

REVIEW REPORT

European Theological Seminary (ETS),
Freudenstadt-Kniebis

Related to a visit for a Cyclical Review;
March 23-25, 2026

ECTE

European Council for
Theological Education

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A. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Report of a Cyclical Review of the institution and one programme of the European Theological Seminary (ETS), Freudenstadt-Kniebis, alternative provider of higher education (AP).

This report presents the findings of the accreditation review conducted from July 2025 to May 2026. The evaluation comprised a desk analysis of the submitted Cyclical Self-Evaluation Report (C-SER) and supplemental documentation, followed by a site visit on 23-25 March 2026.

The purpose of the review was to assess ETS's EQF 6 /First Cycle (P) programme based on the ECTE's *Standards and Guidelines* and relevant ECTE Supplemental Guidelines. The ECTE review process is based on parts 2 and 3 of the [Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area](#) (ESG 2015).

In evaluating the provider using the ECTE Standards referenced to the ESG, the panel reached the following overall conclusions:

ECTE Standards and Guidelines	ESG 1	Compliance rating ⁶
A1 – Identity and purpose	1.8	Substantial compliance
A2 – Governance and QA	1.1 and 1.10	Substantial compliance
A3 – Human resources	1.5	Substantial compliance
A4 – Community and context		Compliance
A5 – Educational resources	1.6 and 1.7	Substantial compliance
A6—Finances and sustainability	1.6	Compliance
B1 – Holistic integration		Compliance
B2 – Curriculum development	1.2 and 1.9	Substantial compliance
B3 – Learning, teaching and assessment	1.3	Substantial compliance
B4 – Student admission, progression, recognition and certification	1.4	Substantial compliance
B5 – Qualification nomenclature and credits	1.2	Compliance

The visitation evaluation team (VET) suggests to the ECTE Accreditation Commission (AC) three commendations of excellence, nine recommendations, and no requirements.

B. INTRODUCTION TO THE REVIEW

Description of the review

ETS obtained institutional and programme accreditation from ECTE as an AP in 2004 with the last re-accreditation in 2021.

Programmes

Programmes submitted for accreditation in 2026:

EQF/QF-EHEA	Name of qualification used by ETS	ECTS	ISCED Level	ICETE Level	Delivery Mode
EQF 6 /First Cycle (P)	Advanced Certificate in Christian Ministries	180	6	Bachelor	hybrid

The Visitation Evaluation Team

The composition of the VET team to ETS was as follows:

Katharina Penner (Team Leader)
Beneamin Mocan (VET Member)
Lara Meinke (Student Representative)
Ervehe Ndreca (ECTE VET Coordinator)

Visit Arrangements

The SER was written following the template set out in the [ECTE protocol for writing an SER](#) and was received, along with supporting documents, in time by the Accreditation Director (AD).

The ECTE VET-Coordinator (VC) recommended the team to the AC. The AC approved the team and the dates of the review visit, and these were communicated to ETS by the VC who also asked the institution if they had any reservations about the team members, but there were none.

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

1. The Review Coordinator (RC) provided access for the VET-members to the SER, supplemental documents, and all previous correspondence with the institution via hyperlink.
2. A shared working report document was set up for members of the VET to access and modify throughout the visit. The document follows the structure of the interim report form pertaining to the current standards and protocol of ECTE. This was filled out and commented on by members of the VET in preparations and as the visit progressed in preparation for the interim report delivered to the institution on the last day of the visit.
3. The Internal Review Coordinator (IRC) of the institution was identified and received a draft version of the visit protocol.
4. In conjunction with the VET leader, the IRC organised and agreed to a schedule for the visit.
5. The panel held two preparatory online meetings with a representative of ECTE and the RC.

6. A shared working report document was set up for members of the team to access and modify throughout the visit. The document follows the structure of the 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.

The team was very warmly received by the leadership and the staff. The institution provided all online and on-campus means needed for an effective evaluation of the educational aspects and communal life. From the team's point of view, the documentation submitted was well produced, and discussions held were transparent and sufficient for the purposes of the evaluation. The documentation provided a useful summary of the institution's current state and response to previous recommendations. The review took place from July 2025 to May 2026, with the site visit on 23rd-25th March 2026.

The review was conducted in English.

Visit Schedule

Meetings with stakeholders occurred as follows, at times including all the VET and other times the VET split up and attended different meetings:

President	Learning Resources
Academic Dean	Library Staff
Leadership Team	Board Members
Administrative Staff	External Stakeholders
Educational Staff	Students
Mentors/Tutors	Alumni
Teaching Faculty	Support Staff

The team also attended devotions and classes in NT Exegesis and Introduction to Sociology.

The complete schedule is in the Appendix to this report.

C. INTRODUCTION TO THE INSTITUTION AND PROGRAMMES

General Description of Institution

ETS has been a member of ECTE since 1989 and has been accredited as an institution since 2004, most recently in 2021.

ETS is a Pentecostal-Charismatic educational institution, located in Kniebis, Germany, affiliated with the Church of God (Cleveland, Tennessee). ETS is approved by the Ministry of Education in the State of Baden-Württemberg, Germany, as a technical college (Fachschule) for training church workers and for the purpose of German financial aid (BAföG).

Mission and Vision Statement

ETS aims to equip people from all over the world to fulfil the Great Commission and to provide them with the practical tools needed in their respective fields so that they can effectively serve in leadership roles in churches, missions, and society. This involves a holistic learning process on three levels: knowing (classroom lectures and learning activities encourage academic reflection and dialogue), being (life in the spiritual community emphasises social, spiritual, and character formation), and doing (practicums and internships help to integrate learned material and personal development through practically engaging in real-life ministry situations).

History

ETS' history spans more than 75 years of Christian education and ministry formation. It began in 1949 with the first Bible courses offered in Schorndorf, Germany, aimed at preparing individuals for Christian service. In 1958 the school became the German Bible School of the Church of God in Krehwinkel and then relocated to Heilbronn in 1962. Shortly thereafter, it was renamed the European Bible Seminary in Rudersberg in 1972.

Through a partnership with the Church of God Theological Seminary in Tennessee, USA, graduate programmes were made accessible to ETS students in 1999. These programmes are accredited within the North American system, not by ECTE and since 2019 by Evalag in Germany.

In 2002 the school moved to its current site in Freudenstadt-Kniebis and was renamed "European Theological Seminary".

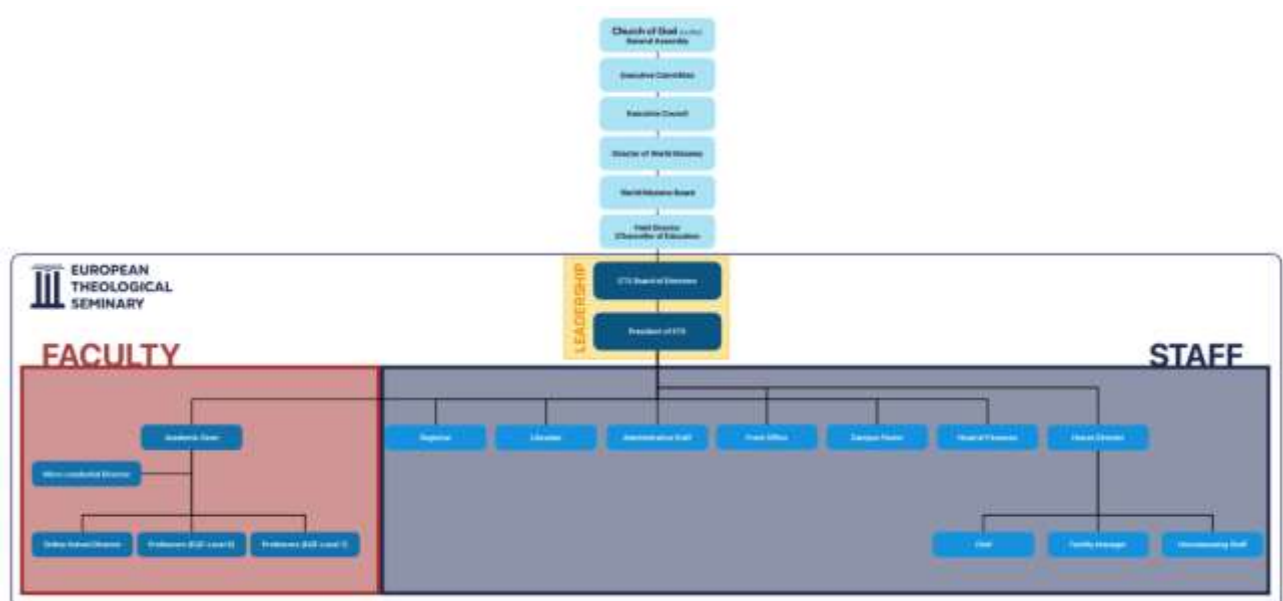
In 2024 ETS celebrated its 75th anniversary, marking seven and a half decades of equipping leaders for Christian ministry through biblical training, spiritual formation, and global service.

Facilities

The campus facilities include a chapel, two classrooms, a seminar room and a library with a reading room. Students have access to a common room, a recreation room, a gym, and further facilities including a student dormitory, a commercial kitchen, a cafeteria serving three meals daily, and an administrative wing with staff offices and a conference room.



Governance



ETS organisation chart

ETS has a committed board of directors, along with faculty and staff who are salaried by the institution rather than non-salaried missionary staff in the past.

Over the past five years, ETS has undergone several significant developments. In September 2022, there was a change in the leadership of the school, while the former president assumed the role of chancellor.

In August 2025, following the retirement of the former Academic Dean, a new Academic Dean was appointed. During this period, a substantial restructuring of staff also took place.

Educational and non-educational Staff

Educational Staff

ETS currently has 11 educational staff members, of which 2 are employed full time, 7 part time, and 2 on an honorarium basis. Faculty qualifications include three persons with doctoral degrees, one PhD candidate, and four with MA degrees, with two others currently completing their MA studies. All faculty hold additional roles outside the classroom, and twice per semester, guest lecturers lead intensive course weeks. At present, the institution does not engage any non-salaried staff, including missionaries or similar roles.

Non-Educational Staff

ETS currently has 7 non-educational staff members, of which one is employed full-time and 6 part time. Positions include a Front Office Secretary, Maintenance Manager (hired 2021), House Manager/Campus Pastor, Video and IT Director, Dormitory Supervisor (all hired 2022), a Cook (hired 2025), and a Librarian (hired 2025). The Dormitory Supervisor and the Librarian also teach and are thus also included under the educational staff.

Budget

ETS has maintained balanced budgets for the last five years (2020–2025). ETS's accounts are audited by an external professional tax advisor who prepares and finalises the legally required statement of accounts ("Jahresabschluss") each year.

ETS is a donor-based institution whose funds are primarily sourced through board members and a network of friends and donors in Germany, Europe, and the United States.

Student Numbers

	EQF Level 6/ First Cycle Advanced Certificate in Christian Ministries)		
	Entering	Total head count*	Graduating
2021	6 (M:1/F:5)	24 (M:8/F:16)	9 (M:3/F:6)
2022	5 (M:5/F:0)	9 (M:5/F:4)	17 (M:8/F:9)
2023	10 (M:4/F:6)	18 (M:8/F:10)	7 (M:4/F:3)
2024	10 (M:4/F:6)	21 (M:10/F:11)	6(M:0/F:6)
2025	12 (M:8/F:4)	26 (M:14/F:12)	2 (M:2/F:0)

* FTE is not applicable here, as all students are studying full time in this programme

How the institution prepared for the review

A committee was appointed by the Academic Dean during the fall semester of 2025 to work on the compilation of the C-SER as the basis for the reaccreditation process. The committee consisted of the following individuals: Academic Dean, President, Administrative Assistant and Head of Finance, Campus Pastor and House Manager, Administrative Support, Front Office Secretary, Registrar and Librarian.

The following ECTE documents were referenced for compiling the SER:

- Criteria and Procedures for ECTE Accreditation (2025)
- Standards and Guidelines for Accreditation (2023)
- Guidelines for Producing a SER (2022)

In addition, the Academic Dean completed the orientation course for accreditation offered through the ICETE Academy.

D. FINDINGS OF THE REVIEW

INSTITUTIONAL STANDARDS

Standard A.1 - Identity and Purpose

INSTITUTIONS HAVE CLEARLY FORMULATED STATEMENTS OF IDENTITY AND PURPOSE

Standards 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: None

Evidence of Compliance

Sources of Evidence:

Meetings with:

- Senior Leadership Team
- External Stakeholders, including the institution's Board Members, Employers, and External Field Education Mentors
- Faculty, Staff and Students
- Administrative, Educational and Support Staff

Examination of supplemental documents, in particular:

- C-SER
- Website, YouTube and Facebook presence
- ETS Bylaws, *Vereinsregisterauszug*
- Knowledge database with various handbooks, such as Faculty Handbook and Student Handbook
- Curriculum Matrix, Course Catalogue

Evidence by Substandard:

A.1.1 Identity. The institution's self-presentation in the SER, website, and stakeholder interviews consistently describes ETS as an AP of tertiary-level Christian theological education. Documents such as the Faculty Handbook and curriculum materials demonstrate biblical grounding. The VET observed integration of ECTE core values in programme design and institutional policies.

A.1.2 Legal and Fiscal status. The register extract in the *Vereinsregisterauszug* confirms ETS's legal status in Germany. Financial documents and policies demonstrate compliance with German fiscal regulations. Programme nomenclature and terminology are used appropriately in public materials, respecting the national framework.

A.1.3 Vision and Mission. Board minutes document regular review of vision and mission statements. Strategic plans show alignment between these statements and institutional operations. Stakeholder interviews confirm understanding and support of institutional direction.

A.1.4 Public information. Information is distributed across multiple platforms: website, social media, VLE, and printed materials. All required elements (access criteria, financial charges, learning outcomes, etc.) are present but scattered.

Analysis:

ETS demonstrates a strong and coherent institutional identity, with clear biblical grounding and operationalised ECTE core values. The institution maintains full legal and fiscal compliance in Germany, correctly positioning itself as an AP. Its vision and mission are well-defined, regularly reviewed, and effectively linked to strategic planning and stakeholder engagement. While ETS provides all required information, the current dissemination across multiple platforms presents an opportunity to enhance accessibility for prospective students. Prospective students currently must navigate between different sources to compile complete information. Consolidating this information would further strengthen the institution's implementation of the standard's requirements for accessible information.

Panel Evaluation: The VET finds substantial compliance with A.1—Identity and Purpose. While the institution demonstrates strong identity, legal compliance, and strategic alignment, the accessibility of public information requires improvement to fully meet the standard.

Recommendation:

A.1.4 Public Information: The VET recommends that ETS make all public-facing information available as required in A.1.4 in one access point for any potential student to access (i.e. hyperlinks to detailed information such as a comprehensive handbook).

Panel Conclusion: Substantial compliance

Standard A.2 - Governance and Quality Assurance

INSTITUTIONS HAVE APPROPRIATE AND EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE AND QUALITY ASSURANCE STRUCTURES

Standards 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:

Recommendation 2.1 (R2.1). In line with European practice, the school consider student representation on the board. Following the last review, ECTE proactively clarified that student participation is expected with "...regards to both community and life and academic programmes...", and that participation does not extend to representation at the Board level.

Recommendation 2.2 (R2.2). The school is to consider further faculty representation on the board in addition to the president.

Evidence of Compliance:

Sources of Evidence:

Meetings with:

- Senior Leadership Team
- Board Members
- Faculty and Staff
- Alumni and Current Students

Examination of supplemental documents, in particular:

- C-SER
- Faculty Handbook
- Board Minutes 2024-2025
- Budget Annual Statements 2000-2025
- Strategic Plan 2025-2027
- Quality Assurance Guidelines
- Quality Assurance Policy
- QA Code of Practice

Evidence by Substandard:

A.2.1 Governance. The governance structures of ETS reflect stakeholder representation and institutional accountability. The board includes members from diverse constituencies and maintains oversight of executive leadership, with a clear distinction between governance, executive management, and delegated authority. The president participates as a non-voting member, and executive members, including financial, faculty, and administrative leaders, report regularly to the board, supporting communication, transparency, and consistency.

A.2.2 Leadership and Management. Leadership and management demonstrate a clear understanding of their responsibilities in relation to governance structures. Executive leadership

operates within board-approved policies and provides direction, coordination, and oversight of institutional activities. Leadership practices reflect sensitivity to the culturally diverse context of staff and students. The institution has maintained continuity and effectiveness in leadership during a period of transition, post-Covid. Evidence indicates growth in student and faculty numbers alongside sustained financial stability. Leadership fosters a collaborative environment within a relatively flat organisational structure, enabling effective use of human resources. Furthermore, leadership actively promotes the institution's educational framework of "knowing, being, and doing," which is reflected both in educational delivery and in the wider community life. Staff engagement in mentoring and formation contributes to modelling Christian leadership and supporting the institution's mission.

A.2.3 Decision-Making Structures. Decision-making processes include participation from students, faculty, and staff through regular faculty and staff meetings and structured student representation. These processes provide opportunities for internal stakeholder engagement in institutional dialogue and development. Student governance and representation structures are established and fit-for-purpose, with representatives sharing student concerns and suggestions during monthly faculty and staff meetings.

A.2.4 Strategic Planning. ETS has reviewed and strengthened its strategic plan following the COVID-19 period, incorporating input from faculty and staff, board members, and external stakeholders. The strategic plan is aligned clearly with the institution's mission and vision and demonstrates linkage to programmes and resource planning. Implementation of the strategic plan is supported by executive and educational leadership, with evidence of ongoing planning activity. Compared to the previous review, there is improved clarity in leadership roles, supporting more structured implementation.

A.2.5 Internal Quality Assurance Policies and Procedures. The institution demonstrates an embedded culture of quality, integrity, and continuous evaluation, including self-assessment, peer review, and course-level feedback mechanisms. Internal quality assurance (IQA) documentation reflects awareness of national context, stakeholder expectations, and institutional mission.

The IQA is governed by three separate documents and does not consistently demonstrate how quality assurance processes are systematically structured, how responsibilities are defined across the institution, or how documented procedures align with actual practice.

A.2.6 Cyclical External Quality Assurance. Cyclical external quality assurance is provided through ECTE and the relevant regional educational authority.

Analysis:

ETS demonstrates substantial compliance with Standard A.2, having established appropriate governance structures with stakeholder representation, effective leadership during transitional periods, and participatory decision-making processes. The institution has made progress in addressing previous recommendations by implementing alternative approaches to student and faculty representation on the board. (R2.1, R2.2) While strategic planning has been redeveloped with stakeholder input and mission alignment, documentation of implementation steps and monitoring mechanisms remain not fully detailed. Quality assurance is guided by three separate documents (listed in the supplemental documents), which provide operational guidance, but would benefit from consolidating into a singular source for enhanced clarity. While quality-related activities are implemented, the lack of an integrated approach limits the IQA's

effectiveness as a driver for institutional improvement. Similarly, decision-making structures are documented across multiple sources, and consolidating these materials would improve systemic formalisation for all stakeholders.

Panel Evaluation: The VET finds substantial compliance with A.2—Governance and Quality Assurance. ETS demonstrates effective leadership and resilience during transitions, with growth in student/faculty numbers and maintained financial stability. However, governance documentation, strategic planning implementation, and the internal quality assurance framework would benefit from strengthening to meet the standard fully.

Commendation:

A.2.2 Leadership and Management: The VET commends that, in the midst of transitions, effective leadership and excellent practices have been maintained and enhanced. The school has grown in student and faculty numbers and has maintained strong financial stability. ETS has embraced its three educational pillars of knowing, being, and doing, and these are reflected both in the classroom and in the school community at large.

Recommendations:

A.2.1 Governance: While the standard does not require a Board Handbook, the VET recommends that ETS enhance governance clarity by consolidating all existing practices, policies, and procedures into a single, accessible resource (such as a Board Handbook or virtual folder).

A.2.4 Strategic Planning: The VET recommends that ETS further strengthen its strategic planning by developing and documenting detailed implementation steps, timelines, and monitoring mechanisms to enhance transparency and accountability in executing strategic objectives.

A.2.5 Internal Quality Assurance: The VET recommends that ETS enhance its Internal Quality Assurance activities by consolidating all existing practices, policies, and procedures into a single, accessible document.

Panel Conclusion: Substantial compliance

Standard A.3 - Human Resources

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

Standards 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:

Recommendation 3.1 (R3.1): Evaluate and modify accordingly faculty workload in light of the totality of their responsibilities.

Recommendation 3.2 (R3.2): ETS continue to increase European personnel, which will help manage the absence of missionary staff and reduce the overall workload of individuals.

Recommendation 3.3 (R3.3): The school is encouraged to have a clearly formulated faculty development programme.

Evidence of Compliance:

Sources of Evidence:

Meetings with:

- Senior Leadership Team
- Teaching Faculty, Programme Director
- Educational Staff
- Administrative and Support Staff

Examination of supplemental documents, in particular:

- C-SER, Strategic Plan 2025-2027
- Organisational Chart
- Table of Teaching Faculty
- Faculty Handbook
- Staff and Faculty Meeting Minutes 2025
- ETS Professional Activities Contract (PAC) 2025-2026
- ETS Professional Activities Report (PAR) 2025-2026
- Employment Contract Template
- ETS Working Time Handbook
- Workplace Safety Training
- ETS Mentoring Agreement

Evidence by Substandard:

A.3.1 Human Resources. Human resources are recognised as central to ETS's mission, as stated in institutional documents and confirmed in leadership interviews. Recruitment and staffing decisions involve institutional leadership and the board, with evidence in board minutes and recruitment documentation. Employment contracts demonstrate compliance with local legal requirements. Job descriptions define roles and responsibilities, and the institutional handbook outlines anti-discrimination and staff protection policies. Performance review processes, including annual faculty interviews, are documented in meeting minutes and evaluation forms.

Since the 2021 review, personnel records show an increase in European staff, addressing previous recommendation R3.2.

A.3.2 Non-educational Staff. Qualifications of non-educational staff are documented in personnel files, demonstrating appropriateness for their roles. Job descriptions clearly outline responsibilities, and organisational charts show defined line management structures. Staff contracts confirm compliance with working time regulations and employment laws. During site visit observations, staff were actively engaged in residential life and spiritual formation activities. Interviews with staff confirmed their integration into the institutional community and participation in student support services. Workload distribution documents show responsibilities are allocated across roles rather than concentrated in individual positions.

A.3.3 Educational Staff. Educational staff hold appropriate qualifications for the delivery of ETS's EQF Level 6 programme, with faculty credentials showing most hold qualifications at least one level above the programme being taught. Recruitment documentation demonstrates consideration of academic qualifications, ministry involvement, and spiritual maturity. Faculty responsibilities extend beyond teaching to include mentoring, practicum supervision, and participation in spiritual formation, as outlined in job descriptions and workload allocations. Professional development records show engagement in further study, including doctoral programmes. The Professional Activities Contract (PAC) and Professional Activities Report (PAR) document funded professional development activities. Since the previous review, additional faculty have been recruited, improving workload distribution and addressing recommendation (R3.3) Professional development activities are designed to address the specific needs associated with each role within the institution.

A.3.4 HR Policies and Procedures. HR-related policies and procedures are in place across multiple areas, including employment contracts, working time regulations, and staff development processes. Documentation reviewed includes employment templates, working time handbook, and PAC/PAR processes. These documents indicate that HR practices are operational and legally compliant. During interviews, staff confirmed awareness of basic HR procedures, though knowledge of comprehensive policies varied. The institution maintains records of policies, but these are distributed across different documents rather than consolidated.

Analysis:

ETS demonstrates substantial compliance with Standard A.3, having established appropriate HR practices that support its mission and contribute to a collegial, mission-driven culture. The institution has made significant progress in addressing previous recommendations, particularly through increasing European staff (R3.2), improving workload distribution (R3.1), and strengthening faculty development processes (R3.3). Non-educational staff are well-integrated into the institutional community with clearly defined roles. Educational staff are appropriately qualified and aligned with the institution's holistic educational philosophy. However, while HR practices are operational and legally compliant, policies are not consolidated into a single, coherent framework. Elements of staff and faculty development are present and improving but are not integrated into a comprehensive HR policy framework covering all aspects outlined in the standard. This limits transparency, accessibility, and consistency in implementation.

Panel Evaluation: The VET finds substantial compliance with A.3—Human Resources. ETS demonstrates a strong commitment to its personnel, evidenced by a collegial, mission-driven

faculty culture and stable, well-integrated non-educational staff. However, HR policies require consolidation and strengthening to meet the standard fully.

Commendation:

A.3.1 Human Resources: The VET commends ETS for its sustained commitment to fostering a collegial, mission-driven faculty culture; increasing European contextual integration; and strengthening strategic faculty development planning. The VET also commends ETS for fostering a stable and committed student support team whose clearly defined roles and integration into the residential community contribute positively to institutional coherence and student support.

Recommendation:

A.3.4 HR Policies and Procedures: The VET recommends that ETS compile its multiple policies into a single HR policy manual that includes all elements outlined in A.3.4, with particular emphasis on strengthening faculty and staff development processes to create a more systematic and coherent approach. This would enhance institutional clarity, support consistent application of procedures, and sustain ongoing improvements in staff and faculty development.

Panel Conclusion: Substantial compliance

Standard A.4 - Community and Context

INSTITUTIONS DISPLAY HEALTHY COMMUNITY DYNAMICS IN ACTIVE RESPONSE TO CONTEXT

Standards examined:

A.4.1 Learning Community; A.4.2 Stakeholder Community; A.4.3 Civil Community; A.4.4 Communication

Previous requirements or recommendations:

Recommendation 4.1 (R4.1): In relation to the school alumni, a more formalised structure of keeping in touch with the alumni is recommended. This would also enable them to develop their own network of mutual support.

Recommendation 4.2 (R4.2): ETS is encouraged to find ways of greater student involvement within the local civil community.

Recommendation 4.3 (R4.3): The school pursue mechanisms for greater involvement of local pastors and ministry leaders in ETS life and educational objectives.

Evidence of Compliance:

Sources of Evidence:

Meetings with:

- Students
- Alumni
- Employers and External Mentors
- Faculty
- Staff

Examination of supplemental documents, in particular:

- C-SER
- Student Handbook
- Faculty Handbook
- Memorandum of Agreement TFEA
- Memorandum of Understanding with Lee University
- Website
- Social Media Platform
- Virtual Learning Environment (VLE)
- Video Sharing Platform

Evidence by Substandard:

A.4.1 Learning Community. ETS fosters a learning community through structured activities, including corporate worship, prayer, mentoring relationships, and organised social and recreational activities. These practices support character formation and align with the institution's holistic educational philosophy.

Support systems are documented, and ethical codes and appropriate disciplinary procedures are in place. Student representatives and the Spiritual Life Committee provide evidence of active student engagement in community governance.

A.4.2 Stakeholder Community. ETS maintains structured relationships with churches, ministry organisations, and academic partners. Students are required to maintain connections with their home churches, and the institution facilitates internships, ministry placements, and mentoring relationships with local ministry leaders. Alumni communication occurs through an alumni network, social media platforms, and institutional newsletters, responding to Recommendation 4.1. In response to Recommendation 4.3, mentoring and supervision records show increased involvement of local pastors and ministry leaders in programme delivery.

A.4.3 Civil Community. ETS demonstrates engagement with the local civil context through participation in community activities. Students, staff, and faculty are involved in local initiatives, reflecting an awareness of and responsiveness to the broader societal context. Documentation of community service activities and participation in public events demonstrates institutional responsiveness to the broader societal context within the local community and the broader evangelical framework in Germany. (R4.2)

A.4.4 Communication. ETS demonstrates strong internal and external communication practices through various analog and digital channels. Information is disseminated in a timely, accessible, and regularly updated manner, supporting transparency and stakeholder engagement. Clear, detailed, and objective information is readily available through multiple platforms, including the knowledge database, various handbooks, staff repositories, the learning management system, and the recently updated website with links to social media.

Analysis:

ETS has established healthy community dynamics and effective communication systems. The institution provides a well-developed learning community where spiritual formation and relational engagement are integrated into the educational model. ETS has effectively addressed previous Recommendation 4.3 by embedding local ministry leaders in programme delivery through mentoring and internship supervision. Engagement with the civil community has strengthened since the previous review, with greater participation in local initiatives and the broader evangelical framework in Germany. Communication systems are effective, ensuring information is accurate and accessible to stakeholders. Alumni engagement is active, as noted in response to Recommendation 4.1.

Panel Evaluation: The VET finds compliance with A.4—Community and Context. ETS demonstrates strong learning and stakeholder communities, effective communication, and enhanced civil community engagement.

Panel Conclusion: Compliance

Standard A.5 - Educational Resources

INSTITUTIONS HAVE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES THAT SUPPORT THEIR MISSION AND STRATEGY

Standards 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:

Meetings with:

- Students
- Educational Staff and Faculty
- Dormitory Supervisor
- House Manager
- Library Staff
- IT & Media Director

Examination of supplemental documents, in particular:

- C-SER
- Student Handbook
- Faculty Handbook
- Library Catalogue
- University of Tübingen ILL arrangement
- VLE and Current Administration System
- Annual Financial Statements
- On-site review of ETS facilities

Evidence by Substandard:

A.5.1 Student Services. Student support services are documented in the Student Handbook and communicated through campus channels. Interviews with students, faculty, and the dormitory supervisor confirmed access to academic advising, tutoring, and structured mentoring, including weekly small groups and academic progress reviews after each semester. The institution demonstrates awareness and responsiveness to special needs through documented procedures for exceptional circumstances.

A.5.2 Study Facilities. Students have access to a student center, dorm accommodation, student laundry room, reading and recreational rooms, and a fully equipped gym. Special needs and physical accessibility are considered and addressed. Facilities are well-maintained and comply with local building regulations. The campus site and buildings are suitable for their purpose and support learning, community life, and recreation.

A.5.3 Library/Learning Resource Centres. The library holds 25,000 print resources suitable for the EQF 6 programme, with holdings located in the main library and additional reading rooms. An interlibrary loan agreement with the University of Tübingen provides extended access, primarily for senior students and faculty. An online library catalogue has been in use since 2016.

Library staff provide orientation sessions and an “Introduction to Library Research” course for new students via the VLE. Digital resources are accessible through Lee University and posted on the VLE within copyright limits. A copier and printer are available for student use.

A.5.4 Information Management. ETS uses its VLE and an administration system for GDPR-compliant data management. Procedures for collecting and analysing data on student progression, success rates, and programme relevance are documented. Students have access to their educational progress information, and course and teacher evaluations are conducted. Faculty peer and self-evaluations are documented, with results discussed with the Dean and President and acted upon. Compliance with GDPR standards is evident in VLE policies, employment contracts, and the website.

A.5.5 Information Technology. ETS is equipped with fit-for-purpose technology. An IT & Media Director is onsite, with additional maintenance outsourced. The IT & Media Director proactively contributes to institutional improvement by proposing new ideas for academic and administrative processes and aligning technology with educational goals. Technology training and support are provided to students, faculty, and staff.

A.5.6 Virtual Learning Environment and Educational Resources. The institution utilises a primary virtual learning environment with documented procedures for its use in course delivery and resource sharing. A transition from one administrative system to another is underway for administrative functions. The virtual learning environment is used for library orientation, research courses, and posting course materials within copyright law.

Analysis:

ETS demonstrates substantial compliance with Standard A.5, having established educational resources that support its mission and strategy. Student services are adequate, accessible, and integrated into the educational experience, effectively supporting student progression and well-being. Study facilities are well-maintained, fit for purpose, and comply with local standards, providing suitable environments for learning and community life. Information management systems are secure, GDPR-compliant, and effectively utilised for data collection, analysis, and stakeholder communication. The institution is well-equipped with appropriate technology, and the IT & Media Director provides proactive support aligned with educational goals. The VLE is effectively utilised for course delivery and resource sharing. Due to personnel changes, the library development plan has not been reviewed or updated recently.

Panel Evaluation: The VET finds substantial compliance with A.5—Educational Resources. While the institution provides adequate resources overall, updating the Library/Learning Resource Centres’ development plan would strengthen the strategic development of both print and digital resources.

Recommendation:

A.5.3 Library/Learning Resource Centres: The VET recommends that ETS update the Library/Learning resources development plan to reflect its practice in collection development, student support, staffing, and staff professional development.

Panel Conclusion: Substantial compliance

Standard A.6 - Finances and Sustainability

INSTITUTIONS HAVE SUITABLE FINANCIAL POTENTIAL, PLANNING, POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Standards 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: None

Evidence of Compliance

Sources of Evidence:

Meetings with:

- Board Members
- Senior Leadership
- Staff (esp. Administrative Assistant as Financial Officer and House Manager as HR Officer)
- Faculty
- Students

Examination of supplemental documents, in particular:

- Annual Statements 2020-2025
- Board Meeting Minutes
- Faculty Handbook
- Student Handbook
- Employment Contracts
- Working Time Handbook
- Website

Evidence by Substandard:

A.6.1 Financial Potential and Planning. Annual financial statements and budget documents reviewed during the site visit demonstrate sufficient financial resources to sustain the institution's mission. A comprehensive business plan is in place and matches the institutional strategic plan. Board minutes and budget reports indicate that fundraising income is allocated to operational expenses, contingency funds, and investments.

A.6.2 Financial Policies and Procedures. Accounting procedures are maintained and audited annually by an external professional firm, as confirmed by the latest audited financial statement. Records of incoming funds show appropriate documentation, allocation, and acknowledgment. The Board Finance Committee, President, and Administrative Assistant collaborate on budget design and approvals.

A.6.3 Sustainability. Financial statements demonstrate stability, continuity, and sustainability in income and expenditures. ETS networks well with various constituencies to ensure appropriate funding for the programme. Budgets manifest reasonable expenditures and forward-looking investments in facilities, faculty, and projects for digital infrastructure.

A.6.4 Remuneration and Fees. Staff and faculty salaries, social security, and pension benefits are documented in employment contracts and are comparable to national scales. Scholarship

programme regulations and records of awarded funds are maintained by the administrative office. German and EU students can apply for governmental support and are guided in this by staff. Student fees are public and transparent.

A.6.5 Fundraising. A dedicated scholarship programme is funded through active fundraising efforts, as evidenced by financial records and scholarship award documentation.

Analysis:

ETS demonstrates full compliance with Standard A.6, having established suitable financial potential, planning, policies, and procedures. Annual financial statements provide evidence that sufficient resources are available to sustain the institution's mission, with appropriate budgetary procedures and oversight from governance bodies. Financial policies and procedures are clear, and professionally audited, ensuring accountability and transparency. The institution demonstrates sustainability through financial stability, reasonable expenditures, and forward-looking investments in key areas. Remuneration and fees are competitive, transparent, and publicly accessible, with support available for students seeking governmental aid. Fundraising procedures secure necessary funding for operations and scholarships. Stability is evidenced by continuity in board membership, low staff turnover, sustained student enrolment, and consistent programme delivery.

Panel Evaluation: The VET finds full compliance with A.6—Finances and Sustainability. ETS demonstrates comprehensive financial management, transparent policies, and clear evidence of sustainability and stability that support its educational mission.

Panel Conclusion: Compliance

PROGRAMME STANDARDS

Standard 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

Standards 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.

Evidence of Compliance:

Meetings with:

- Faculty
- Students
- Alumni
- Tutors/Mentors
- External (Ministry) Stakeholders
- Staff

Examination of supplemental documents, in particular:

- Course Catalogue
- Curriculum Matrix
- Student and Faculty Handbooks
- Syllabus EL 106-306 Field Ministry / *Begleitpraktikum*
- Field Ministry Information for Supervisors
- Mentoring Goals
- Syllabus EL 101-302 Community and Spiritual Formation

Evidence by Substandard:

B.1.1 Holistic Integration. Documents and interviews demonstrate the integration of biblical studies, theological studies, practical ministry, and general education modules across three years. The curriculum map shows that practicum and spiritual formation components are present each year, indicating parallel development. Syllabi evidence dialogue across disciplines, and the residential environment is documented as facilitating holistic development.

B.1.2 Spiritual Formation. ETS monitors related outcomes and learning activities related to spiritual formation. The Community and Spiritual Formation course syllabus confirms it is a formally assessed, credited part of the curriculum. The institution also provides evidence of community contexts, such as corporate worship, where spiritual formation is practiced.

B.1.3 Character Education. Documentation corroborated by interviews shows a residential community and practical ministry activities where character is modelled. Syllabi for courses including Field Ministry and Pastoral Theology contain explicit character formation components that are mapped, assessed, and credited within the curriculum.

B.1.4 Academic Achievement. The curriculum map and syllabi confirm that academic theology components are assessed and credited. Programme learning outcomes include critical thinking and problem-solving, and the institution demonstrates that these align with EQF Level 6 descriptors. Students are motivated and equipped to be lifelong learners.

B.1.5 Practical Training. Programme documentation identifies practical training as integral to the programme's practical components. Evidence of field ministry and internships shows they contribute to learning outcomes, carry ECTS, and are formally supervised and assessed. Course descriptions include both transferable and subject-specific outcomes, and student reflection forms confirm a requirement for reflective practice.

B.1.6 Mentoring. ETS provides documentation of a programme with articulated objectives and structured relationships between faculty mentors and students. Processes include personal inventories and progress evaluation across multiple domains, and records along with interviews confirm faculty involvement in both mentoring and ministry supervision.

Analysis:

The evidence demonstrates a comprehensive and systematic approach to holistic integration that fully satisfies the requirements of Standard B.1. The institution's curriculum structure ensures that academic study, spiritual formation, character education, and practical training are not delivered as separate components but are interwoven throughout the three-year programme, developing in parallel. This integration is achieved through multiple mechanisms: formal coursework such as the Community and Spiritual Formation course, which is assessed and credited; a residential community that provides a context for modelling character and virtue; and a structured mentoring programme that links personal and spiritual development directly to academic learning. The academic components are appropriately aligned with programme level outcomes appropriate at EQF Level 6, fostering intellectual virtues and transferable skills, while practical training is systematically integrated with formal supervision, assessment, and reflective practice. The documented mentoring programme serves as a concrete mechanism for unifying these diverse elements, providing structured support across all domains of student development. The evidence of dialogue across theological sub-disciplines and the theological reflection on other academic fields further confirms that the institution's approach extends beyond a mere addition of components to a truly integrated educational model.

Panel Evaluation: The VET finds full compliance with Standard B.1—Holistic Integration and commends the institution for its exemplary practice.

Commendation:

B.1.1 Holistic Integration: The VET commends the institution for its strong mentoring culture and the integration of faculty into the holistic educational model combining academic study, ministry practice, and spiritual and character formation. Structured mentoring and practicum supervision demonstrate strong alignment between human resources and educational objectives.

Panel Conclusion: Compliance

Standard B.2 - Curriculum Development

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

Standards examined:

B.2.1 Design & approval processes; B.2.2 Outcomes & fitness for purpose; B.2.3 Curricula, module descriptors & learning activities; B.2.4 Graduate profiles; B.2.5 Content, level, feasibility & progression; B.2.6 Credit allocation & duration; B.2.7 Content; B.2.8 Monitoring processes.

Evidence of Compliance:

Meetings with:

- Academic Dean
- Faculty
- Students
- Alumni
- Employer Representatives (Stakeholders)

Examination of supplemental documents, in particular:

- C-SER
- Curriculum Matrix
- Course Catalogue
- Syllabus Template
- Various Syllabi
- Faculty Handbook
- Faculty Meeting Minutes
- Institutional Website

Evidence by Substandard:

B.2.1 Design and Approval Processes. ETS outlines a logical and approved process for the design and formal approval of programmes. Programme design and review includes preliminary analysis and consultation, and draws input from faculty, students, employer representatives, and external experts. The documentation provides limited detail on the extent of stakeholder engagement or external consultation. The programme qualification is clearly specified and communicated. Proper qualification nomenclature is used that is not in breach of protected terminology. Learning outcomes inform curriculum structure, learning activities, and assessment approaches.

B.2.2 Outcomes and Fitness for Purpose. The EQF 6 programme under review defines clear learning outcomes that are aligned with its mission and purpose and correspond to EQF Level 6 expectations. Learning outcomes correspond to the cultural, ecclesiastical, and social contexts where the institution and its graduates serve and inform curriculum structure, learning activities, and assessment approaches. The programme qualification is clearly specified and communicated.

B.2.3 Curricula, Module Descriptors and Learning Activities. Curricula documentation and module descriptors follow a standardised template with clear learning outcomes, activities, and assessment criteria.

B.2.4 Graduate profiles. The graduate profile, described in the C-SER, clearly aligns with ETS' mission, educational philosophy, and the programme learning outcomes. However, no formal documentation was provided outlining the systematic process for reviewing graduate profiles based on graduate outcomes and stakeholder feedback.

B.2.5 Content, level, feasibility and progression. The curriculum is structured to provide appropriate progression from foundational to advanced levels, effectively integrating biblical studies, theology, practical ministry, and spiritual formation in a manner consistent with EQF Level 6 expectations.

B.2.6 Credit allocation and duration. Credit allocation follows ECTS principles and reflects appropriate student workload. The duration of three years for 180 credits is standard for EQF Level 6 programmes. The methodology for credit calculation is reasonable and consistently applied across modules.

B.2.7 - Context. The curriculum and delivery mode engage with the social and ecclesial contexts relevant to the stakeholders' ministry and mission. ETS regularly reviews employability opportunities and further study opportunities for its graduates.

B.2.8 Monitoring Processes. Curriculum adjustments are overseen by the Board, and student and faculty evaluations are collected annually. However, no formal documentation exists showing how this feedback systematically translates into curriculum modifications.

Analysis:

ETS demonstrates substantial compliance with Standard B.2—Curriculum Development. The institution has established a coherent curriculum structure with clear learning outcomes aligned to EQF Level 6, appropriate credit definition and allocation following ECTS principles, and standardised module descriptors that facilitate logical progression. The programme demonstrates fitness-for-purpose through curricular content, delivery mode, and outcomes that correspond to the institution's mission and the contexts in which graduates serve. Graduate profiles are articulated and linked to programme outcomes and need to be reviewed and updated.

Panel Evaluation: The VET finds substantial compliance with B.2—Curriculum Development. While ETS has a well-structured curriculum with clear outcomes and appropriate progression, the formal documentation of design processes, monitoring mechanisms, and review procedures will benefit from strengthening.

Recommendation:

B.2 Curriculum Development: The VET recommends that ETS strengthen current processes in writing for elements outlined in:

- **B.2.1 Design and Approval Processes:** Document the extent of stakeholder engagement and external consultation.
- **B.2.4 Graduate profiles:** Formalise the process for reviewing and updating profiles based on graduate outcomes and stakeholder feedback.

- **B.2.8 Monitoring processes:** Establish documented procedures showing how evaluation feedback systematically translates into curriculum modifications.

Panel Conclusion: Substantial compliance

Standard B.3 - Learning, Teaching and Assessment

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

Standards 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.

Evidence of Compliance:

Meetings with:

- Students
- Faculty
- Educational Staff
- Mentors/Tutors
- Classes visited: Introduction to Sociology, New Testament Exegesis

Examination of supplemental documents, in particular:

- Course Catalogue
- Curriculum Matrix
- QA Code of Practice
- Institutional Website
- Assignment Planner
- Examination Policy
- GE 312 Syllabus Introduction to the Senior Paper
- Senior Paper Grading Rubric
- ETS Style Manual
- Course and Teacher Evaluations

Evidence by Substandard:

B.3.1 Educational philosophy and adult pedagogy. Faculty and students embrace a common educational philosophy, informed theologically and educationally, that incorporates adult pedagogy. The philosophy's "3-Pillars" framework is present on the website, in syllabi, and in other educational documents, and lacks the explicit address of adult pedagogy required by Standard B.3.1

B.3.2 Student-centred learning and teaching and assessment. Student assessment is varied, transparent, and fair; assessment criteria are declared in advance, and feedback aims at improving quality. The practice-oriented programme expects as part of graduation requirements a Senior paper that combines research and reflective components while discussing one's philosophy of ministry and a proposed practice and includes formative and summative assessment as well as an oral defence.

B.3.3 - Module design and delivery. Module design follows a structured approach aligned with programme outcomes. The institution delivers its programme primarily through residential face-to-face instruction with some hybrid elements. Classroom observations revealed clear structure and appropriate pacing.

B.3.4 Variety. Various teaching methods are utilised, including lectures, discussions, group work, and case studies. Assessment is accomplished through different methods, including exams, projects, presentations, and practical assessments.

B.3.5 Delivery feedback. ETS gathers formal and structured feedback through course evaluations, course speaker feedback, and the Student Forum. Informal conversations also serve as a feedback mechanism. This feedback is used to improve teaching and delivery.

B.3.6 Assessment. Assessment is treated as a formative learning activity with published criteria. Different types of assessment are used for various learning activities, utilising both formative and summative methods. The Student Handbook contains assessment regulations and policies on academic misconduct.

Analysis:

The evidence indicates that the institution has established a comprehensive and functional framework for learning, teaching, and assessment that operates effectively in practice. The varied assessment methods and the multiple channels for gathering student feedback demonstrate a commitment to student-centred education and quality assurance. The presence of clear regulations for assessment, appeals, and academic integrity provides a robust foundation for fair and consistent academic processes. However, the institution's approach is characterised by strong practices that are not always systematically formalised or documented. Developing the educational philosophy and andragogical pedagogy (B.3.1) beyond the current 3-Pillars framework would strengthen institutional practice and clarity.

Panel Evaluation: The VET finds substantial compliance with Standard B.3—Learning, Teaching, and Assessment. While ETS demonstrates strong practices in assessment and student support, a fully articulated and publicly accessible educational philosophy and andragogical pedagogy would support full compliance.

Recommendation:

B.3.1 Educational philosophy and adult pedagogy: While ETS embraces a shared educational philosophy that undergirds the curriculum and teaching strategy, the VET recommends that ETS develop a comprehensive, publicly accessible educational philosophy and adult pedagogy to ensure full compliance with Standard B.3.1.

Panel Conclusion: Substantial compliance

Standard 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

Standards examined:

B.4.1 Admission; B.4.2 Progression; B.4.3 Recognition; B.4.4 Graduation and certification.

Evidence of Compliance:

Meetings with:

- Educational Staff
- Registrar
- Administrative Support
- Administrative Assistants
- Students
- Faculty

Examination of supplemental documents, in particular:

- C-SER
- QA Code of Practice
- Student and Faculty Handbook
- Examination policy
- Administrative Management System screenshots demonstrating GPA and credit recording
- Graduation Documents (sample Transcripts and Diploma Supplement)

Evidence by Substandard:

B.4.1 Admission. ETS has established admission policies and procedures that ensure applicants possess the academic, personal, and spiritual readiness required for the programme. Admission requirements are aligned with national higher education access standards and include appropriate secondary education qualifications and the ability to engage with the academic demands of theological study. An applicant's suitability is considered in relation to the programme's objectives and expectations.

B.4.2 Progression. Standard B4.2 is not applicable for this review as it concerns progression between qualifications within the institution, and ECTS is reviewing only one programme.

B.4.3 Recognition. Documentation indicates that recognition of prior learning and transfer credit from other educational institutions is assessed on a case-by-case basis. The documentation is not easily accessible, and there is limited guidance on procedures to assess each case. ETS does not have written, easily accessible guidelines for recognising prior non-formal and informal learning.

B.4.4 Graduation and certification. Graduation and certification regulations are clearly outlined, fit-for-purpose, and publicly available. These regulations are applied consistently. Students are informed of these requirements at admission. The regulations include both academic and practical components, reflecting the holistic nature of the programme. The Diploma Supplement

includes comparability tables for the German vocational system and the North American educational system, providing transparency for international mobility.

Analysis:

ETS demonstrates substantial compliance with Standard B.4 overall. The institution has established clear procedures for admission and progression that are consistently implemented. The graduation and certification processes are well-documented and appropriately communicated to students. However, the recognition of prior formal learning, while practiced, lacks formal, accessible procedures. Furthermore, there are no written, easily accessible guidelines for recognising prior non-formal and informal learning. The absence of clear documentation creates potential inconsistencies in application and limits transparency for prospective students.

Panel Evaluation: The VET finds substantial compliance with Standard B.4—Student admission, progression, recognition, and certification. While ETS demonstrates strong practices in admission, progression, and certification and has a policy for recognising prior formal learning. Recognition of prior learning is not sufficiently formalised or easily accessible to demonstrate full compliance with this standard.

Recommendation:

B.4.3 Recognition: The VET recommends that ETS strengthen current practice for recognition of prior formal, non-formal, and informal learning in writing and ensure it is publicly accessible to potential students.

Panel Conclusion: Substantial compliance

Standard B.5 - Qualification Nomenclature and Credits

INSTITUTIONS FOLLOW INTERNATIONALLY RECOGNISED QUALIFICATION NOMENCLATURE AND CREDIT-COUNTING SYSTEMS

Standards examined:

B.5.1 Qualification nomenclature; B.5.2 Credits.

Evidence of Compliance:

Meetings with:

- Senior Leadership
- Faculty and Educational Staff
- Students

Examination of supplemental documents, in particular:

- Course Catalogue
- Institutional Website
- Student Handbook
- Diploma Supplement

Evidence by Substandard:

B.5.1 Qualification nomenclature. The qualification resulting from the programme is clearly specified as an Advanced Certificate in Christian Ministries, First Cycle, EQF Level 6, ISCED (2011) Level 6, which also communicates its comparability to various qualification frameworks. Comparability to the German vocational and to the North American educational system is indicated in the Diploma Supplement.

B.5.2 Credits. ETS defines the expected student workload in terms of ECTS as 30 hours of student learning corresponding to 1 ECTS credit, in line with the European Framework for Qualifications and the ECTE Certification Framework. Programme documentation consistently applies this calculation across all modules, with the total programme requiring 180 ECTS credits for completion.

Analysis:

ETS demonstrates clear understanding and implementation of appropriate qualification nomenclature that accurately reflects the EQF Level 6 designation without infringing on protected degree nomenclature. The credit system is properly defined and consistently applied throughout the programme, with the 30-hours-per-credit ratio clearly communicated to students and documented in module descriptors. The inclusion of international comparability tables in the Diploma Supplement enhances transparency for graduates seeking recognition outside their national context.

Panel Evaluation: The VET finds compliance with Standard B.5—Qualification nomenclature and credits. The institution demonstrates appropriate use of qualification nomenclature, a consistently applied credit system, and effective support for international mobility through clear comparability information.

Panel Conclusion: Compliance

E. CONCLUSIONS

SUMMARY OF COMMENDATIONS

A.2.2 Leadership and Management: The VET commends that, in the midst of transitions, effective leadership and excellent practices have been maintained and enhanced. The school has grown in student and faculty numbers and has maintained strong financial stability. ETS has embraced their three educational pillars of knowing, being, and doing, and these are reflected both in the classroom and in the school community at large.

A.3 Human Resources: The VET commends ETS for its sustained commitment to fostering a collegial, mission-driven faculty culture; increasing European contextual integration; and strengthening strategic faculty development planning. The VET also commends ETS for fostering a stable and committed student support team whose clearly defined roles and integration into the residential community contribute positively to institutional coherence and student support.

B.1.1 Holistic Integration: The VET commends the institution for its strong mentoring culture and the integration of faculty into the holistic educational model combining academic study, ministry practice, and spiritual and character formation. Structured mentoring and practicum supervision demonstrate strong alignment between human resources and educational objectives.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

A.1.4 Public Information: The VET recommends that ETS make all public-facing information available as required in A.1.4 in one access point for any potential student to access (i.e. hyperlinks to detailed information such as a comprehensive handbook).

A.2.1 Governance: While the standard does not require a Board handbook, the VET recommends that ETS enhance governance clarity by consolidating all existing practices, policies, and procedures into a single, accessible resource (such as a Board Handbook or virtual folder).

A.2.4 Strategic Planning: The VET recommends that ETS further strengthen its strategic planning by developing and documenting detailed implementation steps, timelines, and monitoring mechanisms to enhance transparency and accountability in executing strategic objectives.

A.2.5 Internal Quality Assurance: The VET recommends that ETS enhance its Internal Quality Assurance activities by consolidating all existing practices, policies, and procedures into a single, accessible document.

A.3.4 HR Policies and Procedures: The VET recommends that ETS compile its multiple policies into a single HR policy manual that includes all elements outlined in A.3.4, with particular emphasis on strengthening faculty and staff development processes to create a more systematic and coherent approach. This would enhance institutional clarity, support consistent application of procedures, and sustain ongoing improvements in staff and faculty development.

A.5.3 Library/Learning Resource Centres: The VET recommends that ETS update the Library/Learning resources development plan to reflect its practice in collection development, student support, staffing, and staff professional development.

B.2 Curriculum Development: The VET recommends that ETS strengthen current processes in writing for elements outlined in:

B.2.1 Design and Approval Processes: Document the extent of stakeholder engagement and external consultation.

B.2.4 Graduate profiles: Formalise the process for reviewing and updating profiles based on graduate outcomes and stakeholder feedback.

B.2.8 Monitoring processes: Establish documented procedures showing how evaluation feedback systematically translates into curriculum modifications.

B.3.1 Educational philosophy and adult pedagogy: While ETS embraces a shared educational philosophy that undergirds the curriculum and teaching strategy, the VET recommends that ETS develop a comprehensive, publicly accessible educational philosophy and adult pedagogy to ensure full compliance with Standard B.3.1.

B.4.3 Recognition: The VET recommends that ETS strengthen current practice for recognition of prior formal, non-formal, and informal learning in writing and ensure it is publicly accessible to potential students.

IN CONCLUSION

The VET recommends to the ECTE Accreditation Commission (AC) that ETS be judged to be in overall compliance with the *Standards and Guidelines* of the ECTE with the exceptions of the recommendations listed above.

The team recommends to the ECTE AC that it grant ETS re-accreditation, with the suggested recommendations through the annual reporting processes of the ECTE.

The VET would like to record their gratitude to ETS staff 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 ETS for their excellence and commitment in following their calling.

In producing this report, all peer experts have been free from undue stakeholder influence. The findings, conclusions, commendations, and recommendations derive exclusively from documentary evidence, site visit interviews, and independent panel deliberation.

Venice.ai assisted only with post-draft mechanical editing—citations, typographical corrections, and readability—without contributing to substantive analysis or evaluative judgments.

The Visitation Evaluation Team:

Signed:

Katharina Penner (Team Leader)

Beneamin Mocan (VET Member)

Lara Meinke (Student Representative)

Ervehe Ndreca (ECTE VET Coordinator)

March/ 2026

APPENDICES

Visitation Schedule

		Place	Comments
<i>Day 1: Monday, March 23</i>			
08:00	Team Briefing		
9:00-09:45	Introductory meeting with Senior Leadership Team President Academic Dean Administrative Assistant		
10:00-10:45	Devotions VET is introduced to staff and students VET members have a chance to address staff and students		
11:00-11:45	Tour of Facilities		
12:00-12:45	Administrative Staff House Manager & Campus Pastor Administrative Assistant (Finances) Front Desk Administrative Support		
14:00-14:45	Team Time /Review Worksheet		
15:00-15:45	Educational Staff (includes programme director) Front Desk & Registrar Library & Registrar Online (Micro-credentials) Director Practical Ministry Coordinator		
16:00-16:45	Board Members	Students– in person meeting 3rd Year Student 3rd Year Student 2nd Year Student 2nd Year Student 1st Year Student 1st Year Student	
17:00-18:00	Team Time /Review Worksheet		

Day 2: Tuesday, March 24

8:00-9:00	Team Briefing for the Day	Visit Class "NT Exegesis"		
9:00-10:00	Learning Resources (library/online) Library Library Support Media Director	Visit Class "Introduction to Sociology"		
10:00-10:45	Teaching Faculty			
11:15-12:00	Support Staff House Manager Dormitory Supervisor Grounds & Maintenance Manager IT & Media Director Front Desk	External Stakeholders Ministry leaders, Austria Youth Pastors, Germany General Presbyter, Wider Europe and Middle East Pastor, IJG Erlangen		
12:15-13:00	Team Time /Review Worksheet			
14:00-14:45	Programme Director Academic Dean			
15:00-15:45	Mentors/Tutors – Internships etc. Practical Ministry Coordinator Campus Pastor Local Pastor, On-site supervisor Local Pastor, On-site supervisor			
16:15-17:00	Meeting with Alumni	Additional meeting period / Team time		
	Team Time /Review Worksheet Decide on need for follow-up conversations for day 3 – communicate to Internal Review Manager			

Day 3: Wednesday, March 25

45 min	Team Briefing for the Day		
45 min	Reserved for follow-up conversations as needed		
2-3 hours	Finalising Report (commendations, recommendations, requirements)		
	Team meeting with OC to prepare findings for the final presentation		
14:00-15:00	Sharing Conclusions with Leadership Team		