

REVIEW REPORT

Colegiul Biblic Est European (EEBC) Oradea
Related to a visit for Cyclical Review and New Programme
Accreditation; 8th, 9th, 10th and 11th of March 2022

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A. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Two-year full-time hybrid programme for a research-oriented course in Theology and Culture; designated Master în Teologie și Cultura by the school, that corresponds to a higher education learning opportunity at EQF Level 7 and contains 120 ECTS credits. The learning opportunity is offered by the Colegiul Biblic Est-European, an alternative provider of higher education operating in Romania.

This report relates to a process, including an onsite visit 8th to 11th March, for the purpose of accrediting the institution and programme of the Colegiul Biblic Est European (EEBC) Oradea on the basis of the European Council for Theological Education (ECTE)'s current *Standards and Guidelines*, in the form of a Cyclical Review of the institution and a programme review of the intended EQF level 7 programme under the provision of Concept Accreditation for programmes which are under design. It finds the institution generally excellent in seeking to achieve its intentions in theological education, suggests to the ECTE Accreditation Commission 12 commendations of excellence, 10 recommendations and 3 requirements.

B. INTRODUCTION TO THE REVIEW

Eastern European Bible College was founded in 1994. It was first accredited by ECTE (then EEAA) in 2003 and the bachelor programmes in Theology and Christian Education and in Journalism and Media training were accredited in 2009. In 2015 this accreditation was renewed. In 1996 the school became a member of EPTA (European Pentecostal Theological Association). In practice it is inter-denominational since EEBC welcomes students and faculty from all Evangelical denominations, with teachers from Pentecostal, Baptist and Independent church affiliations.

Subsequent to the 2015 review, due to decreasing numbers, the school began to offer only year one and two of the bachelor programme in Theology and Christian Education and, in 2018, the decision was made in council to suspend accreditation and postpone the ECTE cyclical review coming due. This was then postponed further due to the Corona Virus pandemic. A fundamental review of the situation was conducted by a board retreat and extensive consultation in 2020 and 2021. A plan was made to launch a new course, a Master în Teologie și Cultură with hybrid delivery and the school applied in 2021 to ECTE for re-accreditation of its institution and for concept accreditation of its level 7 programme not yet commenced.

A process of review was undertaken by the school in order to write the C-SER and P-SER. The self-evaluation process started near the end of May 2021. A self-evaluation committee was set up including the Vice President, the Campus Pastor, the Academic Dean and two executive board members. Four alumni were also included in the process. The reports were written by the new president of EEBC, Marius Ban and data was collected by Florin Ghiurău. Both SERs were submitted at the end of January 2022.

The team was very warmly received by the leadership and the staff and the school provided all means needed for an effective evaluation of the institution, academic work and communal life of the institution. The programme of visitation and meetings was agreed upon in advance

and carried out effectively. Among other activities, members of the team were involved in meeting alumni. Discussions with board, leadership, faculty, staff and students were carried out in a collegial and friendly manner. From the team's point of view, the documentation submitted and discussions held were highly transparent. The SERs were submitted to the ECTE with hyperlinks to supporting documentation. A number of other documents were submitted to the VET on request in the days leading up to and during the visit. The SER provides a good summary of the school's current state and future intentions.

The *Standards and Guidelines* which form the basis of this report are those applying post December 2019.¹

The review was authorised by Dr Hubert Jurgensen as the ECTE Quality Assurance Co-ordinator (QAC). It was conducted by a Visitation Evaluation Team (VET) put together by the Review Secretary of ECTE. The team consisted of peer experts, a student VET member and the review secretary, viz:

- Horst Born, Germany, (Team leader)
- Katharina Penner, Austria
- James Lockwood, Ireland (student representative)
- Dr Graham Cheesman, UK, (Review Secretary)

Dr Graham Cheesman, ECTE Review Secretary, was involved in the initial preparation for the visit on behalf of ECTE, as well as the report writing based on the VET members' findings.

The SERs were planned and written in a professional manner following the template set out in the ECTE protocol for writing a SER which can be found [here](#). Relevant also were the ECTE documents [Guidelines for Distance and on-line Education](#) since a hybrid delivery mode was envisaged for the Masters course and [Concept Accreditation](#). The SERs addressed each area of the relevant standards competently and comprehensively - to the extent that the material was available at the time for the PSER.

Additional embedded supporting documents were also well constructed and helpful.

Logistical and administrative arrangements prior to the visit were set up as follows;

1. The Review Secretary sent the SER, accompanying documents, and all previous correspondence with the school, to all VET members using Dropbox links.
2. VET members communicated the results of their initial reading of the documents to the team leader and RS via email.
3. In conjunction with the VET leader, the school organised and agreed a programme for the visit.
4. An initial pre-visit meeting of the VET took place via Zoom.
5. A working report document was set up using Google Docs for members of the team to access and modify, which followed the structure of the worksheet or interim report form pertaining to the current standards and protocol of ECTE. This was filled out and commented on by members of the VET as the visit progressed in preparation for the interim report-writing on the last day of the visit.
6. The review took place over four days, beginning on Tuesday 8th March 2022 and concluding on Friday morning, March 11th 2022.

¹ ECTE *Standards and Guidelines* and can be found at <http://ecte.eu/qa/standards/>

Schedule of the visit

Tuesday, 8 March

10.00 Library visit and discussion

Wednesday, March 9

9.00 – 9.45 Meeting of VETs

10.00 – 11.00 Meeting with the Principal and representatives of the Executive Council (Part1)

11.30 – 12.00 Meeting with the Principal and representatives of the Executive Council (Part 2)

12.10 – 13.00 Meeting with Chief Administrator

14.00 – 15.00 Meeting with representatives of the faculty and campus pastor

15.10 – 15.50 Meeting with staff representatives

16.00 – 17.00 Finance Meeting

17.00 – 17.30 Visit of compound and facilities

17.30 – 18.20 VET meeting

Thursday, March 10

9.00-10.00 Meeting with several members of the Representative Council who are not members of the Executive Council

10.00 – 10.50 Meeting with several alumni and possible future students

11.00 – 12.00 Meeting with some representatives of the stakeholders

12.00 – 13.00 Meeting with the Field Director

14.00 – 15.00 Study of various documents

15.00 – 16.00 Meeting with Principal and Vice Principal for additional questions and clarifications

16.00 – 18.00 Preparation of final report

19.20 – Preparation of final report

Friday, March 11

9.00 – 10.00 Preparation of final report

10.00 – 11.00 Zoom meeting with ECTE representatives

11.00 – 12.00 Presentation of final report to representatives of the Executive Council

13.00 Departure

C. INTRODUCTION TO THE INSTITUTION AND PROGRAMME

History and Status

The Eastern European Bible College (CBEE) was founded in 1994 in response to the “need to equip saints for God's work in Romania and Eastern Europe”.

CBEE was founded on the initiative of 5 people, pastors and church leaders (Lars Hornberg from Sweden, Ron Robertson from USA and Bulzan Teodor, Bogdan Ioan, Florian Ghiurau from Oradea, Romania), the last three being part of the management board of the Society Pentecostal of the Christian Mission of Romania (SPMCR), having the functions of president, director of the evangelism mission department, director of the education department respectively.

Since its establishment, the aim has been to obtain the legal autonomy of the College within the limits of the legislation in force. In this sense, CBEE has been established since February 1999 through the EEBC Foundation (Eastern European Bible College). The statute of the foundation was updated in October 2000, when it was moved to an organizational and management structure consisting of a Representative Council and an Executive Bureau. CBEE has been a member of the European Pentecostal Theological Association (EPTA) since 1996.

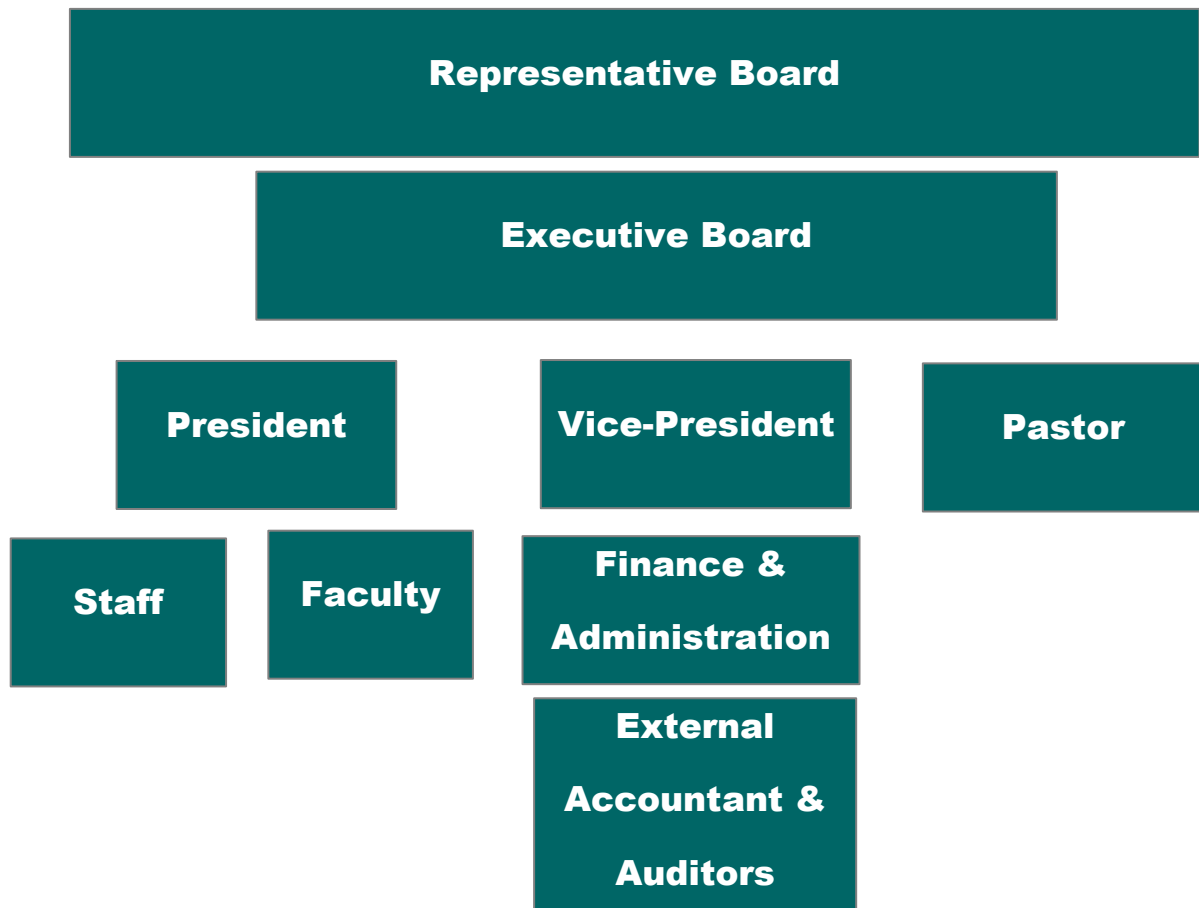
Facilities

The school operates from a new, well-equipped building which provides adequate space for the envisaged programme, community and worship. This campus has been purpose built, from 2016 to 2020. Technologically, it is well up to standard and the video and media studios are exceptional. The library is well equipped and has adequate study space.



Governance

ORGANISATIONAL CHART



The Representative Council members, representing Christian Churches in Romania and abroad, are involved spiritually and financially in fulfilling the purpose of the foundation.

The Council:

- has an annual meeting called by the Executive Board;
- supports it spiritually and materially to fulfil the proposed objectives;
- elects the Executive Board;
- gives direction to the development of the foundation;
- analyses the spiritual and administrative-financial activity of the foundation;
- receives the report of the Executive Board on the activity of the foundation;
- elects the auditing committee and receives an annual report from it;
- approves and revokes the election of the president of the foundation.

The Representative Council of EEBC meets annually when it receives the activity report, the financial report and the report of the auditing commission of the college for the preceding year. The council elects every four years the members of the Executive Board of EEBC and sets the direction for the further development of EEBC. The discussions are recorded in minutes, which are kept in the archives of EEBC, together with the reports presented to the Council.

The Executive Board is the primary operational structure of the foundation, chosen by the Representative Council for a four-year period. The Executive Board members are also members in the Representative Council.

The primary responsibilities of the Executive Board are:

- To meet monthly or as often as needed;
- To write the annual reports of the foundation;
- To be responsible for the daily activity of the foundation;
- To hire the staff needed for the development of the foundation;
- To set forth the plan for the development of the foundation;
- To create the Bylaws of the foundation;
- To establish the annual budget of the foundation;
- To establish the salaries of the staff; and,
- To dismiss staff who break the Bylaws of the foundation.

The Executive Board of EEBC meets monthly or as often as necessary. Each meeting has an agenda determining the current problems, and other matters that need to be decided on. The content of each meeting is summarised and is recorded together with the decisions taken in a minute, which is then presented to the board at the next meeting. Thus, the way the decisions and responsibilities are carried out can be easily tracked.

The president represents the foundation in its relations with the authorities and on all other occasions. He can commission another member of the board to represent the foundation in special situations. During the Annual Board Meeting in 2019, rector Lars Hornberg announced his retirement and appointed Marius Ban as the new president of the EEBC Foundation. Also, Florin Ghiurău announced his retirement in April 2020. A new Executive Board has been named.

Student numbers

This section of the report is not relevant at present since the course under consideration in concept accreditation has not yet begun.

The school estimates that the programme will start with 8 – 10 students and expand to 15 the following year.

Educational and non-educational staff

EEBC Staff

1	Adrian Știrbu Media	Media Specialist	Part-time
2	David Ghiurău	IT Support	Part-time
3	Erika Onykwere	Office assistant	Full-time (maternity leave until August 2022)
4	Florin Ghiurău	Vice-president	Part-time
5	Lidia Ban	Communication Manager	Part-time
6	Marius Daniel Ban	President	Full-time
Adrian Galiger - Pastor			

Faculty for the proposed EQF level 7 Programme

1	Dr. Ciprian Simuț	Research Methodologies	Part-time
2	Daniel Fărcaș, PhD.	Essential Directions in Continental Philosophy Christian Spirituality and Social Transformation	Part-time
3	To be confirmed	Theological Anthropology: the 20th Century	Visiting
4	Daniel Tomuleț, PhD.	Christian Ethic and Culture: Key Questions	Part-time
5	Dr. Gheorghe Mocan	Systematic Theology: An Introduction	Part-time
6	Marius Ban, PhD.	Philosophy of Religion and the Big Questions Postmodernism, Hermeneutic Phenomenology and Theology	Full-time
7	To be confirmed	Theology, Culture and Technological Change	Visiting
8	To be confirmed	Theology and Film	Visiting
9	To be confirmed	Selected Themes in Political Theology	Visiting

*Note: the faculty marked with * would be for the second year of the MA programme, and they are provisional at this stage.*

Budget

The policies in place for establishing and approving budgets are clearly stated. Once the budget is approved by the Representative Board, the budget is implemented and carefully monitored. Among other things, this involves careful documentation of all the expenditures and the incoming funds. Accounting procedures are maintained at all time and financial reports are audited at professional level by qualified personnel. The balance sheet with income and expenditure statements is available at any time on request. EEBC's accountant prepares the monthly financial statements and at least once a year at the end of October and at the annual Representative Council meeting a full Financial Report for the previous school year is presented. On that occasion the Audited Financial Report for the previous calendar year is also presented, in accordance with the state requirement, laws and regulations.

Budgeting in the last few years for this long-established school has been difficult with declining student numbers and the re-orientation of the courses offered. It is hoped that the new course will increase student numbers and contribute to sustainability in the long term.

Programmes and delivery modes

Programme	Delivery mode
Two-year full-time research oriented programme in Theology and Culture; designated by the school as Master în Teologie și Cultura , that corresponds to the ISCED and EQF Level 7 and contains 120 ECTS credits.	Initially in person but the school is considering expanding this to also offer blended synchronous learning.

Functions, activities and mission statement

FUNCTIONS AND ACTIVITIES

In addition to the intended delivery of the level 7 programme, the school offers a one-year hybrid course in Christian life and Service (REPER) presently with 18 students, correspondence courses from the International Education Fellowship and short, on-line courses, such as in Applied Ethics taught by faculty. The school also works with Roma youth.

CORE BELIEFS, VALUES AND GOALS

As stated in the CSER, the Vision of EEBC is

To inspire the new generation of Christian believers to active service in church and society.

Strongly anchored in the Word of God and providing a balance between theoretical knowledge, spiritual formation and practical experience, Eastern European Bible College is committed to training effective servants for the great work of building and expanding God's Kingdom, in Romania and abroad.

Objectives are:

- To develop in the students' deep knowledge of the Christian message and teach them to communicate it effectively;
- To equip the students with the appropriate tools for personal systematic study of the Scriptures;
- To help the students to understand the ministry of the church and its role in society;
- To help the students to develop leadership abilities in their different areas of service
- To develop in the students Christ-like character

GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF INSTITUTION AND PROGRAMMES

The school is an evangelical alternative provider of higher education with a long and effective history which has suffered a fall in student numbers recently due to a number of factors beyond their control, seeking to offer a level seven programme in Theology and Culture, within a competitive environment in Romania.

There is one programme included in the request for concept accreditation:

The two-year level 7 research programme designated by the school Master în Teologie și Cultură through which it seeks to fulfil its mission and vision as stated above.

D. Findings of the review

Description of the extent of the review

This report relates to a Cyclical Review of the institution and an initial review of the EQF Level 7 intended programme in Theology and Culture by means of Concept Accreditation – an initial stage of programme accreditation for courses not yet being taught but substantially planned.

The examination of the institution in this visit will have the value of a cyclical renewal visit for institutional accreditation. The examination of the programme has the value of an initial assessment of the plans to deliver the programme, which will be taken further towards programme accreditation in a follow-up visit.

Therefore, standards relating to the institution (part A of *Standards and Guidelines*) have the value of a cyclical review of the institution. Standards relating to the programme (part B of *Standards and Guidelines*) have the value of initial assessment of programme standards (B1-B5) and relate to the elements which are in place, well documented and thus could be assessed. Recommendations and requirements related to Standards B1-B5 are included with a view to the final programme accreditation after a follow-up-visit.

The last cyclical review took place in 2014 and re-accreditation was obtained in 2015. Previous recommendations and requirements from this review are included in the report below only in respect to the institutional standards (three relevant areas) and not those relating to programme standards since no programme existing then is presented for review this time.

D1 - Standards relating to the institution

A.1 - IDENTITY AND PURPOSE

INSTITUTIONS HAVE CLEARLY FORMULATED STATEMENTS OF IDENTITY AND PURPOSE

Guidelines examined	A.1.1 identity, A.1.2 Legal and Fiscal status, A.1.3 Vision and Mission, A.1.4 Public information.
Previous requirements or recommendations	2015 “The school has presented an appropriate mission statement. Short and long term development plans are clearly spelled out in reference to the school facilities yet not sufficiently in the area of faculty and programme development.”
Evidence of Compliance;	C-SER A.1, examination of ancillary documents, in particular, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Statutes • EEBC Bylaws and Regulations. Meetings with leaders faculty, stakeholders and students of the school.
Analysis	<p>EEBC understands itself as an alternative provider of tertiary evangelical theological education. It supports the statement of faith of the European Evangelical Association. The core Christian values are integrated into the programme presented for accreditation. The application of biblical standards is embedded in all aspects of the institution’s operations.</p> <p>EEBC complies with the legal and fiscal standards and regulations of Romania. The institution understands that ECTE accreditation does not serve degree recognition purposes. It seeks an evaluation of its EQF Level 7 programme as evidence of international comparability and continual improvement of quality.</p> <p>The institution’s vision and mission statements are in operation. The respective documents are regularly reviewed by the school’s leadership. They indicate the programme’s intention to achieve a balance between vocational, spiritual and academic elements in the provision of theological education.</p> <p>The school’s activities and identity are accessible for the public and future applicants for registration. Website (eebc.ro) and Facebook page (since 2011) are in Romanian, attractive and user-friendly. They offer accessible information on activities and programmes, admission process and criteria, some teaching and</p>

	<p>learning procedures. There is a catalogue with course offerings for 2021-22. The 'About' section is under construction, the 'History of EEBC' stops in 2004, these pages are going to be updated. The budget is approved by an external auditor, who is recognized by the government.</p> <p>The institution has clearly formulated statements of purpose and identity.</p>
Recommendations, requirements	None
Panel conclusion	Fully compliant

A.2 - GOVERNANCE AND QUALITY ASSURANCE.

INSTITUTIONS HAVE APPROPRIATE AND EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE AND QUALITY ASSURANCE STRUCTURES

Guidelines examined	A.2.1 Governance, A.2.2 Leadership and Management, A.2.3 Decision-making structures, A.2.4 strategic planning, A.2.5 Internal Quality Assurance procedures, A.2.6 Cyclical External Quality Assurance.
Previous requirements or recommendations	None
Evidence of Compliance	<p>C-SER A.2, examination of QA processes on the ground and meetings with leadership and governance personnel. Documents including;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management structures • Organisational chart
Analysis	<p>Effective governance is in place. The Representative Council and Executive Council are firmly committed to evangelical values. Continuity of board members and executive leaders as well as good financial and administrative practice give evidence of stability and sustainability for a future MA programme.</p> <p>The institution finds itself in a period of leadership transition which has been challenging and they are creatively optimising human and financial resources. Different leadership functions are spelled out in writing. Internal review reports are set up regularly. The engagement of an external examiner is not obligatory. However, it might help the school to get an objective perspective of the</p>

internal operations of the school. The institution has procedures in place that model Christian patterns of leadership and community. Administrative and academic staff are encouraged to achieve the mission of the institution through effective planning and implementation.

Decision making structures are clear and transparent. Faculty, staff and students participate in decision-making. Student government structures are in place. Matters relating to community life and academic programmes are areas for students involvement in decision making. They are informed about the By-laws and regulations of the school at the beginning of their studies. External stakeholders are also encouraged to comment on the school's decisions and to make suggestions in different areas of EEBC's operations.

EEBC has short and long-term plans for administration, management and its academic programme and the planned learning outcomes envisaged for the new MA programme. The institution's strategic plan includes a mission statement with institutional values and core values plus long-term development plans to fulfil the mission statement. Financial forecasting exists.

The Representative Council and Executive Board cooperate in designing, approving, implementing and reviewing strategic plans. Due to external and internal factors, planning throughout the last years seems rather to have been ad hoc.

The leadership promotes a culture of integrity, quality and improvement. Some regular and needs-based quality assurance policies and procedures are in place. Quality assessment of organisational units, institutional leadership, staff members and students exist. Students are expected to give feedback on design, delivery and assessment of their study programme. Vigilance against academic fraud, intolerance and discrimination are in place.

The school has regular institutional and programme assessment as well as adequate record-keeping procedures. External quality assurance is predominantly practised by ECTE. Separation between board and executive functions exist and exist in writing. Governance and quality assurance are well practised. Quality assessment processes are implemented.

Recommendations, requirements	<p>Recommendation: The Representative Council and the Executive Board at present are not independent from each other. The members of the Executive Board are also voting members of the Representative Council. We recommend that the school consider a solution that guarantees independence. A governing board handbook, including orientation of new board members, policies on conflict of interest, quorum and voting regulations does not exist and should be written.</p> <p>Recommendation: We recommend EEBC consider documenting their strategic plan in more detail. Areas could include: how and when the goals may be attained, what resources are required, who will be responsible for each element and to whom they are accountable, what group will monitor the process, as well as the role of the board in the development and approval of the plan.</p> <p>Recommendation: We recommend EEBC consider an overall perspective or policy of quality assurance that would be put in writing</p>
Panel conclusion	Substantially compliant

A.3 - HUMAN RESOURCES

HUMAN RESOURCES IN INSTITUTIONS ARE FIT FOR PURPOSE AND MANAGED FOR FLOURISHING

Guidelines examined	A.3.1 Human Resources; A.3.2 Non-Educational Staff; A.3.3 Educational Staff; A.3.4 HR Policies and procedures;
Previous requirements or recommendations	<p>2015 “The core faculty of full-time lecturers seems very small - only two full-time lecturers. After the departure of two members of staff, full-time faculty members have to deal with additional administrative responsibilities. Salaries in Romania are low, therefore part-time lecturers often have multiple jobs, which does affect the time they can devote to teaching at EEBC. We recognize, however, that this is an issue across the region. We encourage the Representative Council and the Executive Board to keep monitoring the workload of the staff and seek ways to alleviate it wherever possible.”</p> <p>“The number of full-time teaching staff is minimal, which results in rather significant reliance on part-time teachers. This in itself raises issues regarding quality and consistency across the courses, and needs to be carefully monitored. If possible, an increase in staff numbers would be highly desirable.”</p>

	“Faculty and staff development plans should be put in writing”
Evidence of Compliance;	<p>C-SER A.3, discussion in meetings with leaders, staff and students, ancillary documents including;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff and faculty lists • Job description sample
Analysis	<p>The institution’s leadership considers their personnel as their prime asset and responsibility. Human resources to carry out the educational programme effectively are limited. The workload of faculty members for the planned EQF Level 7 programme must be carefully examined. According to the P-SER (page 7) more than 50% of the faculty seem to be engaged in church ministry outside of their engagement with EEBC. A solution for the problem should be considered despite financial limitations in the budget. A faculty handbook could be produced to inform visiting professors of EEBC’s regulations and procedures.</p> <p>The non-educational staff are qualified for their responsibilities. They are spiritually mature and show Christian character. The institution has clear and transparent procedures for staff recruitment and employment. At the moment EEBC is trying to recruit additional staff.</p> <p>The educational staff have appropriate academic qualifications and come from relevant cultural and linguistic context. The faculty members are qualified in Theology and adult pedagogy. They possess a Doctoral level qualification, which should predominantly lie in their teaching area. Teachers know how to promote student-centred learning. They will actively promote in students the acquisition of knowledge and the development of generic and specific competences. Normally the central courses of the academic programme are expected to be taught by full-time lecturers. It is laudable that EEBC encourages further training of the faculty and scholarly activity. The faculty is expected to actively participate in the life and worship of the theological institution and in character formation and spiritual growth of students. The teaching load of EQF Level 7 faculty should not go beyond 10-12 hours per week.</p> <p>EEBC has written policies concerning staff recruitment and development, salary regulations and social services. Job descriptions, appeal procedures and redundancy and dismissal procedures are in place and implemented. There is a data protection policy and EEBC complies with GDPR guidelines.</p>

	In summary, human resources are well cared for. Procedures in most areas of the school's operations exist in writing.
Recommendations, requirements	<p>Recommendation: For the future development of the academic programme, we recommend appointing a programme director to monitor the development of the EQF Level 7 programme. The need for a "field director" type role, with the responsibility of monitoring the practical aspects of the course has been mentioned. EEBC is encouraged to consider developing a faculty development programme, and that this be put in writing.</p> <p>Recommendation: We recommend the school's plans for staff's ongoing professional development be put in writing.</p>
Panel conclusion	Substantially compliant

A.4 - COMMUNITY AND CONTEXT

INSTITUTIONS DISPLAY HEALTHY COMMUNITY DYNAMICS IN ACTIVE RESPONSE TO CONTEXT

Guidelines examined	A.4.1 Learning Community; A.4.2 Stakeholder Community; A.4.3 Civil Community; A.4.4 Communication.
Previous requirements or recommendations	None
Evidence of Compliance;	C-SER A.4. Meetings with students and alumni, meetings with faculty formally and informally.
Analysis	<p>A sense of community life is fostered and considered as a core component of theological education. Students, members of staff, faculty and governing board are actively engaged in fulfilling this mission as their availability allows. Hands-on learning, exhibition visits, service opportunities and extra-curricular activities together with staff and faculty allow for possibilities of social and spiritual recreation, mutual learning, relationships and character development. Ethical codes and disciplinary regulations are in place and applied.</p> <p>The school has good relations with external stakeholders, that include alumni, churches, supporting ministry organisations, other theological institutions, graduates and donors. Where necessary,</p>

	<p>relations with future or potential employers of graduates could be helpful.</p> <p>EEBC has very good relations with local civil authorities and the broader community and has set an example of Christian engagement in society in the present Ukraine crisis. Students are encouraged to set an example of good behaviour when moving in the broader community. Curriculum prepares students to engage with civil society and its questions and reflect on these theologically.</p> <p>Communication policies are transparent and truthful. Internal information is objective and readily accessible. This includes a student handbook, fee schedules and board minutes. Social, spiritual and physical extra-curricular activities are provided. Contact and dialogue with other educational and theological institutions exists.</p> <p>Overall, the institution expresses healthy community dynamics and is aware of the context in which it functions.</p>
Recommendations, requirements	<p>Recommendation: We recommend that opportunities for input from alumni, stakeholders and external groups be further developed.</p>
Panel conclusion	<p>Substantially Compliant</p>

A.5 - EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES

INSTITUTIONS HAVE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES THAT SUPPORT THEIR MISSION AND STRATEGY

Guidelines examined	A.5.1 Student services; A.5.2 Study facilities; A.5.3 Library/Learning Resource Centres; A.5.4 Information management; A.5.5 Information Technology; A.5.6 Virtual Learning Environment and Educational Resources.
Previous requirements or recommendations	None
Evidence of Compliance	SER A.5. Meeting formally and informally with different staff members involved in student services: VET received an insightful tour of the campus including library facilities and catalogues.
Analysis	<p>Student services focus on mentoring programmes, pastoral counselling, academic skills support, peer support and technical support. These services are adequate, readily accessible and fit for purpose. The shift towards student-centred learning and flexible modes of learning and teaching is shown by the ratio between in-class teaching and supervised learning of future students. Students are informed at the beginning of their studies of available services.</p> <p>EEBC's student facilities are very well laid out for educational purposes. The media facilities such as radio and video studios are exceptional and put to good use. The learning platform Moodle is being used for storing materials for taught modules. Facilities for e-learning are in place. Buildings and furnishings and IT provision for use are suitable for the use of the students. Master plans for existing and possible extensions of facilities are in place.</p> <p>EEBC's library uses the Dewey system. A sufficient number of study places exist. Via the internet students have access to a number of high quality academic libraries. At present library holdings amount to about 17,000 books. The school is about to produce a library development plan in writing to diversify its collection as necessary for the MA programme in Theology and Culture. Periodicals for different fields of Theology including Practical Theology and sciences exist. The library operates on a self-service system. Students have access to the library for 24 hours per day. A faculty member supported by a student is responsible for library services.</p>

	<p>An online catalogue of the library holdings is in place. The library holds a robust percentage of books in English. The possibility of getting books via Logos free of charge was mentioned by the VET. The budget for the library is in line with ECTE standards.</p> <p>EEBC administration collects, analyzes and uses data and information relating to the school's academic programme and other activities. Appropriate record-keeping, complying with GDPR, is in place. The archives contain student progress files and transcripts.</p> <p>Information Technology, such as project-management and library software, are utilised to promote the educational mission and the proper organisation of the institution.</p> <p>Apart from in-class instruction EEBC offers some distance and online modules and provides the necessary virtual learning platform Moodle with technical support for students and faculty. We recommend that faculty be trained in the effective use of the platform for educational purposes.</p> <p>In summary, in different areas EEBC's educational resources are adequate. Further development is necessary in the area of library services.</p>
Commendations, recommendations, requirements	<p>Recommendation: EEBC is encouraged to engage a librarian who has sufficient and ongoing training to advise students and faculty members on recent publications in theology and cultural studies, to provide statistics on the use of the library and to serve the library where necessary. As the majority of the books currently in the library are in English, we recommend that future applicants for the EQF Level 7 programme be proficient in English.</p>
Panel conclusion	Substantial compliance

A.6 - FINANCES AND SUSTAINABILITY

INSTITUTIONS HAVE SUITABLE FINANCIAL POTENTIAL, PLANNING, POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Guidelines examined	A.6.1 Financial Potential and Planning; A.6.2 Financial Policies and Procedures; A.6.3 Sustainability; A.6.4 Remuneration and Fees; A.6.5 Fundraising.
Previous requirements or recommendations	2015 “There are financial challenges to be met. Again, EEBC needs to continue exploring ways of becoming more self-sufficient.”
Evidence of Compliance	C-SER A.6, discussions with the relevant leaders and staff responsible for financial management, recruitment and publicity. Budgets and audited accounts were available.
Analysis	<p>EEBC has improved its financial situation by renting out its facilities for special occasions. Ongoing donations have remained stable throughout the Covid-19 pandemic. An approved business plan matching the mission and strategic planning could be developed.</p> <p>Financial policies are documented in written form. All spending is carried out on the basis of an authorised budget. Accounting procedures are audited by a qualified public auditor.</p> <p>The institution shows signs of sustainability. This is proven by a stable financial condition at this time and by a continuity of board membership, administrative and academic leadership and faculty membership. The planned EQF Level 7 programme will have to show satisfactory student enrolment figures and continuity in its programme of instruction.</p> <p>Staff and faculty salaries and additional social services are comparable to public salaries. Employment contracts exist in writing. Student fees are transparent and reviewed regularly.</p> <p>Fundraising procedures are transparent and truthful. Financial records and budgets are externally audited and made public. Financial planning and strategic plans are published likewise.</p> <p>Overall, Financial planning, policies and procedures are transparent and effective. Sustainability of the new EQF Level 7 programme will have to be under review.</p>
Recommendations, requirements	None
Panel conclusion	Full compliance

D2 Standards relating to the programme

B.1 - HOLISTIC INTEGRATION

INSTITUTIONS FORM THEIR STUDENTS WITHIN A HOLISTIC APPROACH TO THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION, CAREFULLY INTEGRATING SPIRITUAL FORMATION, CHARACTER EDUCATION, ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AND PRACTICAL TRAINING

Guidelines examined	B.1.1 Holistic Integration; B.1.2 Spiritual Formation; B.1.3 Character Education; B.1.4 Academic Achievement; B.1.5 Practical training; B.1.6 Mentoring.
Previous requirements or recommendations	
Evidence of Compliance;	
Analysis	<p>EEBC has a tradition of integrating academic learning, character education and spiritual formation. They emphasise a holistic approach to curriculum design that allows for engagement with real life issues encountered by believers and churches. The programme is an EQF Level 7 programme in Theology and Culture. The programme, officially designated as research oriented, featuring an emphasis on developing professional skills and critical awareness of knowledge issues in theology and at the interface with other fields. The programme is specially designed to enable students to enter into dialogue with secular world views and scientific approaches to life and to meet the problems of the present day Romanian society. The dialogue and engagement seem to cross denominational lines. The programme's goal is to achieve its predetermined learning outcomes.</p> <p>The school wants its programme to apply to contexts where spiritual formation can grow. Spiritual formation components as part of the curriculum are regularly assessed and included in the calculation of ECTS credits.</p> <p>There are plans for the Executive Board to evaluate the faculty's commitment to spiritual formation of students and there is a list of activities for implementation of spiritual formation. More information as to the procedure of assessing these qualities objectively should be put in writing.</p>

	<p>The school provides sufficient contexts where character and virtue are modelled and mature Christian character becomes apparent serving as an example for staff and students likewise.</p> <p>They have implemented aspects of character education in curriculum design, for example through course contents and learning activities. Assessment is planned through self-reflective essays in the Mentoring course.</p> <p>Retreats, spiritual disciplines week and study trips are planned in providing opportunities for character education, spiritual formation and practical training. Where credits are awarded, examples of evidence for character development are desirable.</p> <p>The level described by the Dublin Descriptors for an EQF Level 7 programme is observed in the design of the individual modules. The school understands ECTS and indicates the number of ECTS credits for each course or activity in the academic calendar. ECTS are used according to ECTE standards. Credits awarded by other ECTE accredited schools can be fully transferred to EEBC's final credit counting.</p> <p>In developing an EQF Level 7 programme in theology and culture EEBC seeks to enter into dialogue with culture from a perspective of theology. In order to reduce the gap between theory and practise the curriculum contains a series of practical learning activities at the intersection of culture, society and theology. Following introductory lectures and dialogues e.g. with an artist, a workshop about reading and reflecting on a work of art may follow. The school includes in its different courses learning activities to develop abilities required of graduates in their future service. Activities such as practica in church context, experiential learning and reflective practice are part of the formal learning plan and are included in the total calculation of ECTS credits. Generic learning activities are also part of the educational programme.</p> <p>A mentoring programme sponsored by EEBC includes an on-going evaluation of students by faculty members in order to inform them on their academic and spiritual progress. Graduate profiles are kept in the student files. There is an awareness of tailoring teachers' time allocation accordingly.</p> <p>Students will be trained for service by a holistic approach in theological and culture oriented education, which includes</p>
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	spiritual formation, character training, academic progress and practical training.
Recommendations, requirements	<p>Requirement: The final design of the programme will require module descriptors following the template of the one already received by the VET team.</p> <p>Requirement: More information as to the procedure of assessing spiritual formation, character development, mentoring and practical learning objectively must be put in writing.</p>
Panel conclusion	Compliance to be determined during follow-up visit

B.2 - CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

INSTITUTIONS DESIGN AND IMPLEMENT APPROVED, OUTCOME-BASED PROGRAMMES THAT ARE FIT FOR PURPOSE IN CONTEXT

Guidelines examined	B.2.1 Design and approval processes; B.2.2 Outcomes and fitness for purpose; B.2.3 Curricula, Module descriptors and learning activities; B.2.4 Graduate profiles; B.2.5 Content, level, feasibility and progression; B.2.6 Credit allocation and duration; B.2.7 Content; B.2.8 Monitoring processes.
Previous requirements or recommendations	
Evidence of Compliance	
Analysis	<p>EEBC's EQF Level 7 programme is outcome-based and includes all components that are needed for effective service. Students, stakeholders and external experts have contributed to the formation of the existing academic programme. The programme is geared to the Framework for Qualifications of European Higher Education.</p> <p>EEBC's academic programme is research based and seeks the integration of research and practice. It contains clearly defined learning outcomes that take into account fitness for purpose, the content of the school's mission statement and the ecclesiastical and cultural context of its students. The learning outcomes refer to academic skills, practical abilities, spiritual and character formation.</p>

	<p>The academic programme has standard module descriptors indicating learning outcomes and objectives, content, instructional methods, assessment criteria and the requirements for the award of credits for each module. EEBC must clarify whether the programme contains a sufficient component of biblical teaching in view of the fact that not all students need to hold an EQF Level 6 or equivalent qualification as a prerequisite in the area of theological studies . It might be helpful to provide introductory/survey modules in areas of biblical studies for those students who have not studied theology.</p> <p>Graduate profiles exist, are regularly reviewed and are fit for purpose. Continued training possibilities for graduates could be considered on an ongoing basis.</p> <p>The programme offered by EEBC includes different emphases: theological and biblical studies and practice-oriented units such as traineeships, internships and other periods of the programme that allow the student to gain experience outside the classroom. Theological modules move from foundational to advanced levels of study and of competence (= appropriate progression).</p> <p>Credit allocation is transparent and ECTS is understood and applied correctly. Student learning activities are evaluated on the basis of the demonstration of learning outcomes. Credits are awarded for all learning activities that match learning outcomes. Guidelines could be developed for the allocation of credits for prior learning, non-formal and informal learning.</p> <p>Curricular content and applied delivery modes are appropriate. Graduates are prepared for different vocations and contexts. The school will install a regular review process of the curriculum. The review will check whether the programme responds to the needs of students, stakeholders and society. Evidence of excellence are module descriptors and a variety of learning activities</p> <p>Overall, EEBC has designed an outcome-based programme that could well be fit for purpose.</p>
<p>Recommendations, requirements</p>	<p>Recommendations: One module contains 20 hours of in class lectures and 165 hours of directed learning and independent study: details and procedures need to be put in writing.</p>

	<p>Recommendation: The balance between theology and culturally oriented components of the EQF Level 7 programme be spelled out in detail.</p> <p><u>Requirement:</u> As the programme has not yet been implemented the programme is expected to be under review for accreditation until 30 ECTS out of the 120 ECTS have been gained by students (cf. Criteria and Procedures p. 15 point nine 'Decision making').</p>
Panel conclusion	Compliance to be determined during follow-up visit

B.3 - LEARNING, TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT

INSTITUTIONS IMPLEMENT GOOD EDUCATIONAL PRACTICE IN AREAS OF LEARNING, TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT

Guidelines examined	B.3.1 Educational philosophy and adult pedagogy; B.3.2 Student centred learning and teaching and assessment; B.3.3 Module design and delivery; B.3.4 Variety; B.3.5 Delivery feedback; B.3.6 Assessment.
Previous requirements or recommendations	
Evidence of Compliance;	
Analysis	<p>EEBC has a clear and transparent educational philosophy grounded on the school's mission. The educational staff have appropriate academic qualifications and come from relevant cultural and linguistic context. The faculty members are qualified in theology and adult pedagogy. The realisation of the programme, however, depends on future student numbers registered for the programme.</p> <p>Student-centred learning is one of the goals of the educational programme. Lecturers aim at strengthening students' motivation, self-reflection and engagement in the learning process. Students are encouraged to be autonomous learners and applicants of self-regulation strategies. Procedures for students' complaints, academic misconduct and plagiarism are in place and implemented.</p>

	<p>Module design and delivery methods are adequate. EEBC plans to use a variety of approaches to teaching and learning in relation to module aims and learning outcomes. A variety of assessment methods for the new programme are being planned for exams, projects and practical tests. Feedback from students and stakeholders in written form will be a regular practice.</p> <p>Consistent and fair assessment will be carried out in accordance with the requirements for each module and in accordance with learning outcomes. Different types of assessment will be applied for the different areas of the programme. Completion of assignments, an exam for each module and a master-level thesis will lead to the successful completion of the academic programme. Assessment criteria for practica, exams and thesis will exist in written form when implemented. Assessment regulations will be published in advance. Appeal procedures exist in written form and will be applied.</p> <p>Overall, The EQF Level 7 programme suggests good educational practice in the areas of learning, teaching and assessment.</p>
Recommendations, requirements	None
Panel conclusion	Compliance to be determined during follow-up visit

B.4 - STUDENT ADMISSION, PROGRESSION, RECOGNITION AND CERTIFICATION

INSTITUTIONS FORMULATE AND IMPLEMENT SUITABLE POLICIES FOR THE STUDENT "LIFE CYCLE" THAT INCLUDES ADMISSION, PROGRESSION, RECOGNITION AND CERTIFICATION.

Guidelines examined	B.4.1 Admission; B.4.2 Progression; B.4.3 Recognition; B.4.4 Graduation and certification.
Previous requirements or recommendations	
Evidence of Compliance	
Analysis	<p>Admission policies are clearly formulated and published on the website and in the student handbook. Written candidate profiles enable the school to evaluate the suitability of the applicants for EEBC's academic programme.</p> <p>Progression regulations exist in writing. Individualised action plans designed by a faculty member with the student are envisioned to ensure successful completion of the programme.</p> <p>EEBC has clear regulations for the recognition of higher education qualifications, non-BA qualifications and for recognition of non-formal and informal learning</p> <p>Graduation and certification regulations are clear and will be applied consistently. Assessment procedures including final thesis ensure that the graduating students have met the described programme outcomes. Students will be informed of graduation requirements when they are admitted to the educational programme. Graduates get an accreditation certificate with a statement of comparability and a Diploma Supplement.</p> <p>Overall, student admission and graduation regulations and practices meet ECTE standards for a prospective EQF Level 7 learning opportunity.</p>
Recommendations, requirements	None
Panel conclusion	Compliance to be determined during follow-up visit

B.5 - QUALIFICATION NOMENCLATURE AND CREDITS

INSTITUTIONS FOLLOW INTERNATIONALLY RECOGNISED QUALIFICATION NOMENCLATURE AND CREDIT-COUNTING SYSTEMS

Guidelines examined	B.5.1 Qualification nomenclature; B.5.2 Credits
Previous requirements or recommendations	
Evidence of Compliance	
Analysis	<p>The qualification resulting from EEBC's programme is clearly specified and communicated. The certificate awarded to students will indicate comparability to EQF level 7.</p> <p>The ECTS awarded in connection with EEBC's presented programme are in line with the ECTE Certification Framework.</p> <p>EEBC follows the international credit counting system. The ECTS awarded in connection with the EQF Level 7 programme are in line with the ECTE Certification Framework.</p>
recommendations, requirements	None
Panel conclusion	Compliance to be determined during follow-up visit

E. CONCLUSIONS

SUMMARY OF COMMENDATIONS

EEBC is a fine institution, with many strengths. The C-SER was well organized and clearly formulated. The institution responded (where relevant) to the recommendations and requirements made by the previous accreditation visits. The P-SER was thoughtfully put together in anticipation of the new programme. We would like specially to mention the following:

1. There is an impressive level of creativity and forward thinking of the staff to develop a programme which seeks to meet the needs of Romania today.
2. The last few years have caused difficulties with the low uptake from students and the Covid-19 pandemic, and the perseverance and adaptability of the school to both of these challenges is commendable.
3. The school is on a solid financial basis. The fundraising and networking efforts have been very successful, and this should be an encouragement moving forward.
4. EEBC has always been very cooperative with ECTE whenever any issues came up and was open to all manner of advice given by ECTE.
5. The holistic approach, the balance between theological education, spiritual formation and character growth is a real strong point of the school.
6. The proposed EQF Level 7 programme, whilst being academic and research-orientated, is also very practical in its approach and in its content.
7. Core Christian values are central to all the school's work and educational programmes.
8. The development of the facilities (meeting rooms, video and sound studios etc.) is a great resource for the school and community to use.
9. There is a strong engagement from all staff and faculty members in realising student-oriented learning.
10. Despite great difficulties during the Covid-19 pandemic, the school has endeavoured to provide all relevant and necessary documents to ECTE.
11. The principal's efforts to build a network of supporters has been highly successful in building a family of educators. This will provide support, guidance and encouragement moving forward.
12. The willingness to support refugees from Ukraine during the current crisis has been wonderful to see and shows that the Christian values held by the school are lived out.

Best Practice Advice

1. A faculty handbook could be produced to inform visiting professors of EEBC's regulations and procedures.
2. Library holds a number of print specialised books and academic journals with holdings in missions, media studies and pastoral and dogmatic theology. As level 7 programs expect a broad exposure, it might be useful to negotiate access for students to libraries of nearby schools and universities. Many relevant academic titles are also available as e-books and e-journals in open access and information on these can be made available to students on a library website or in a special section on Moodle. An Orientation session for new students on library and online resources and on search strategies will be useful.
3. We suggest that faculty be trained in the effective use of the Moodle platform for educational purposes.
4. An approved business plan matching the mission and strategic planning could be developed.
5. Continued training possibilities on an ongoing basis for graduates could be considered.
6. Guidelines could be developed for the allocation of credits for prior learning, non-formal and informal learning and for possible transfer credits.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The Representative Council and the Executive Board at present are not independent from each other. The members of the Executive Board are also voting members of the Representative Council. We recommend that the school consider a solution that guarantees independence. A governing board handbook, including orientation of new board members, policies on conflict of interest, quorum and voting regulations does not exist and should be written.
2. We recommend EEBC consider documenting their strategic plan in more detail. Areas could include: How and when the goals may be attained, what resources are required, who will be responsible for each element and to whom they are accountable, what group will monitor the process, as well as the role of the board in the development and approval of the plan.
3. We recommend EEBC consider an overall policy of quality assurance that would be put in writing.
4. For the future development of the academic programme, we recommend appointing a programme director to monitor the development of the EQF Level 7 programme. The need for a “field director” type role, with the responsibility of monitoring the practical learning in the courses has been mentioned. EEBC is encouraged to consider developing a faculty development programme, and that this be put in writing.
5. We recommend that EEBC engage a qualified librarian who has ongoing training to advise students and faculty members on recent publications in theology and cultural studies, to provide statistics on the use of the library and to serve the library where necessary. As the majority of the books currently in the library are in English, we recommend that future applicants for the EQF Level 7 programme be proficient in English.
6. We recommend the school’s plans for staff’s ongoing professional development be put in writing.
7. We recommend that opportunities for input from alumni, stakeholders and external groups be further developed.
8. We recommend that where credits are awarded, examples of evidence for character development are involved.
9. Planned so far are that one module contains 20 hours of in class lectures and 165 hours of direct learning and independent study: We recommend that details and procedures are put in writing for this.
10. We recommend that the balance between theology and culturally oriented components of the EQF Level 7 programme be spelled out in detail.

SUMMARY OF REQUIREMENTS for Programme Accreditation

Explanation:

As the EQF Level 7 programme has not yet been implemented the programme is expected to be under review for accreditation until all standards are assessable and full accreditation has been granted by ECTE Accreditation Commission (cf Concept Accreditation)

1. The final design of the programme will require module descriptors following the template of the one already received by the VET team. (cf. Standard B3.3 “Institutions implement good practice in module design” and, under heading example of evidence, “Module Descriptors”.)
2. More information as to the procedure of objectively assessing spiritual formation, character development, mentoring and practical learning must be put in writing and included in the follow-up P-SER submitted in preparation of the follow-up site visit. (Cf. Standards B.1.2 - Spiritual Formation; B1.3 - Character Formation; B.1.5 - Practical Training; and B.1.6 - Mentoring).

IN CONCLUSION

The visitation team recommends to the ECTE Accreditation Commission that EEBC be judged to be in compliance with the *Standards and Guidelines* of the ECTE in the Institutional area with no requirements.

The team recommends the renewal of Institutional accreditation, with the relevant (first seven) recommendations listed above, monitored through the annual reporting processes of ECTE.

The team suggests to the Academic Commission that EEBC be commended for the work done so far on the level 7 course, ask the school to note the relevant recommendations above (8, 9 and 10) and work on the requirements which relate to the programme, and set a date for a second visitation in accordance with the regulations, to complete the accreditation process for the programme.

The visitation team would like to record their gratitude to EEBC for a warm welcome and constantly helpful interaction with the team throughout the process. It was truly a meeting of colleagues in the process from which we in the team learnt much and greatly appreciated the staff and leadership of EEBC for their excellence and commitment in following their calling.

In producing this report, all those involved as peer experts have been free from undue influence or stakeholders on the findings, analysis, conclusions, commendations, recommendations, and requirements.

The visitation team.

Signed:

Horst Born, Germany, (Team leader)

Katharina Penner, Austria

James Lockwood, Ireland (student representative)

Dr Graham Cheesman, UK, (Review Secretary)

May 2022