEC welcomed the discussion around a name of a tourism scholar who might be employed in the next academic year.
- The international academic in dietetics from Greece is well suited for the international delivery of this programme; another specialist in nutrition should be employed and involved with teaching and research, especially if the programme is upscaled as discussed during the site visit.
- Setting up a small research centre to co-ordinate research activities. Make use of a Conference Application form to further encourage staff to attend conference, and to streamline the process.
- The tenuous connection to tourism studies in this Masters programme is problematic and hiring more tourism scholars with a PhD degrees is strongly advised. The EEC suggests using the following resources to advertise upcoming positions in tourism:
Trinet tourism and hospitality community <https://tim.hawaii.edu/about-values-vision-mission-accreditation/trinet/>, or internationally or academic job fora such as www.jobs.ac.uk, www.timeshighereducations.com, www.akadeus.com.



Please select what is appropriate for each of the following sub-areas:

Sub-area		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>
3.1	Teaching staff recruitment and development	Partially compliant
3.2	Teaching staff number and status	Compliant
3.3	Synergies of teaching and research	Compliant

4. Student admission, progression, recognition and certification (ESG 1.4)

Sub-areas

- 4.1 Student admission, processes and criteria
- 4.2 Student progression
- 4.3 Student recognition
- 4.4 Student certification

4.1 Student admission, processes and criteria

Standards

- *Pre-defined and published regulations regarding student admission are in place.*
- *Access policies, admission processes and criteria are implemented consistently and in a transparent manner.*

4.2 Student progression

Standards

- *Pre-defined and published regulations regarding student progression are in place.*
- *Processes and tools to collect, monitor and act on information on student progression, are in place.*

4.3 Student recognition

Standards

- *Pre-defined and published regulations regarding student recognition are in place.*
- *Fair recognition of higher education qualifications, periods of study and prior learning, including the recognition of non-formal and informal learning, are essential components for ensuring the students' progress in their studies, while promoting mobility.*
- *Appropriate recognition procedures are in place that rely on:*
 - *institutional practice for recognition being in line with the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention*
 - *cooperation with other institutions, quality assurance agencies and the national ENIC/NARIC centre with a view to ensuring coherent recognition across the country*

4.4 Student certification

Standards

- *Pre-defined and published regulations regarding student certification are in place.*
- *Students receive 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.*

Findings

4.1 Student admission, processes and criteria

All information on student admission, processes, and criteria are provided in the application form. These comply with the requirements of the agency. The Director of Admissions receives the applications. Minimum admission requirements are available in the application form (p.9). The EEC has checked and they fit the purpose and the level of study. There is a question on whether the English language requirements are correctly expressed (IELTS 5, p.10). The EEC recommends the college to double check as it was reported from other members that the score should be 5.5 or 6. The criteria for admission to this specific programme is not available on the college website.

There is no policy of recognition of prior learning due to the specialized requirements of the programme. However, there is clear reference to the previous studies and content students must have completed to be able to apply to this programme.

Admissions process and criteria are in place and implemented consistently.

4.2 Student progression

Regulations regarding student progression are in place. Information is provided in the application form (p.11). there is clear policy on transfer of credit, the requirements and criteria used. They also comply with the agency's requirements.

4.3 Student recognition

All criteria and policies were provided in the documentation. The EEC did not ask for any evidence of having implemented them as this is the first cohort of students and there were no students transferring from other programmes. However, the qualifications of the current small cohort of 3 students were appropriate and as per the requirements based on the policy and the agency.

The college has taken action ensuring that students are registered to the relevant association. The Cyprus Dietetic and Nutrition Association has confirmed that graduates from the programme may be registered as members at the association upon review of academic qualifications and having completed practical training.

4.4 Student certification

All policies and regulations in terms of student certification are in place. There is clear evidence of terms for passing the course, for evaluation and confirmation of marks. There is also clear information on the transfer of credit and what counts towards the final mark. The requirements for graduation are also provided. All this information is also available in the programme handbook which students receive. Copies of certifications awarded are provided in the application form. Transcripts are also provided with details on the courses studied, marks awarded etc.

Strengths

- Clear policy is available
- Criteria for admissions fit the purpose, level of study and are similar to other international institutions

Areas of improvement and recommendations

- Check IELTS requirement

Please select what is appropriate for each of the following sub-areas:

Sub-area		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>
4.1	Student admission, processes and criteria	Compliant
4.2	Student progression	Compliant
4.3	Student recognition	Compliant
4.4	Student certification	Compliant

5. Learning resources and student support (ESG 1.6)

Sub-areas

5.1 Teaching and Learning resources

5.2 Physical resources

5.3 Human support resources

5.4 Student support

5.1 Teaching and Learning resources

Standards

- *Adequate and readily accessible teaching and learning resources (teaching and learning environments, materials, aids and equipment) are provided to students and support the achievement of objectives in the study programme.*
- *Adequacy of resources is ensured for changing circumstances (change in student numbers, etc.).*
- *All resources are fit for purpose.*
- *Student-centred learning and flexible modes of learning and teaching, are taken into account when allocating, planning and providing the learning resources.*

5.2 Physical resources

Standards

- *Physical resources, i.e. premises, libraries, study facilities, IT infrastructure, are adequate to support the study programme.*
- *Adequacy of resources is ensured for changing circumstances (change in student numbers, etc.).*
- *All resources are fit for purpose and students are informed about the services available to them.*

5.3 Human support resources

Standards

- *Human support resources, i.e. tutors/mentors, counsellors, other advisers, qualified administrative staff, are adequate to support the study programme.*
- *Adequacy of resources is ensured for changing circumstances (change in student numbers, etc.).*

- *All resources are fit for purpose and students are informed about the services available to them.*

5.4 Student support

Standards

- *Student support is provided covering the needs of a diverse student population, such as mature, part-time, employed and international students and students with special needs.*
- *Students are informed about the services available to them.*
- *Student-centred learning and flexible modes of learning and teaching, are taken into account when allocating, planning and providing student support.*
- *Students' mobility within and across higher education systems is encouraged and supported.*

Findings

5.1. Teaching and Learning resources

Teaching and learning resources are appropriate for the programme. Google classroom is used as Virtual Learning Environment, example shared with the EEC on the screen. Notes are printed and given to students so that they can write their notes on the printed copies. Material is updated, and recent articles are given to students to create awareness of changes in the topics relevant to the programme and the course. Students are given support by lecturers on teaching and learning as well as assessment. Resources are fit for purpose, however there could be further use of software or IT in the Nutrition Informatics (NUTR2) course. Books are limited, but the students have access to the library of the University of Cyprus, to EBSCO online platform.

5.2. Physical resources

The College provides a computer and lecture rooms fit for purpose.

The students are able to use electronic databases to access articles and eBooks.

The College provides software that will enable students to determine the macro and micronutrients of diets (YAZIO).

5.3 Human support resources

The support provided to students is fit for purpose. Lecturers are hired from Cyprus and Greece to provide the specialized knowledge and support to students, and all are fluent in English to comply with provisions of this programme in English. Mentors/advisors are responsible for students and are usually the first point of reference in case students have issues. The programme coordinator and internship coordinator are also there to provide support. The number of staff currently employed for the programme are adequate even if numbers increase. Students are informed about such services and support provided via their programme handbook, and meetings with staff.

5.4 Student support

There is continuous student support at the college. The needs of the students are addressed and considered when designing the delivery of the courses, as well as on the teaching and learning methodology used. Scholarships are available to provide financial on the grounds that students meet the criteria. Erasmus+ is used to support student and staff mobility. There were 3 incoming students to the college (at other programmes of study) however there is an Erasmus officer who may provide students with support in finding a programme, completing relevant forms and monitoring the process. Various services are available such as the Admissions Office, the Academic Affairs Office, Student Support and Welfare Services, Career Office. Activities and responsibilities are provided in the application form.

There is no particular reference to students with special needs in policies which could be considered by the college.

Strengths

- The College has ambitious programme for expansion, and it is well placed within Nicosia for easy access to learning opportunities
- The College has a strong supporting system for the students

Areas of improvement and recommendations

- Emphasis could be given in supporting other software that could accessed for free like AI a Calc.
- Use further software and/or IT in courses where they need calculations for diets as there are many available for free use

- Introduce a welfare and special skills/needs policy
- As the programme is planned to upscale and offered in the English language support with specific terminology in English should be offered. To be noted that the students the EEC met did not feel comfortable speaking in English. It is understood that they follow the Greek programme but the tenuous connection to tourism, again, is evidenced as being weak since students are not prepared to engage with international patients as claimed during the site visit by the Programme and College Directors.

Please select what is appropriate for each of the following sub-areas:

Sub-area		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>
5.1	Teaching and Learning resources	Compliant
5.2	Physical resources	Compliant
5.3	Human support resources	Compliant
5.4	Student support	Compliant

6. Additional for doctoral programmes (ALL ESG)

Sub-areas

- 6.1 Selection criteria and requirements**
- 6.2 Proposal and dissertation**
- 6.3 Supervision and committees**

6.1 Selection criteria and requirements

Standards

- *Specific criteria that the potential students need to meet for admission in the programme, as well as how the selection procedures are made, are defined.*
- *The following requirements of the doctoral degree programme are analysed and published:*
 - *the stages of completion*
 - *the minimum and maximum time of completing the programme*
 - *the examinations*
 - *the procedures for supporting and accepting the student's proposal*
 - *the criteria for obtaining the Ph.D. degree*

6.2 Proposal and dissertation

Standards

- *Specific and clear guidelines for the writing of the proposal and the dissertation are set regarding:*
 - *the chapters that are contained*
 - *the system used for the presentation of each chapter, sub-chapters and bibliography*
 - *the minimum word limit*
 - *the binding, the cover page and the prologue pages, including the pages supporting the authenticity, originality and importance of the dissertation, as well as the reference to the committee for the final evaluation*
- *There is a plagiarism check system. Information is provided on the detection of plagiarism and the consequences in case of such misconduct.*
- *The process of submitting the dissertation to the university library is set.*

6.3 Supervision and committees

Standards

- *The composition, the procedure and the criteria for the formation of the advisory committee (to whom the doctoral student submits the research proposal) are determined.*
- *The composition, the procedure and the criteria for the formation of the examining committee (to whom the doctoral student defends his/her dissertation), are determined.*
- *The duties of the supervisor-chairperson and the other members of the advisory committee towards the student are determined and include:*
 - *regular meetings*
 - *reports per semester and feedback from supervisors*
 - *support for writing research papers*
 - *participation in conferences*
- *The number of doctoral students that each chairperson supervises at the same time are determined.*

You may also consider the following questions:

- *How is the scientific quality of the PhD thesis ensured?*
- *Is there a link between the doctoral programmes of study and the society? What is the value of the obtained degree outside academia and in the labour market?*
- *Can you please provide us with some dissertation samples?*

Findings

A short description of the situation in the Higher Education Institution (HEI), based on elements from the application for external evaluation and on findings from the onsite visit.

Click or tap here to enter text.

Strengths

A list of strengths, e.g. examples of good practices, achievements, innovative solutions etc.

Click or tap here to enter text.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

A list of problem areas to be dealt with, followed by or linked to the recommendations of how to improve the situation.

Click or tap here to enter text.

Please select what is appropriate for each of the following sub-areas:

Sub-area		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>
6.1	Selection criteria and requirements	Choose answer
6.2	Proposal and dissertation	Choose answer
6.3	Supervision and committees	Choose answer

Conclusions and final remarks

Overall, the College follows the instructions provided by the agency in terms of the programme design and delivery. Some strengths are identified such as the expertise knowledge of the teaching staff, the student support and the very positive feedback acquired by the current students.

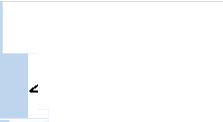

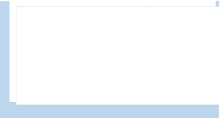

There are some areas for improvement as identified in the previous sections of this report. In general, the EEC recommends the college to revise the programme and courses learning outcomes to ensure they comply with level 7. A thesis handbook can also be developed to include specific instructions and assessment criteria to students.

An Ethics Committee should be set up and ethical guidelines need to be included in the Programme’s curriculum. An ethics approval process should also be in place especially for such a programme.

The tourism element is not convincingly present throughout the programme. This should be reflected in the programme learning outcomes, in the content and learning outcomes of the courses, and where possible in assessment. The interdisciplinary link between diet, nutrition, and tourism should also be highlighted. This should be as an integral part of the subject and the students should understand tourism connected to dietetics and nutrition. Academics should reflect on the tourism or hospitality element to make it as a part of the course rather than use it as a buzzword in the Programme title.



C. Signatures of the EEC

<i>Name</i>	<i>Signature</i>
Dr Amalia Tsiami	
Professor Dorina-Maria Buda	
Dr Lia Marinakou	
Niki	

Date: 27/01/2024