

Cyprus Agency of Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Higher Education

Republic of Cyprus

External Evaluation Report

Program of Study

Institution: KES COLLEGE

District: NICOSIA

Name of the Program of Study in Greek:

ΚΗΠΟΤΕΧΝΙΑ ΚΑΙ ΣΧΕΔΙΑΣΜΟΣ ΚΗΠΟΥ

Name of the Program of Study in English:

GARDENING AND LANDSCAPE DESIGN

Department:

Language/s of instruction: GREEK, ENGLISH

Faculty:

Program Status (check where applicable):

- New Program of Study:
- Currently operation Program of Study:
 - Registered but not evaluated
 - Evaluated and accredited by SEKAP
 - Evaluated by the Cy.Q.A.A. and did not get accreditation

Program Category (check where applicable):

- Conventional
- Distance Learning
- Inter-university (Name of collaborating university/ies)

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|--|-----------|
| Instructions..... | 3 |
| External Evaluation Committee (EEC)..... | 4 |
| Introduction..... | 5 |
| Findings..... | 6 |
| Conclusions and Suggestions of the External Evaluation Committee..... | 12 |
| Document Number: 300.1..... | 13 |

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:

| NAME | TITLE AND RANK | UNIVERSITY / INSTITUTION |
|------------------------------|-----------------------|---|
| Dr. Eckart Lange | Professor, Chair | University of Sheffield, UK |
| Dr. Athanassios Styliadis | Professor | Technological Educational Institute of Eastern Macedonia and Thrace, Greece |
| Dr. Dimitrios Georgakopoulos | Associate Professor | Agricultural University of Athens, Greece |
| Mr. Solonas Solonos | Student member | Cyprus University of Technology |

INTRODUCTION:

I. The External Evaluation procedure

The members of the evaluation and accreditation committee were contacted by the Cyprus agency of quality assurance and accreditation in higher education well in advance of the planned visit to Cyprus. The committee received in advance the following documents and information to evaluate the vocational programme on Gardening and Landscape Design (3 years) at KES College:

- Description of the College
- The general profile of the programme
- The structure of the programme
- The list of modules (courses) including a detailed course description
- A list of the teaching personnel and their curriculum vitae
- A list of research activities and publications, also highlighted as relevant to particular modules
- Information on infrastructure
- Information on quality standards and indicators

The committee was accompanied by an officer of the Agency and visited KES College on January 24, 2019 from 09:00 to 17:00. The meeting with College management representatives, staff and students, took place at the College. The schedule was organized by the Agency and the College. Moreover, the committee visited the infrastructure of the College and was provided with further information on request.

II. The Internal Evaluation procedure

The committee received the detailed internal evaluation report of KES College, which was studied along with all other information provided.

FINDINGS:

1. EFFECTIVENESS OF TEACHING WORK – AVAILABLE RESOURCES

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

The curriculum is organized into 6 semesters of study. Each semester consists of six or seven courses. A course on practical training is included at the end of second and fourth semesters. Most courses are mandatory and there is a small number of elective courses. Semesters 5 and 6 allow for further specialization in landscape design. There is also a compulsory final project in the sixth semester.

The ratio of students/faculty is very favorable for a constructive learning and teaching environment. The organization of the educational process is exemplary.

The infrastructure (including hardware and software) is very good for teaching and training the current number of students and allows for further expansion of the programme. The College provides to the teaching personnel all necessary mechanisms for a creative and effective communication with their students.

The programme is taught in Greek, and all students come from Cyprus. Teaching methodology (including assessment and feedback) and student requirements are at a very good level. Teaching material and methods for this type of vocational education are excellent. The online teaching platform (Moodle) is very good.

Most teaching personnel is employed on a part-time basis. This is acceptable and beneficial in vocational training institutions, as the personnel also maintain professional links with the market. All teaching personnel have University Bachelor's degrees; several also possess post graduate degrees (M.Sc. and Ph.D.).

The College does not own field plots for practical training of students, but there are good connections with local businesses and government agencies. Therefore the needs of practical training are met.

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 labor market and the society**

The programme aims at training young people to become professionals in Gardening and Landscape Design. There is an increasing need for skilled personnel in Gardening and Landscape Design in Cyprus. To our knowledge, this is the only vocational programme in Gardening and Landscape Design in Cyprus. The graduates of the programme have high employability.

The objectives, learning process, assessment methods and learning outcomes of each module are clearly and adequately described and communicated to the students.

The curriculum is well structured as a logical progression of fundamental modules leading to more specific disciplines, in particular in the final 2 semesters of study. The content of the program's modules can be improved in addressing sustainability issues in landscape design more widely (green waste management, water conservation, selection of native, drought tolerant species).

Formalized quality assurance procedures in the College are in place and implemented.

The director of the vocational programme in Gardening and Landscape Design supervises the overall design and execution of the curriculum. He is assisted by a curriculum design and development officer and supervises teaching personnel. The structure of the curriculum, the content and updates of courses are decided in collaboration with the teaching personnel.

The College participates in the EU Erasmus+ programme. This is an extremely positive example for a vocational education institution.

The evaluation and accreditation committee recommends that teaching and administrative staff is encouraged to participate in the Erasmus+ programme.

Over 90% of the graduates find jobs in the first 6 months after graduation. This indicates that the course is well designed for its purpose, addresses the needs of the market for skilled personnel in gardening and landscape design and provides crucial job opportunities to young people.

3. RESEARCH WORK AND SYNERGIES WITH TEACHING

- Research Teaching Synergies

There are ongoing applied research activities at the College involving students, as part of the curriculum. These activities are carried out at the laboratories of the College, at collaborating private enterprises and at government research agencies. This is an unusual activity for a vocational education institution and sets an excellent example to other similar institutions of Cyprus.

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

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

Administrative mechanisms are in place to ensure the successful delivery of the programme in Gardening and Landscape Design. The administrative staff is highly

competent and their number is sufficient in respect to the size of the College and the programme.

The infrastructure of KES College (class room number and size, library, laboratories, commons area, hardware and software) is very good. The dedicated student service office at KES College is very supportive of students' issues and proactively addresses various problems, including the financial situation of students.

The financial resources of the College come exclusively from tuition fees. The allocation of financial resources, as regards to academic matters, is decided by the management, by taking into consideration the needs, demand and application for funding.

5. DISTANCE LEARNING PROGRAMS

Not Applicable

6. DOCTORAL PROGRAMS OF STUDY

Not Applicable

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS OF THE EXTERNAL EVALUATION COMMITTEE¹

The committee was welcomed by an enthusiastic management, staff and students at KES College. The programme under evaluation is unique in Cyprus and aims to cover specific needs of the market with skilled gardening and landscape design personnel. The current number of students is small; this contributes to excellent teaching and training conditions in an already well organized institution. We have not identified any major weaknesses and shortcomings. The committee summarizes their evaluation and recommendation of the KES College 3-year vocational programme in Gardening and Landscape Design as follows:

- The programme of study is very well organized and executed.
- The infrastructure of the College is at a very good level. The College does not own field plots for practical education of the students; however, the College provides access for practical training at private enterprises of the area.
- There is the capacity and potential to admit an increased number of students.
- Quality assurance procedures are well implemented.

¹ 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.

- An international dimension is in place with student exchanges with similar institutions in other countries. This should be extended to mobility of teaching and administrative personnel.
- Sustainability (green waste management, recycling, water reclamation and conservation, selection of native, drought tolerant plants) and climate change topics should be strengthened and become an integral part of the programme.
- The Moodle platform is a very good tool for students and teachers. The College is well aware of the possibilities to further develop applications under this platform.

In conclusion, the evaluation and accreditation committee has formed a very positive impression of KES College and the 3-year programme in Gardening and Landscape Design.

Quality Standards and Indicators

External Evaluation of a Program of Study

Institution: KES COLLEGE

Program of Study: GARDENING AND LANDSCAPE DESIGN

Duration of the Program of Study: 3 YEARS

Evaluation Date: January 26th, 2019

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”.

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. Poor
2. To an unsatisfactory degree
3. To a satisfactory degree
4. Best practice
5. Excellent

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 AND RANK | UNIVERSITY / INSTITUTION |
|------------------------------|---------------------|---|
| Dr. Eckart Lange | Professor, Chair | University of Sheffield, UK |
| Dr. Athanassios Styliadis | Professor | Technological Educational Institute of Eastern Macedonia and Thrace, Greece |
| Dr. Dimitrios Georgakopoulos | Associate Professor | Agricultural University of Athens, Greece |
| Solonas Solonos | Student member | Cyprus University of Technology |

Date and Time of the On-Site Visit: January 24, 2019

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. | | | | √ | |
| 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. | | | | | √ |
| 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: | | | | | √ |
| 1.1.3.1 | The implementation of a specific academic calendar and its timely publication. | | | | | √ |
| 1.1.3.2 | The disclosure of the program's curricula to the students, and their implementation by the teaching personnel | | | | | √ |
| 1.1.3.3 | The course web-pages, updated with the relevant supplementary material | | | | | √ |
| 1.1.3.4 | The procedures for the fulfillment of undergraduate and postgraduate assignments / practical training | | | | | √ |
| 1.1.3.5 | The procedures for the conduct and the format of the examinations and for student assessment | | | | | √ |
| 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. | | | | | √ |
| 1.1.4 | Adequate and modern learning resources, are available to the students, including the following: | | | | √ | |
| 1.1.4.1 | facilities | | | | √ | |
| 1.1.4.2 | library | | | | | √ |
| 1.1.4.3 | infrastructure | | | | √ | |
| 1.1.4.4 | student welfare | | | | | √ |

| | | | | | | | | |
|--|---|--------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|---|
| | 1.1.4.5 | academic mentoring | | | | | | √ |
| 1.1.5 | A policy for regular and effective communication, between the teaching personnel and the students, is applied. | | | | | | | √ |
| 1.1.6 | The teaching personnel, for each course, provide timely and effective feedback to the students. | | | | | | | √ |
| 1.1.7 | Statutory mechanisms, for the support of students and the communication with the teaching personnel, are effective. | | | | | | | √ |
| 1.1.8 | Control mechanisms for student performance are effective. | | | | | | | √ |
| 1.1.9 | Support mechanisms for students with problematic academic performance are effective. | | | | | | | √ |
| 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. | | | | | | √ | |
| 1.1.11 | The program of study applies an effective policy for the prevention and detection of plagiarism. | | | | | | | √ |
| 1.1.12 | The program of study provides satisfactory mechanisms for complaint management and for dispute resolution. | | | | | | | √ |
| <p>The number of students per class is small and the ratio of students/faculty is very favorable for a constructive learning and teaching environment. The organization of the educational process is exemplary: class information, requirements and student evaluation are provided in detail and in advance using ICT technologies.</p> <p>The infrastructure is very good for teaching and training the current number of students. The College provides to the teaching personnel all necessary mechanisms for a creative and effective communication with their students, including policies and practices regarding plagiarism and complaint management.</p> <p>Note, additionally:</p> <p>α) The programme is taught in Greek, therefore all students come from Cyprus β) The maximum planned number of students per class-section is twelve.</p> | | | | | | | | |
| 1.2 | Teaching | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
| 1.2.1 | The methodology utilized in each course is suitable for achieving the course's purpose and objectives and those of the individual modules. | | | | | | | √ |
| 1.2.2 | The methodology of each course is suitable for adults. | | | | | | | √ |

| | | | | | | |
|---|--|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| 1.2.3 | Continuous-formative assessment and feedback are provided to the students regularly. | | | | | √ |
| 1.2.4 | The assessment system and criteria regarding student course performance are clear, adequate, and known to the students. | | | | | √ |
| 1.2.5 | Educational activities which encourage students' active participation in the learning process are implemented. | | | | | √ |
| 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. | | | | | √ |
| 1.2.7 | Teaching materials (books, manuals, journals, databases, and teaching notes) meet the requirements set by the methodology of the program's individual courses, and they are updated regularly. | | | | √ | |
| <p>Teaching methodology (including assessment and feedback) and student requirements are at a very good level. Student class participation is actively encouraged and contributes to the grading process.</p> <p>Teaching material and methods for this type of vocational education are excellent; there are available books, journals and magazines and access to thematic reference databases which are also suitable for higher levels of education. State-of-the-art surveying equipment (e.g. drones, GPS instruments) should be considered.</p> <p>The online teaching platform (Moodle) is excellent. The following issues should be considered: the menu on the welcome page of the platform should not just be about E-learning; it should be redesigned to include personalized student and staff issues for: email, modules, ECTS credits, registration or de-registration procedures, announcements, e-learning functionality, and access to open source software.</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. | | | | | √ |
| 1.3.2 | The members of teaching personnel for each course have the relevant formal and fundamental qualifications for teaching the course, as described by the legislation, including the following: | | | | | √ |

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|--|---|-----|--|--|--|---|---|
| | 1.3.2.1 | Subject specialization, preferably with a doctorate, in the discipline. | | | | | | √ |
| | 1.3.2.2 | Publications within the discipline. | | | | | | √ |
| 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 courses in the program of study. | | | | | | | √ |
| 1.3.5 | In every program of study the Special Teaching Personnel does not exceed 30% of the Teaching Research Personnel. | | | | | | | √ |
| 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. | | | | | | | √ |
| 1.3.7 | In the program of study, the ratio of the number of courses taught by full-time personnel, occupied exclusively at the institution, to the number of courses taught by part-time personnel, ensures the quality of the program of study. | | | | | | √ | |
| 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. | | | | | | | √ |
| 1.3.9 | The academic personnel's teaching load does not limit the conduct of research, writing, and contribution to the society. | | | | | | | √ |
| 1.3.10 | Future redundancies / retirements, expected recruitment and promotions of academic personnel safeguard the unimpeded implementation of the program of study within a five-year span. | | N/A | | | | | |
| 1.3.11 | The program's Coordinator has the qualifications and experience to efficiently coordinate the program of study. | | | | | | | √ |
| <p>Most teaching personnel is employed on a part-time basis. This is acceptable in vocational training institutions, as the personnel also have professional links with the market. Teaching personnel is highly motivated and some of them possess academic qualifications and credentials even for higher levels of education. All teaching personnel have University Bachelor's degrees; several also possess post graduate degrees (M.Sc. and Ph.D.). Moreover, their links to the gardening and landscape design sector in Cyprus are essential in vocational education.</p> | | | | | | | | |

| 2. PROGRAM OF STUDY AND HIGHER EDUCATION QUALIFICATIONS | | | | | | |
|--|--|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| 2.1 | Purpose and Objectives and learning outcomes of the Program of Study | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 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. | | | | | √ |
| 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. | | | | | √ |
| 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. | | | | √ | |
| 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. | | | | | √ |
| 2.1.6 | The learning process is properly designed to achieve the expected learning outcomes. | | | | | √ |
| 2.1.7 | The higher education qualification awarded to the students, corresponds to the purpose and objectives and the learning outcomes of the program. | | | | | √ |
| <p>The objectives, learning process, assessment methods and learning outcomes of each module are clearly and adequately described and communicated to the students. Because of the low number of graduates so far, there is no official Professional Body. The graduates of the programme have high employability.</p> | | | | | | |
| 2.2 | Structure and Content of the Program of Study | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2.2.1 | The course curricula clearly define the expected learning outcomes, the content, the teaching and learning approaches and the method of assessing student performance. | | | | | √ |
| 2.2.2 | The European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) is applied and there is true correspondence between credits and workload per | | | | | √ |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| | course and per semester for the student either he / she studies 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. | | | | | √ |
| 2.2.4 | The higher education qualification awarded, the learning outcomes and the content of the program are consistent. | | | | | √ |
| 2.2.5 | The program, in addition to the courses focusing on the specific discipline, includes an adequate number of general education courses. | | | | | √ |
| 2.2.6 | The content of courses 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. | | | | | √ |
| 2.2.7 | The number and the content of the program's courses are sufficient for the achievement of learning outcomes. | | | | | √ |
| 2.2.8 | The content of the program's courses reflects the latest achievements / developments in science, arts, research and technology. | | | | √ | |
| 2.2.9 | Flexible options / adaptable to the personal needs or to the needs of students with special needs, are provided. | | | | | √ |
| <p>The curriculum is well structured as a logical progression of fundamental modules leading to more specific disciplines, in particular in semesters 5 and 6. The content of the program's modules can be improved in addressing sustainability issues more widely (green waste management, water conservation, selection of native, drought tolerant plants). State-of-the-art surveying equipment (e.g. drones, GPS instruments) should be considered.</p> <p>There are no students studying simultaneously at another academic institution. A good proportion of the students are already active professionally at private enterprises.</p> | | | | | | |
| 2.3 | Quality Assurance of the Program of Study | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2.3.1 | The arrangements regarding the program's quality assurance define clear competencies and procedures. | | | | | √ |
| 2.3.2 | Participation in the processes of the system of quality assurance of the program, is ensured for | | | | | |

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|--|--|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|---|
| | 2.3.2.1 | the members of the academic personnel | | | | | | √ |
| | 2.3.2.2 | the members of the administrative personnel | | | | | | √ |
| | 2.3.2.3 | the students. | | | | | | √ |
| 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. | | | | | | | √ |
| 2.3.4 | The quality assurance process constitutes an academic process and it is not restricted by non-academic factors. | | | | | | | √ |
| Formalized quality assurance procedures in the College are in place and implemented. There is an internal quality committee in the College. At the beginning of the semester the teaching personnel is receiving training in teaching and class management procedures. Student feedback is taken into consideration by the College. | | | | | | | | |
| 2.4 | Management of the Program of Study | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
| 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. | | | | | | | √ |
| 2.4.2 | It is ensured that learning outcomes may be achieved within the specified timeframe. | | | | | | | √ |
| 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. | | | | | | | √ |
| 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. | | | | | | | √ |
| 2.4.5 | Information relating to the program of study are posted publicly and include: | | | | | | | |
| | 2.4.5.1 | The provisions regarding unit credits | | | | | | √ |
| | 2.4.5.2 | The expected learning outcomes | | | | | | √ |
| | 2.4.5.3 | The methodology | | | | | | √ |
| | 2.4.5.4 | Course descriptions | | | | √ | | |
| | 2.4.5.5 | The program's structure | | | | | | √ |
| | 2.4.5.6 | The admission requirements | | | | | | √ |
| | 2.4.5.7 | The format and the procedures for student assessment | | | | | | √ |

| | | | | | | | |
|-------|---|--|--|--|--|--|---|
| 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. | | | | | | √ |
| 2.4.7 | The effectiveness of the program's evaluation mechanism by the students is ensured. | | | | | | √ |
| 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. | | | | | | √ |

Course descriptions on the website are provided in detail in Greek language; there is also some information in English.

The programme has a total of 180 ECTS credits. There is a practical training of 4 weeks duration at the end of the second and fourth semester, each worth 2 ECTS credits. A final project at the end of semester 6 is worth 6 ECTS credits; we recommend increasing the ECTS value of the final project. Students also receive extensive practical training in many modules during the duration of the semester. Practical training is not taking place outside of Cyprus. The ECTS credits of the 4-week practical training could be increased. For students enrolling from another institution with a similar background it is possible to transfer up to 50% of the ECTS credits.

| 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. | | | | | √ |
| 2.5.2 | The program attracts Visiting professors of recognized academic standing. | N/A | | | | |
| 2.5.3 | Students participate in exchange programs. | | | | | √ |
| 2.5.4 | The academic profile of the program of study is compatible with corresponding programs of study in Cyprus and internationally. | | | | | |

It is very unusual to see a vocational training institution to participate in the EU Erasmus+ programme. KES College is an extremely positive example in this respect.

The evaluation and accreditation committee recommends that teaching and administrative staff is encouraged to participate in the Erasmus+ programme.

The programme under evaluation is the only one available in Cyprus and Greece as well.

| 2.6 | Connection with the labor market and the society | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|-----|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | | |

| | | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|---|
| 2.6.1 | The procedures applied, so that the program conforms to the scientific and professional activities of the graduates, are adequate and effective. | | | | | √ |
| 2.6.2 | According to the feasibility study, indicators for the employability of graduates are satisfactory. | | | | | √ |
| 2.6.3 | Benefits for the society, deriving from the program are significant. | | | | | √ |
| <p>The College management informed the evaluation and accreditation committee that over 90% of the graduates find jobs in the first 6 months after graduation. This figure was confirmed through student interviews. The employability facts of the students and graduates of the programme indicate that the course is well designed for its purpose, addresses the needs of the market for skilled personnel in gardening and landscape design and provides crucial job opportunities to young people.</p> | | | | | | |

| 3. RESEARCH WORK AND SYNERGIES WITH TEACHING | | | | | | |
|--|---|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| 3.1 | Research - Teaching Synergies | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3.1.1 | It is ensured that teaching and learning have been adequately enlightened by research. | | | | | √ |
| 3.1.2 | New research results are embodied in the content of the program of study. | | | | | √ |
| 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. | | | | √ | |
| 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. | | | | | √ |
| 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. | N/A | | | | |
| 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. | | | | | √ |
| 3.1.7 | The policy for, indirect or direct, internal funding of the academic personnel's research activity is satisfactory. | | | | | √ |
| 3.1.8 | The participation of students, academic, teaching and administrative personnel of the program in research activities and projects is satisfactory. | | | | | √ |
| 3.1.9 | Student training in the research process is sufficient. | | | | | √ |
| <p>Research culture within the College is actively encouraged by the management and the teaching personnel. Research funding from internal resources through a competitive call allowed the support of three small applied research projects, including the participation of students. Research output has been presented in conference proceedings. Moreover, the output of one project is under review for publication in a peer-reviewed scientific national journal.</p> | | | | | | |

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. | | | | | √ |
| 4.1.2 | Statutory administrative mechanisms for monitoring and supporting students are sufficient. | | | | | √ |
| 4.1.3 | The efficiency of these mechanisms is assessed on the basis of specific criteria. | | | | | √ |
| <p>There is a dedicated student service at KES College. The student service is very supportive of students' issues and proactively addresses various problems, including the financial situation of students.</p> | | | | | | |
| 4.2 | Infrastructure / Support | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4.2.1 | There are suitable books and reputable journals supporting the program. | | | | | √ |
| 4.2.2 | There is a supportive internal communication platform. | | | | | √ |
| 4.2.3 | The facilities are adequate in number and size. | | | | √ | |
| 4.2.4 | The equipment used in teaching and learning (laboratory and electronic equipment, consumables, etc.) are quantitatively and qualitatively adequate. | | | | √ | |
| 4.2.5 | Teaching materials (books, manuals, scientific journals, databases) are adequate and accessible to students. | | | | | √ |
| 4.2.6 | Teaching materials (books, manuals, scientific journals, databases) are updated regularly with the most recent publications. | | | | | √ |
| 4.2.7 | The teaching personnel are provided with training opportunities in teaching method, in adult education, and in new technologies on the basis of a structured learning framework. | | | | | √ |

The available books, journals, magazines and electronic databases are up-to-date and adequate even for a higher level of education. College laboratories are well equipped with instruments and the necessary consumables are available. Equipment for field work (e.g. surveying technologies) should be considered. Training and orientation of teaching personnel occurs regularly prior to the beginning of each semester.

| 4.3 | Financial Resources | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|------------|--|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| 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. | | | | | √ |
| 4.3.2 | The allocation of financial resources as regards to academic matters is the responsibility of the relevant academic departments. | N/A | | | | |
| 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. | | | | | √ |
| 4.3.4 | Student tuition and fees are consistent to the tuition and fees of other respective institutions. | | | | | √ |

The College adequately supports provision of teaching. The allocation of financial resources as regards to academic matters is decided by the management considering the need, demand and application for funding. The opinion and recommendations of the teaching staff are taken into consideration. The salaries of all personnel, as well as the tuition fees are in line with the local market.

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

NOT APPLICABLE

| 5. | DISTANCE LEARNING PROGRAMS | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|------|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 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 courses taught by the teaching personnel in conventional programs of study. | |

The following criterion applies additionally for doctoral programs of study.

NOT APPLICABLE

| 6. | DOCTORAL PROGRAMS OF STUDY | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|-----|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 6.1 | The provision of quality doctoral studies is ensured through Doctoral Studies Regulations. | | | | | |
| 6.2 | The structure and the content of a doctoral program of study are satisfactory and they ensure the quality provision of doctoral studies. | | | | | |
| 6.3 | The number of academic personnel, which is going to support the doctoral program of study, is adequate. | | | | | |
| 6.4 | The doctoral studies' supervisors have the necessary academic qualifications and experience for the supervision of the specific dissertations. | | | | | |
| 6.5 | The degree of accessibility of all interested parties to the Doctoral Studies Regulations is satisfactory. | | | | | |
| 6.6 | The number of doctoral students, under the supervision of a member of the academic personnel, is apt for the continuous and effective feedback provided to the students and it complies with the European and international standards. | | | | | |
| 6.7 | The research interests of academic advisors and supervisors are satisfactory and they adequately cover the thematic areas of research conducted by the doctoral students of the program. | | | | | |

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

Note the number of doctoral students under the supervision of each member of the academic personnel of the program and the academic rank of the supervisor.

FINAL REMARKS – SUGGESTIONS

The evaluation and accreditation committee summarizes their evaluation and recommendation of the KES College 3-year vocational programme in Gardening and Landscape Design:

- The programme of study is very well organized and executed.
- A final project at the end of semester 6 is worth 6 ECTS credits; we recommend increasing the ECTS value of the final project.
- The infrastructure of the College is at a very good level. The College does not own field plots for practical education of the students; however, the College provides access for practical training at private enterprises of the area. State-of-the-art surveying equipment (e.g. drones, GPS instruments) should be considered.
- Quality assurance procedures are well implemented.
- An international dimension is in place with student exchanges with similar institutions in other countries. This should be extended to mobility of teaching and administrative personnel.
- Sustainability (green waste management, recycling, water reclamation and conservation, selection of native, drought tolerant plants) and climate change topics should be strengthened and become an integral part of the programme.
- The Moodle platform is a very good tool for students and teachers. The College is well aware of the possibilities to further develop applications under this platform.
- In conclusion, the evaluation and accreditation committee has a very positive impression of KES College and the 3-year programme in Gardening and Landscape Design.

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

| Name: | Signature: |
|--------------------------------|------------|
| Prof. Eckart Lange | |
| Prof. Athanassios Styliadis | |
| Prof. Dimitrios Georgakopoulos | |
| Mr. Solonas Solonos | |

Date: January 26, 2019



300_1_1_external_evaluation_report_en.docx/Epl