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Date: 10/10/2025

External Evaluation Report

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

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

- **Town:** Limassol

- **School/Faculty (if applicable):** N/A

- **Department/ Sector:** N/A

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

In Greek:

Βιολογικές Κηπευτικές Καλλιέργειες (2 έτη / 120 ECTS)

In English:

Organic Horticultural Crops (2 years / 120 ECTS)

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

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

- **Concentrations (if any):**

In Greek: Concentrations

In English: Concentrations



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

A. Introduction

This part includes basic information regarding the onsite visit.

On behalf of the Cyprus Agency of Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Higher Education, we, the panel of the External Evaluation Committee (hereafter referred to as the EEC), met physically on Friday, 10th October 2025, to evaluate the full application of Public School of Higher Vocational Education and Training – MIEEK, Limassol and Paphos branches, for the provision of a Degree in Organic Horticultural Crops. We adhered to the preset agenda except of the last issue on the preset agenda, where the visit to the premises of Paphos was done through a video-streamed session; and we conducted our meeting at the premises of MIEEK at Limassol with the Head of the Institution, members of the Internal Evaluation Committee (IEC), heads of relevant departments, the Programme Coordinator, faculty members, students and administrative staff. The EEC had the opportunity to tour the College's facilities. As a committee, we reviewed the application documents submitted both individually and collectively to gain a thorough understanding of the programme under review. Additionally, the committee met before and after the evaluation to ensure the objectivity of our decisions. We suggested changes to the Organic Horticultural Crops programme; MIEEK Limassol reviewed some of the recommendations and conditions, taking into account our initial discussions. The committee is pleased to have conducted a comprehensive review of the programme and is impressed by the dedication, enthusiasm, and positive feedback from all involved. In the following sections, we have further detailed the aspects of the evaluation process we followed to reach our conclusions and recommendations.

The site visit took place according to the following schedule:

09:30 – 09:40: A brief introduction of the members of the External Evaluation Committee

09:40 – 09:55: A meeting of the EEC with the members of the Internal Evaluation Committee

Dr E. Margadjis, General Manager MIEEK*

K. Kyriakou, Coordinator MIEEK

P. Zacharoplastis, Quality Assurance Officer MIEEK

A. Kleanthous, Manager MIEEK Limassol

G. Nicolaou, Manager MIEEK

Paphou M. Chatzieftychiou, Manager MIEEK Avgorou

M. Spanos, MIEEK Program Coordinator

D. Kouklos Assistant Manager MIEEK Limassol

Dr. K. Konstantinou, Assistant Manager MIEEK Paphos

P. Loullis, Assistant Manager MIEEK Avgorou

A. Vasiliou, Coordinator IT technologies MIEEK / Assistant Manager MIEEK Nicosia

Dr. A. Christophorou, Coordinator IT technologies MIEEK Limassol, Paphos

9:55 – 10:25: A meeting with the Head(s) of the relevant department and the Coordinator(s) of the programme (Limassol branch)

A. Kleanthous, Manager MIEEK Limassol

D. Kouklos, Assistant Manager MIEEK Limassol

10:25 – 10:55: A meeting with the Head(s) of the relevant department and the Coordinator(s) of the programme (Paphos branch)

G. Nicolaou Manager MIEEK Paphos

Dr. K. Konstantinou Assistant Manager MIEEK Paphos

10:55 - 11:10: Coffee Break

11:10 – 12:20: A meeting of the EEC with the Head(s) of the relevant department and the Coordination Committee of the programme

M. Spanos MIEEK Program Coordinator
Loukas Solomou, Limassol Program Coordinator
Chrysis Kaponas, Paphos Program Coordinator

12:20 – 12:30: A meeting of the EEC with members from the Administrative Staff

A. Kleanthous, Manager MIEEK Limassol
D. Kouklos, Assistant Manager MIEEK Limassol
Maria Psara, Secretary MIEEK Limassol *
G. Nicolaou, Manager MIEEK Paphos
Dr. K. Konstantinou, Assistant Manager MIEEK Paphos
Dr. A. Christophorou, Coordinator IT technologies MIEEK Limassol, Paphos

12:30 – 13:00: A visit to the institution's premises at the Limassol branch

A. Kleanthous, Manager MIEEK Limassol
D. Kouklos, Assistant Manager MIEEK Limassol
M. Spanos, MIEEK Program Coordinator
Loukas Solomou, Limassol Program Coordinator
P. Zacharoplastis, Quality Assurance Officer MIEEK

13:00 – 13:20: A video-streamed visit to the institution's premises at the Paphos branch

Chrysis Kaponas Paphos Program Coordinator

13:20 – 14:20: Lunch Break

14:20 – 15:20: A meeting of the EEC with members of the teaching staff

Georgios Karaiskakis, Instructor Agriculture General *
Aegli Georgiadou, Instructor Horticulture, viticulture
Stavros Georgiou, Instructor Agriculture, Biotechnology
Zacharias Zacharia, Instructor Electrical & Computer engineering
Maria Neofytou, Instructor English Terminology
Konstantinos Konstantinou, Instructor Agriculture, Organic Crops
Mathaios Akoysiotis, Instructor Mechanical Engineering *
Kyriakos Georgiou, Instructor Computer engineering *
Stelios Georgiou, Instructor Electronics
Athanasios Zervas, Instructor English Terminology
Stavros Hadjievagorou, Instructor Electrical engineering *

15:20 – 16:00: A meeting of the EEC with students and graduates

Nikolaos Nisiforou Graduate
Giannos Soteriou, Graduate
Sophia Chadjicharalambous, Graduate
Ilias Televantos, Graduate
Anthousa Charalambous, Second year student

Christos Savva, Second year student
Ioanna Anastasiou, Second year student
Demetris Tsaeras, Second year student
Elena Charalampous, First year student
Marina Iordanou, First year student
Andreas Panagiotou, First year student
Demetris Makarounas, First year student
Christoforos Kakoulis, First year student

16:00 – 16:50: A meeting of the EEC with External Stakeholders

Dr. Iakovos Pantelides, Assistant professor Plant pathogen interaction Cyprus University of Technology
Menelaos Papageorgis, Organic Farmer

16:50 – 17:05: Coffee Break

17:05 – 17:30: Exit Discussion

A. Kleanthous, Manager MIEEK Limassol
P. Zacharoplastis, Quality Assurance Officer MIEEK
Dr. K. Konstantinou, Assistant Manager MIEEK Paphos
D. Kouklos, Assistant Manager MIEEK Limassol
M. Spanos, MIEEK Program Coordinator
Loukas Solomou, Limassol Program Coordinator
Chrysis Kaponas, Paphos Program Coordinator

* not present in the meeting

B. External Evaluation Committee (EEC)

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>University</i>
Weih Martin	Professor of Plant Ecology and Ecophysiology of Agricultural Crops	Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences (SLU), Uppsala, Sweden
Cannon Nicola	Professor of Agriculture	Royal Agricultural University, United Kingdom
Tsiamis George	Professor of Environmental Microbiology	University of Patras, Greece
Ioannis Onoufriou	Student	Cyprus University of Technology

C. Guidelines on content and structure of the report

- *The external evaluation report follows the structure of assessment areas.*
- *At the beginning of each assessment area there is a box presenting:*
 - (a) sub-areas*
 - (b) standards which are relevant to the European Standards and Guidelines (ESG)*
 - (c) some questions that EEC may find useful.*
- *The questions aim at facilitating the understanding of each assessment area and at illustrating the range of topics covered by the standards.*
- *Under each assessment area, it is important to provide information regarding the compliance with the requirements of each sub-area. In particular, the following must be included:*

Findings

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

Strengths

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

Areas of improvement and recommendations

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

- *The EEC should state the compliance for each sub-area (Non-compliant, Partially compliant, Compliant), which must be in agreement with everything stated in the report. It is pointed out that, in the case of standards that cannot be applied due to the status of the HEI and/or of the programme of study, N/A (= Not Applicable) should be noted.*
- *The EEC should state the conclusions and final remarks regarding the programme of study as a whole.*
- *The report may also address other issues which the EEC finds relevant.*

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

Sub-areas

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

1.1 Policy for quality assurance

Standards

- *Policy for quality assurance of the programme of study:*
 - *is a part of the strategic management of the program.*
 - *focuses on the achievement of special goals related to the quality assurance of the study program.*
 - *has a formal status and is publicly available*
 - *supports the organisation of the quality assurance system through appropriate structures, regulations and processes*
 - *supports teaching, administrative staff and students to take on their responsibilities in quality assurance*
 - *ensures academic integrity and freedom and is vigilant against academic fraud*
 - *guards against intolerance of any kind or discrimination against the students or staff*
 - *supports the involvement of external stakeholders*
 - *is developed with input from industry leaders and other stakeholders (i.e. industry leaders, professional bodies/associations, social partners, NGO's, governmental agencies) to align with professional standards.*
 - *integrates employer surveys to adapt to evolving workplace demands.*
 - *regularly utilizes alumni feedback for long-term effectiveness assessment.*
 - *is published and implemented by all stakeholders.*

1.2 Design, approval, on-going monitoring and review

Standards

- *The programme of study:*
 - *is designed with overall programme objectives that are in line with the institutional strategy and have explicit intended learning outcomes*
 - *Aligns course learning outcomes with student assessments using rubrics to ensure objectives are met.*

- *Connects each course's aims and objectives with the programme's overall aims and objectives through mapping, aligning with the institutional strategy.*
- *is designed by involving students and other stakeholders*
- *benefits from external expertise*
- *reflects the four purposes of higher education of the Council of Europe (preparation for sustainable employment, personal development, preparation for life as active citizens in democratic societies, the development and maintenance, through teaching, learning and research, of a broad, advanced knowledge base)*
- *is designed so that it enables smooth student progression*
- *is designed so that the exams' and assignments' content corresponds to the level of the programme and the number of ECTS*
- *defines the expected student workload in ECTS*
- *includes well-structured placement opportunities where appropriate*
- *is subject to a formal institutional approval process*
- *results in a qualification that is clearly specified and communicated, and refers to the correct level of the National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education and, consequently, to the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area*
- *is regularly monitored in the light of the latest research in the given discipline, thus ensuring that the programme is up-to-date*
- *is periodically reviewed so that it takes into account the changing needs of society, the students' workload, progression and completion, the effectiveness of procedures for assessment of students, student expectations, needs and satisfaction in relation to the programme*
- *is reviewed and revised regularly involving students and other stakeholders*
 - *collaborates with industry experts for curriculum development.*
 - *conducts joint reviews with external academic specialists to maintain academic rigor.*
 - *performs periodic assessments with external stakeholders to ensure continuous alignment with market needs.*
 - *establishes collaboration with international educational institutions or/& other relevant international bodies for a global perspective.*
 - *conducts regular feedback sessions with local community leaders for societal relevance.*

1.3 Public information

Standards

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

- *pass rates*
- *learning opportunities available to the students*
- *graduate employment information*

In addition, the program has established mechanisms of transparency & communication to ensure that

- Professional bodies validate program descriptions and outcomes.
- Community leaders actively participate in ensuring that the program's public information is relevant and resonates with the local and societal context.
- External auditors review public information for accuracy & consistency vis-à-vis the actual implementation of the program.
- Industry-specific & societal information is regularly updated with expert inputs.
- Alumni testimonials are included for a realistic portrayal of program outcomes.

1.4 Information management

Standards

- *Information for the effective management of the programme of study is collected, monitored and analysed using specific indicators and data i.e:*
 - *key performance indicators*
 - *profile of the student population*
 - *student progression, success and drop-out rates*
 - *students' satisfaction with their programmes*
 - *learning resources and student support available*
 - *career paths of graduates*
 - *industry trend analysis.*
 - *feedback mechanisms from external partners/stakeholders*
 - *data exchanges with professional networks*
 - *employer insights concerning career readiness*
- *Students and staff are involved in providing and analysing information and planning follow-up activities.*

Findings

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

Based on the application documentation, the on-site visit, and extensive discussions with staff, students, and administrators, the Diploma programme meets the needs of the industry and addresses demand for this profession in Cyprus. The institution has experience in providing relevant studies. The programme's purpose, objectives, and goals were presented. The degree's knowledge, Skills, and Competences are presented in detail. However, there is no clear distinction between the theoretical and practical lessons.

1.1 Policy for quality assurance

In discussions with management, the EEC noted that whilst the programme has quality assurance procedures in place, the organisational structure is not as comprehensive as would be expected. The quality assurance framework includes both Central and Local Committees. Whilst the participation and membership of Central Committees are clearly defined, the composition and membership of Local Committees lack clarity and require further specification. The following procedures are in place for the study programme:

- Executive Committee
- Faculty and Administrative Committee
- Disciplinary Committee
- Programme Coordinator
- Student Affairs Committee
- Internal Quality Assurance Committee
- Programmes Committee
- Erasmus Committee

The institution should provide a comprehensive list of all committees, distinguishing between Central and Local Committees, together with their respective members, ensuring that there is no conflict of interest between the members.

1.2 Design, approval, ongoing monitoring and review

The programme and subject design meet the basic skills, competencies, and knowledge required for graduates to enter the profession.

- The overall programme objectives reflect expected learning outcomes at diploma level. However, the wording of some programme and course learning outcomes could be rephrased to better reflect the practical application and competences expected at this qualification level.
- The programme provides diploma-level knowledge of the subject. It includes elements that offer background knowledge and some of the skills required for the profession.
- The institution has some external partners from the industry, though the mechanisms for ensuring student employment opportunities could be strengthened—as noted in student discussions. The department organises occasional events to enhance student experience.
- The institution acknowledges challenges regarding limited research outputs and the absence of a dedicated Research Committee. Without a formal research structure, opportunities for promoting research initiatives remain limited.

1.3 Public information

The EEC committee has reviewed the relevant course information, and basic details are published on the website. The selection criteria, learning outcomes, and qualifications awarded are available. More specifically, the following are published:

- *selection criteria*
- *learning outcomes*
- *qualification awarded*
- *teaching, learning and assessment procedures*
- *pass rates*

- *learning opportunities available to students*

The programme's purpose and objectives are outlined on the website. The programme aims to provide students with foundational understanding of the sector, preparing them for employment opportunities in the field.

1.4 Information management

Information related to the management of the programme was adequate, although there is room for improvement. Students and staff are provided with some opportunities to participate in providing and analysing information. The institution demonstrated basic processes for monitoring student progression and success, as well as student satisfaction with the programme. Access to library resources is available, including a link to EBSCO that enables students to access electronic resources remotely. It is highly recommended to establish links with additional scientific databases (such as Elsevier, Wiley, etc.) and to develop more robust management information systems.

Strengths

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

- The College maintains connections with industry and is continuing to strengthen links with professional bodies.
- The College supports students' professional development and introduces them to the farming industry, prioritising opportunities for professional growth.
- Quality assurance processes are established in line with other programmes.
- Academic staff provide communication with students and ample opportunities for discussion.
- The College has invested in improving the electronic platform for students, administration, and assessment.
- There is strong evidence of emphasis on training and development.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

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

1. The College should undertake a comprehensive review of the course descriptions to indicate the Theoretical and Practical parts of each course with the respective lessons. Additionally, the references for each course should be thoroughly updated to ensure they include current and relevant academic sources.
2. The space allocated for field practicals is rather restricted. Considerable effort should be made to expand these facilities to accommodate the practical training needs of the programme.
3. There are no dedicated teaching laboratories for subjects such as entomology and soil chemistry, which significantly limits the practical learning opportunities for students. This is a considerable deficiency that should be addressed and improved as soon as possible to ensure students receive proper laboratory training.

4. Library facilities should be substantially improved to better support student learning and research. This includes expanding the physical collection, enhancing study spaces, and increasing access to electronic resources and databases.
5. A greater number of teaching staff members should be encouraged and supported to actively engage in research activities. This would not only enhance the academic profile of the programme but would also ensure that teaching is informed by current research and developments in the field.
6. The composition and membership of the Local Committees lack clarity and should be clearly defined and made accessible on the programme's website.

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

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

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

Sub-areas

- 2.1 Process of teaching and learning and student-centred teaching methodology**
- 2.2 Practical training**
- 2.3 Student assessment**

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

Standards

- *The process of teaching and learning supports students' individual and social development.*
- *The process of teaching and learning is flexible, considers different modes of delivery, where appropriate, uses a variety of pedagogical methods and facilitates the achievement of planned learning outcomes.*
- *Students are encouraged to take an active role in creating the learning process.*
- *The implementation of student-centered learning and teaching encourages a sense of autonomy in the learner, while ensuring adequate guidance and support from the teacher.*
- *Teaching methods, tools and material used in teaching are modern, effective, support the use of modern educational technologies and are regularly updated.*
- *Mutual respect within the learner-teacher relationship is promoted.*
- *The implementation of student-centred learning and teaching respects and attends to the diversity of students and their needs, enabling flexible learning paths.*
- *Appropriate procedures for dealing with students' complaints regarding the process of teaching and learning are set.*
- *Detailed schedules in course materials are included, explicitly stating the expected hours for lectures, self-study, and group projects, ensuring transparency in time allocation.*
- *A system is integrated where each learning activity is assigned a weight proportional to its importance and time requirement, aiding in balanced curriculum design.*

2.2 Practical training

Standards

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

- *The expected hours for different components of practical training, such as lab work, fieldwork, and internships are clearly documented in the training manuals*
- *A weighting system is applied to various practical training elements, reflecting their significance in the overall learning outcomes and student workload.*

2.3 Student assessment

Standards

- *Assessment is consistent, fairly applied to all students and carried out in accordance with the stated procedures.*
- *Assessment is appropriate, transparent, objective and supports the development of the learner.*
- *The criteria for the method of assessment, as well as criteria for marking, are published in advance.*
- *Assessment allows students to demonstrate the extent to which the intended learning outcomes have been achieved. Students are given feedback, which, if necessary, is linked to advice on the learning process.*
- *Assessment, where possible, is carried out by more than one examiner.*
- *A formal procedure for student appeals is in place.*
- *Assessors are familiar with existing testing and examination methods and receive support in developing their own skills in this field.*
- *The regulations for assessment take into account mitigating circumstances.*
 - *The time allocation for each assessment task is explicitly stated in course outlines, ensuring students are aware of the expected workload.*
 - *A balanced assessment weighting strategy is implemented, considering the complexity and learning objectives of each task, to ensure fair evaluation of student performance.*

Findings

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

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

MIEET (Limassol branch) has a dedicated space within the technical school for staff offices, social space and growing area, but shares teaching, computer lab and library facilities. The staff occupy this space during the operational hours of MIEET and the students can access the staff and facilities as required. The outdoor space to deliver practical skills sessions is currently very small but is in the process of developing some further land.

Programme-Specific Materials: Course specification needs to improve the quality of the learning outcomes and align these to Bloom taxonomy by incorporating appropriate verbs for the level of study and to change the learning outcomes to intended learning outcomes (ILOs). It is recommended that 3-6 ILOs are developed per course and move away from the current format. It

would also be worthwhile considering aligning the course content to the ILOs and then detail in the assessment section how each ILO is assessed. The course content is partly inconsistent in presentation between the course specifications and it is recommended that a week-by-week table is incorporated with theoretical and practical class details to improve the structure of the course specific delivery. The reading lists are slightly outdated and should be updated annually.

2.2 Practical training

Library Resources: The library resources were very small and locked away and there were only a couple of books visible. The students did not complain about the reading resources but enhancing these resources could help develop student centred learning and teaching.

Learning Environment: Lecture rooms are shared with the technical school and used in the evening as teaching occurs between 5-9 p.m. The classroom facilities are adequate to meet the teaching requirements of the diploma. The greenhouse is very small and the students expressed the need for an increased growing, more machinery and a crop storage area. There are no laboratory facilities available to the students and just 2 microscopes. The students would benefit from enhanced facilities to further investigate crop growth and development.

The external stakeholders group demonstrated access to a wider learning environment which helps students gain exposure to a wider range of farms and laboratory facilities through neighboring farms and the Natural Resources and Environment department at Cyprus University of Technology.

2.3 Student assessment

The assessment proportioning of marks should be evaluated to make sure it is representative of the work required and the ILOs assessed. The assessment section should be far more specific about the number and type of assessments in the section 'written assignments, reports, tests' (note, the exact wording varies course to course). It would help the students plan their workload if they know the deadlines for assessments and therefore the assessment dates should be included, ideally in table for clarity. Adopting an improved assessment brief will help ensure assessment briefs are clear and that the learner understands the assessment requirements. It is recommended that all assessment briefs, tests, practicals etc are moderated before they are released to the student to ensure clarity and avoid biasing assessments towards particular students' preferences. Assessments are currently submitted through Turnitin to allow for plagiarism detection. An improved process of mark moderation should be implemented to improve equality and help spread methods of best practice.

There are appropriate procedures in place for the student appeals procedure. The processes in place for mitigating circumstances seem poorly understood and has the potential to be confusing. Currently retake opportunities are 2 weeks after the first sit opportunity and could be deemed problematic if the student was suffering from mitigating circumstances at the time of assessment.

Strengths

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

- Practical facilities are very close to the classrooms enabling a quick transition between teaching environments to help maintain student engagement.

- A dedicated and enthusiastic team of teaching staff with a broad range of skills to help cover the scope of the curriculum.
- An engaged group of students who are keen to learn and develop skills.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

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

1. Learning Outcomes (ILOs)

Revise current learning outcomes to **intended learning outcomes (ILOs)**, ensuring clarity and measurability.

Align ILOs with [Bloom's Taxonomy](#), using appropriate action verbs that reflect the level of study.

Standardise the number of ILOs per course to **3–6 well-defined outcomes**.

Ensure that course content and assessments are **explicitly mapped to ILOs**, demonstrating how each outcome is achieved and evaluated.

2. Course Content Structure

Introduce a **week-by-week teaching plan** in each course specification, clearly outlining:

Theoretical sessions, practical sessions, key learning activities

Standardise the **presentation format** of course content across all specifications to ensure consistency and clarity.

3. Student Assessment Design and Transparency

Review the **weighting and proportioning of marks** to ensure fairness, workload balance, and alignment with ILOs.

Provide **specific details** on the number, type, and format of assessments (e.g., written assignments, reports, tests, projects).

Include an **assessment schedule** (ideally in table format) with deadlines and submission dates to help students plan their workload effectively.

Moderate assessment briefs and marked work.

4. Learning Resources and Bibliography

There are currently no laboratory facilities available to the students and just 2 microscopes. The students would benefit from enhanced laboratory facilities to further investigate crop growth and development. Update and expand the **reading lists** to include more **recent reliable sources**.

Enrichment of the organic horticulture/farming section of the library is highly recommended to enable students to have access to newly published books, articles and reports.

5. Resubmission/retake procedures

The resubmission procedure needs to be more clearly defined taking care to ensure that it is fair and reasonable to students suffering challenges.

6. Consider renaming some of the courses to make them more attractive to students.

Overall, a training session/workshop should be delivered to all teaching staff with guidance on improving these aspects of student assessment, resubmission/retake and course specifications.

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

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

3. Teaching staff (ESG 1.5)

Sub-areas

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

3.1 Teaching staff recruitment and development

Standards

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

3.2 Teaching staff number and status

Standards

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

3.3 Synergies of teaching and research

Standards

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

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

Findings

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

3.1 Teaching staff recruitment and development

The recruitment and employment of teaching staff members is conducted and managed through the formal processes established by the Ministry of Agriculture, which oversees the appointment procedures and determines the staffing requirements for the institution.

3.2 Teaching staff number and status

Following a comprehensive evaluation of the 12 members of teaching staff currently employed at the institution, an examination of the highest academic qualification obtained by each individual member of staff revealed the following distribution: 3 members of staff hold a Bachelor's degree as their highest qualification, 8 members of staff hold Master's degrees, and 1 member of staff holds a PhDs. With regard to employment status, all of the teaching staff members at the Limassol campus are employed on a full-time basis, and there are no part-time staff members currently employed within the department. In terms of employment security and contractual arrangements, 60 % of the teaching staff are permanent members of staff with ongoing contracts, whilst the remaining 40 % are pool staff members drawn from the registry maintained by the Ministry of Education, who may be employed on a more temporary or rotating basis.

3.3 Synergies of teaching and research

There is no research conducted at MIEEK and the students are not exposed to formal research activities however the PhD qualified staff is research active and has use this to inform her teaching.

Strengths

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

- The institution benefits from a robust and transparent recruitment process that is administered through the Ministry of Education, which ensures fairness, impartiality, transparency in appointments, and full alignment with established European standards and best practices in academic staff recruitment.
- The teaching staff are qualified professionals, with all members holding academic qualifications at Master's level or above, and the department benefits from the presence of a PhD holder who bring advanced research expertise and scholarly perspective to their teaching.
- The staffing structure demonstrates a balanced and effective mix of permanent staff members who provide continuity and institutional knowledge, alongside pool staff who bring fresh perspectives and flexibility to the department's teaching capacity.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

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

1. Substantially increase the number of staff members holding a PhD qualification to further strengthen and expand research opportunities, enhance the quality of research-informed teaching practices, and ensure that students benefit from exposure to advanced scholarly expertise and contemporary research developments in organic agricultural production.
2. Significantly increase and diversify training opportunities for both new and existing staff members to enhance their knowledge base and skill sets, to ensure they remain up to date with current and emerging pedagogical approaches, and to develop their subject-relevant academic skills in line with contemporary developments in organic agriculture and educational best practices.

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

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

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

Sub-areas

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

4.1 Student admission, processes and criteria

Standards

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

4.2 Student progression

Standards

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

4.3 Student recognition

Standards

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

4.4 Student certification

Standards

- *Pre-defined and published regulations regarding student certification are in place.*
- *Students receive certification explaining the qualification gained, including achieved learning outcomes and the context, level, content and status of the studies that were pursued and successfully completed.*

Findings

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

4.1. Student admission

The student admission requirements are publicly available, effective, and ensure the institution admits qualified students. These include academic qualifications—such as grades and standardized test scores—and non-academic criteria, such as extracurricular activities and community service.

4.2. Student progression

The Secretariat maintains comprehensive digital records of academic performance for current students and graduates. This data enables effective trend analysis and supports informed programme-related decisions. Students must achieve a passing grade of 50 % to progress through the programme.

The programme provides academic support and resources to help students navigate challenges during their studies. Students benefit from regular meetings with the programme coordinator and course leaders for advising and counselling. These sessions offer valuable feedback on academic performance and practical guidance on achieving goals.

The organisation has established effective committees to facilitate communication and collaboration. The Programme Committee actively discusses programme content, delivery, and issues raised by students and staff. All committee discussions and actions are thoroughly recorded for review and analysis.

4.3. Student recognition

This programme is equivalent to level 5b education in the European system. It comprises four semesters of full-time study with 14 weeks of teaching per semester, including final examinations. Students earn 120 ECTS credits, which are fully transferable to other institutions within the European Union. The programme successfully combines theoretical and practical courses, with valuable opportunities for research and internships. The pass grade is 50 %. The EEC notes a concern regarding the absence of incentives or recognition mechanisms for high-achieving students, particularly those in the top 5 % of academic performance or the awarding of levels of study e.g. pass, merit and distinction. This lack of motivation and reward for excellence may hinder the

development of a culture that encourages and celebrates outstanding achievement amongst the most capable students.

4.4. Student certification

The institution has established and published clear regulations governing student certification. These regulations provide comprehensive guidelines and ensure fair, consistent evaluation of all students. The regulations are regularly reviewed and updated to remain current and relevant to student needs. The institution demonstrates strong commitment to providing a high-quality, rigorous certification process for all students.

Strengths

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

The institution has developed robust admission procedures that successfully attract candidates through well-structured selection criteria. These criteria encompass academic achievement, engagement in activities beyond the classroom, contributions to the wider community, and individual qualities that demonstrate potential for success. The college has implemented comprehensive systems for tracking how students advance through their studies. These include analysing academic records to pinpoint challenges early, followed by targeted teaching strategies to address specific difficulties. Furthermore, the institution has created channels for gathering insights from both students and teaching staff, which inform ongoing enhancements to monitoring approaches. This ensures that students facing obstacles receive appropriate assistance whilst all learners maintain steady movement towards completing their academic objectives.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

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

1. The institution should consider introducing recognition schemes for students who achieve outstanding results throughout their studies. This approach can encourage greater effort, strengthen involvement in coursework, and raise overall standards. Recognition could take various forms: certificates, medals, scholarships, or acknowledgement at formal gatherings. Celebrating students' commitment and accomplishments helps build an environment where high achievement becomes part of the institutional culture.
2. Additionally, the institution might benefit from offering students the opportunity to retake certain modules to enhance their results. Permitting students to select two or three courses at the conclusion of the spring semester for re-examination would provide a pathway to achieve better outcomes. This approach demonstrates confidence in students' ability to progress and encourages a mindset focused on growth and achievement.

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

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

5. Learning resources and student support (ESG 1.6)

Sub-areas

- 5.1 Teaching and Learning resources
- 5.2 Physical resources
- 5.3 Human support resources
- 5.4 Student support

5.1 Teaching and Learning resources

Standards

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

5.2 Physical resources

Standards

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

5.3 Human support resources

Standards

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

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

5.4 Student support

Standards

- *Student support is provided covering the needs of a diverse student population, such as mature, part-time, employed and international students and students with special needs.*
- *Students are informed about the services available to them.*
- *Student-centred learning and flexible modes of learning and teaching, are taken into account when allocating, planning and providing student support.*
- *Students' mobility within and across higher education systems is encouraged and supported.*
- *Students receive support in research-led teaching through engagement in research projects, mentorship from research-active faculty, and access to resources that enhance their research skills and critical engagement with current studies.*

Findings

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

5.1 Teaching and Learning Resources

MIEEK uses Moodle to upload teaching materials and communicate with students. However, concerns have been raised regarding the overall organisation and availability of teaching and learning resources.

- Whilst basic resources are available, the overall provision demonstrates notable deficiencies in organisation and comprehensiveness. Academic and administrative staff attempt to follow a student-centered learning approach and provide flexible modes of learning and teaching, focusing on practical skills required for the profession, but they are significantly constrained by inadequate practical facilities and resources.
- Students have access to the library, which provides an adequate number of computers and books, as well as access to EBSCO (either via library computers or remotely). However, the library's physical collection is severely limited, particularly in specialized agricultural sciences.
- Students receive notes, further reading, and other sources via the VLE (Moodle).
- The list of books on Organic Production is limited. A substantial investment in current textbooks, reference materials, and additional resources on Organic Agricultural Production is needed. The library lacks essential reference works, international journals, and contemporary publications that are fundamental to a comprehensive agricultural education.

- Access to electronic databases beyond EBSCO is severely restricted. The institution should establish subscriptions to major scientific databases such as Elsevier, Wiley, Springer, and agricultural-specific databases to provide students with access to current research and industry developments.

5.2 Physical Resources

The physical resources at MIEEK present the most significant area of concern identified by the EEC. The institution demonstrates substantial deficiencies in laboratory facilities and practical training spaces for delivering a comprehensive programme in Organic Agricultural Production.

- The department provides computer rooms and lecture rooms equipped with computer connections and recording facilities.
- The institution is lacking facilities like a Microscopy-Botany lab, a Plant Physiology-Soil Science lab, and a Chemistry lab.
- The facilities for practical farming and field work are restricted. The limited field space means that students cannot gain sufficient hands-on experience in crop cultivation, organic farming techniques, pest management, and other essential practical skills. With insufficient experimental plots, students have minimal opportunities to design and conduct their own agricultural trials, severely limiting their practical competence upon graduation.
- The greenhouse facilities are limited in both number and size, restricting opportunities for controlled-environment agriculture training.
- The absence of proper storage facilities for agricultural equipment, seeds, and organic inputs further hampers the practical training programme. Students have limited exposure to the range of tools, machinery, and materials they will encounter in professional practice.

5.3 Human Support Resources

- All human support resources, practices, and policies are in place. The College provides support for students' wellbeing, academic experience, student life, and learning. However, the commitment and dedication of staff cannot fully compensate for the substantial deficiencies in physical resources and facilities.
- The academic staff demonstrate strong commitment to student success, but they are severely constrained by inadequate laboratory and field facilities, which limits their ability to deliver the practical, hands-on training that is essential for this programme.
- The EEC notes that whilst the College has demonstrated engagement with external stakeholders through informal channels and ad hoc consultations, there is currently no formally established and proper External Stakeholder Committee in place. The absence of such a structured committee represents a significant gap in the programme's governance and quality assurance mechanisms. A formal External Stakeholder Committee would provide systematic input from industry professionals, agricultural enterprises, government bodies, and other relevant stakeholders, ensuring that the programme remains aligned with evolving industry needs, labour market demands, and professional standards. The establishment of this committee would facilitate regular, structured dialogue between the institution and the agricultural sector, enabling timely curriculum updates, enhanced placement opportunities,

and stronger links between academic training and professional practice. The EEC strongly recommends that the College prioritise the formation of this committee as a matter of urgency to strengthen the programme's external engagement and ensure its continued relevance to the agricultural industry in Cyprus.

5.4 Student Support

- Students are informed about all existing policies through the student handbook and at events organized by administrative support staff, particularly during orientation at the beginning of the semester.
- However, students expressed concern during discussions with the EEC regarding the limited practical training opportunities resulting from inadequate facilities.

Strengths

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

The institution demonstrates several positive aspects in its resource provision and support systems. MIEEK utilises Moodle for uploading teaching materials and student communication and is investing in new software to integrate services and improve student access to grades. The College provides a central hub where provisions can be accessed at one point of contact. Students have access to a library with an adequate number of computers and books, as well as remote access to EBSCO. Academic and administrative staff attempt to follow a student-centred learning approach, focusing on practical skills required for the profession. The College provides excellent human support resources, with strong support for students' wellbeing, academic experience, student life, and learning. Academic staff demonstrate strong commitment to student success. Students receive comprehensive information about existing policies through the student handbook and orientation events, with international students receiving additional support for immigration processes and accommodation.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

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

1. Substantially expand the library's physical collection, particularly in specialised agricultural sciences, with current textbooks, reference materials, and contemporary publications.
2. Establish subscriptions to major scientific databases such as Elsevier, Wiley, Springer, and agricultural-specific databases beyond EBSCO.
3. Create a dedicated, properly equipped Botany/Chemistry laboratory with adequate space, specimens, and equipment for plant identification, herbarium work, and botanical practical sessions.
4. Significantly expand the space allocated for practical farming and field work beyond current greenhouse facilities and experimental plots.
5. Increase the number and size of greenhouse facilities for controlled-environment agriculture training.
6. Provide proper storage facilities for agricultural equipment, seeds, and organic inputs.

7. Human Support Resources: The establishment and formation of a proper, formally structured External Stakeholder Committee is required and necessary, should be implemented, and made operational as soon as possible in the near future. It is strongly advised and recommended that the institution establish, formalise, and sign comprehensive Memoranda of Collaboration, Understanding, and Cooperation with relevant private companies, agricultural enterprises, industry partners, and universities, both domestic and international, for the purpose of further interaction, ongoing dialogue, knowledge exchange, student placement opportunities, collaborative research initiatives, and mutually beneficial partnerships.

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

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

6. Additional for doctoral programmes (ALL ESG)

Sub-areas

6.1 Selection criteria and requirements

6.2 Proposal and dissertation

6.3 Supervision and committees

6.1 Selection criteria and requirements

Standards

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

6.2 Proposal and dissertation

Standards

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

6.3 Supervision and committees

Standards

- *The composition, the procedure and the criteria for the formation of the advisory committee (to whom the doctoral student submits the research proposal) are determined.*
- *The composition, the procedure and the criteria for the formation of the examining committee (to whom the doctoral student defends his/her dissertation), are determined.*
- *The duties of the supervisor-chairperson and the other members of the advisory committee towards the student are determined and include:*
 - *regular meetings*

- reports per semester and feedback from supervisors
- support for writing research papers
- participation in conferences
- The number of doctoral students that each chairperson supervises at the same time are determined.

Findings

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

Not applicable

Strengths

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

Not applicable

Areas of improvement and recommendations

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

Not applicable

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

Sub-area		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>
6.1	Selection criteria and requirements	Not applicable
6.2	Proposal and dissertation	Not applicable
6.3	Supervision and committees	Not applicable

D. Conclusions and final remarks

Please provide constructive conclusions and final remarks which may form the basis upon which improvements of the quality of the programme of study under review may be achieved, with emphasis on the correspondence with the EQF.

Conclusions and Final Remarks

Overall Assessment

The External Evaluation Committee has conducted a comprehensive review of the Organic Horticultural Crops programme at MIEEK Limassol branch. The programme demonstrates a solid foundation in meeting the vocational education needs of Cyprus's agricultural sector and aligns with **EQF Level 5b** requirements for short-cycle higher education qualifications. The programme successfully delivers 120 ECTS over four semesters, preparing students for employment in organic agriculture and horticulture.

Key Strengths

The programme benefits from several notable strengths that should be recognized and maintained:

- **Dedicated and Qualified Staff:** The teaching staff demonstrate strong commitment to student success, with 75 % holding Master's degrees or higher, including two PhD holders who bring research expertise to their teaching.
- **Industry Relevance:** The programme maintains valuable connections with the agricultural sector, with evidence of stakeholder engagement and practical placement opportunities that align with labor market needs—a critical requirement for EQF Level 5 qualifications.
- **Student Engagement and Support:** The institution has established effective student-centered learning approaches, with strong human support resources and comprehensive student support services. Students expressed appreciation for staff accessibility and dedication.
- **Quality Assurance Framework:** Basic quality assurance structures are in place and functioning, with established committees overseeing programme delivery and regular monitoring of student progression.
- **Transparent Processes:** Admission, progression, and certification procedures are clearly defined, published, and consistently applied, ensuring fairness and alignment with European standards.

Critical Areas Requiring Attention

While the programme demonstrates merit, several significant deficiencies must be addressed to ensure full compliance with EQF Level 5 standards and ESG requirements:

1. Physical Infrastructure (PRIORITY)

The most pressing concern identified by the EEC is the **inadequacy of physical resources**, which fundamentally undermines the programme's ability to deliver practical, hands-on training essential for vocational education at this level:

- **Absence of essential teaching laboratories** (botany, chemistry, plant physiology, soil science, entomology) prevents students from gaining fundamental practical skills required for the profession
- **Limited field space and greenhouse facilities** restrict opportunities for students to develop competencies in crop cultivation, organic farming techniques, and pest management
- **Inadequate equipment and storage facilities** limit student exposure to the tools and materials they will encounter in professional practice

This deficiency is incompatible with EQF Level 5 descriptor requirements, which emphasize the development of comprehensive practical and technical skills within a specialized field. The institution must prioritize substantial investment in laboratory facilities, expanded growing areas, and modern equipment to meet minimum standards for vocational agricultural education.

2. Learning Resources and Library Provision

The library's physical collection is severely limited, particularly in specialized agricultural sciences. To align with EQF Level 5 requirements for knowledge development:

- Substantially expand the collection of current textbooks, reference materials, and contemporary publications in organic agriculture
- Establish subscriptions to major scientific databases (Elsevier, Wiley, Springer) beyond the current EBSCO access
- Ensure students can access peer-reviewed research and industry developments essential for evidence-based agricultural practices

3. Programme Design and Documentation

To ensure full alignment with EQF Level 5 descriptors and ESG 1.2 standards:

- **Revise all learning outcomes** to clearly articulated **Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)** aligned with Bloom's Taxonomy, using appropriate action verbs for Level 5 (application, analysis, evaluation)
- **Clearly distinguish and document** the theoretical and practical components of each course with specified contact hours
- Develop **week-by-week teaching schedules** showing the integration of theory and practice
- **Update all bibliographies and reading lists** to include current (within 5 years) academic sources
- **Map course-level ILOs** to programme-level learning outcomes, demonstrating clear alignment with EQF Level 5 knowledge, skills, and competence descriptors

4. Assessment Design and Academic Standards

To strengthen the rigour and transparency required at EQF Level 5:

- Provide **detailed assessment schedules** with clear deadlines in tabular format
- Specify the **exact number, type, and weighting** of all assessments for each course
- Implement **systematic moderation procedures** for all assessment briefs and marked work
- Clarify and improve **resubmission/retake procedures**, ensuring fairness for students facing mitigating circumstances
- Ensure all assessments demonstrably measure achievement of ILOs at the appropriate cognitive level

5. Organizational Structure and Governance

Several essential committees are absent, limiting the programme's quality assurance capacity:

- Establish a **Student Affairs Committee** to address student welfare and representation systematically
- Create a **Disciplinary Committee** to ensure fair and transparent handling of academic misconduct
- Form a **Research Committee** to promote scholarly activity and research-informed teaching

6. Research Culture and Staff Development

The near-complete absence of research activity represents a significant weakness for a Level 5 programme:

- **Significantly increase the number of PhD-qualified staff** to enhance research capacity
 - **Actively encourage and support research activities** among teaching staff, providing time allocation and resources
 - Develop mechanisms to integrate current research findings into teaching, ensuring students benefit from evidence-based, contemporary practice
 - Establish partnerships with research institutions (such as the Cyprus University of Technology) to provide students with research exposure
- The EEC strongly recommends that accreditation be conditional upon:**
- Concrete plans with timelines for establishing essential teaching laboratories
 - Significant expansion of field facilities for practical training
 - Comprehensive revision of all course documentation to align with EQF Level 5 requirements
 - Establishment of missing governance committees
 - Development of a strategic plan to increase research activity and staff qualifications

7. Human Support Resources

The establishment and formation of a proper, formally structured **External Stakeholder Committee** is required and necessary, and should be implemented, put into place, and made operational as soon as possible in the near future.

With these improvements, the programme will be well-positioned to deliver the specialized theoretical knowledge and comprehensive practical skills that define EQF Level 5 qualifications in vocational higher education.

E. Signatures of the EEC

<i>Name</i>	<i>Signature</i>
Martin Weih	
Nicola Cannon	
George Tsiamis	
Ioannis Onoufriou	
Click to enter Name	
Click to enter Name	

Date: 14/10/2025