Doc. 300.1.2

Higher Education Institution's Response

Date: October 12, 2020

- **Higher Education Institution:**
  COLLEGE OF TOURISM AND HOTEL MANAGEMENT

- **Town: NICOSIA**

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

  In Greek:

  ΔΙΕΥΘΥΝΣΗ ΥΠΗΡΕΣΙΩΝ ΑΝΑΨΥΧΗΣ ΚΑΙ ΤΟΥΡΙΣΜΟΥ

  (12 ΜΗΝΕΣ ΜΕΤΑΠΤΥΧΙΑΚΟ) 90 ΠΜ

  In English:

  LEISURE AND TOURISM MANAGEMENT, MASTER OF

  ARTS, 12 MONTHS, and ECTS 90. Programme Name

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

- **Programme's status:** New

ΚΥΠΡΙΑΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ
REPUBLIC OF CYPRUS

ΔΙΠΑΕ
CYQAA

ΦΟΡΕΑΣ ΔΙΑΣΦΑΛΙΣΗΣ ΚΑΙ ΠΙΣΤΟΠΟΙΗΣΗΣ ΤΗΣ ΠΟΙΟΤΗΤΑΣ ΤΗΣ ΑΝΩΤΕΡΗΣ ΕΚΠΑΙΔΕΥΣΗΣ
CYPRUS AGENCY OF QUALITY ASSURANCE AND ACCREDITATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION

eqar//// enqa.

A. Guidelines on content and structure of the report

- *The Higher Education Institution (HEI) based on the External Evaluation Committee's (EEC's) evaluation report (Doc.300.1.1) must justify whether actions have been taken in improving the quality of the programme of study in each assessment area.*

- *In particular, under each assessment area, the HEI must respond on, <u>without changing the format of the report</u>:*

  - *the findings, strengths, areas of improvement and recommendations of the EEC*
  - *the deficiencies noted under the quality indicators (criteria)*
  - *the conclusions and final remarks noted by the EEC*

- *The HEI's response must follow below the EEC's comments, which must be copied from the external evaluation report (Doc. 300.1.1).*

- *In case of annexes, those should be attached and sent on a separate document.*

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

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Findings.

The MA programme in Leisure and Tourism Management targets students with a BA (or equivalent) degree aiming to develop a career in the leisure and tourism sectors. In general, the 8 documentation provides comprehensive guidance to the programme proposed. The programme follows a traditional and mainstream approach to teaching. Like other programmes currently offered by the College, the programme is expected to predominantly attract international but also Cypriot students interested in pursuing a career in the leisure and tourism sectors.

With respect to tourism, the programme adequately prepares students for employment and development, by equipping them with a range of skills and knowledge. This is anticipated to support the enhancement of skills and techniques, personal qualities, and attributes pertinent to a successful career in the tourism sector. The aims and objectives of the programme, therefore, enable students to develop their skills and increase their career prospects. Nonetheless, the same cannot be argued for the beyond tourism-related areas of the leisure sector such as sports, outdoor recreation, events and entertainment. In fact, the curriculum is designed in such a way so as to either treat leisure and tourism as interchangeable terms and/or to implicitly assume that non-tourism leisure elements can be adequately covered within modules that include the words "Leisure and Tourism" in their titles. The EEC is concerned about this approach given that: a) although leisure and tourism do share common activities, they are certainly not the same; and b) the content of the leisure and tourism-related modules has only very indirect explicit references to non-tourism leisure elements.

ANSWER.
We agree with the comments of the EEC and for this reason, we have increased the modules of the Leisure part of the program to include convention management, sport management and events strategy. Please see the new structure of the program in the new application.

During the evaluation meeting, the management team of the College provided an overview of the institution in general and of the programme under evaluation in particular. It appears that teaching work is organised efficiently, based on ECTS-related workload standards. There is an optional, non-credit bearing module, i.e. Induction to MA in Leisure and Tourism Management; eight (8) compulsory modules accounting for 72 ECTS and a compulsory Thesis accounting for 18 ECTS. Out of the eight (8) modules, three (3) are of generic business nature (all in the first semester of studies) and five (5) are leisure and tourism specific. Assessments in the programme follow a traditional approach with a robust combination of final exams, presentations, practical assessments and coursework. As the degree is on management, it is advised that presentation skills should be explicitly evaluated and assessed as much as possible. Attendance and class participation are also taken (indirectly) into consideration. It seems that the MA programme was primarily designed by the senior academic management team based on consultation with the teaching members of staff. In fact, and as with other programmes in the College, the latter are welcomed to become involved in the process at a module delivery stage and effectively deal with any emerging issues.

ΔΙΠΑΕ CYQAA

ΦΟΡΕΑΣ ΔΙΑΣΦΑΛΙΣΗΣ ΚΑΙ ΠΙΣΤΟΠΟΙΗΣΗΣ ΤΗΣ ΠΟΙΟΤΗΤΑΣ ΤΗΣ ΑΝΩΤΕΡΗΣ ΕΚΠΑΙΔΕΥΣΗΣ
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ANSWER.

The structure of the program has changed to follow the suggestion of the EEC.
Instead of four modules in each semester now, we have five modules of six ECTS each. There is a number of electives in each semester of which the student can select one.
The assessments have been modified to include the presentation skills.
More details are in the areas of improvement and recommendations
that follows including the assessment.

There is sufficient sectoral expertise in the teaching team but limited research output in highly respected leisure and tourism journals. It is also evident that several members of academic staff are hospitality specialists and have relevant background studies. Some members of the teaching team have a good insight of the tourism sector and are professionally involved in the industry and in other related activities. The teaching staff were able to contribute to the preparation of module documentation and learning outcomes.

Quality assurance has been documented from an internal point of view to a satisfactory degree. An internal committee meets regularly to discuss quality assurance issues and intervene when this is deemed appropriate. Processes for identifying academic fraud appear to be robustly documented in the college's Quality Assurance Handbook. It appears that the practice of detecting academic fraud is well-defined, as students submit their assignments via the Edmodo platform where plagiarism-checking software is embedded.

The two (international) students interviewed expressed their satisfaction from the academic delivery and support services of the College. An effective administrative structure supports the delivery of the programme. Teaching staff were passionate about their subject expertise and were reflective of their teaching methods. Networking with local travel and leisure companies is in place to provide students with career opportunities.

Information in relation to the programme is currently available on the College's website https://www.cothm.ac.cy/pos-master-lt. The detailed programme description states that the programme "…is registered but not yet accredited".

ANSWER:
We are trying to create an environment for research activities by offering to the lecturers the incentive of the reduction of three hours per week to devote themselves to research.
We are happy that the lecturers participate in the writing of the modules and the design of the program.

Strengths
A list of strengths, e.g. examples of good practices, achievements, innovative solutions etc.
The College has a comprehensive Quality Assurance Policies & Regulations and Student Handbook across the programmes offered. The MA programme in Leisure and Tourism Management includes academic modules to help students prepare for the real world. This is a topical programme as Cyprus has a vibrant leisure and tourism sector that will be actively seeking to recruit new staff as soon as the COVID-19 pandemic recedes. Active collaborations with the local leisure and tourism sectors facilitate the enrichment of the programme; such opportunities for continued engagement were also encouraged during the evaluation meeting.

ANSWER.
We thank the EEC for their good words.

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 is concerned about the design of the programme for four main reasons:
a) all modules are compulsory and there are no electives thus making the structure of the programme very rigid; flexibility should be an inherent feature of postgraduate programme delivery;
b) there are only four (4) modules per semester each accounting for nine (9) ECTS, which implies a very high workload per module; in practice, this may prove problematic to manage from a pedagogical point of view, while it may also disadvantage certain students who may face difficulties with understanding the concepts of a specific module;
c) generic modules are not sufficiently contextualised thus possibly limiting the interest of students; to the credit of the College, though, classes in all modules (including the generic ones) will consist solely of MA in Leisure and Tourism Management students;
d) the leisure element is significantly under-represented in the contents of the sector (i.e. leisure and tourism)-specific modules; this is not only in disagreement with the intended learning outcomes of the programme but may also result in the disappointment of students primarily interested in the beyond-tourism components of the leisure sector.
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Having the above in mind, and based on the online discussions which confirmed the College's intention to use the word "Leisure" in the title of the new MA programme as an effective differentiation selling point, the EEC would like to suggest that:

a) the College should consider introducing several elective modules into the programme by explicitly considering specific elements of the beyond-tourism leisure sector, such as Sports Management; Events Management; Outdoor Recreation; Wellness and Entertainment, etc. To do so, the College is advised to reduce the number of ECTS per module from nine (9) to six (6) and:
a. either to give room for two (2) extra modules per semester and keep the number of Thesis' ECTS at eighteen (18); or
b. to give room for one (1) extra module per semester and increase the number of Thesis' ECTS to thirty (30) – in that case, Thesis' requirements regarding the student workload would also have to increase significantly;
b) the College should appropriately contextualize the leisure and tourism element in all generic modules offered throughout the curriculum;
c) the majority of textbooks suggested for the modules are appropriate and sufficiently current - nonetheless, relevant leisure and tourism academic journal articles should be included in the outlines of relevant modules;
d) The College should consider a more diverse approach to their assessment.

ANSWER.

a) The Internal Quality committee (IQC) has reviewed the program and has included six elective modules. The Sports Management is included as compulsory. The Convention Management and the Events Strategy are included as electives. The number of ECTS for each module is now 6. We feel confident that the above modules cover adequately the leisure part of the program.
Although there are a lot of Master programs that operate with eight modules only including the thesis, the IQC has decided to follow the suggestion made by the EEC and has reviewed the program as follows.

The first semester to have four compulsory modules and three electives to choose one out of the three.
The second semester to have four compulsory modules and three electives to choose one out of the three.
All modules have six ECTS each.
The ECTS for Thesis has been increased to 30 by increasing the number of hours, and the words to be between 15.000 to 20,000.
The new structure of the program is shown in the new application submitted together with this answer, but in general is the following.

E. TABLE 1: STRUCTURE OF THE PROGRAM OF STUDY

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS	ECTS
Compulsory courses	60
Elective courses (a) Courses of specialization (b) General Education courses / Free Electives	N/A
Undergraduate / Postgraduate Assignment	30
Practical training	N/A
Total ECTS	90

TABLE 2: COURSE DISTRIBUTION PER SEMESTER

A/A	Course Type	Course Name	Course Code	Periods per week	Period duration	Number of weeks/ Academic semester	Total per Academic se
Optional		Induction to MA in Leisure and Tourism Management	BUS052	15	55'		
A' Semester (30 ECTS)							
1.	Compulsory	Leisure and Tourism Marketing	MAR522	3	55'	13	39
2.	Compulsory	Human Resources Management	HUM502	3	55'	13	39
3.	Compulsory	Financial Management	ACC503	3	55'	13	39
4.	Compulsory	Strategic Management	HUM508	3	55'	13	39
5.	Elective	Convention Management	HOT301	3	55'	13	39
6.	Elective	Leisure and Technology	LEI322	3	55'	13	39
7.	Elective	International Management	BUS508	3	55'	13	39
Students must choose one out of the three electives							
B' Semester (30 ECTS)							

1	Compulsory	Policy and Planning in Leisure and Tourism	LET501	3	55'	13	39
2	Compulsory	E-Business in Leisure and Tourism	LET502	3	55'	13	39
3	Compulsory	Theoretical Perspectives in Leisure and Tourism	LET503	3	55'	13	39
4	Compulsory	Sport Management	EVE211	3	55'	13	39
5	Elective	Events Strategy	EVE321	3	55'	13	39
6	Elective	Sustainable Tourism	TOU501	3	55'	13	39
7	Elective	Research methods for Leisure and Tourism	BUS525	3	55'	13	39

Students must choose one out of the three electives

C' Semester (30 ECTS)

1.	Compulsory	Thesis	BUS519	12	55'	13	156

b) **We have adjusted the generic modules to contextualize the leisure and tourism elements and emphasize the context of that in the course.**

c) **We have included in the Leisure and Tourism Management, the Convention Management, The Sports Management and the Events Strategy relevant journal articles and links where students can study further.**

d) **The college has included the presentation skills in the assessment on most of the courses.**

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2. Teaching, learning and student assessment
(ESG 1.3)

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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.
The programme of study at the College enjoys the benefits of small classes and so can be flexible with the teaching and learning methods which clearly aims to support students' individual and social
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development. Different modes of delivery are employed, and varieties of pedagogical methods are used to help achieve the learning outcomes.
The assessment methods appear mainstream and weights of different assessment modes are applied horizontally across the entire curriculum – this may end up putting certain students at a disadvantage. The College is, therefore, actively encouraged to use variable weights but also types of assessment modes. Additionally, there are adequate facilities available for the expansion of a Master's Programme and commitment to adjust these facilities to match student demand is clear.

ANSWER.

The college is using different types of assessment modes. The most common type of assessment includes 50% of the grading deriving from coursework and 50% from the final exams. In the term coursework we include assignments, projects, presentations, attendance and participation.

Strengths
A list of strengths, e.g. examples of good practices, achievements, innovative solutions etc.
In some ways the students learning needs seem to be what drives the College's daily activities. Students with different abilities, learning needs and learning opportunities are taken into consideration when conducting educational activities. So, for example, when a student fails a test, individual guidance is given to help students master the material. At the same time students appreciate the rigour built into the modules and value the fact that one must "study hard" to pass the test. Further, the development of students' general competencies, supported by the educational activities are generally guided by the faculty but also additional support comes from the staff in support services e.g. IT.
Extensive support services are available to students. Students have access to computer laboratories, library services, on-campus dining facilities. Access to sports facilities is available and there are several options for sports recreation in the vicinity of the campus. There is also a vibrant student council, which steers the communication between the College and the students. Adequate opportunities and help from the staff for internship and work possibilities are available to students.

ΔΙΠΑΕ CYQAA

ΦΟΡΕΑΣ ΔΙΑΣΦΑΛΙΣΗΣ ΚΑΙ ΠΙΣΤΟΠΟΙΗΣΗΣ ΤΗΣ ΠΟΙΟΤΗΤΑΣ ΤΗΣ ΑΝΩΤΕΡΗΣ ΕΚΠΑΙΔΕΥΣΗΣ
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ANSWER.
We thank the EEC for their good words.

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.

Though it is a statement reflected in the strategy of the College, there is no clear indication of how students are encouraged to take an active role in creating the learning process.

Recommendations: It is important to help the students understand their role in the learning process too. Both faculty as well as support staff can more explicitly help students become familiar with the learning process, as well as the strategies, they could use to improve their learning. Teaching students how to learn is a more empowering tool than any teaching method. Self directed learning principles lend are appropriate for small class sizes, which is common at the CHTM. Further, the College can benefit significantly from applying the following principles to enhance student centred learning:

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a) help students understand the principles of metacognition- helping students think about their own thinking, become consciously aware of oneself as a problem solver, help them monitor, plan and control their mental processing;

b) help students develop concrete learning strategies (understanding the difference between studying and learning). Ideally students should develop metacognitive strategies that work for them;

c) help students establish a growth and a mindset aimed at succeeding;

d) help students understand the connection between motivation, emotions, and learning.

It is not quite clear how the students' career path from College to work is mapped. The programme's orientation at this time would benefit from further clarification and there might be a mismatch between the perceived educational preparation and career choices. A clearer establishment of professional opportunities for students once they have completed the program is necessary. This is particularly relevant for student seeking International opportunities.

ANSWER
As a part of the student centred learning, The College tries to create an environment where students can feel secure emotionally and to feel that they can succeed by assisting them to find a job and giving guidance where is requested.

From the moment they arrive at the College, the staff offers them a complete package with all the information they need to achieve their academic goals. By trying to create a community where everyone can participate, whether it is in the classroom or with extra curriculum activities we try to make students feel like a part of a team. Extra curriculum activities include student clubs and activities. In the classroom, many of the lectures include group project hence creating the feeling of accountability to each other.

At the beginning of every semester lecturers provide the students with the syllabus, giving them an introduction on the learning objectives and outcomes and what is expected from

them as a way of creating learning goals to help them become better learners and keep them on task.

Classroom notes are uploaded well before each lecture so students can study them in advance and keep extra notes.

Lecturers were requested to incorporate more case studies and problem solving activities to increase order thinking skills. Some of the lecturers have also added activities where students present a part of the lecture or students evaluate each other results for tests and presentations.

Discussions are clearly encouraged in the classroom, questions are urged and activities such as visits to travel agencies have a clear goal not only to show the students how they operate but to also create discussion, to observe the way they operate but to solve real life problem that may also be included in quizzes.

In addition, lecturers are now requested to prepare rubrics for every assignment and project along with written comments as a mean to provide quality feedback to the students.

Also, students are requested to evaluate their lecturers every semester to give a feedback on their satisfaction level and their recommendations.

Finally, the IQC discusses often the issue on how to help students learn more and what kind of strategies can be followed to enhance their learning and offer them new information, through new means.

3. Teaching Staff
   (ESG 1.5)

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 documentation provided by the College, seven (7) members of staff are involved in teaching the programme's modules; four (4) work on a full-time basis delivering fifteen (15) periods per week (i.e. 45.45% out of the total 33), while the other three (3) work on a part-time basis delivering eighteen (18) periods per week (i.e. 54.55% out of the total 33); in other words, parttime members of staff deliver a significant part of the programme. Three (3) members of staff (two full-timers and one part-timer) are PhD/DBA holders; while the other four (4) members of staff (two full-timers and two part-timers) are holders of postgraduate degrees. In other words, only four (4) out of seven (7) members of the academic staff teach at a level which is at least one level below their qualifications.
During the remote site visit, the EEC had the opportunity to meet via Zoom all seven (7) teaching members of staff involved in the delivery of the Programme (specialization and type of occupation in parenthesis), i.e.:
• Mr Christoforou Andreas, Senior Lecturer (Hotel Management / Business Administration, FT)
• Dr Hadjigeorgiou Soteris, Senior Lecturer (Hospitality Management/ Culinary arts / Human

Resources, FT)
• Mr Ioannou Christos, Senior Lecturer (Business / Accounting, PT)
• Ms Kokhanets Anna, Senior Lecturer (Hospitality Management / International Relations, FT)
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• Dr Kolokasides Lefteris, Lecturer (Business Administration/ Communications/ Human Resource Management, PT)
• Dr Mitsis Pandelis, Senior Lecturer (Economics / Statistics, FT)
• Mr Georgiou Giorgos, Senior Lecturer (Computer Science/ Computer Networking, PT)

During the discussion with the abovementioned individuals it emerged that some members of teaching staff were recruited during the last academic year. The rapport between the management/ownership of the College and the members of teaching staff as well as between the latter and the students seems to be very good. The teaching staff also mentioned that they were able to contribute to the preparation of module documentation and learning outcomes; thus, they took ownership of the curriculum.

The average class size across the College is about twenty (20) students. Staff are formally evaluated by the students based on a semi-structured questionnaire where Likert scales are extensively used to facilitate quantitative analysis of the results by the Programme Leader - no problems and/or concerns were reported. At the same time, however, the College does not implement a 360-degree evaluation approach, which would also involve the evaluation of the academic management team by the teaching staff. This emerged out of the online discussion but was welcomed by the academic management team as a possible way forward to improve the learning experience and increase transparency from a human resources management perspective.

Teaching members of staff commended the existence of a friendly family environment within the College, which expedites decision-making in a rather informal setting. They argued that opportunities for personal and professional development within the College are gradually increasing compared to the past; some of the members of staff have already taken advantage of the exposure offered by the Erasmus+ staff mobility programme. Few of the members of teaching staff are research active and only to a limited degree. In the past, there was a lack of proper research culture within the College although the latter co-publishes Tourism Today, i.e. an international peer-reviewed academic journal. Nonetheless, the appointment of a new Director of Research a few months ago may hopefully instigate a paradigm change soon.
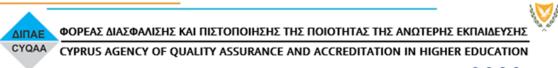
Strengths

ANSWER.
Due to the inclusion of new modules to cover the need of the leisure part of the program, as per the recommendation of the EEC, the number of lecturers has increased from seven to nine. We have included two new lecturers, Elena Panagiotou, who is at the final stage of her PhD dissertation and our Academic Director Andria Hadjistylli who is at the beginning of her PhD dissertation.

The new table 4, which is included in the new application, is as follows.

TABLE 4: TEACHING PERSONNEL, QUALIFICATIONS, AND TOTAL TEACHING PERIODS

Name and Surname	Qualifications	Rank *	FT/PT**	Program of Study	Periods / wee

1	Christoforou Andreas	MBA BSc in Hotel Management	SL	FT	Master in Leisure and Tourism	6
2	Hadjigeorgiou Soteris	DBA in HRM MSc. In Tourism Management MSc. In Hospitality Management BA In Hospitality Management Diploma of Higher Education in Cookery	SL	FT	Master in Leisure and Tourism	9
3	Ioannou Christos	MBA (Finance) BA (Hons) International Accounting Doctorate in Business Administration (candidate)	SL	PT	Master in Leisure and Tourism	15
4	Kokhanets Anna	MA in International Relations BA in Hospitality Management	SL	FT	Master in Leisure and Tourism	
5	Kolokasides Lefteris	DBA /MBA MSC in Human Resource Management BA in Communications	L	FT	Master in Leisure and Tourism	6
6	Mitsis Pandelis	PhD in Economics MSc in Economics & Finance BSc in Economics	SL	FT	Master in Leisure and Tourism	3
7	Georgiou Giorgos	Bsc/Msc Computer Science/Netwoking	SL	FT	Master in Leisure and Tourism	3
8	Elena Panagiotou	BSc Economics MBA, PhD (cand.) in Business Administration	SL	FT	Master in Leisure and Tourism	6
9	Andria Hadjistylli	MBA BA in Hospitality Management	SL	FT	Master in Leisure and tourism	6

* Rank: Professor (P), Associate Professor (Assoc. P), Assistant Professor (Assis. P), Lecturer (L), Senior Lecturer (SL), Special Teaching Personnel (STP), Visiting Professor (Vis. P), Special Scientist (SS), Lab Assistant (LA)
** Full Time (FT), Part Time (PT)

6.STATEMENT OF FULL TIME, PART TIME, PhD HOLDERS AND OTHER LECTURERS,

OCTOBER 2020

MASTER IN LEISURE AND TOURISM

STATEMENT OF FULL TIME, PART TIME, PhD HOLDERS AND OTHER LECTURERS.

NUMBER OF TEACHING HOURS

	Phd holders	Master Holders	Full time	Part time
ANDREAS CHRISTOFOROU		6	6	
SOTIRIS HADJIGEORGIOU	9		9	
CHRISTOS IOANNOU	15			15
LEFTERIS COLOCASSIDES	6		6	
PANDELIS MITSIS	3		3	
GIORGOS GEORGIOU		3	3	
ELENA PANAGIOTOU	6		6	
ANDRIA HADJISTYLLI		6	6	
	------	------	------	------
	39	15	39	15
	72%	28%	72%	28%

The college has developed new questionnaire to establish the 360-degree evaluation. So far, only students were able evaluate academic and administration members and the Academic director evaluated the lecturers. After the recommendation of the committee we have developed a new questionnaire where lectures can also evaluate the administration team and the management team, which in our case is the course coordinator and the Academic Director. The new questionnaires will be collected in December 2020.

A list of strengths, e.g. examples of good practices, achievements, innovative solutions etc.
The existing staff qualifications and experience are diversified within the hospitality, travel and tourism sectors which is an asset to the programme. There are clear procedures in place for the evaluation of teaching and module delivery. Moreover, the EEC welcomes the academic partnerships developed by the College within the Erasmus+ framework as well as the fact that the College invites internationally renowned tourism and hospitality scholars as visitors and/or invited speakers.

ANSWER. We thank the EEC members for their good words.

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.
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All staff should become more actively involved in research to understand the evolving requirements of the leisure and tourism sectors and contextualize their teaching accordingly. Moreover, non-PhD/DBA degree holders who are going to teach in the proposed programme are
    strongly encouraged to pursue further studies at doctoral level the soonest possible.

ANSWER: Three members of our faculty are active on research.

Mrs Roxana Michaelidou has prepared a research project named "continuing education of local communities in hospitality industry " which was sent for publication to two journals including the Tourism Today in June 2020.

Furthermore Dr. Pantelis Mitsis is currently running a research project named " do differences in hotel rooms' prices reflect the differences in quality characteristics recorded in travel websites?"

Dr Andreas Siamarou has sent for publication his paper in September 2020 named E-Business Model for Medical Tourism.

Our Academic Director Andria Hadjistylli, has started her PhD at the European University. She passed all exams and now she is at the stage to prepare the Thesis.

Elena Panagiotou is at the final stage of her PhD Thessis.

Our senior lecturer Andreas Christoforou, has given a good number of seminars and presentations on various subjects.

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4. Students
(ESG 1.4, 1.6, 1.7)

Click or tap here to enter text.

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.
As this is a new programme, the College has not yet enrolled any students in the MA Leisure and Tourism Management but has experience of offering other postgraduate courses. The objectives set by the College are well communicated for the students' academic progress, counselling, mobility, etc. Student certification regulations are in place. Admission criteria and processes are in place and appear to be transparent. The students prior education/background is assessed.

Strengths
A list of strengths, e.g. examples of good practices, achievements, innovative solutions etc.
The College appears to have years of experience in managing different academic and professional programmes. The admission requirements for the study programme are clearly communicated to potential applicants and students' prior preparation/education background is assessed for both Cypriot and international students. The College provides students with personalized counselling services.

ANSWER:
We thank the members of the EEC for their good words.

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.
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The EEC would like to propose that the College should improve its admission criteria by explicitly stating in their paperwork how professional qualifications or combinations of qualifications are recognised as equivalent to an undergraduate degree.

ANSWER:

The college has included in the admissions criteria the following.

> *"Examples of professional qualifications, which are officially recognized as equivalent to a Bachelor's degree, are the qualifications of the Chartered Accountants, The Chartered Certified Accountants, the Chartered Management Accountants, the International Accountants, the Certified Public Accountants, the Chartered Surveyors, Chartered Architects, and other professional qualifications which are recognized internationally as equivalent to a Bachelor Degree".*

5. Resources

(ESG 1.6)

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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.
In general, the College provides adequate and readily accessible teaching and learning resources for a postgraduate level award. Teaching and learning resources are adequate readily available and accessible for teaching staff and students. In a student-centered atmosphere, the setup of the rooms in a classroom format was quite noticeable. The use of Edmodo platform seems to be supported by other software but the online software provision for teaching and learning could be better strategized.

ANSWER: See answer below.

Strengths
A list of strengths, e.g. examples of good practices, achievements, innovative solutions etc.
Regarding Teaching and Learning Resources, Human Support:
• There seems to be well planned student care and counselling in place;
• As a small institution, faculty member seem to be very caring towards student achievements;

• Well-qualified administrative staff.

Regarding Physical Resources:
• The physical resources are adequate;
• The premises appear well kept and clean;
• The Library is well maintained and has a provision of online resources;
• There are good study facilities;
• The IT infrastructure is adequate;
• Some care has been taken to redesign the space to provide better access for visitors and students with mobility issues.

ANSWER: We thank the members of EEC for their good words.

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.
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A clear strategy in terms of online learning platforms should be established.

ANSWER:

The programs offered by the college are conventional.   The college is offering on line lectures now because of the Covid-19.   On top of the Edmodo platform, we are using the Cisco Webex platform.

We have tried a number of platforms such as Zoom and Teams and at the end; we decided to use Cisco Webex because of their characteristics.

Most of the lectures are offered on line, except the ones, which include practical elements in which case the lectures are offered in class.

Additional for distance learning programmes
(ALL ESG)

NOT APPLICABLE

Additional for doctoral programmes

(ALL ESG)

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NOT APPLICABLE

Additional for joint programmes
(ALL ESG)

Click or tap here to enter text.

NOT APPLICABLE

c) Conclusions and final remarks

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The purpose of the EEC was to evaluate the intended Masters of Arts in Leisure and Tourism to be offered at the College of Tourism and Hotel Management and make recommendations based on the presented information to the CYQAA to grant permission/or accredit the programme for delivery in the next academic year. To this end the EEC presents its conclusions below.

Programme Aims, Objectives and Learning Outcomes

The Master of Arts in Leisure and Tourism aims and objectives are quite commendable. One aim of the programme is to help fill the recognized skills gap in the market by providing students with a solid foundation of education enabling them to become effective managers anywhere in today's globally competitive fast changing environment of leisure and tourism. Another aim is to help students develop their management and leadership skills, to be able to operate effectively in a multicultural environment. The College has responded quickly to market conditions propelled by the changing social, political, legal, technological, environmental and economic conditions; by seeking to educate well-rounded managers for the leisure and tourism sectors. More specifically, the main objectives of the programme are:
• To apply theoretical concepts and principles of management to the rapidly developing leisure and tourism industry;
• To adopt an inter-disciplinary approach to the study of leisure and tourism management;
• To encourage planning and implementation of original research in the tourism and leisure industry;
• To promote a student-centred learning approach in an interactive environment;
• To enhance students' problem-solving capabilities and strategic thinking by developing key personal skills.
Once the student completed their Master of Arts degree at CTHM they should have gained a thorough understanding of the leisure and tourism industry and its specific characteristics. At the same time, the basic managerial skills necessary to pursue a successful career in the leisure and tourism industry should be acquired. Diverse skills and competencies such as problem solving, analytical personal and professional skills are mentioned as outcomes of the program.

Specific Recommended Changes

Despite these ambitious yet commendable goals the EEC is concerned about the design of the programme. These concerns are based on the following four reasons, and we reiterate the main points of what was discussed in detail in Section 1:
1) all modules are compulsory and there are no electives thus making the structure of the programme very rigid; flexibility should be an inherent feature of postgraduate programme delivery;
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2) there are only four (4) modules per semester each accounting for nine (9) ECTS, which implies a very high workload per module; in practice, this may prove problematic to manage from a pedagogical point of view, while it may also disadvantage certain students who may face difficulties with understanding the concepts of a specific module;
3) generic modules are not sufficiently contextualized thus possibly limiting the interest of students; to the credit of the College, though, classes in all modules (including the generic ones)

will consist solely of MA in Leisure and Tourism Management students;

4) the leisure element is significantly under-represented in the contents of the sector (i.e. leisure and tourism)-specific modules; this is not only in disagreement with the intended learning outcomes of the programme but may also result in the disappointment of students primarily interested in the beyond-tourism components of the leisure sector.

Though the EEC understands the rationale for the use of the word "Leisure" in the title of the new Master of Arts programme, we feel that a clear choice should be made in order to avoid confusion especially in the international arena. We therefore would like to suggest that:

a) the College should consider introducing several elective modules into the programme by explicitly considering specific elements of the beyond-tourism leisure sector, such as Sports Management; Events Management; Outdoor Recreation; Wellness and Entertainment, etc. To do so, the College is advised to reduce the number of ECTS per module from nine (9) to six (6) and:

a. either to give room for two (2) extra modules per semester and keep the number of Thesis' ECTS at eighteen (18); or

b. to give room for one (1) extra module per semester and increase the number of Thesis' ECTS to thirty (30) – in that case, Thesis' requirements regarding the student workload would also have to increase significantly;

b) the College should appropriately contextualize all generic modules offered throughout the curriculum;

c) the majority of textbooks suggested for the modules are appropriate and sufficiently current - nonetheless, relevant leisure and tourism academic journal articles should be included in the outlines of relevant modules;

d) The College should consider a more diverse approach to their assessment.

ANSWER:

1. **The two semesters are made up of four compulsory modules and three electives out of which the students have to choose one, for each semester. In this way students have the flexibility to study a number of different modules.**
2. **All modules have been revised and now they carry six ECTS each except the Thesis Which carries 30 ECTS.**
3. **Generic modules have been contextualized appropriately to increase the interest of students. As this is a new program, each class will have students of only this specific program.**
4. **The leisure element has been enhanced in the new program and a number of modules have been included as suggested by the EEC.**
   a)The college has introduced six elective modules. All modules carry now six ECTS from nine ECTS, which was before.

   The college has included now in the curriculum some of the modules suggested by the EEC. The sports management, the Events strategy and the convention management are part of the new program.

   The EEC has recommended to the college to have two semesters with either five or six modules.

   The IQC has decided to have five modules each semester of six ECTS each and to have a Thesis of thirty ECTS.

b) The college has appropriately contextualized all generic modules.

c) We have included articles from leisure and tourism journals for the

Sports Management, the Events Strategy and the Convention Management.

d) The college has amended the assessment methods to include presentation skills.

e) **Higher Education Institution academic representatives**

Name	*Position*	*Signature*
Adamides Savvas	Director	
Hadjistylli Andria	Academic director	
Christoforou Andreas	Senior Lecturer	
Stavrou Elena	Academic Officer	
Soteroula Christodoulou	TTA Program Coordinator	
Roxanna Michaelides	Research Director	

Date: October 12, 2020