

**Cyprus Agency of Quality Assurance and Accreditation in  
Higher Education**

**Republic of Cyprus**

**External Evaluation Report  
Program of Study**

**Institution:**

**KES College**

**Program of Study:**

**Travel & Tourism Management (3 Years, Plus an Optional  
Foundation Year – 180 ECTS, Higher Diploma)**

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**INSTRUCTIONS:**

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 2016” [N. 136 (I)/2015].

The document is duly completed by the External Evaluation Committee for each program of study. The ANNEX (Doc. Number 300.1) constitutes an integral part of the external evaluation report for the external evaluation accreditation of a program of study.

**EXTERNAL EVALUATION COMMITTEE**

<b>NAME</b>	<b>TITLE</b>	<b>UNIVERSITY / INSTITUTION</b>
Prof Dr Andreas Papatheodorou	Professor in Industrial and Spatial Economics with Emphasis on Tourism	University of the Aegean, Greece
Prof Dr Dorina – Maria Buda	Professor of Tourism Management	Leeds Beckett University, United Kingdom
Associate Prof Dr Wai Mun Lim	Associate Professor in Service Management	University of Plymouth, United Kingdom
Ms Evdokia Anastasiou	Student	Cyprus University of Technology

## INTRODUCTION:

### I. The External Evaluation procedure

- Short description of the documents that have been studied, of the on-site visit meetings, and of the on-site visit to the infrastructures.

The External Evaluation Committee (hereafter EEC) studied the Travel & Tourism Management (3 Years, Plus an Optional Foundation Year, Higher Diploma) documentation for KES College. Academic members of the EEC held a first meeting and discussed the documentation on Sunday 24 June 2018 at Hilton Hotel in Nicosia. Following that, academic members of the EEC and Ms Evdokia Anastasiou, the CUT student, met with Mr George Aletraris, the DI.P.A.E. official at Hilton Hotel on Monday 25 June 2018 in the morning. This meeting was followed by a day visit to the KES College in Nicosia on Monday 25 June 2018. While at KES College, a meeting with the academic management team of the College explained the college strategy and standing. Subsequently, a meeting with the programme teaching staff explored the curriculum as well as other issues in further detail. Another meeting with existing students of the Higher Diploma in Travel & Tourism Management explored learning experience, student satisfaction and aspirations. Finally, the EEC visited the KES College resources, class infrastructure, kitchens, audio/radio laboratory, wellness laboratory, library and online facilities.

### II. The Internal Evaluation procedure

- Comments concerning the quality and the completeness of the application submitted by the institution of higher education (Doc. Number 200.1), as well as concerning the overall acceptance of and participation in the quality assurance procedures, by the institution in general and by the program of study under evaluation in particular.

The EEC studied the application and documentation provided in advance and during the site visit. There were several areas that were discussed during the meetings based on the documentation. Additional information and clarifications were provided during the evaluation process and duly considered by the EEC.

## INTERNAL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE AND TEACHING STAFF

Internal Management Committee (in attendance)
Mr Petros Stylianou, Director General
Mr Panayiotis Hadjisymeou, Head of Hospitality and Culinary Arts - Head of Programs Coordinator
Mr Dimitris Englezakis, Head of Academic Affairs
Mr Chris Constantinou, Head of the Student Welfare Services
Ms Maria Mavridou, Marketing Manager
Ms Calypso Charalambous, Curriculum Development Officer
Dr Xenia Danou, Educational Officer
Teaching Staff (in attendance)
Costas Yerokostas
Demetris Demetriou
Evangelos Sozos
Sophia Pratzioti
Marios Savva
Nikoletta Georgiou
Savvas Constantinides
Angelos Agathangelou
Dr Achilleas Karayiannis
Michael Georgiades
Stella Kyriakidou
Eve Constantinou
George Pishilis
Student Representative (in attendance)
Deepak Rawat
Sahil Dheman

## **FINDINGS:**

### **1. EFFECTIVENESS OF TEACHING WORK – AVAILABLE RESOURCES**

- **Organization of Teaching Work**
- **Teaching**
- **Teaching personnel**

The Director General of KES College explained the relevant educational experience of the College. The College has 47 years of educational involvement.

It seems that teaching work is organised efficiently and the students interviewed were satisfied with the provision. An effective administration structure supports the delivery of the programmes.

Teaching staff seemed enthusiastic about teaching their students. There is some travel and tourism expertise in the team but very limited research output in highly respected travel and tourism journals. It is also evident that only few members of staff are travel and tourism academic specialists and have relevant background studies. Some members of the teaching team may lack the necessary updated insight of the travel and tourism industry; nonetheless, they seem to be somehow involved in industry related activities. The teaching staff were not fully involved in the preparation of module documentation and learning outcomes.

## 2. PROGRAM OF STUDY AND HIGHER EDUCATION QUALIFICATIONS

- **Purpose and Objectives and learning outcomes of the Program of Study**
- **Structure and Content of the Program of studies**
- **Quality Assurance of the Program of studies**
- **Management of the Program of Study**
- **International Dimension of the Program of Study**
- **Connection with the labour market and the society**

This Higher Diploma programme in English targets undergraduate students aiming to develop a career in travel and tourism. It is positioned as a good opportunity for personal and professional development, through equipping students with knowledge, foreign languages and the skills of operations and management for the travel and tourism sectors. This is expected to support their career development and professional life. The aims and objectives of the programme should, therefore, enable students to develop their skills and increase their career prospects.

The documentation provides a comprehensive and meticulously prepared guidance to the programme proposed. The programme is structured into three (3) years, i.e. six (6) semesters offering 180 ECTS credits – sixty (60) ECTS credits per year and thirty (30) ECTS credits per semester. Each semester contains fourteen (14) weeks, twelve (12) related to teaching and two (2) for examinations. On average, students are taught sixteen (16) hours per week over fifty-five (55') minutes-long sessions. To be awarded their degree, students need to have successfully completed 42 modules, i.e. 36 compulsory and 6 (six) electives. The total number of elective modules offered is 17 (seventeen) – the College reports them as 21 but we found evidence of double counting as the same elective modules are occasionally offered in different semesters. In other words, a total of  $36+17=53$  modules are offered. There are sixteen (16) specialised travel and tourism related modules (including Final Project I and Final Project II); two (2) specialised food related modules, while the rest, i.e.  $53-16-2=35$  are generic. Out of these 35 modules, eight (8) modules are related to languages (i.e. Greek for international students, French, Russian and German); nineteen (19) are predominantly business and/or social sciences related; three (3) are Cyprus and EU politics/economics related; and rather worryingly five (5) are predominantly practical skills related.

The programme follows a traditional, mainstream and to some extent uninspiring and unimaginative approach to teaching travel and tourism. The programme offers a portfolio of theoretical business and management knowledge with modules in the areas of travel and tourism. The programme offers several modules with limited attempt to customize and contextualize learning to the students interested in travel and tourism. The programme seems to be centrally managed but teaching staff are somewhat involved in the formation of the curriculum and their modules. The generic business modules do not include literature relevant to travel and tourism. Most textbooks suggested for all modules are at least ten (10) years old and travel and tourism academic journal articles are not included in the module outlines. Programme structure issues need to be considered too, as discussed later in this evaluation report.

There is room for improvement on the structure of the degree by contextualising generic modules and increasing the number of travel and tourism related modules, which are relevant to the contemporary travel and tourism environment. There is in general a logical sequence of modules in terms of content, although the academic value of practical skills modules (ECTS-wise) such as “Communication Skills” and “Computer Basics I”, “Quality Customer Service”, “IT Web Page Design” and “Business Communication” is questionable. The generic modules on geography, anthropology, economics and business also fail to acknowledge the specific requirements of travel and tourism, and they remain very broad. There is also limited innovation in this programme and a failure to acknowledge contemporary sectoral and macroeconomic challenges. As such, and in contrast to what is advocated in the motto of KES College (*semper vigilans* - always alert), the Higher Diploma programme would not prepare graduates adequately to excel in an increasingly challenging global travel and tourism environment at the time of graduation.

Assessment is traditional - there is apparently a mid-term exam, a final exam and a coursework for each module. Class attendance and participation is also evaluated. As the degree is on management, it is advised that presentation skills should be explicitly evaluated and assessed as much as possible. The number of credits attached to each module is standard.

Quality assurance has been documented from an internal point of view to a satisfactory degree.

The college team indicated that they are active in the Erasmus+ programme for staff and student mobility. The inspected student welfare facilities were also ample and modern and Erasmus+ programme signposting was evident. Interestingly, though, the interviewed students were not aware of the opportunities offered by the Erasmus+ programme. In the documentation, there is evidence of the connection with the labour market and the local community. The curriculum offers two compulsory, thirteen (13) weeks placement periods (after the second and after the fourth semester) for students capitalising on the fact that Cyprus is in the epicentre of the Mediterranean tourism sector. Nonetheless, these placements are not ECTS credit-bearing despite students being required to keep a detailed logbook and submit a report; this may have negative repercussions for the incentivisation of students to excel in their placement.

### 3. RESEARCH WORK AND SYNERGIES WITH TEACHING

#### - **Research Teaching Synergies**

The main programme documentation does not refer to the research policies and activities implemented by the College and its members of staff encouraging excellent research. Nonetheless, during the visit at KES College, the EEC members were provided with additional information on the recent efforts undertaken by the college to stimulate research. In particular, under the coordination of Dr Dimitrios Sarris, KES College initiated the necessary legal procedures to establish a Research Centre earlier in 2018 offering financial and other incentives to all members of its staff to apply for internally funded research projects of primarily applied nature.

Moreover, each member of the KES Research Centre is entitled to additional financial support for conference participation. The EEC commends KES College on undertaking this important initiative because at present there is no strong evidence of research activity in general and in travel and tourism in particular among the involved members of academic staff. So far, few members of KES College are engaged in research activities with modest publication or other related outputs. Apparently only two (2) out of twenty-four (24) members of the Higher Diploma teaching team in KES College hold a PhD; moreover, only one of them (i.e. Dr Achilleas Karayiannis) works there as full-time member of staff. There is no research on journal articles in the module descriptors and teaching staff seem unaware of recent research on their subject areas. There was some interest to undertake research and/or consultancy collaboration with the local travel and tourism sector.

### 4. ADMINISTRATION SERVICES, STUDENT WELFARE AND SUPPORT OF TEACHING WORK

- **Administrative Mechanisms**
- **Infrastructures / Support**
- **Financial Resources**

The College appears to have sufficient and adequate provision for the administration of the programme. During the discussion with the students, this was confirmed. Other infrastructures/support were adequate for the proposed number of students and

expected level of teaching delivery. The College seems to have adequate resources to operate viably. Interestingly, the College has good resources also in terms of an audio/radio studio and a wellness/beauty salon studio. This infrastructure could be used to develop interdisciplinary, creative and innovative modules such as Wellness Tourism, and Tourism & Journalism. As discussed later in the report, such modules could improve the academic offering of KES College thus shaping a competitive advantage in the marketplace.

In any case, insufficient information was provided in terms of future cash flows and costs at campus as well as at programme level. No proper feasibility study was provided. At present, the Higher Diploma programme has only three (3) students enrolled. This is clearly unsustainable from a financial point of view. Nonetheless, the academic management team of the college is optimistic that they will manage to increase the number of students in the future. The proposed number of students is fifteen (15) per intake. The EEC understands that there are three (3) intakes every academic year, i.e. in February, June and September.

## **5. DISTANCE LEARNING PROGRAMS**

**N/A**

## **6. DOCTORAL PROGRAMS OF STUDY**

**N/A**

## CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS OF THE EXTERNAL EVALUATION COMMITTEE<sup>1</sup>

The present situation of the program, good practices, weaknesses that have been detected during the external evaluation procedure by the external evaluation committee, suggestions for improvement.

In conclusion, the learning outcomes of the overall programme are geared towards acquiring travel and tourism management knowledge and applying it to the sectors. The programme aims to provide students with an in-depth understanding of issues associated with management and organisational aspects of travel and tourism together with basic principles that support the industry. More specifically, it aims to guide the student to a professional area that would be appealing to him/her as a future career; to equip graduates with a solid academic, technological, and intellectual background for academic and/or career advancements; to provide students with a solid foundation of management skills, marketing and sales, human resource management, finance, operations, information technology, and to help students, develop their critical thinking and refine their analytical and decision-making skills.

The learning outcomes of the individual modules are well-structured and balanced but occasionally fail to address modern travel and tourism management challenges. The generic modules (Introduction to Economics, Introduction to Social Science, Introduction to Statistics, Geography and Anthropology of Tourism) are too broad and often overlook the specific context as well as the requirements of the travel and tourism sectors. As such, the courses do not provide sufficient contextualized knowledge. For example, the Introduction to Economics I (Microeconomics) module, fails to address the idiosyncrasies of the travel and tourism sectors and engage students in relevant discussion. The modules use dated literature of almost ten (10) years-old and fail to include journal articles with contemporary methodologies and topics. Similarly, the course on Geography and Anthropology of tourism aims to cover two very vast disciplines: geography and anthropology in relation to tourism.

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<sup>1</sup> It is highlighted, at this point, that the External Evaluation Committee is expected to justify its findings and its suggestions on the basis of the Document num.: 300.1. The External Evaluation Committee is not expected to submit a suggestion for the approval or the rejection of the program of study under evaluation. This decision falls under the competencies of the Council of the Agency of Quality Assurance and Accreditation of higher education.

Often the module documentation feels like a collection of outdated module outlines packaged together for validation purposes. The teaching team does not appear fully engaged in the development of the modules at least regarding the preparation of module outlines. In any case, however, the EEC was told by the teaching team that the latter is encouraged to take initiatives to improve and update the delivery of the curriculum.

There is documented industry engagement, placement and professional practice interaction. This is a strength of the programme as it may help students prepare themselves for the real world. This is topical as Cyprus has a vibrant tourism industry that is actively seeking to recruit new staff. The academic management team also mentioned collaborations with the local tourism industry associations that can enrich the programme.

There is sufficient information to gain a comprehensive picture of the assessment strategy. Assessment appears traditional - there is apparently a mid-term exam, a final exam and a coursework for each module in most cases. There is no reference to group work strategy. There is no mention of any advanced assessment methodologies or pedagogic strategies. The number of credits attached to each module is standard.

There is limited evidence of relevant research activity or culture among the involved members of academic staff. Few members of KES College are engaged in research activities with modest publication or other related outputs.

Staffing is of some concern as very few academic members of staff are qualified to PhD level often in unrelated subject areas. Most staff have MSc degrees although some members of staff only hold a BA degree. There is limited evidence of specialised travel and tourism research and knowledge creation activity; moreover, this is centred around few individuals, with limited teamwork involvement. The academic staff had also limited engagement in the module preparation.

Doc. Number: 300.1

## Quality Standards and Indicators

### External Evaluation of a Program of Study

Institution: [KES College](#)

Program of Study: [Higher Diploma in Travel & Tourism Management \(3 Years, Plus an Optional Foundation Year\)](#)

Duration of the Program of Study: [3 years](#)

Evaluation Date: [25 June 2018](#)

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The document describes the quality standards and indicators, which will be applied for the external evaluation of programs of study of institutions of higher education, by the External Evaluation Committee.

**DIRECTIONS:** Note what is applicable for each quality standard/indicator.

1. Applicable to a minimum degree
2. Applicable to a non satisfactory degree
3. Applicable to a satisfactory degree
4. Applicable to a very satisfactory degree
5. It applies and it constitutes a good practice

**It is pointed out that, in the case of standards and indicators that cannot be applied due to the status of the institution and/or of the program of study, N/A (= Not Applicable) should be noted and a detailed explanation should be provided on the institution’s corresponding policy regarding the specific quality standard or indicator.**

### Members of the External Evaluation Committee

NAME	TITLE	UNIVERSITY / INSTITUTION
Prof Dr Andreas Papatheodorou	Professor in Industrial and Spatial Economics with Emphasis on Tourism	University of the Aegean, Greece
Prof Dr Dorina – Maria Buda	Professor of Tourism Management	Leeds Beckett University, United Kingdom
Associate Prof Dr Wai Mun Lim	Associate Professor in Service Management	University of Plymouth, United Kingdom
Ms Evdokia Anastasiou	Student	Cyprus University of Technology

**Date and Time of the On-Site Visit:** 25 June 2018

**Duration of the On-Site Visit:** One day

1. EFFECTIVENESS OF TEACHING WORK – AVAILABLE RESOURCES						
1.1	Organization of teaching work	1	2	3	4	5
1.1.1	The student admission requirements to the program of study, are based on specific regulations which are adhered to in a consistent manner.				X	
1.1.2	The number of students in each class allows for constructive teaching and communication, and it compares positively to the current international standards and/or practices.				X	
1.1.3	The organization of the educational process safeguards the quality implementation of the program's purpose and objectives and the achievement of the learning outcomes. Particularly, the following are taken into consideration:				X	
1.1.3.1	The implementation of a specific academic calendar and its timely publication.				X	
1.1.3.2	The disclosure of the program's curricula to the students, and their implementation by the teaching personnel				X	
1.1.3.3	The programme web-pages, updated with the relevant supplementary material			X		
1.1.3.4	The procedures for the fulfillment of undergraduate and postgraduate assignments / practical training				X	
1.1.3.5	The procedures for the conduct and the format of the examinations and for student assessment				X	
1.1.3.6	The effective provision of information to the students and the enhancement of their participation in the procedures for the improvement of the educational process.				X	
1.1.4	Adequate and modern learning resources, are available to the students, including the following:			X		
1.1.4.1	facilities				X	
1.1.4.2	library			X		
1.1.4.3	infrastructure				X	
1.1.4.4	student welfare				X	

	1.1.4.5	academic mentoring				X	
1.1.5	A policy for regular and effective communication, between the teaching personnel and the students, is applied.					X	
1.1.6	The teaching personnel, for each programme, provide timely and effective feedback to the students.				X		
1.1.7	Statutory mechanisms, for the support of students and the communication with the teaching personnel, are effective.					X	
1.1.8	Control mechanisms for student performance are effective.				X		
1.1.9	Support mechanisms for students with problematic academic performance are effective.					X	
1.1.10	Academic mentoring processes are transparent and effective for undergraduate and postgraduate programs and are taken into consideration for the calculation of academic work load.				X		
1.1.11	The program of study applies an effective policy for the prevention and detection of plagiarism.					X	
1.1.12	The program of study provides satisfactory mechanisms for complaint management and for dispute resolution.					X	

Justify the answer you have provided and note the additional comments you may have on each standard / indicator.

The college library subscribes to the EBSCO e-book database; nonetheless, learning resources such as electronic subscriptions to academic and professional travel and tourism journal databases are rather poor and the proportion of books related to travel and tourism is low. The IT facilities are satisfactory. The library opening hours and days are somewhat limited but the library premises are attractive.

Note, additionally:

- α) the expected number of Cypriot and International Students in the program of study.
- β) the countries of origin of the majority of students.
- γ) the maximum planned number of students per class-section.

About fifteen (15) students per intake are expected to enrol in this Higher Diploma programme. At present, the programme primarily attracts only very few (i.e. three)

international students, who account for over 100% of the entire cohort and originate from India.						
<b>1.2</b>	<b>Teaching</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
1.2.1	The methodology utilized in each programme is suitable for achieving the programme's purpose and objectives and those of the individual modules.				X	
1.2.2	The methodology of each programme is suitable for adults.				X	
1.2.3	Continuous-formative assessment and feedback are provided to the students regularly.			X		
1.2.4	The assessment system and criteria regarding student programme performance, are clear, adequate, and known to the students.				X	
1.2.5	Educational activities which encourage students' active participation in the learning process, are implemented.			X		
1.2.6	Teaching incorporates the use of modern educational technologies that are consistent with international standards, including a platform for the electronic support of learning.			X		
1.2.7	Teaching materials (books, manuals, journals, databases, and teaching notes) meet the requirements set by the methodology of the program's individual programmes, and are updated regularly.		X			
<p>Justify the answer you have provided and note the additional comments you may have on each standard / indicator.</p> <p>The curriculum is outdated and does not address contemporary challenges in the travel and tourism sectors. Modules such as "Communication Skills" and "Computer Basics I", "Quality Customer Service", "IT Web Page Design" and "Business Communication" are almost entirely practical skills related are less relevant than other essential subject areas. There is a serious lack of contemporary travel and tourism consumer related topics. There are many modules that are generic and/or not contextualized. Typically, textbooks are outdated and there is a lack of journal articles. In fact, more recent textbooks and journal articles in travel and tourism should be used to provide currency and intellectual stimulation. All the above-mentioned may deter students from engaging in plagiarism practices.</p>						

1.3	Teaching Personnel	1	2	3	4	5
1.3.1	The number of full-time academic personnel, occupied exclusively at the institution, and their fields of expertise, adequately support the program of study.		X			
1.3.2	The members of teaching personnel for each programme have the relevant formal and fundamental qualifications for teaching the programme, as described by the legislation, including the following:		X			
1.3.2.1	Subject specialization, preferably with a doctorate, in the discipline.		X			
1.3.2.2	Publications within the discipline.	X				
1.3.3	The specializations of Visiting Professors adequately support the program of study.	N/A				
1.3.4	Special Teaching Personnel and Special Scientists have the necessary qualifications, adequate work experience and specialization to teach a limited number of programmes in the program of study.	N/A				
1.3.5	In every program of study, the Special Teaching Personnel does not exceed 30% of the Teaching Research Personnel.	N/A				
1.3.6	The teaching personnel of each private institution of tertiary education, to a percentage of at least 70%, has recognized academic qualification, by one level higher than that of the program of study in which he/she teaches.				X	
1.3.7	In the program of study, the ratio of the number of programmes taught by full-time personnel, occupied exclusively at the institution, to the number of programmes taught by part-time personnel, ensures the quality of the program of study.			X		
1.3.8	The ratio of the number of students to the total number of teaching personnel is adequate for the support and safeguarding of the program's quality.				X	
1.3.9	The academic personnel's teaching load does not limit the conduct of research, writing, and contribution to the society.			X		
1.3.10	Future redundancies / retirements, expected recruitment and promotions of academic personnel safeguard the			X		

	unimpeded implementation of the program of study within a five-year span.					
1.3.11	The program's Coordinator has the qualifications and experience to efficiently coordinate the program of study.				X	
<p>Justify the answer you have provided and note the additional comments you may have on each standard / indicator.</p> <p>The EEC was concerned about the fact that few members of KES College are engaged in research activities with modest publication or other related outputs. Two (2) out of twenty-four (24) members of the teaching team in KES College hold a PhD; nonetheless only one PhD holder is employed there as full-time members of staff. There is no research on journal articles in the module descriptors and teaching staff seem, unfortunately, unaware of recent research on their subject areas. Existing staff should be supported to develop their travel and tourism-related expertise (staff development) and to commence their research journey.</p> <p>Due to the vocational orientation of KES College, the use of Visiting Professors, Special Teaching Personnel and Special Scientists is not required and not applicable in their context.</p>						

<b>2. PROGRAM OF STUDY AND HIGHER EDUCATION QUALIFICATIONS</b>						
<b>2.1</b>	<b>Purpose and Objectives and learning outcomes of the Program of Study</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
2.1.1	The purpose and objectives of the program of study are formulated in terms of expected learning outcomes and are consistent with the mission and the strategy of the institution.				X	
2.1.2	The purpose and objectives of the program and the learning outcomes are utilized as a guide for the design of the program of study.				X	
2.1.3	The higher education qualification and the program of study, conform to the provisions of their corresponding Professional and Vocational Bodies for the purpose of registration to these bodies.	N/A				
2.1.4	The program's content, the methods of assessment, the teaching materials and the equipment, lead to the achievement of the program's purpose and objectives and ensure the expected learning outcomes.				X	
2.1.5	The expected learning outcomes of the program are known to the students and to the members of the academic and teaching personnel.				X	
2.1.6	The learning process is properly designed to achieve the expected learning outcomes.			X		
2.1.7	The higher education qualification awarded to the students, corresponds to the purpose and objectives and the learning outcomes of the program.			X		
<p>Justify the answer you have provided and note the additional comments you may have on each standard / indicator.</p> <p>The EEC was concerned about the non-specialist modules being dominated by languages (eight modules) and practical skills (five modules) especially because they seem to lack specialization in the context of travel and tourism.</p>						
<b>2.2</b>	<b>Structure and Content of the Program of Study</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
2.2.1	The programme curricula clearly define the expected learning outcomes, the content, the teaching and learning approaches and the method of assessing student performance.				X	
2.2.2	The European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) is applied and there is true correspondence between credits and workload per programme and per semester for the student either he / she studies				X	

	in a specific program or he/she is registered and studies simultaneously in additional programs of studies according to the European practice in higher education institutions.					
2.2.3	The program of study is structured in a consistent manner and in sequence, so that concepts operating as preconditions precede the teaching of other, more complex and cognitively more demanding, concepts.				X	
2.2.4	The higher education qualification awarded, the learning outcomes and the content of the program are consistent.				X	
2.2.5	The program, in addition to the programmes focusing on the specific discipline, includes an adequate number of general education programmes.			X		
2.2.6	The content of programmes and modules, and the corresponding educational activities are suitable for achieving the desired learning outcomes with regards to the knowledge, skills, and abilities which should be acquired by students.				X	
2.2.7	The number and the content of the program's programmes are sufficient for the achievement of learning outcomes.			X		
2.2.8	The content of the program's programmes reflects the latest achievements / developments in science, arts, research and technology.		X			
2.2.9	Flexible options / adaptable to the personal needs or to the needs of students with special needs, are provided.				X	

Justify the answer you have provided and note the additional comments you may have on each standard / indicator.

The EEC considers that the proportion of travel and tourism related modules should be higher to better meet the proposed objectives of the Higher Diploma programme. In this context, the number of non-specialist modules currently dominated by languages (8 modules) and practical skills (5 modules) should be reduced or alternatively become specialized in the context of hospitality and tourism.

Note the expected number of students who will be studying simultaneously at another academic institution, based on your experience so far, regarding students who study simultaneously in the programs of your institution.

<b>2.3</b>	<b>Quality Assurance of the Program of Study</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
2.3.1	The arrangements regarding the program's quality assurance define clear competencies and procedures.				X	

2.3.2	Participation in the processes of the system of quality assurance of the program, is ensured for				X	
	2.3.2.1	the members of the academic personnel			X	
	2.3.2.2	the members of the administrative personnel		X		
	2.3.2.3	the students.			X	
2.3.3	The guide and / or the regulations for quality assurance, provide detailed information and data for the support and management of the program of study.				X	
2.3.4	The quality assurance process constitutes an academic process and it is not restricted by non-academic factors.				X	
Justify the answer you have provided and note the additional comments you may have on each standard / indicator.						
<b>2.4</b>	<b>Management of the Program of Study</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b> <b>5</b>
2.4.1	Effective management of the program of study with regard to its design, its approval, its monitoring and its review, is in place.					X
2.4.2	It is ensured that learning outcomes may be achieved within the specified timeframe.					X
2.4.3	It is ensured that the program's management and development process is an academic process which operates without any non-academic interventions.					X
2.4.4	The academic hierarchy of the institution, (Rector, Vice-Rectors, Deans, Chairs and Programs' Coordinators, academic personnel) have the sole responsibility for academic excellence and the development of the programs of study.					X
2.4.5	Information relating to the program of study are posted publicly and include:					X
	2.4.5.1	The provisions regarding unit credits				X
	2.4.5.2	The expected learning outcomes				X
	2.4.5.3	The methodology				X
	2.4.5.4	Programme descriptions				X
	2.4.5.5	The program's structure				X
	2.4.5.6	The admission requirements				X
	2.4.5.7	The format and the procedures for student assessment				X

2.4.6	The award of the higher education qualification is accompanied by the Diploma Supplement which is in line with the European and international standards.				X	
2.4.7	The effectiveness of the program's evaluation mechanism, by the students, is ensured.				X	
2.4.8	The recognition and transfer of credit units from previous studies is regulated by procedures and regulations which ensure that the majority of credit units is awarded by the institution which awards the higher education qualification.				X	

Justify the answer you have provided and note the additional comments you may have on each standard / indicator.

The EEC was satisfied that effective management of the program of study was applied.

In the case of practical training, note:

- The number of credit units for programmes and the number of credits for practical training
- In which semester does practical training takes place?
- Note if practical training is taking place in a country other than the home country of the institution which awards the higher education qualification

The EEC would like to commend KES College for introducing two, thirteen-week periods of placement (internship) into the Higher Diploma programme. Moreover, the EEC would also like to stress that further to the discussion with the students, it seems that these placements were of added value to their studies. Nonetheless, these placements are not ECTS credit-bearing despite students being required to keep a detailed logbook and submit a report; this may have negative repercussions for the incentivisation of students to excel in their placement and thus should be rectified.

2.5	International Dimension of the Program of Study	1	2	3	4	5
2.5.1	The program's collaborations with other institutions are compared positively with corresponding collaborations of other departments / programs of study in Europe and internationally.			X		
2.5.2	The program attracts Visiting professors of recognized academic standing.	N/A				

2.5.3	Students participate in exchange programs.			X		
2.5.4	The academic profile of the program of study is compatible with corresponding programs of study in Cyprus and internationally.			X		
<p>Justify the answer you have provided and note the additional comments you may have on each standard / indicator.</p> <p>At present, KES College undertakes genuine internationalisation efforts under the auspices of the Erasmus+ programme for staff and student mobility. Nonetheless, given the vocational orientation and the calibre of the institution, attracting visiting professors of recognized academic standing is deemed as non-applicable.</p> <p>Also, comment on the degree the program compares positively with corresponding programs operating in Cyprus and abroad in higher education institutions of the same rank.</p> <p>The proposed programme meets the standards expected from corresponding programs operating in Cyprus and abroad in higher education institutions of the same rank.</p>						
<b>2.6</b>	<b>Connection with the labour market and the society</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
2.6.1	The procedures applied, so that the program conforms to the scientific and professional activities of the graduates, are adequate and effective.			X		
2.6.2	According to the feasibility study, indicators for the employability of graduates are satisfactory.		X			
2.6.3	Benefits, for the society, deriving from the program are significant.			X		
<p>Justify the answer you have provided and note the additional comments you may have on each standard / indicator.</p> <p>Insufficient information was provided in the feasibility study in terms of student employability.</p>						

<b>3. RESEARCH WORK AND SYNERGIES WITH TEACHING</b>						
<b>3.1</b>	<b>Research - Teaching Synergies</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
3.1.1	It is ensured that teaching and learning have been adequately enlightened by research.			X		
3.1.2	New research results are embodied in the content of the program of study.		X			
3.1.3	Adequate and sufficient facilities and equipment are provided to support the research component of the program of study, which are available and accessible to the personnel and the students.			X		
3.1.4	The results of the academic personnel's research activity are published in international journals with the peer-reviewing system, in international conferences, conference minutes, publications etc.		X			
3.1.5	External, non-governmental, funding for the academic personnel's research activities, is compared positively to the funding of other institutions in Cyprus and abroad.		X			
3.1.6	Internal funding, of the academic personnel's research activities, is compared positively to the funding of other institutions in Cyprus and abroad.			X		
3.1.7	The policy for, indirect or direct, internal funding of the academic personnel's research activity is satisfactory.			X		
3.1.8	The participation of students, academic, teaching and administrative personnel of the program in research activities and projects is satisfactory.		X			
3.1.9	Student training in the research process is sufficient.		X			
<p>Justify the answer you have provided and note the additional comments you may have on each standard / indicator.</p> <p>The EEC felt there is insufficient awareness among members of academic staff regarding the importance of current research in travel and tourism and how this should be related to curriculum currency and innovation in teaching. Few members of KES College are engaged in research activities with modest publication or other related outputs in travel and tourism. There was some interest to undertake research and/or consultancy collaboration with the local hospitality and tourism industry also as a result of the recent introduction of the KES Research Centre, where, among</p>						

others, a research project is currently implemented in the field of Food, Hotel and Tourism entitled *Wage differentiation between men and women in the food sector of Cyprus*.

#### 4. ADMINISTRATION SERVICES, STUDENT WELFARE AND SUPPORT OF TEACHING WORK

4.1	Administrative Mechanisms	1	2	3	4	5
4.1.1	There is a Student Welfare Service that supports students with regards to academic and personal problems and difficulties.				X	
4.1.2	Statutory administrative mechanisms for monitoring and supporting students are sufficient.				X	
4.1.3	The efficiency of these mechanisms is assessed on the basis of specific criteria.			X		

Justify the answer you have provided and note the additional comments you may have on each standard / indicator.

Further to the discussion with the students, the EEC would like to commend KES College members of staff on showing care and responsibility when dealing with student problems of both academic and personal nature.

4.2	Infrastructure / Support	1	2	3	4	5
4.2.1	There are suitable books and reputable journals supporting the program.		X			
4.2.2	There is a supportive internal communication platform.				X	
4.2.3	The facilities are adequate in number and size.			X		
4.2.4	The equipment used in teaching and learning (laboratory and electronic equipment, consumables etc) are quantitatively and qualitatively adequate.			X		
4.2.5	Teaching materials (books, manuals, scientific journals, databases) are adequate and accessible to students.		X			
4.2.6	Teaching materials (books, manuals, scientific journals, databases) are updated regularly with the most recent publications.		X			
4.2.7	The teaching personnel are provided with training opportunities in teaching method, in adult education, and		X			

	in new technologies on the basis of a structured learning framework.					
<p>Justify the answer you have provided and note the additional comments you may have on each standard / indicator.</p> <p>Support is required in investing on more library resources; moreover, staff development initiatives need to be undertaken to better utilize the available resources. The curriculum is outdated and does not address contemporary challenges in the travel and tourism sectors. There are many modules that are generic and/or not contextualized. The student welfare facilities are modern and student-friendly.</p>						
<b>4.3</b>	<b>Financial Resources</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
4.3.1	The management and allocation of the financial resources of the program of study, allow for the development of the program and of the academic / teaching personnel.			X		
4.3.2	The allocation of financial resources as regards to academic matters, is the responsibility of the relevant academic departments.				X	
4.3.3	The remuneration of academic and other personnel is analogous to the remuneration of academic and other personnel of the respective institutions in Cyprus.				X	
4.3.4	Student tuition and fees are consistent to the tuition and fees of other respective institutions.				X	
<p>Justify the answer you have provided and note the additional comments you may have on each standard / indicator.</p> <p>The feasibility study could have been more detailed explicitly providing data on the future cash flow and viability of the Higher Diploma programme.</p>						

**The following criterion applies additionally for distance learning programs of study.**

<b>5.</b>	<b>DISTANCE LEARNING PROGRAMS</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
5.1	Feedback processes for teaching personnel with regards to the evaluation of their teaching work, by the students, are satisfactory.					
5.2	The process and the conditions for the recruitment of academic / teaching personnel, ensure that candidates have the necessary skills and experience for long distance education.					
5.3	Through established procedures, appropriate training, guidance and support, are provided to teaching personnel, to enable it to efficiently support the educational process.					
5.4	Student performance monitoring mechanisms are satisfactory.					
5.5	Adequate mentoring by the teaching personnel, is provided to students, through established procedures.					
5.6	The unimpeded long distance communication between the teaching personnel and the students, is ensured to a satisfactory degree.					
5.7	Assessment consistency, its equivalent application to all students, and the compliance with predefined procedures, are ensured.					
5.8	Teaching materials (books, manuals, scientific journals, databases) comply with the requirements provided by the long distance education methodology and are updated regularly.					
5.9	The program of study has the appropriate and adequate infrastructure for the support of learning.					
5.10	The supporting infrastructures are easily accessible.					
5.11	Students are informed and trained with regards to the available educational infrastructure.					
5.12	The procedures for systematic control and improvement of the supportive services are regular and effective.					

5.13	Infrastructure for distance education is comparable to university infrastructure in the European Union and internationally.					
5.14	Electronic library services are provided according to international practice in order to support the needs of the students and of the teaching personnel.					
5.15	The students and the teaching personnel have access to the necessary electronic sources of information, relevant to the program, the level, and the method of teaching.					
5.16	The percentage of teaching personnel who holds a doctorate, in a program of study which is offered long distance, is not less than 75%.					

Justify the answer you have provided and note the additional comments you may have on each standard / indicator.

If the following apply, note “√” in the appropriate space next to each statement. In case the following statements do not apply, note what is applicable:

The maximum number of students per class-section, should not exceed 30 students.	
The conduct of written examinations with the physical presence of the students, under the supervision of the institution or under the supervision of reliable agencies which operate in the countries of the students, is compulsory.	
The number of long distance classes taught by the academic personnel does not exceed the number of programmes taught by the teaching personnel in conventional programs of study.	



## FINAL REMARKS – SUGGESTIONS

Please note your final remarks and suggestions for the program of study and/or regarding particular aspects of the program.

Overall suggestions for improving the identity, aims, content and target audience of the programme:

### STAFFING

- Academic staff need to further engage in research and knowledge creation in travel and tourism related areas;
- A minimum of one more permanent (i.e. not adjunct) member of staff specialized in travel and/or tourism at PhD level is required to be able to run the programme at an acceptable level subject to adequate student numbers;
- These staff as well as existing staff need to be research active and publish in international academic journals as indicated in the Association Business Schools (ABS) list, for example. Publications by members of academic staff in the areas of travel and tourism should be actively encouraged by KES College;
- Existing staff should be developed to understand the requirements of the travel and tourism industry and contextualise their teaching accordingly;
- Business/Management/Social Science generalists need to be trained to understand in finer details the travel and tourism phenomenon with its global challenges, and incorporate them into their teaching;
- A clear human resources management strategy is required to ensure that sufficient and relevant resources are allocated and recruited to address any possible mismatches between the lecturers' expertise and modules taught.

### PROGRAMME STRUCTURE

The philosophy and narrative of the programme structure should become clearer. Usually, related programmes of study start with generic modules appropriately contextualised and continue with specialised modules in the areas of travel and tourism. Social sciences and other modules (including languages) are also part of the curriculum either as compulsory or electives. Having the above in mind, the following are specifically suggested:

- Generic management modules (such as those related to the Business Management series) should be enriched with travel and tourism-related content and context;
- Generic social sciences modules (such as Introduction to Social Science, Geography and Anthropology of Tourism) should be furthered focused and crystallised in their message. Currently, Introduction to Social Science (Sociology and Psychology) should focus on only one of these two vast disciplines, and on key concepts e.g. travel motivation, tourist behaviour and such like. Similarly, Geography and Anthropology of Tourism should focus on only one of these two vast disciplines, and on key concepts e.g. place identity in tourism, spatial scale in tourism, destination image, and such like.
- While the module “Introduction to Social Science (Sociology and Psychology)” is generic with no contextualised follow-up module in tourism, the “Geography and Anthropology of Tourism” module has no generic predecessor. This apparent inconsistency should be rectified, as explained above. Choosing a single discipline (e.g. only Sociology instead of Psychology or only Geography instead of Anthropology) is imperative to focus on depth rather than width of provided knowledge.
- All modules should modernize content, update reading lists and include travel and tourism journal articles;
- The modules “Communication Skills” and “Computer Basics I”, “Quality Customer Service”, “IT Web Page Design” and “Business Communication” offer almost entirely practical skills. Therefore, they should be either eliminated, merged or delivered in workshop, non-ECTS credit-bearing mode. Further to the proposed shakeup, the freed-up module slots can be filled by new modules explicitly contextualised in travel and tourism, such as “or “Travel and Tourism Management” or “Tourism Marketing”
- It is suggested that “Health, Safety and Security” is renamed to “Food Health, Safety and Security” to better reflect the module content. Moreover, this module should not be compulsory on a Travel and Tourism Management Higher Diploma programme (and certainly not in semester one) but may be offered as an elective in a subsequent semester.
- It is suggested that “Introduction to Economics I” is renamed to “Principles of

Microeconomics in Tourism” and be contextualised accordingly. Another module on “Principles of Macroeconomics in Tourism” may be added in the programme to provide an integrated approach of economics.

- It is suggested that the missing “Business Management II” module (at present there is progression from Business Management I to Business Management III) should be introduced in the curriculum. Alternatively, it is suggested that the “Business Management” title series is abandoned, and proper, content-specific titles are introduced currently appearing only within parentheses, e.g. “Organisational Behaviour”.
- It is suggested that “Applied Principles of Tourism” becomes “Principles of Destination Management” with the module contents focusing accordingly.
- Language modules should be offered in consecutive semesters for pedagogical reasons. Moreover, languages training delivery should be specialized in travel and tourism oral communication and interaction.
- It is suggested that the “European Community Economics” module is deleted from the curriculum as the module content is outdated and/or presupposes extensive knowledge of economics (i.e. advanced trade theory, monetary integration) that is not part of the programme and possibly of limited interest to the students of a travel and tourism programme.
- It is suggested that a module related to cruise industry is added to complement the “Introduction to the Airline Industry” module from a travel management perspective. Moreover, the “Introduction to the Airline Industry” can be renamed “Introduction to the Air Transport Industry” to incorporate developments in the airport and ground handling sectors.
- It is suggested that the “Air Travel Fares and Ticketing” module is enriched with principles of revenue management to move beyond the purely vocational aspects currently taught.
- It is suggested that “Sustainable and Alternative Tourism” is renamed into “Special Interest Tourism” given that neither all forms of alternative tourism are sustainable, nor all forms of mass tourism are unsustainable. Moreover, the special interest tourism embeds alternative tourism to a major degree. “Special Interest Tourism” should then become a compulsory module, whereas “Rural Tourism” can become an elective one and not all students are

expected to show an interest in this.

- It is suggested that the college develops new interdisciplinary, creative and innovative modules such as Wellness Tourism and Tourism & Journalism to capitalise on its existing infrastructure currently used by other programmes of study. Such modules could improve the academic offering of KES College thus shaping a competitive advantage in the marketplace.
- Finally, it is suggested that the module “Introduction to Nutrition and Diet” is shifted to an earlier semester (still as an elective) as it makes little pedagogical sense to offer introductory modules in the last semester of the Higher Diploma.

#### INDUSTRY ENGAGEMENT AND PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE

- A comprehensive programme of guest speakers, industrial visits, practice and placements should be explicitly developed;
- Academics should be seconded to travel and tourism sectors for a period to understand modern challenges and required skills.

#### RECRUITMENT

- A comprehensive feasibility study and a solid recruitment strategy are required;
- The profile of academic staff needs to be better considered from a sectoral (i.e. travel and tourism) point of view.

#### RESOURCES

- More resources are required in the library;
- Staff should be developed to access sector-specific resources.

#### ASSESSMENT

- A comprehensive pedagogic strategy is required to take advantage of modern methodologies to transfer knowledge;
- The opportunity to use real industry engagement as part of assessment should be actively explored;
- Plagiarism detection software should become core to the assessment and severe penalties should be introduced and closely regulated.

**Names and Signatures of the Chair and the Members of the External Evaluation Committee:**

<b>Name:</b>	<b>Signature:</b>
Prof Dr Andreas Papatheodorou	
Prof Dr Dorina – Maria Buda	
Assoc. Prof Dr Wai Mun Lim	
Ms Evdokia Anastasiou	

Date: 27 June 2018