



## **EEC-ITIS Malta Tourism and Languages Institute**

### Quality Assurance Manual

Version 2.0

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## **Abbreviations and Acronyms**

EU – European Union

EFL – English as a Foreign Language

CSOs – Civil Society Organisations

MFHEA - Malta Further and Higher Education Authority

NGOs – Non-Governmental Organisations

## Table of Contents

### 1. EEC-ITIS Malta Tourism and Languages Institute

|  |    |
|--|----|
| About EEC-ITIS Malta Tourism and Languages Institute | 4  |
| Ethos and Mission Statement                          | 5  |
| Vision and Goals                                     | 6  |
| Strategic Principles 2021-2026                       | 7  |
| Assurance Philosophy                                 | 8  |
| Organisation Structure                               | 9  |
| Roles and Responsibilities                           | 12 |
| Board of Admissions                                  | 16 |
| Board of Studies                                     | 16 |
| Board of Examinations                                | 16 |
| Board of Classifications                             | 17 |

### 2. Performance Indicators

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Governance Structure for the monitoring and implementation of Performance Indicators | 18 |
| Strategic Principles for Performance Indicators 2021-2026                            | 18 |
| Performance Indicators 2021-2026   | 19 |
| Business Strategy 2021-2026  | 20 |
| Five-year Business Plan  | 23 |
| Marketing Plan   | 27 |

### 3. Quality Management and Ongoing Quality Assurance

|   |    |
|---|----|
| Internal and External Auditing          | 29 |
| Review of the Quality Management System | 29 |
| Teaching and Learning                   | 34 |
| Relevant Policies                       | 35 |

### 4. Monitoring and periodic reviewing of academic programmes

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Monitoring and periodic reviewing of academic programmes | 36 |
|--|----|

### 5. Data Management

|                                 |    |
|---------------------------------|----|
| Data Protection                 | 43 |
| Document control and management | 44 |

### 6. Annexes

|                   |    |
|-------------------|----|
| Relevant policies | 45 |
|-------------------|----|

## **1. EEC-ITIS Malta Tourism and Languages Institute**

### **1.1 About EEC-ITIS Malta Tourism and Languages Institute**

*EEC-ITIS Malta Tourism and Language Institute* is a merger of two schools, formally known as Malta Tourism Institute (ITIS) and EEC Language Centre.

EEC-ITIS Malta Tourism and Languages Institute holds over 20 years' experience in training and learning provision, policy consultancy, research, project management and learning mobility in the field of hospitality, tourism and business management. It provides boutique and tailor-made training with the best of European curricula.

Through constant experimentation and collaboration with professionals and practitioners in various fields, the institute strives to advance education and training in and for industry. This includes ongoing research and analysis of the changes in industry and the world of work to deliver more focused and industry-relevant learning methodologies and pedagogies.

EEC-ITIS's high-calibre faculty of academics, entrepreneurs, consultants and business leaders combine the academic and professional to support a unique and exceptional quality of learning.

EEC-ITIS is an active member of international think- tanks and organisations including ATLAS and ATHE and has trained numerous professionals in the greater field of hospitality including through our accredited Bachelor of Arts course in International Tourism and Hospitality Management.

Blending traditional teaching methods with on-the-job experience, site visits, and guest speaker sessions, our experiential approach to learning, provides students with the knowledge and tools to thrive in today's rapidly evolving business world.

The Institute's Languages Centre offers an interesting selection of different courses, the main area is English as a Foreign Language (EFL), including; General English for children, teens and adults, Intensive English courses; One to one; English for specific purposes; English plus Practice Placements; English for Executives.

## **1.2 Ethos and Mission Statement**

EEC-ITIS Malta Tourism and Languages Institute is committed to deliver quality and accessible learning opportunities for all. It aims to ensure that students have a high-quality learning experience, and that standards of qualifications are set at the appropriate levels. Similar confidence is placed in the capacity of EEC-ITIS to continue to secure and maintain quality and standards to the benefit of its students who operate in the hospitality and tourism industry.

Since its establishment, EEC-ITIS has been collaborating with numerous education providers as well as numerous stakeholders including social partners, industry players, NGOs and CSOs.

EEC-ITIS's mission underlines the Institute's commitment to quality standards. EEC-ITIS is committed to advance education and training in and for industry and by a diversity of means encourage and develop creativity and learning, for the benefit of the community in the country in which the Institute's students reside. This includes advancing, preserving and disseminating knowledge and culture through teaching and the influence and example of corporate life to promote wisdom and understanding.

Our mission is to provide every student with the best possible opportunity to acquire relevant up-to-date knowledge of the subject area of International Tourism Management and to develop skills appropriate to his or her present and likely future needs. Our mission permeates and underpins our approach to teaching and learning. The particular needs, and therefore the particular combination of knowledge and skills required varies greatly from one group of students to the other, mainly because of the diversity of nationalities in student body and the various first job destinations which are likely to arise.

### **1.3 Vision and Goals**

In the next five years, EEC-ITIS will continue to work methodically and systematically to further improve the structures, mechanisms, systems and interventions needed to institutionalize a culture of quality. This will support all applications for accrediting programmes in International Tourism and Hospitality Management and other related fields.

Goals:

1. To institutionalize a culture of quality;
2. To collaborate strategically in the exchange of students internationally including through ERASMUS+ projects with schools across the EU;
3. To establish consensus on standards of excellence in major aspects of the Institute's work areas;
4. To develop mechanisms, tools and protocols for the formal evaluation of standards in regular cycles;
5. To promote strategic and annual planning as tools for continuous improvement in time and resource management;
6. To promote the functioning and continuous evaluation of our teaching through feedback submitted by our students during the course of their studies and continuously improve the quality of teaching and learning;
7. To establish internal user-friendly mechanisms, policies, regulations and protocols for the proper implementation of quality assurance standards;
8. To prepare plans for achieving and maintaining accreditation in given programmes of study;
9. To play a leading role in the further development of quality assurance of tourism studies in Malta;
10. To provide accessible and affordable higher education learning opportunities for all, including through teaching methods and pedagogies which afford individual attention.

#### **1.4 Strategic Principles 2021-2026**

EEC-ITIS aims to continue attracting students at higher education level and assist by equipping them with the necessary tools to successfully enter and participate in the labour market. This is firmly rooted in its strategic five-point plan for the period 2021-2026.

EEC-ITIS aims to:

- I. Continue strengthening its academic offerings, including by enlarging its portfolio of home-grown accredited qualifications;
- II. Strengthen collaborations with industry players locally and abroad in order to continue offering industry-relevant qualifications and better interpret the changing patterns and processes of industry;
- III. Enlarge its student population including through increased international outreach;
- IV. Invest in establishing online home-grown accredited programmes in order to increase its academic relevance to changing trends and processes;
- V. Re-orient its academic programmes in order to better understand, interpret, instruct and train students on how global economic forces shaping industry trends such as the ongoing dual green and digital transitions are leaving an impact upon industry standards and practices.

## **1.5 Assurance Philosophy**

The Principal, assisted by the Faculty Coordinator, is responsible for ensuring that policy requirements are met within their set academic programmes.

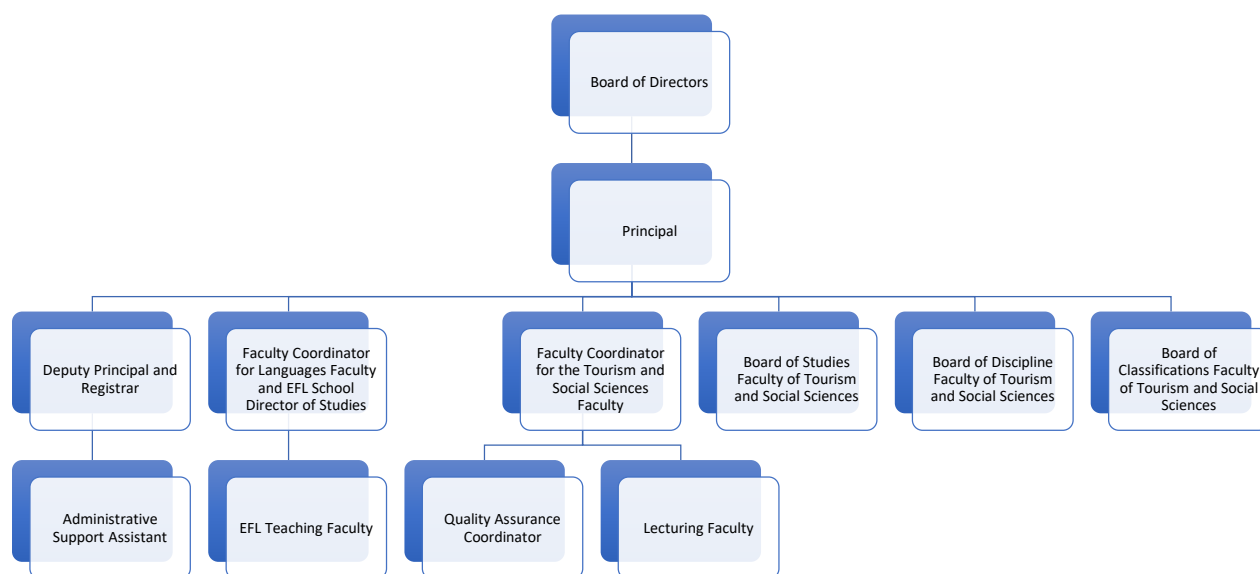
EEC-ITIS views quality assurance as a developmental process which does not have an endpoint. The focus is on improvement, where good practice is identified and shared, and the emphasis in organisation policies is on improving the status quo rather than censuring areas of weakness.

Quality Assurance and academic planning are combined wherever possible in order to best utilize limited resources and maintain a holistic view. The Institute's assessment system is based on a combination of internal reviews, self-evaluation, student feedback, and management policies. Lecturers are encouraged to set their own targets and make use of 'self-reflective practice' in line with the broader mission of the Institute.

Appropriate Performance Indicators are provided annually and these are used to indicate and monitor performance in relation to the Institute's mission. Frequent communication is ensured by keeping academic and administrative staff, and students fully informed of all quality assurance initiatives and developments via the website, internal emails and circulars.



## 1.6 Organisation Structure



**Table 1.1 – Organisational Chart**

EEC-ITIS is a micro organisation with a flat organisational structure. It has presently one accredited B.A course.

### **The Board of Directors**

The institute’s highest hierarchy is the Board of Directors representing the shareholders to which the Principal is answerable. This enhances the system of check and balances within the headship positions of the institute (see table 1.1). The role of the Board of Directors is to oversee, scrutinize and approve major strategic and financial decisions of the school, including its strategic outlook and business strategy and to vet the performance of the Principal and the respective faculty boards that are in place according to the quality manual.

### **The Principal**

The role of the Principal, who is answerable to the Board of Directors (see table 1.1), includes, but is not limited to: course marketing; student pre-admission interviews (acting upon recommendations from the respective faculty coordinators); student admission (acting upon recommendation from the registrar); tutor selection and recruitment; tutor academic mentoring and appraising; overseeing the work of the faculty coordinators on scheduling of assessments, verification of all assignment briefs, liaison with internal verifier for assessment decisions; liaison with stakeholders from the world of work for organising placements; overseeing and approving the work of the respective faculty coordinators on the design, development and review of programmes; financial control and liaising with the MFHEA.

In this regard, the remit of the Principal is focused to oversee the work of the faculty coordinators and registrar and to provide an overall supervisory role while focusing on the future business and academic direction of the Institute. This serves to provide more checks and balances whereby decisions are vetted and involve numerous distinct areas of expertise to increase the organisational capacity as the student body is gradually growing and evolving.

### **The Deputy Principal and the Registrar**

The role of the Deputy Principal and Registrar is to assist and support the Principal in the carrying out of the duties assigned to the latter, while taking care and overseeing student recruitment; student progression; coordination between the internal departments; liaising with stakeholders, international agents and coordinating the school outreach, including its marketing plan.

The Deputy Principal and Registrar is assisted by the administrative support assistant (see table 1.1). Therefore, the role of Administrator and Registrar are separate from each other into two separate positions in order to separate the two roles. This serves to invest further in the capacity building of the institute by enhancing the administrative arm to deal with administrative procedures while ensuring that the registrar is able to focus more on recruitment, handle enquiries by applicants and current students while also supporting the Principal.

### **Faculty Coordinators**

EEC-ITIS continuously works on updating its business model and function. This has recently included the opening of an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) school operating under an EFL license issued and monitored by the EFL monitoring board. In this regard, EEC-ITIS has since updated its organisational structure to split its academic activities into two designated faculties: Faculty of Languages which is responsible for offering EFL courses at various levels along with other language courses, and a Faculty of Social Sciences and Hospitality which is currently responsible for offering the Certificate in International Tourism and Diploma in International Tourism and Hospitality Management, Higher Diploma in International Tourism and Hospitality Management as individual exists and part of the three-year Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in International Tourism and Hospitality Management. The activities of each faculty are coordinated by a 'Faculty Coordinator' (see table 1.1). The Institute thus currently has two

Faculty Coordinators, one for each faculty, supporting the principal in the academic affairs of each faculty<sup>1</sup>.

The role of Faculty Coordinator for the Faculty of Social Sciences and Hospitality, includes the following: design, reviewing and development of programmes, scheduling of assessments, verification of all assignment briefs, monitoring student development, supporting students in their progress within the Institute, coordinating the lecturing faculty, liaison with internal verifier for assessment decisions, liaison with stakeholders from the world of work for organising placements, placement assessment. This thus serves to provide further in-house capacity and expertise while at the same time ensuring coordination between the lecturers.

### **Quality Assurance Coordinator**

The role of Quality Assurance Coordinator is incorporated within the Faculty of Social Sciences and Hospitality, liaising directly and collaborating closely with the Faculty Coordinator and the Principal on the operational and academic aspect of the institution. The Quality Assurance Coordinator remains the Institute's Quality Management System Representative and is mainly responsible for ensuring that the Quality Management System is fit for purpose through its monitoring, updating and reporting.

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<sup>1</sup> EEC-ITIS operates under two licenses, as an EFL school monitored by the EFL monitoring board and as a Higher Education Institution monitored by the MFHEA. The setting up of two faculties is intended to distinguish the EFL programmes into one faculty (Faculty of Languages) and higher education programmes licensed by MFHEA into a separate faculty (Faculty for Social Sciences and Hospitality). The Faculty Coordinator for the Faculty of Languages is the Director of Studies (Dos) required for the operation of a licensed EFL school. The Faculty Coordinator for the Faculty of Social Sciences and Hospitality, which this quality assurance exercise is thus concerned with, assists the Principal in the academic running of the higher education programmes.

## **1.7 Roles and Responsibilities**

Fundamental to the effective operation of all the quality assurance procedures are the various elements that make up the management structure. Their specific roles and responsibilities are described below.

The Institute has a reliable software accounting system. It has a system which was tailor-made for its own specific needs. This is based around EXCEL. This ensure that the organization stays organized, ensuring that EEC-ITIS know where they stand at all times of the year. Furthermore, it facilitates the input of information without wasting a lot of time, and it provides historical detail of all processes performed.

Accounts are regularly issued to monitor the Institute's performance. Since EEC-ITIS is a small Institute, lecturers are only engaged whenever required and therefore the organization does not have a large payroll. The Institute has enough reserves to ensure its financial stability and it has presently no intention of selling to an external party. It also has a plan in order to ensure that it provides its education services without interruption in case of a mishap. EEC-ITIS does not need monthly budget plans due to its micro size. The Principal is an Accountant by profession and therefore very capable of doing budget plans (including marketing budgets), and keeping accounts in order. On a yearly basis, the accounts are audited by an external source.

The lecturers for each study unit are outsourced and engaged specifically for their expertise in specific areas.

### **Principal**

The principal serves as the educational leader, responsible for managing the policies, regulations and procedures of the organisation. The principal is responsible for the efforts, results, and success of an organisation's finances. The responsibilities include taking strategic decisions concerning the offered courses.

The Principal's responsibilities also include:

1. Establishing and promoting high standards and expectations for all students and staff for academic performance and responsibility for behaviour.
2. Managing, evaluating, and supervising effective and clear procedures for the operation and functioning of the organization consistent with the philosophy, mission, values and goals of EEC-ITIS.
3. Ensuring compliance with all laws, educational policies and civil regulations. Ensuring that all organisational activities are within budgetary guidelines.
4. Approving recommendations of instructional materials and equipment, approving all recommendations.
5. Supervising in a fair and consistent manner effective discipline and attendance systems with high standards, consistent with the philosophy, values, and mission of the organization.

6. Ensuring a safe, orderly environment that encourages students to take responsibility for behaviour and creates a high morale among staff and students.
7. Establishing a professional rapport with students and with staff in order to earn their respect. Displaying the highest ethical and professional behavior and standards when working
8. Keeping the staff informed and seeking ideas for the improvement of the organization. Conduct meetings, as necessary, for the proper functioning of EEC-ITIS.
9. Establishing procedures that create and maintain attractive, organized, functional, healthy, clean, and safe facilities, with proper attention to the visual, acoustic and temperature conditions in the premises.
10. Assuming responsibility for the health, safety, and welfare of students, employees and visitors.
11. Developing clearly understood procedures and providing regular drills for emergencies and disasters.
12. Maintaining visibility with students, lecturers, and staff.
13. Establishing procedures for safe storing and integrity of all confidential records. Ensuring that student records are complete and current.
14. Protecting confidentiality of records and information gained as part of exercising professional duties and use discretion in sharing such information within legal confines.
15. Organizing and supervising procedures for identifying and addressing special needs of students

### **Deputy Principal and Registrar**

The role of the Deputy Principal and Registrar is to assist and support the Principal in the carrying out of the duties assigned to the latter, while taking care and overseeing student recruitment; student progression; coordination between the internal departments; liaising with stakeholders, international agents and coordinating the school outreach, including its marketing plan.

In more detail, the duties include the following:

- (i) Enquiries – the first-point provider of information: The registrar and deputy principal may be approached by lecturers, students and business contacts, either in person or via telephone, email or letter.
- (ii) Communications & Liaison: The circulation of information within the Institute setting; amongst lecturers, and students. The deputy principal and registrar also liaises with other institutions, external agencies and local authorities.

(iv) Administration of the “student lifecycle”: Co-ordinating the recording or collation of information from registration, absences, assessments and examinations.

(v) Data entry and management: responsible for the entry of data in the Institute’s management information system for record-keeping.

### **Administrative Support Assistant**

The Deputy Principal and Registrar is assisted by the administrative support assistant (see table 1.1). Therefore, the role of Administrator and Registrar are separate from each other into two separate positions in order to separate the two roles. This serves to invest further in the capacity building of the institute by enhancing the administrative arm to deal with administrative procedures while ensuring that the registrar is able to focus more on recruitment, handle enquiries by applicants and current students while also supporting the Principal. In more detail, the duties include:

(i) Organizing and servicing meetings: These include board meetings, examiners meetings, and other ad-hoc meetings organized by the Principal. The administrative support assistant is responsible for organizing and circulating information about the meetings, preparation and distribution of agendas before the meetings, and minute-taking and distribution of minutes and action points after the meeting.

(ii) General office duties: In addition to handling phone calls, emails and letters, filing, photocopying and other clerical tasks.

(iii) Organising and facilitating educational and social activities: The administrator may be asked to be involved in anything from booking minibuses and theatre tickets or accommodation for educational trips.

### **Faculty Coordinator**

The faculty coordinator is responsible for developing the curriculum, staffing programmes, reviewing programme performance, and creating an atmosphere conducive to scholarly pursuits. The faculty coordinator undertakes periodic programme reviews for all taught programmes of study under their remit. The faculty coordinator ensures that programmes are updated regularly to reflect developments in the area and recommendations made through internal feedback and industry stakeholders. Furthermore, the faculty coordinator conducts one-to-one evaluations with each module lecturer, reviews the feedback every student presents at the end of each module, follows programmes offered by similar organisations, and meets regularly persons working in the hospitality and tourism industry. The faculty coordinator makes sure that all modules have the necessary information with regard to objectives, rationale, description, learning outcomes, number of learning hours, number of ECTS, assessment, and reading list.

The faculty coordinator also liaises with lecturers involved in the delivery of the study units for the accredited programmes. The faculty coordinator further provides programme specific advice to students and prospective applicants and monitor student experience and study unit delivery through feedback data. In addition, the faculty coordinator is also responsible to organise and manage student placements through the close links that the organisation has with the hotel industry in Malta.

The faculty coordinator is also responsible for ensuring that assessments across the programme as a whole are robust, consistent and varied. The faculty coordinator must ensure that students are exposed to sufficient formative assessment to enable their development. The faculty coordinator should also lead the coherent scheduling of assessments across the programme to ensure workload is balanced for students. They are also responsible for ensuring that any reasonable adjustments or alternative forms of assessment required for disabled students are put in place.

### **Lecturing Faculty**

Lecturers are responsible for developing the curriculum and scheduling assessments of respective study units they are engaged to lecture. They ensure through the alignment with learning outcomes that the assessments set are appropriate for measuring students' progress. This makes setting the learning outcomes for the module a crucial element to assessment design. Lecturers are also responsible for ensuring students receive appropriate and effective feedback on their assessments within one week from the publishing of their results. Lecturers are self-motivated and carry out their own professional development. They regularly attend conferences, do academic research and attend training courses in their particular area of expertise.

### **Quality Assurance Coordinator**

The quality assurance coordinator oversees the institute's regulation framework and the overall quality of programmes, primarily via the Annual Programme Review and Programme validation process. The officer is responsible for devising procedures to inspect and report quality issues. Furthermore, he is responsible for monitoring all operations that affect quality. More specifically the quality assurance coordinator reviews proposals for new modules and programmes according to the Institute's policy, with special emphasis given to the assessment and feedback elements of programme proposals. The aim is to assure reliability and consistency in all modules.

### **1.8 Admissions Board**

The purpose of the board is to review annually the undergraduate admissions standards, policies, and procedures for first time applicants who meet the regular admissions criteria. Members of this board are the Principal, Deputy Principal and Registrar, the Faculty Coordinator and 2 lecturers representing the main areas taught on a programme. The lecturers are elected annually from among the lecturing faculty in the annual faculty meeting. Members recommend applicants for admission and ensure that recommendations give appropriate attention to quality assurance and are consistent with the Institute's Strategic Plan and other relevant goals and objectives. The Admissions Board shall review the admissions standards, policies, and procedures of the Institute on an annual basis or as needed. The decisions are taken by qualified majority ensuring the independence of the board and its autonomy.

### **1.9 Board of Studies**

Members of this board are the Principal, Deputy Principal and Registrar, the Faculty Coordinator and 2 lecturers representing the main areas taught on a programme. The lecturers are elected annually from among the lecturing faculty in the annual faculty meeting. These ensure that effective monitoring and evaluation procedures are in place for each programme, review and approve any new methods of assessment proposed, and ensure that students receive sufficient formative assessment for these new methods. The board of studies' members are presented with the programme of studies and module descriptions in order to ascertain that the assessment provision and credits offered are sufficiently inclusive, varied and balanced for students. In addition, the boards ensures that effective mechanisms are in place for lecturer/student consultation. Furthermore, they discuss and take action on reports of the Quality Assurance Office. The decisions are taken by qualified majority ensuring the independence of the board and its autonomy.

### **1.10 Board of Examinations**

Members of this board are the Principal, Deputy Principal and Registrar, the Faculty Coordinator and 2 lecturers representing the main areas taught on a programme. The lecturers are elected annually from among the lecturing faculty in the annual faculty meeting. The boards give due consideration to profile of component marks and overall module marks; averages and standard deviations of component marks and overall module marks; pass rates; and percentage of marks falling in each grade band. This data is collected from the marks sheets by the secretary and analysed through a statistical formula. It is stored on an external drive. The members ensure that awarded marks are accurately recorded and ratified. Where relevant, the Examination Board makes formulaic across the board changes to sets of marks or asks an examiner of a particular module to revisit scripts/assignments. The decisions are taken by qualified majority ensuring the independence of the board and its autonomy.



### **1.11 The Board of Classifications**

The board can make decisions on progression and, the award of qualifications on a named programme on the basis of ratified marks from relevant Examination Boards. Members of this board are the Principal, Deputy Principal and Registrar, the Faculty Coordinator and 2 lecturers representing the main areas taught on a programme. The lecturers are elected annually from among the lecturing faculty in the annual faculty meeting.

These make sure that the students have successfully completed all the study units and are eligible through their number of credits to receive their degree. The identity of the candidates is not disclosed in order to ensure that the principle of fairness for the whole group of students has been applied. The decisions are taken by qualified majority ensuring the independence of the board and its autonomy.

## **2 Performance Indicators**

The Institute has established a series of performance indicators duly aligned and corresponding to the mission of the organisation and the strategic plan 2021-2026. These will serve to indicate and monitor performance in relation to the Institute's mission.

### **2.1 Governance structure for the monitoring and implementation of Performance Indicators**

The performance indicators of the Institute are revised every five years in line with the cycle of the strategic plan, which is also revised every five years. A specifically setup working group under the direct auspices of the Principal, is responsible for the setting up of criteria, drafting and revision of the performance indicators every five years. The working group is convened by the principal once the previous cycle of the strategic plan and the corresponding performance indicators is up. The working group is made up of the faculty coordinators of both faculties, the principal, the deputy principal and registrar and the quality assurance coordinator. The working group would be responsible to present its draft strategic plan and performance indicators for the next five years to the board of directors, who would then be tasked with their final review and approval. Upon approval, the revised strategic plan objectives and performance indicators are updated in the quality assurance manual.

### **2.2 Strategic Principles for Performance Indicators 2021-2026**

EEC-ITIS aims to continue attracting students at higher education level and assist by equipping them with the necessary tools to successfully enter and participate in the labour market. This is firmly rooted in its strategic five-point plan for the period 2021-2026.

EEC-ITIS aims to:

- I. Continue strengthening its academic offerings, including by enlarging its portfolio of home-grown accredited qualifications;
- II. Strengthen collaborations with industry players locally and abroad in order to continue offering industry-relevant qualifications and better interpret the changing patterns and processes of industry;
- III. Enlarge its student population including through increased international outreach;
- IV. Invest in establishing online home-grown accredited programmes in order to increase its academic relevance to changing trends and processes;
- V. Re-orient its academic programmes in order to better understand, interpret, instruct and train students on how global economic forces shaping industry trends such as the ongoing dual green and digital transitions are leaving an impact upon industry standards and practices.

The above five-point strategic plan, which is revised every five years serves to guide and govern the performance indicators for 2021-2026.

### **2.3 Performance Indicators 2021-2026**

The performance indicators 2021-2026 correspond to and serve to identify attainable targets to implement the strategic five-point plan for 2021-20216.

The performance indicators 2021-2026 commit to advance education and training in and for industry and by a diversity of means encourage and develop creativity and learning, for the benefit of the community in the country in which the Institute's students reside. The performance indicators thus include the following overarching commitments in line with the organisation's mission in order to identify attainable targets:

- I. advancing, preserving and disseminating knowledge and culture through teaching and the influence and example of corporate life to promote wisdom and understanding;
- II. provide every student with the best possible opportunity to acquire relevant up-to-date knowledge of the subject area of International Tourism Management and to develop skills appropriate to their present and likely future needs;
- III. remain sensitive to the particular combination of knowledge and skills required which varies greatly from one group of students to the other, mainly because of the diversity of nationalities in student body and the various first job destinations which are likely to arise.

The performance indicators 2021-2026 will lay the structure and identify the resources to sustain learners within the institute. In this regard, the focus will be on a more sustainable and digital education.

An increase in the predictive capacity will be instrumental in making the performance indicators more attainable. In this regard, the following targets shall underpin the performance indicators for 2021-2026:

Target 1 – Refurbish the main building of the Institute including to increase accessibility and provide a better environment for more interaction

Target 2 – Strengthen the internship and work exposure component within the accredited BA course

Target 3 - Increase the retention rate of the Institute by 5%

Target 4 - Promote digitalisation as a core interactive function including through accredited online courses

Target 5 - Increase the number of international students, and staff by 10%

Target 6 Generate 3 to 5 key research activities for and within industry

Target 6 - Review all qualifications at least every five years

Target 7 - Increase the number of females in the student body by 10%

Target 8 - Reduce the use of paper by at least 30%

Target 9 - Increase CPD activities for staff members by 10%

Target 10 – Increase participation in ATLAS think thank conferences at least once every two years for staff members thus strengthen the research infrastructure of the school.

## **2.4 Business Strategy 2021-2026**

### **2.4.1 Needs Analysis**

Upon the approval of the strategic principles and the corresponding performance indicators every five-year cycle, the Principal is tasked with drawing up a five-year strategic business plan indicating the volume of financial and strategic growth and targets for the upcoming five years which should correspond to and complement the implementation of the strategic five-point plan and also the realisation of the corresponding targets indicated in the performance indicators. The business strategy is thus meant to dovetail with the performance indicators and thus help implement the strategic five-point plan for the upcoming five-year cycle.

In preparation for the business strategy 2021-2026, EEC-ITIS Malta Tourism and Languages Institute conducted preliminary market research through discussions with a number of industry players and stakeholders in order to determine the patterns and processes of industry demands and thus address such needs through designated language programmes and courses.

The business strategy 2021-2026 outlines a strategic outlook based on three factors: age group, course duration and the needs of students. EEC-ITIS believes that this will further enhance the capacity building of Malta's already existing ELT and higher education industry in order to ensure that the future supply continues to meet the growing demand in this sector. The emphasis placed by EEC-ITIS on fusing the formal learning with informal and non-formal methods ensures a blended approach which keeps the industry updated with current demands and requirements, including the needs for the acquisition of soft skills and digital skills in respective fields.

The accredited programmes offered by EEC-ITIS further widen the choice and range of educational programmes available to foreign students and those looking to pursue higher education, thus addressing an important growing niche in Malta's education fora.

The following are the market demands which have been identified:

- I. Demand for accredited programmes in tourism and hospitality management amongst international students wishing to pursue higher education in Malta;

EEC-ITIS plans to address such market demand by continuously revising the course content and learning outcomes of its already accredited higher education qualifications by MFHEA including the Bachelor of Arts in International Tourism and Hospitality Management.

- II. Demand for online accredited programmes

EEC-ITIS plans to address such market demand through kick-starting the process with MFHEA in order to convert some of its already accredited programmes into online accredited programmes.

- III. Demand for health and social management-oriented accredited programmes

EEC-ITIS plans to address such market demand through the development of accredited higher education qualifications in healthcare and social management

- IV. Language training as part of Erasmus+ Projects.

Through its partners, EEC-ITIS has identified a need for the provision of language training as a component for its Erasmus+ internship programmes.

#### **2.4.2 Target Countries**

EEC-ITIS plans to target the following countries in the first five years of operation for the English Language School. EEC-ITIS shall be using its already established network of over a 100+ agents which it currently works with in terms of student recruitment for its accredited Certificate, Diploma, Higher Diploma and BA Hons. Courses which it is already licensed to provide.

In this regard, the plan includes targeting student recruitment from the following countries:

Europe: Belgium, France, Italy, Spain, Germany, Austria, Croatia, Hungary, Czechia, Poland, Bulgaria, Romania, Ukraine, Russia, Serbia;

Asia: Japan, China, India, Nepal, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Philippines, Thailand

South America: Brazil, Colombia, Venezuela.

#### **2.4.3 Employment Opportunities**

The extension of EEC-ITIS Malta Tourism and Languages Institute through the setting up of a dedicated ELT Language school set to increase the number of staff employed on a full-time and part-time basis. Furthermore, more engagement of lecturing staff is expected as a

result of the re-orientation and increase in accredited higher education programmes. The staff shall include the following:

- Director of Studies
- Registrar and Assistant Principal
- ELT Warranted Language Teachers
- Group leaders for leisure activities
- Increased lecturers engaged for individual study units part of the accredited higher education programmes

#### **2.4.4 Business Opportunities**

The extension of EEC-ITIS Malta Tourism and Languages Institute through the setting up of a dedicated ELT Language school and the re-orientation of higher education programmes is set to create the following internal and external business growth opportunities:

Internal business opportunities:

- increase the number of students at EEC-ITIS both within the language school and the faculty of tourism and social sciences;
- increase the volume of online teaching business opportunities;
- increase the volume of international students;
- the ELT Language school will boost the internal capacity of EEC-ITIS as it will provide in-house English Language Foundation programmes and preparatory courses for those students who wouldn't have fulfilled the linguistic proficiency admission criteria for the accredited higher academic programmes;

External business opportunities:

- generate increased student foot traffic for business operating around the school including cafeterias, restaurants, utility shops and other services;
- generate additional business for the registered host families working with EEC-ITIS and the school's partners offering self-catering accommodation;
- generate additional business for the school's partners offering leisure activities, tour guides, transport providers.

#### **2.4.5 Tourism Marketing Opportunities**

The distribution and sales network will comprise an ongoing publicity campaign consisting of direct advertising and public relations using both online and offline means. This will serve to both advertise EEC-ITIS Malta and also the opportunity for students to pursue higher education in Malta and thus Malta as a higher education destination and niche industry. Thus, the promotion and advertising initiatives undertaken by EEC-ITIS will have the added benefit of advertising Malta as a destination amongst potential foreign visitors.

EEC-ITIS' advertising strategy will include advertising through targeted Google adverts, search engine optimization (SEO) and targeted social media advertising (Facebook and Instagram) in

the markets identified as per above. This will be complemented by advertising in international publications and magazines. Public relations activities will include outreach through study abroad agencies, participation in international student fairs, workshops and private visits to new agencies.

The distribution/sales network identified by EEC-ITIS will target the promotion of Malta's higher education product in newly emerging destinations and markets including Europe, Asia and South America, thus widening the reach and broadening the scope for Malta's ELT industry. This will enhance the diversity and sustainability of the industry to ensure its continued relevance and competitiveness by tapping into new markets alongside the more traditional and established European markets.

## 2.5 Five-Year Business Plan

| Year | Programmes Offered  | Target Countries  | Promotion Strategies                               | Student Recruitment Strategies               | Targeted Number of Students and financial growth target      |
|------|---|---|--|--|--|
| 2022 | BA Hons in International Tourism and Hospitality Management<br><br>ELT – accredited English Language courses<br><br>Participation in Erasmus+ | Belgium, France, Italy, Spain, Germany, Austria, Croatia, Hungary, Czechia, Poland, Bulgaria, Romania, Ukraine, Russia, Serbia;   | Online Advertising<br><br>Social Media Advertising | Study Abroad Agencies<br><br>Direct Bookings | 20<br><br>Financial growth target of 5% on the previous year |
| 2023 | BA Hons in International Tourism and Hospitality Management<br><br>ELT – accredited English Language courses                                  | Europe: Belgium, France, Italy, Spain, Germany, Austria, Croatia, Hungary, Czechia, Poland, Bulgaria, Romania, Ukraine, Russia, Serbia;<br><br>Asia: Japan, China, India, | Online Advertising<br><br>Social Media Advertising | Study Abroad Agencies<br><br>Direct Bookings | 30<br><br>Financial growth target of 5% on the previous year |

|      |  |   |   |  |  |
|------|--|---|---|--|--|
|      | Participation in Erasmus+  | Nepal, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Philippines, Thailand<br><br>South America: Brazil, Colombia, Venezuela.   |   |  |  |
| 2024 | BA Hons in International Tourism and Hospitality Management<br><br>Offering of accredited higher education programmes in health and social care management<br><br>ELT – accredited English Language courses<br><br>Participation in Erasmus+ | Europe: Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Finland, Lithuania, Estonia, Latvia, Belgium, France, Italy, Spain, Germany, Austria, Croatia, Hungary, Czechia, Poland, Bulgaria, Romania, Ukraine, Russia, Serbia, Turkey, Cyprus, Greece, Slovenia, Slovakia, Croatia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Armenia;<br><br>Asia: Japan, China, India, Nepal, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Philippines, Thailand, Sri Lanka,<br><br>South America: Chile, Brazil, Colombia, Venezuela. | Online Advertising<br><br>Social Media Advertising<br><br>Print advertising: magazines and journals<br><br>Participation in International Student Fairs | Study Abroad Agencies<br><br>Direct Bookings<br><br>Participation in international student fairs, workshops and private visits to new agencies | 35<br><br>Financial growth target of 7% on the previous year |



|      |   |  |  |   |   |
|------|---|--|--|---|---|
| 2025 | <p>BA Hons in International Tourism and Hospitality Management</p> <p>Offering of accredited higher education programmes in health and social care management</p> <p>ELT – accredited English Language courses</p> <p>Participation in Erasmus+</p> | <p>Europe: Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Finland, Lithuania, Estonia, Latvia, Belgium, France, Italy, Spain, Germany, Austria, Croatia, Hungary, Czechia, Poland, Bulgaria, Romania, Ukraine, Russia, Serbia, Turkey, Cyprus, Greece, Slovenia, Slovakia, Croatia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Armenia;</p> <p>Asia: Japan, China, India, Nepal, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Philippines, Thailand, Sri Lanka,</p> <p>South America: Chile, Brazil, Colombia, Venezuela.</p> | <p>Online Advertising</p> <p>Social Media Advertising</p> <p>Print advertising: magazines and journals</p> <p>Participation in International Student Fairs</p> | <p>Study Abroad Agencies</p> <p>Direct Bookings</p> <p>Participation in international student fairs, workshops and private visits to new agencies</p> | <p>40</p> <p>Financial growth target of 7% on the previous year</p> |
| 2026 | <p>General English</p> <p>Intensive English</p> <p>One-to-one English</p>   | <p>Europe: Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Finland, Lithuania, Estonia, Latvia, Belgium, France, Italy, Spain, Germany, Austria, Croatia, Hungary, Czechia, Poland,</p>   | <p>Online Advertising</p> <p>Social Media Advertising</p> <p>Print advertising: magazines and journals</p>   | <p>Study Abroad Agencies</p> <p>Direct Bookings</p> <p>Participation in international student</p>   | <p>50</p> <p>Financial growth target of 9% on the previous year</p> |

|  |  |  |   |  |  |
|--|--|--|---|--|--|
|  | <p>English for Hospitality and Tourism</p> <p>Executive English Programme</p> <p>Academic Year</p> <p>Erasmus+</p> | <p>Bulgaria, Romania, Ukraine, Russia, Serbia, Turkey, Cyprus, Greece, Slovenia, Slovakia, Croatia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Armenia;</p> <p>Asia: Japan, China, India, Nepal, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Philippines, Thailand, Sri Lanka,</p> <p>South America: Chile, Brazil, Colombia, Venezuela.</p> | <p>Participation in International Student Fairs</p> | <p>fairs, workshops and private visits to new agencies</p> |  |
|--|--|--|---|--|--|

## 2.6 Marketing of Programmes

All marketing materials used to project the organisation and the programmes it offers have to be approved by top management. This includes, but is not limited to, advertising, webpages, brochures, flyers, promotional merchandise, social media, press releases, statements/announcements, publications.

Approval of programme-level marketing depends on the following considerations. This information is necessary for inclusion in any marketing communication programme:

- (a) The correct title, qualification and length of the accredited programme.
- (b) Full details of study units in each programme (level and number of ECTS).
- (c) The learning outcomes of the programme.
- (d) The eligibility criteria for each programme.
- (e) A visual plan of progression.
- (f) The pass rate.
- (g) Further learning opportunities.
- (h) The Institute's facilities and staff.
- (i) The Institute's approach to providing student support services.
- (j) Correct use of English and if a language other than English is used, then an accurate translation in English should also be provided.
- (k) Information on the Institute's degree/diploma awarding powers.
- (l) Artwork.

### **3. Quality Management and Ongoing Quality Assurance**

The process of quality management is governed by the core principles of continuous improvement and a focus on student satisfaction. All staff are engaged with the concepts of quality assurance and management, and understand the importance of quality assurance for staff and students.

EEC-ITIS Malta Tourism and Languages Institute is a Higher Education Institution (HEI) licensed by the Malta Further & Higher Education Authority (MFHEA). As such, it commits to devise, implement and improve an Internal Quality Assurance Policy that reflects the 11 QA Standard in Part 1 of Malta's National Quality Assurance Framework (NQAF).

The standards are the following:

1. Policy for quality assurance: entities shall have a policy for quality assurance that is made public and forms part of their strategic management.
2. Institutional and financial probity: entities shall ensure that they have appropriate measures and procedures in place to ensure institutional and financial probity.
3. Design and approval of programmes: self-accrediting providers shall have appropriate processes for the design and approval of their programmes of study.
4. Student-centred learning, teaching and assessment: entities shall ensure that programmes are delivered in a way that encourages students to take an active role in the learning process.
5. Student admission, progression, recognition and certification: entities shall consistently apply pre-defined and published regulations covering all phases of the student 'life-cycle'.
6. Teaching staff: entities shall assure the competence and effectiveness of their teaching staff.
7. Learning resources and student support: entities shall have appropriate funding for their learning and teaching activities and sufficient learning resources to fully support the students' learning experiences.
8. Information management: entities shall ensure that they collect, analyse and use relevant information for the effective management of their programmes and other activities.
9. Public information: entities shall publish information about their activities which is clear, accurate, objective, up-to-date and readily accessible.
10. Ongoing monitoring and periodic review of programmes: entities shall implement the 'Quality Cycle' by monitoring and periodically reviewing their programmes to ensure their continuing fitness for purpose.

11. Cyclical external quality assurance: entities should undergo external quality assurance, approved by MFHEA, at least once every five years.

### 3.1 Internal and External Auditing

The Quality Assurance Coordinator, is responsible for the development, monitoring, execution, promotion and improvement of all matters related to Quality Assurance. EEC-ITIS works with a number of external stakeholders to deliver its range of programmes to the students. These stakeholders include the MFHEA, international educational institutions, accrediting bodies, international student recruitment agents, and local government departments.

As such, EEC-ITIS ensures that its operations are checked and held to the highest standards demanded by each stakeholder. EEC-ITIS has therefore internal and external mechanisms to ensure compliance with all relevant standards, as outlined above. EEC-ITIS utilises external verifiers as part of its assessment protocols. The verifier reviews a range of documentation and student work to ensure that EEC-ITIS continues to deliver the programmes as obliged and requested by the awarding body.

External QA audits are conducted by staff from and/or boards appointed key and independent stakeholders. As per standard 11 of the NQAF, EEC-ITIS is audited periodically by the MFHEA. The audit process is outlined in the External Quality Assurance: Provider Manual of Procedures and includes the publication of the audit report on the MFHEA website. EEC-ITIS last underwent an MFHEA audit in 2018 and the report was issued by MFHEA on 2019.

### 3.2 Review of the Quality Management System

EEC-ITIS has introduced a standard operating procedure for documented internal review of the Quality Management System in its Quality Manual.

A structured procedure for internal review of the quality management system forms the basis of the renewal process of the Institute's Quality Assurance and Quality Enhancement processes and the process whereby EEC-ITIS checks that its management system remains relevant to today's requirements in terms of financial regulations, regulatory requirements to operate as a higher education and to maintain internal quality.

A periodic internal review of the Quality Management System shall be conducted on the following areas:

| Area                              | Frequency   |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| Institute's financial performance | External financial audit of the institute's financial accounts conducted by a qualified financial auditor and as per MFSA requirements every year. The report shall be communicated to the Principal and the Board of Studies in order to |

|  |   |
|--|---|
|  | assess the quality assurance and management system from a financial aspect.                               |
| Quality assurance audit of the Institute's Management structure                                      | Conducted by the Board of Directors every three years. The next audit shall take place in September 2021. |
| Quality assurance audit of Institute's policies, regulations, visions and goals                      | Conducted by the Board of Directors every three years. The next audit shall take place in September 2021. |
| Quality assurance Audit of Programme Proposals and Cyclical Revision of Existing Academic Programmes | Conducted by the Board of Directors every three years. The next audit shall take place in September 2021. |
| Quality assurance audit of marketing of programmes   | Conducted by the Board of Directors every three years. The next audit shall take place in September 2021. |
| Quality assurance audit of recruitment and admissions policy   | Conducted by the Board of Directors every three years. The next audit shall take place in September 2021. |
| Quality assurance audit of student assessment procedure  | Conducted by the Board of Directors every three years. The next audit shall take place in September 2021. |
| Quality assurance audit of student welfare and support   | Conducted by the Board of Directors every three years. The next audit shall take place in September 2021. |
| Quality assurance audit on staff recruitment and staff management                                    | Conducted by the Board of Directors every three years. The next audit shall take place in September 2021. |

### **Area 1: Institute's financial performance**

Step 1: External financial audit of the institute's financial accounts conducted by a qualified financial auditor and as per MFSA requirements every year. The auditor is chosen by the Principal and approved by the Board of Directors.

Step 2: The report shall be communicated to the Principal and the Board of Studies in order to assess the quality assurance and management system from a financial aspect.

Step 3: An evaluation of the report shall be carried out by the board of Directors in order to ensure no financial irregularities on a yearly basis. The principal shall report to the Board of Directors on any actions carried out to address any financial irregularities within one month from the issuance of the auditor's report.

## **Area 2: Quality assurance audit of the Institute's Management structure**

Step 1: The Board of Directors shall request the respective boards which make up the structure of the Faculty of Social Sciences and Hospitality to undertake an audit through a written procedure to assess the soundness of the institute's management. This shall be made through a written request by the Board of Directors which is sent to the Board of Studies, the Board of Examiners and the Classifications Board to kick start a written consultation process. This would provide a system of check and balances, where the management which at the end of the day are expected to provide institutional support to the respective boards are then assessed on a cyclical basis on their performance.

Step 2: Upon the receipt of the written request from the Board of Directors; the Board of Studies, the Board of Admissions, the Board of Examiners and the Classifications Board shall kick-start an audit process whereby each board would individually and independently from each compile a written consultation in the forms of a performance appraisal of the Principal, the Faculty Coordinator and the QA Coordinator. This would be compiled within a month of communication from the Board of Directors to each respective board or on the first date of meeting of each respective board, whichever comes first. The feedback for each written consultation must be agreed and endorsed upon by all respective board members within that specific board which feedback has been requested for and thus must universally reflect the opinion of the board.

The written consultation delivered by each board (the board of studies, the board of examiners, the board of admissions and the board of classifications) shall consist of feedback on the following three main criteria:

- i. Leadership measures implemented in the last 3 years
- ii. Timeliness measures implemented in the last 3 years
- iii. Teamwork measures implemented in the last 3 years
- iv. Change management measures implemented in the last 3 years
- v. Personal development undertaken in the last three years

Each board must comment on the effectiveness, provide recommendations for improvement and an overall mark out of 10 (10 being the highest and 0 being the lowest) to assess the performance of each member of the faculty management structure as part of the written consultation process.

Step 3: Upon receipt of feedback as per written consultation process from the respective boards; the Board of Studies shall assess the feedback and recommendations put forward by each board. The Board of Studies shall work with the management of the faculty to address the recommendations and feedback provided by the respective boards.

**Area 3: Quality assurance audit of Institute's policies, regulations, visions and goals**

**Area 4: Quality assurance Audit of Programme Proposals and Cyclical Revision of Existing Academic Programmes**

**Area 5: Quality assurance audit of marketing of programmes**

**Area 6: Quality assurance audit of recruitment and admissions policy**

**Area 7: Quality assurance audit of student assessment procedure**

**Area 8: Quality assurance audit of student welfare and support**

**Area 9: Quality assurance audit on staff recruitment and staff management**

Step 1: The Board of Directors shall request the respective boards which make up the structure of the Faculty of Social Sciences and Hospitality to undertake a self-assessment exercise and self-audit on areas 3-9, in order to assess the soundness of all existing institutes' policies, regulations and the overall mission and goal, procedure for new programme proposals and cyclical revision of existing academic programmes, marketing of programmes, student assessment procedure, student welfare and support, staff recruitment and staff management. This shall take place once every three years. This shall be made through a written request by the Board of Directors which is sent to the Board of Studies, the Board of Examiners and the Classifications Board to kick start a written consultation process.

Step 2: Upon the receipt of the written request from the Board of Directors; the Board of Studies, the Board of Admissions, the Board of Examiners and the Classifications Board shall kick-start an internal self-evaluation and self-audit process whereby each board would individually and independently from each compile a written consultation in order to express feedback from each board on how they assess the soundness of the procedures in place for areas 3-9 as stipulated in the QA manual. This would be compiled within a month of communication from the Board of Directors to each respective board or on the first date of meeting of each respective board, whichever comes first. The feedback for each questionnaire must be agreed and endorsed upon by all respective board members within that specific board which feedback has been requested for and thus must universally reflect the opinion of the board.

The written consultation delivered by each board (the board of studies, the board of examiners, the board of admissions and the board of classifications) shall consist of feedback on the following three main criteria:

- I. Effectiveness and robustness of current Institute's procedures in place as stipulated in the QA manual for areas 3-9 (each Board must comment and deliver an opinion on the soundness and relevance of each existing policy within the Institute. The principal shall compile an updated list of all existing procedures in the QA manual which would be brought to the attention of each respective board,



upon the deliverance of the written request by the Board of Directors to kick-start the written consultation).

- II. Identification of scope for new procedures to be included in the QA manual for areas 3-9 (each Board must comment and deliver an opinion upon the deliverance of the written request by the Board of Directors to kick-start the written consultation).
- III. Effectiveness of the implementation of procedures place as stipulated in the QA manual for areas 3-9 (each Board must comment and deliver an opinion upon the deliverance of the written request by the Board of Directors to kick-start the written consultation).

Each board must comment on the effectiveness, provide recommendations for improvement and submit proposed changed on each of the above three criteria as part of the written consultation process.

Step 3: Upon receipt of feedback as per written consultation process from the respective boards; the Board of Studies shall assess the feedback, recommendations and proposed changes put forward by each board on each respective existing policy, regulations, mission vision and goals. The Board of Studies shall work with the Principal to incorporate those changes which are deemed feasible by the Board of Studies, on each respective existing policy, regulations, mission vision and goals.

Step 4: Upon finalisation of changes and incorporation of feedback provided through the written consultation with each respective Boards, the Principal shall convene a Quality Assurance Symposium on a minimum of three days (two areas for each day) which takes place once every three years. This is to be attended and chaired by the Board of Directors and the members of all respective boards of studies, admissions, classifications and examinations. The symposium shall focus on an exchange of views, discussion and final endorsement of the changes proposed for the procedures listed in the QA manual for each of areas 3-9 which would have been suggested during the written consultation process, updates to existing procedures and their implementation methods and endorsement of new procedures. Decisions are taken by qualified majority of attendees in the symposium.

### 3.3 Teaching and Learning

EEC-ITIS is committed to offer every student the opportunity to develop as an independent learner and optimise their capacity for pragmatic, analytical and creative thought.

In view of attaining educational excellence and to reflect the national priorities for research, learning and teaching, EEC-ITIS adheres to and promote the following principles:

- strategic approach to learning and teaching. A shared understanding of this approach is promoted among the staff, students and other stakeholders.
- The resources provided give every student an equal opportunity to meet the intended learning outcomes.
- Lecturers make use of student-centred learning methods which shift the focus of instruction from the lecturer to the student and seek to encourage active student engagement.
- Ensuring that all lecturers and staff are suitably qualified.

The Principal, Faculty Coordinator and the lecturers are collectively responsible for ensuring that the assessment of students follows the relevant curriculum, as prescribed by the awarding institution.

All assessments are formulated to reflect the syllabus and to ascertain that the students have achieved the learning outcomes. The Faculty Coordinator is thus responsible for ensuring that assessment methods genuinely assess the learning outcomes which the programme aims for students to achieve. An appropriate amount of time for assessment and verification activities is allocated prior to the issuing of the assessment, during which the Faculty Coordinator and the lecturer of the specific study unit finalise the criteria on which the students are to be assessed. The Faculty Coordinator also ensures that assessment is consistent between different assessors in order to achieve an outcome that is representative of a students' learning achievements. Internal verification substantiates the final grading decisions, in line with the awarding body requirements.

Clear and transparent feedback in grading is essential and is documented by the lecturer throughout each assignment, displaying how marks are awarded in a comprehensive and comprehensible manner. This enables students to review their work in a constructive manner and improve their performance in future work.

On the EEC-ITIS website students and other stakeholders can access also all the necessary information about each course offered or awarded by EEC-ITIS. As per MFHEA and European QA standards, the information includes: the duration of the course, its MQF level, ECTS value, the learning outcomes and the assessment criteria for all the units or modules of the courses.

### **3.4 Relevant Policies**

- Student Admission Procedure (Annex 1)
- Student Resources and Induction (Annex 2)
- Equality and Diversity Policy (Annex 3)
- Disability Policy (Annex 4)
- Ethics Policy (Annex 5)
- Principles Against Intolerance (Annex 6)
- Teaching Policy (Annex 7)
- Assessment Policy (Annex 8)
- Attendance Policy (Annex 9)
- Examinations Policy (Annex 10)
- Revision of Assessment Regulations Procedure (Annex 11)
- Assessment Grading Rubric (Annex 12)
- Student Progression (Annex 13)
- Academic Fraud (Annex 14)
- Recognition of Prior Learning (Annex 15)
- Appeals Policy (Annex 16)
- Complaints Policy (Annex 17)
- Student Placements (Annex 18)
- Setting examinations and assignments (Annex 19)
- Policy for reasonable adjustments (Annex 20)
- Academic Integrity (Annex 21)
- Recruitment of Staff (Annex 22)
- Feedback and Student Support (Annex 23)
- External examining (Annex 24)

#### **4. Monitoring and Periodic Reviewing of Academic Programmes**

EEC-ITIS has further established a standard operating procedure detailing the monitoring and periodic reviewing of the academic programmes, by building on the provisions already established in section 10 of the Quality Assurance manual.

Periodic Monitoring is the building block of the Institute Quality Assurance and Quality Enhancement processes and the process whereby EEC-ITIS checks that individual study units and programmes meet the expectations of lecturers, students, prospective students and industry.

Periodic monitoring has a key role in:

- (a) Maintaining academic standards
- (b) Monitoring and enhancing the management of assessment and of feedback to students
- (c) Monitoring student performance and progression
- (d) Evaluating the quality of the student experience and identifying enhancements
- (e) Evaluating the effectiveness of learning and teaching resources and identifying matters requiring attention
- (f) Identifying, promoting and disseminating good practice
- (g) Informing the lecturers of matters requiring their attention

##### **Monitoring and reviewing tools**

As established in the revised standard operating procedure included in the Quality Assurance Manual, there are five main elements that are taken into account in the updated process for monitoring and periodical reviewing of individual study units and academic programmes. These include:

##### **I. Student feedback**

Student feedback obtained through the questionnaires filled in by student at the end of every academic year. Two types of online questionnaires are being disseminated in order to collect feedback from current students: one to assess student satisfaction and feedback on the effectiveness of each study unit and thus in order to be able to make adequate adjustments of each study unit and another one on the overall course programme in order to assess the adequacy of the overall programme.

Students are asked to provide their feedback on the effectiveness of the learning outcomes, teaching and instructional quality, assessment procedures, relevance of the study unit for the world of work and the administration of the study unit and on the overall effectiveness and administration of the course programme. This

feedback is then used and taken into account both for the creation and proposition of new programmes and in the periodical reviewing of current and existing academic programmes. This exercise is expected to be held at the end of every academic year and the feedback evaluated by the faculty coordinator which would then report to the Board of Studies.

## **II. Alumni feedback**

As from academic year 2020/21, an online questionnaire is being disseminated in order to collect feedback from alumni on the effectiveness and relevance of current programmes offered by EEC-ITIS and their use for the world of work, once every three years amongst the previous three intakes. This will also include a component for graduate tracing.

## **III. Stakeholder feedback: Employers, Industry Operators and Social Partners**

A standard operating procedure has also been developed for stakeholder consultation in view of new programme proposals and the revisions of current programmes at every three-year cycle. This includes:

- a questionnaire designed for stakeholders including employers, industry operators and social partners working in the relevant fields related to the accredited programmes on offer, once every three years. The questionnaire is designed to help collect feedback from the latter on the effectiveness and relevance of current programmes on offer, collect feedback on what could be improved and what new elements could be added in order to make the current and future programmes on offer more relevant to the industry and world of work.
- follow-up one-to-one interviews with selected stakeholders once a new programme has been developed and drafted or a cyclical review of current programmes has been developed in order to provide feedback on the finalised draft which would then be considered by the Board of Studies.

## **IV. Lecturer Feedback**

As from academic year 2020/21, a questionnaire is being distributed to each lecturer requiring the latter to conduct a self-assessment and self-audit of each study unit and the overall course programme highlighting revisions and recommendations they wish to propose on the learning outcomes, teaching and instructional facilities and tools, including digital tools, assessment procedures, relevance of the study unit for the world of work, the administration of the study unit and on the overall effectiveness and administration of the course programme. This self-assessment by lecturers is carried out once every three years, and the feedback evaluated by the faculty coordinator which would then report to the Board of Studies prior to the cyclical programme revision every three years.

## V. External Agencies

Feedback is taken from the recommendations emanating from the external quality assurance audit conducted by the Malta Further and Higher Education Authority every five years. Recommendations would be incorporated in the revised academic programmes every cyclical review by the Board of Studies.

### **Phase I: Periodic Study Unit Review**

The periodic review of study units is one of the main ways by which the Institute assures itself of the quality of the student learning experience and of the provision delivered. This is conducted by the Faculty Coordinator as part of the periodic programme review every three years.

The review provides a formal opportunity for EEC-ITIS to reflect on and critically evaluate its provision and to benefit from a constructive dialogue with the lecturers who are teaching the subjects.

| <b>Criteria for Periodic Study Unit Review</b>   | <b>Monitoring and Reviewing Tools in use</b>   |
|--|--|
| Teaching <input type="checkbox"/> learning and assessment<br>[SEP]   | Lecturer Feedback – every 3 years<br><br>Student Feedback – every year<br><br>Alumni Feedback – every 3 years  |
| Student experience   | Student Feedback – every year<br><br>Alumni Feedback – every 3 years   |
| Enhancement procedures including academic management, research and resources as they relate to teaching, learning and assessment | Lecturer Feedback – every 3 years<br><br>Stakeholder Feedback – every 3 years<br><br>Student Feedback – every year<br><br>Alumni Feedback – every 3 years<br><br>External Agencies – every 5 years |

Upon the commencement of a cyclical review every three years of existing course programmes and following the recommendations emanating from the evaluation of lecturers' questionnaires on the self-assessment and self-audit of the structures, course content and learning outcomes of the study units within their portfolio, the Board of Studies shall decide which study units will merit a revision. The respective lecturer responsible for the delivery of that study unit will be requested by the Board of Studies to draft a revised study unit course description and structure including learning outcomes.

The following assessment procedure shall be used by the Board of Studies to consider a draft revised study unit presented by the lecturer:

Step 1: Assess whether the study unit is complementary and fits within the overall scope, aims and objectives of any revised programme.

Step 2: Assess the accurate presence of the study unit objective, rationale, description, learning outcomes, number of learning hours, number of ECTS, assessment, reading list and lecturer's name. Specifically during study unit evaluation the following are considered:

- (i) Where the intended outcomes realistic, achievable, and appropriate?
- (ii) Has the curriculum content been altered to reflect new research/practice?
- (iii) Is the delivery method appropriate?
- (iv) Should the study unit be core/compulsory to the programme?
- (v) What changes are necessary in the reading list?
- (vi) Are the assessment methods suitable?
- (vii) Are the grading criteria clear and successful in distinguishing performance?
- (viii) Has a critical reflection been made on the teaching staff?

Step 3: Analysis of annual student questionnaire feedback on the individual study units by the Faculty Coordinator. An evaluation report is drawn up from the feedback collected. The recommendations of the evaluation report of every year are taken into account by the board of Studies in the three-year cyclical review of each academic programme.

Step 4: In the case of a significantly revised study unit, changes are tracked to reflect all amendments.

Step 5: In the case of a new study unit, a fresh numerical code is generated.

Step 6: Provide a recommendation for approval of the revised or new study unit and its inclusion in the programme. If a study unit is not approved by the board of studies recommendations for revisions by the lecturer need to be drawn up by the Board of studies and steps 1-5 are again repeated until the Board of Studies is satisfied with the quality of the study unit. Once a study unit is finalised this shall be included in the revised course programme. Once all study units are revised, the cyclical review will move into Phase II –

periodic programme review.

### **Phase II: Periodic Programme Review**

The Periodic Programme Review is designed to act as the single action plan for programme planning and development. It provides a mechanism for the Quality Assurance Office to review a programme success every three years, and to capture actions designed to enhance that programme.

| <b>Criteria for Periodic Programme Review</b>   | <b>Monitoring and Reviewing Tools in use</b>   |
|---|--|
| to consider the validity of a programme in light of developments in research, and industry practice, and the continued alignment with the Institute strategy and mission; | Lecturer feedback – every 3 years<br>Stakeholder Feedback – every 3 years  |
| changes in the external environment such as requirements of professional and regulatory bodies  | External Agencies – every 5 years  |
| to ensure that students are attaining the intended learning outcomes and whether assessments enable this to be appropriately demonstrated;                                | Student Feedback – every year<br>Alumni Feedback – every 3 years   |
| to highlight where improvements to provision are possible in order to enhance the student learning experience.  | Lecturer Feedback – every 3 years<br>Stakeholder Feedback – every 3 years<br>Student Feedback – every year<br>Alumni Feedback – every 3 years<br>External Agencies – every 5 years |

The following procedure is followed:

Step 1: Analysis of annual student questionnaire feedback on the overall course programme by the Faculty Coordinator. An evaluation report is drawn up from the feedback collected. The recommendations of the evaluation report of every year are taken into account by the board of Studies in the three-year cyclical review of each academic programme.

Step 2: Analysis of lecturer questionnaire feedback on the self-audit and self-assessment of their own study units and overall course programme by the Faculty Coordinator carried out every three years. An evaluation report is drawn up from the feedback collected. The



recommendations of the evaluation report are taken into account by the board of Studies in the three-year cyclical review of each academic programme.

Step 3: Analysis of alumni questionnaire feedback and graduate tracer study by the Faculty Coordinator carried out every three years. An evaluation report is drawn up from the feedback collected. The recommendations of the evaluation report are taken into account by the board of Studies in the three-year cyclical review of each academic programme.

Step 4: Analysis of stakeholder questionnaire and one-to-one meeting carried out every three years. An evaluation report is drawn up by the Faculty Coordinator. The recommendations of evaluation report are taken into account by the board of Studies in the three-year cyclical review of each academic programme.

Step 5: Analysis by the Board of Studies of the recommendations emanating from the external quality assurance audit conducted by the Malta Further and Higher Education Authority every five years.

Step 6: Analysis by the Board of Studies of the approach used towards 'weaker' students, i.e. those who have failed more than two study units per academic year, and how this was handled by the faculty through interviews with relevant lecturers as part of the cyclical review every three years in order to highlight what could be improved in terms of procedural approach.

Step 7: Assessment by the Board of Studies that current research and/or practice is reflected in the updated content of every study unit. This will take place through peer reviewing amongst lecturers of each other study units according to relevant area of expertise which would then report to the Board of Studies.

Step 8: Assessment by the Board of Studies that the programme has kept pace with developments in teaching and learning, e.g. use of technology, innovations in course design, improving availability of resources for students. This will take place through peer reviewing amongst lecturers of each other study units according to relevant area of expertise which would then report to the Board of Studies.

Step 9: Self-audit carried out by the Board of Studies to ensure that students with disabilities have equal access to the facilities of the Institute. Such students are provided with a chair lift, special restroom facilities, and large interactive boards for those suffering from eye- impairment.

Step 10: Analysis by the Board of Studies on the number and quality of applications and admissions.

Step 11: Analysis by the Board of Studies of the method of communication to current and prospective students.

Step 12: Analysis by the Board of Studies of data sets in order to evaluate student performance and achievement.

Step 13: Once the Board of Studies has concluded the programme review and all members

on the board are in agreement with the revised programme content, the board shall inform the Principal to communicate changes to the programme to MFHEA prior to the launch of the revised programme and in any case not before the formal approval and re-accreditation of the changes by the MFHEA Accreditation Unit.

Step 14: Upon formal approval and re-accreditation of the changes by the MFHEA Accreditation Unit, the study unit is promoted by the Principal.

Step 15: Once an academic year has commenced, no amendments should be introduced to existing study units in that year.

## 5. Data Management

### 5.1 Data Protection

EEC-ITIS is committed to protecting all personal and sensitive data for which it is responsible and to handle this data in line with local data protection legislation and the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).

The data protection principles as outlined by the Office of the Information and Data Protection Commissioner (IDPC) in Malta are available here:  
<https://idpc.org.mt/en/Pages/dp/principles.aspx>

The legal bases for processing data are:

- Consent: the student, parent/guardian or member of staff has given consent for the institution to process their personal data for a specific purpose.
- Contract: the processing is necessary for the contract. This includes staff employment contracts as well as student application forms.
- Legal obligation: the processing is necessary for EEC-ITIS to comply with the law (not including contractual obligations).

#### Policy and Guidelines

All staff are required to treat all student information in a confidential manner and follow the guidelines of this policy.

The requirements of this policy are mandatory for all staff employed by EEC-ITIS and any third party contracted to provide services within the institution.

#### Fair Processing and Privacy Notifications

EEC-ITIS will be transparent about the intended processing of data and communicate these intentions to staff, parents/guardians and students prior to the processing of the individual's data. Notifications shall be in accordance with regulations in terms of transparency, including where they are required to be issued to those defined as 'Children' under the legislation.

There may be instances when EEC-ITIS is required, either by law or in the best interests of students and/or staff, to pass information to external authorities. These authorities are also required to comply with the GDPR and have their own policies relating to the data protection. Any intention to share personal data to a third party organisation will be clearly defined with notifications, including details of the basis for sharing the data.

Data will be shared with third parties where it is a legal requirement to provide this information.

Staff and students will be notified of any proposed changes to data processing that may impact them.

Under no circumstances will EEC-ITIS disclose information:

That would cause serious harm to students, staff, or anyone else's physical or mental health or condition.

That would allow another person to be identified, or identifies another person as the source, unless the person is an employee of the institution or a local authority or has given consent, or it is reasonable in the circumstance to disclose the information without consent. The exemption from disclosure does not apply if the information can be edited so that the person's name or identifying details are removed.

## Data Security

In order to assure the protection of all data being processed and inform decisions on processing activities, EEC-ITIS will undertake an assessment of the associated risks of data processing the impact on individual privacy. Risk assessments are conducted in accordance with the requirements of Article 32 of the GDPR.

Security of data is achieved through the implementation of proportionate physical and technical measures. Nominated staff are responsible for the effectiveness of the controls implemented, and the reporting on their performance.

## **5.2 Document Control and Management**

EEC-ITIS is committed to ensuring that the records it produces are managed effectively. Good records management allows the Institute to satisfy the needs of corporate accountability, audit requirements, and facilitate management decision-making.

Records are kept by the Institute for the following purposes:

Administrative value - Records which provide evidence of the Institute's actions, activities and decisions.

Financial value - Evidence of the way in which funds are obtained, allocated, controlled and spent.

Legal value - Records which will provide the source of the authority for actions taken by the Institute and show evidence of title, contractual obligations, duties and privileges.

Historical value - Records which supply the corporate memory and kept for historical reasons.

Records are stored in a variety of location and formats:

Paper files - Paper records stored in offices or transferred to a central record store.

Shared drives, personal drives and emails - Records produced day-to-day by staff at their computers and stored in network drives and email accounts provided by the Institute.

IT systems - Systems dedicated to holding information and data to support a specific business

process, such as accounts, student profiles, the library catalogue, feedback data, or student registration, progression and success rate. Software packages such as excel sheets, word, accounting, and database are used throughout the IT system.

There are risks around records such as loss, damage or unauthorised access which need to be managed effectively. Persons handling information should ensure that all records, paper or electronic, are stored safely and securely. Two important concerns are the management of personal data and financial or commercially sensitive data. The Data Protection Act requires the Institute to ensure that sensitive personal data is inaccessible through appropriate technical measures. Financial and commercially sensitive data could have serious implications for the commercial performance and financial health of the Institute.

ITIS works towards the elimination of the following risks:

(a) The loss of records through unauthorized destruction or accidental deletion – copies are held in external hard drives.

(b) Records being viewed by an unauthorized member of staff – records handled by only one person.

(c) Unnecessary retention of records that are no longer required, leaving the Institute exposed to complaints of breaching the Data Protection Act – records reviewed yearly.

(d) Damage in storage locations damaged by flooding or fire – external drives stored in separate locations.

(e) Obsolete formats by virtue of changes in software and technology.

The purchasing and implementation of a new IT systems holding information should include an assessment of how records will be stored. If the system is replacing another it should also provide a solution for the records held on the obsolete system.

### **Accuracy of Information**

EEC-ITIS makes sure that their database is up to date by ensuring that all information stored such as professional details, student details, and networking details are regularly updated.

## **Annex 1**

### **1. Student Admission Procedure**

#### **1.1 Recruitment of Students**

A member of the administrative staff is fully qualified to ensure the following:

(a) International students are given the opportunity to make a conscious choice of academic programme level based on a well-informed and impartial foundation. This is achieved by providing them with knowledge of content, necessary pre-requisites for starting a programme, and challenges faced as life of a student.

(b) Potential students are informed through various modes of communication of the particular needs of society and the organisation's strategic objectives.

(c) International students are provided with knowledge of the linguistics, cultural and educational conditions upon which the teaching at EEC-ITIS is based.

(d) Potential students will be in a position to make a conscious choice based on well-informed communication through various modes, and impartial advice with particular focus on job opportunities.

#### **1.2 Student Admissions**

EEC-ITIS's objective to attract well-qualified, talented international students. It aims to promote a qualified choice of academic programmes and give new course participants a good transition to life as a student at the Institute. EEC-ITIS has in place clear and transparent admissions processes which are reviewed on a regular basis and which meet stringent Quality requirements. Every application is reviewed in detail by the Principal together with the Deputy Principal and Registrar. These are then overseen by the board of admissions. An evaluation of the applicant's academic and personal achievements is made in light of the course entry requirements. Furthermore, consideration is made to the applicant's demonstrated capacity to contribute to the intellectual life at EEC-ITIS.

All applicants are considered against the same criteria for the programme for which they have applied. When an interview is required, this will normally be conducted by two members of the Institute, the Principal and the Faculty Coordinator. The offer of a place will be dependent on the applicant's performance at this interview. All interviews for the same taught programme of study will follow a similar format and similar questions will be asked. It will be the responsibility of the interviewers to keep comprehensive and contemporaneous notes of the discussion that takes place during the interview. This ensures fairness and transparency. The Institute does not follow a *numerus clausus* policy.

The Institute seeks to ensure that admissions policies and procedures work effectively to

support its strategic objectives. The following are the core principles:

11. (a) The admissions process is fair, transparent, implemented consistently and is compliant with all relevant legislation.

(b) The Institute's policies embrace its commitment to equal opportunities.

(c) Every student will meet the entry requirements of a particular course, as articulated in the programme selection regulations. These requirements are made available to a prospective student (through the Institute's marketing effort) prior to application.

(d) Every student will at least meet the English Language requirements as specified in the programme regulations.

(e) Admission for some students may be dependent upon the applicant fulfilling Maltese residency regulations.

(f) When questions arise as to the eligibility of a prospective candidate, the offer of a place may be dependent upon satisfactory performance at an interview. An Ad hoc interview board is convened and this is made up of the Principal, Deputy Principal and Registrar, the Faculty Coordinator, Quality Assurance Co-ordinator, and a lecturer who teaches on the particular programme. During the interview it is ascertained that the candidate has all academic requirements to start the course. Furthermore, it is also established that the person is adequately motivated to successfully follow the course with profit.

(g) The Institute is committed to ensuring a diverse student population. It embraces the principles of widening participation and fair access and welcomes applications from all suitably qualified applicants who, in the Institute's judgment are able to demonstrate their potential to succeed in their chosen programme of study.

(h) There may be occasions where an applicant wishes to request that a decision be reviewed. In such cases an applicant should submit a case in writing to the Deputy Principal and Registrar indicating the grounds for review and providing any supporting evidence. Admissions decisions will not be reviewed where grounds are simply that an applicant disagrees with the academic judgement applied in reaching the decision. The Institute's complaint policy is explained below.

## **Annex 2**

### **2. Student Resources and Induction**

#### **2.1 Student Resources**

EEC-ITIS provides the following resources in order to ensure that students remain motivated to their course.

(i) A library which contains standard and additional texts needed for undergraduate courses offered by the Institute.

(ii) Wireless hotspots are available throughout the Institute which give quick access to Internet. Students can use their computer to access the internet and the Institute provides a dedicated password. This is supplied on admission. Students are provided information and contacted through dedicated social media (e.g. Facebook). Drop Box is used in cases where detailed information needs to be delivered. Lecturers are encouraged to upload their notes through Drop Box.

(iii) A service desk which is manned throughout the time the Institute is open.

#### **2.2 Induction**

New students are given an introduction by the principal who gives detailed information about the Institute, its culture, and the resources it provides. Students are taken around the institute and introduced to administration. They are also provided with an information handout which includes methods of communication, the course regulations, content and timetables of their first semester. The pack contains full details of each module; name of lecturer, subject content, number of ECTS, subject and learning outcomes, method/s of assessment, core textbook and reading list.



### Annex 3

#### 3. Equality and Diversity Policy - Fostering wellbeing and nurturing a safe learning environment

|                                   |   |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| <b>Policy Owner</b>               | Managing Director and Principal   |
| <b>Policy Lead</b>                | Managing Director and Principal   |
| <b>Audience</b>                   | All students, lecturers and staff   |
| <b>Legislation and regulation</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Chapter 456 – Equality for Men and Women Act.</li><li>• Chapter 452 – Employment and Industrial Relations Act.</li><li>• Legal Notice 181/2008 – Access to Goods and Services and their Supply Regulations.</li></ul> |
| <b>Formally endorsed by</b>       | Board of Directors  |
| <b>Endorsement date</b>           | September 2021  |
| <b>Next review</b>                | September 2024  |

### 3.1 Introduction

EEC-ITIS Malta Tourism and Languages Institute (EEC-ITIS) is dedicated to encouraging a supportive and inclusive culture amongst its student body, lecturers and staff within the institute. It is within our best interest to promote diversity and eliminate discrimination of all forms.

Our aim is to ensure that all students, lecturers and staff are given equal opportunity and that our organisation is representative of all sections of society. Each student, lecturer and staff member will be respected, valued and able to give their best as a result.

This policy reinforces our commitment to providing equality and fairness to all in our operations and not provide less favourable facilities or treatment on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, ethnic origin, colour, nationality, national origin, religion or belief, or sex and sexual orientation. We are opposed to all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination.

The definitions afforded to equality, diversity, acts of sexual harassment and acts of discrimination within this policy are in line with relevant legislation within the laws of the Republic of Malta, including:

- Chapter 456 – Equality for Men and Women Act.
- Chapter 452 – Employment and Industrial Relations Act.
- Legal Notice 181/2008 – Access to Goods and Services and their Supply Regulations.

EEC-ITIS has made an open commitment to increase the percentage of diverse people providing its services, and increase accessibility to the services we provide and the programmes we deliver. This reflects our steadfast commitment to our Fundamental Principles and reflects our core values that we should be inclusive in all we do. [L] [SEP]

To be able to deliver these ambitions and to demonstrate our compliance with anti-discrimination legislation, we need to recognise and empower everyone within our organisation. Our objective is to authentically deliver services that are available to everyone; that we live up to our Fundamental Principles, including impartiality and universality; and that we are inclusive and compassionate in all of the work that we do. This requires that we challenge ourselves to eliminate physical and attitudinal blockers that currently lead to discrimination.

By demonstrating our commitment to reflect the people we support, we will be better able to respond effectively and inspire credibility and confidence in our student body, lecturers and staff.

## **3.2 Definitions**

What we mean by Equality, diversity and inclusion:

**Equality:** ensuring people are not treated less favourably; unjustifiably. Specifically, on the basis of one or more protected characteristics defined by Chapter 456 of the laws of Malta and subsequent legislation.

**Diversity:** recognising and valuing the benefits of different perspectives, backgrounds and experiences. Also, identifying and acknowledging under-representation, and taking active steps to address it through: initiatives, policies, and systemic change.

**Inclusion:** actively embracing people with diverse perspectives, backgrounds and experiences. And creating an environment that enables us all to feel a sense of belonging, and where we can achieve the extraordinary together.

Equality, diversity and inclusion are not identical, but they are reliant on one other to tackle discrimination. For example, we cannot achieve real inclusion unless we embrace equality and diversity. We often use diversity as umbrella term to describe any of our equality, diversity and inclusion initiatives.

### **Unlawful discrimination**

When a person or group of people is treated less favourably than another person or group of people would be treated based on their protected characteristic.

Each of the above, are grounds covered by current anti-discrimination legislation in Malta.

### **Types of discrimination**

- > Direct discrimination – treating someone unfairly because of their protected characteristic
- > Indirect discrimination – A practice, policy or rule applied to everyone that may at first appear fair or neutral, but puts people of a particular protected characteristic at a disadvantage
- > Discrimination by association – a person is treated unfavourably because of another person's protected characteristic
- > Discrimination by perception – when someone is treated unfairly because others believe they have a protected characteristic
- > Victimisation – a person is treated less favourably because they have or is expected to complain about discrimination

> Harassment – unwanted conduct that has the purpose or effect of violating a person’s dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment.

> Bullying – as persistent, offensive, abusive, intimidating or insulting behaviour, abuse of power or unfair sanctions which make the recipient feel upset, threatened, humiliated or vulnerable, which undermines their self-confidence and which may cause them to suffer stress.

### **3.3 Aims and objectives of this policy**

This is a written document that solidifies EEC-ITIS’s commitment to promoting equality and diversity, particularly in areas such as student admissions, staff recruitment and training. It demonstrates that EEC-ITIS values every individual; that it is willing and prepared to fulfil their needs; that it will stand by them and combat discrimination.

Equality and diversity is all about promoting and accepting the things that distinguish us from each other. This policy ensures that EEC-ITIS is receptive to the needs of those with unique characteristics through support and inclusion.

This policy explains attitudes and values towards equality and diversity at EEC-ITIS. It outlines the primary aims for removing prejudice and inequality, and how it will improve the learning and working environment in terms of fair treatment, i.e. by:

- Creating a positive and supportive environment for all students, lecturers and staff;
- Protecting students and employees from being discriminated against because of one or more of the protected characteristics that apply to them;
- Providing equal opportunity for everyone, no matter their background or characteristics;
- Promoting the diversity of the student body and the workforce;
- Responding to changing demographics and working patterns.

### **3.4 Characteristics covered by this policy**

This equality and diversity policy outlines the aims of EEC-ITIS to safeguard those who may face inequality or harassment due to one or more of the nine ‘protected characteristics’:

- 3.5 Age
- 3.6 Disability
- 3.7 Sex
- 3.8 Sexual orientation
- 3.9 Race
- 3.10 Religion or belief
- 3.11 Gender reassignment
- 3.12 Marriage or civil partnership
- 3.13 Pregnancy and maternity

### **3.5 Commitments**

All students, lecturers and staff, no matter whether they are part-time, full-time, or temporary, will be treated fairly and with respect. Throughout its student admission process and when selecting candidates for employment, promotion, training, or any other benefit, EEC-ITIS shall adhere to its established criteria and shall base such processes on the basis of their aptitude and ability.

All students, lecturers and staff will be given help and encouragement to develop their full potential and utilise their unique talents. Therefore, the skills and resources of our organisation will be fully utilised and we will maximise the efficiency of our whole workforce.

EEC-ITIS commitments:

- To create an environment in which individual differences and the contributions of all students, lecturers and staff are recognised and valued;
- To create a working environment that promotes dignity and respect for every student, lecturer and staff member;
- To not tolerate any form of intimidation, bullying, or harassment, and to discipline those that breach this policy;
- To make training, development, and progression opportunities available to all students, lecturers and staff;
- To promote equality in the workplace, which EEC-ITIS believes is good management practice and makes sound business sense;
- To encourage anyone who feels they have been subject to discrimination to raise their concerns so we can apply corrective measures;
- To encourage its students, lecturers and staff to treat everyone with dignity and respect;
- To regularly review all student recruitment and staff employment practices and procedures so that fairness is maintained at all time.

### **3.6 Monitoring**

EEC-ITIS will inform all employees that an equality and diversity policy is in operation and that they are obligated to comply with its requirements and promote fairness in the workplace. The policy will also be drawn to the attention of funding agencies, stakeholders, customers, learners, and job applicants.

EEC-ITIS equality and diversity policy is fully supported by senior management. Our policy will be monitored and reviewed annually to ensure that equality and diversity is continually promoted in the workplace.

## Appendix 1: related documents

| Document Title   | Relationship to this Policy   |
|--|---|
| Quality Assurance Manual   | Underpins the principles and commitments behind this policy                                   |
| Student Handbook   | Supports this policy in relation to student behavior, conduct and classroom management        |
| Examinations policy  | Supports this policy in relation to assessment, examination code of conduct                   |
| Revision of assessment procedure                                     | Supports this policy in relation to procedures to be followed for the revision of assessments |
| Lecturer's engagement agreement template and staff contract template | Supports this policy in relation to lecturer and staff engagement                             |
| Disability Policy  | Supports this policy in relation to disability aspects  |

## Appendix 2: Document provenance

| Date endorsed  | Category                           | Summaries changes made   | Reason for changes   | Consulted   | Changes endorsed by |
|----------------|------------------------------------|--|--|---|---------------------|
| September 2021 | Endorsed by the Board of Directors | This policy replaces the generic reference to equality and diversity in the Quality Assurance Manual | In order to have a stand-alone and defined approach to equality and diversity. | Managing Director and Principal<br>Deputy Principal and Registrar<br>Head of Faculty – Faculty of Tourism and Social Sciences<br>Head of Faculty/Director of Studies – Faculty of Languages | Board of Directors  |

### **Appendix 3: Impact Assessment Summaries**

Privacy impact assessment summary: Not required

Environmental impact assessment summary: Not required

Equality Impact Assessment summary:

The Board of Directors has noted no negative contentious issues within the policy. It however highlights the positive impacts on protected characteristics.

## Annex 4

### 4. Disability Policy - Fostering an accessible learning environment

|                                   |   |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| <b>Policy Owner</b>               | Managing Director and Principal   |
| <b>Policy Lead</b>                | Managing Director and Principal   |
| <b>Audience</b>                   | All students, lecturers and staff   |
| <b>Legislation and regulation</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Chapter 456 – Equality for Men and Women Act.</li><li>• Chapter 452 – Employment and Industrial Relations Act.</li><li>• Legal Notice 181/2008 – Access to Goods and Services and their Supply Regulations.</li></ul> |
| <b>Formally endorsed by</b>       | Board of Directors  |
| <b>Endorsement date</b>           | September 2021  |
| <b>Next review</b>                | September 2024  |



## **4.1 Introduction**

EEC-ITIS has made an open commitment to increase the percentage of disabled people providing its services, and increase accessibility to the services we provide and the programmes we deliver. This reflects our steadfast commitment to our Fundamental Principles and reflects our core values that we should be inclusive in all we do.

To be able to deliver these ambitions and to demonstrate our compliance with anti-discrimination legislation, we need to recognise and empower everyone within our organisation. Our objective is to authentically deliver services that are available to everyone; that we live up to our Fundamental Principles, including impartiality and universality; and that we are inclusive and compassionate in all of the work that we do. This requires that we challenge ourselves to eliminate physical and attitudinal blockers that currently lead to discrimination.

By demonstrating our commitment to reflect the people we support, we will be better able to respond effectively and inspire credibility and confidence in our student body, lecturers and staff.

## **4.2 Definitions**

**Substantial:** The impairment is neither minor nor trivial.

**Physical impairment:** Can include long term conditions such as deafness, visual impairment, mobility impairments, heart conditions, diabetes, asthma, cancer or progressive conditions such as motor neurone disease.

**Mental impairment:** Can include mental health conditions such as depression, learning difficulties and learning disabilities

**Fluctuating conditions:** Conditions that change such as pain, MS, ME, Crohn's disease. **Long term:** Means that the condition or impairment has lasted twelve months, is expected to last for at least twelve months, or is likely to last for the rest of someone's life.

**Reasonable adjustment:** making changes to a disabled person's environment or the way their employment is structured to mitigate any disadvantages, and allows them to work safely and productively. This may include, removing physical barriers, providing extra support, and providing flexibility.

### **4.3 Purpose and aims**

- 4.3.1 The purpose of the policy is to ensure that we operate consistent with our Fundamental Principles and our 'inclusive' value, as well as to ensure that our practice is compliant with relevant legislation and regulation.
- 4.3.2 We will be assessing the equality impact of policies, projects and decisions, including around changes such as technology and building accessibility. Assessments identifying specific issues in relation to disabled people will be further assessed, and appropriate action taken in response as required.
- 4.3.3 We will ensure we consult with the internal and external stakeholders (e.g. the national commission for the promotion of equality, the national commission for persons with disability, the student body/staff/service users) on issues relevant to disability and accessibility.
- 4.3.4 We have included accessibility as a primary criterion within all projects such as technology services, buildings, learning and development, and employment practices.
- 4.3.5 No premises will be purchased or leased if they don't meet our accessibility standards or cannot be adapted to do so. Where our existing buildings do not meet these standards, we will have a clear exit plan so as to be able to replace these buildings with more accessible premises within a reasonable time-frame.
- 4.3.6 All reasonable adjustments will be provided both proactively and when requested. This may include making alterations to physical premises, the provision of specialist equipment or alterations in practical arrangements such as reduced working hours or a reassignment of some duties. It should be assumed that adjustments will be provided unless it can be proven that the request is unreasonable.
- 4.3.7 A student or employee may become disabled as defined by the current legislation governing disability and accessibility within the laws of Malta. In these circumstances, every effort will be made to assist in the individual through making appropriate adjustments.
- 4.3.8 In appropriate circumstances, an individual should seek advice from relevant teams (including diversity, expert services and volunteering) as to how they can provide support. There may be instances where medical advice should be sought from an individual's doctor, the organisation's occupational health service, and from any relevant specialist organisations to ensure the most appropriate support can be provided.
- 4.3.9 In order to ensure that disabled students and lecturers are not placed at a disadvantage, EEC-ITIS should:
  - > Ensure that application packs and documentation are accessible, and available in different formats (e.g. large font size for visually impaired people) on request.

> Ask short-listed candidates if they have any particular requirements when making the arrangements for the interview, and make appropriate adjustments, in case of both lecturers and students. Make appropriate arrangements for students for lectures and examination sessions.

> Provide special equipment, additional support or allow additional time to complete any assessment and examinations. In the case of disabled students an additional fee may apply for the hiring of Learning support educators, where these are requested.

> The individual responsible for health and safety at the site where the individual works should be informed if a member of staff or a student has an impairment or condition so that appropriate provisions can be made for their health and safety.

#### **4.4 Training and support**

4.4.1 EEC-IT IS provides a one hour on-line equality and diversity training and training relating to disability confidence has been included as part of the students and staff training course, which is provided to all staff and students.

4.4.2 Leadership training will also assist our people with understanding the standards we have set out in this policy, and our systems will support their compliance.

## Appendix 1: related documents

| Document Title   | Relationship to this Policy   |
|--|---|
| Quality Assurance Manual   | Underpins the principles and commitments behind this policy                                   |
| Student Handbook   | Supports this policy in relation to student behavior, conduct and classroom management        |
| Examinations policy  | Supports this policy in relation to assessment, examination code of conduct                   |
| Revision of assessment procedure                                     | Supports this policy in relation to procedures to be followed for the revision of assessments |
| Lecturer's engagement agreement template and staff contract template | Supports this policy in relation to lecturer and staff engagement                             |
| Equality and Diversity Policy  | This underpins the principles and commitments behind the policy                               |

## Appendix 2: Document provenance

| Date endorsed  | Category                           | Summaries changes made   | Reason for changes   | Consulted   | Changes endorsed by |
|----------------|------------------------------------|--|--|---|---------------------|
| September 2021 | Endorsed by the Board of Directors | This policy replaces the generic reference to respect for all students with disability and reasonable accommodation therein, in the Quality Assurance Manual | In order to have a stand-alone and defined approach to diversity policy which is application for students, lecturers and staff | Managing Director and Principal<br>Deputy Principal and Registrar<br>Head of Faculty – Faculty of Tourism and Social Sciences<br>Head of Faculty/Director of Studies – Faculty of Languages | Board of Directors  |

### **Appendix 3: Impact Assessment Summaries**

Privacy impact assessment summary: Not required

Environmental impact assessment summary: Not required

Equality Impact Assessment summary:

The Board of Directors has noted no negative contentious issues within the policy. It however highlights some positive impacts on protected characteristics (besides disability) such as age and sex, showing how characteristics can affect one another.

## Annex 5

### 5. Ethics Policy

All clauses mentioned in the below ethics policy apply inter alia for all staff and faculty members of EEC-ITIS, applicant students and enrolled students. All provisions refer to the interaction between staff members, between student to students and between students and staff. All members of EEC-ITIS, including students and staff are expected to act in accordance with the following principles:

#### Responsibility and Accountability

All members of the organisation embrace the principle of individual responsibility at every level of the organisation's management and governance structures;

#### Integrity

All members of the organisation, including students and staff must be honest and truthful, act according with all relevant legislation, declare interests and possible conflicts of interest, be transparent and consistent in decision-making, maintain professionalism when engaging with outside parties including when representing the organisation;

#### Respect and Equal Opportunity

All students and staff will be treated with dignity and respect and all members will ensure that no person will be treated less favourably because of their role, age, disability, gender (including gender reassignment), race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity and social and economic background. This applies to interactions between staff members, students and staff and amongst students.

#### Collegiality

The organisation promotes an inclusive and participatory working and social environment in which all members are encouraged, supported and expected to behave appropriately to one another. Thus, this element of collegiality is expected to be carried out in all interactions amongst staff, students and staff and amongst students.

#### Sustainability

The organisation will make every effort to minimize any negative impact with the natural and built environment by effectively managing its resources.

#### Intellectual Freedom

The organisation will protect individual's freedom of expression, and uphold the freedom of research and convey research findings. This applies to all interactions whether verbal or in writing including during lectures and outside of lectures where interactions are involved amongst staff, between students and staff and amongst students.

## Annex 6

### 6. Principles Against Intolerance

All clauses mentioned in the below principles against intolerance apply inter alia for all staff and faculty members of EEC-ITIS, applicant students and enrolled students. All provisions refer to the interaction between staff members, between student to students and between students and staff. All members of EEC-ITIS, including students and staff are expected to act in accordance with the following principles:

The mission of the Organisation is to promote discovery of and dissemination of knowledge, to expand opportunities for all, and to educate a civil populace and the next generation of leaders. The Organisation therefore strives to foster an environment in which all are included, all are given an equal opportunity to learn and explore, in which differences as well as commonalities are celebrated, and in which dissenting viewpoints are not only tolerated but encouraged. Acts of hatred and other intolerant conduct, as well as acts of discrimination that demean our differences, are antithetical to the values of the Organisation and serve to undermine its purpose. This applies to the interaction amongst staff, between students and staff and amongst students.

Organisational policy prohibits discrimination based on race, colour, national origin, religion, sex, gender, gender expression, gender identity, pregnancy, physical or mental disability, medical condition (cancer-related or genetic characteristics), genetic information (including family medical history), ancestry, marital status, age, sexual orientation, citizenship, or the intersection of any of these factors. This applies to the interaction amongst staff, between students and staff and amongst students.

Discrimination arising from historical biases and stereotypes which may prejudice and jeopardize the research, teaching and service mission of the Organisation is strictly prohibited. This applies to the use of vocabulary, explanations, examples or use of case studies used for both explanations and demonstrations both by students and staff in writing or orally. This mission is best served when members of the Organisation community, including all students and staff collaborate to foster an equal learning environment for all, in which all members of the community are welcomed and confident of their physical safety.

Each member of the Organisation, including all students and staff are entitled to speak, to be heard, and to be engaged based on the merits of their views, and unburdened by historical biases, stereotypes and prejudices. Discourse that reflects such biases, stereotypes or prejudice can undermine the equal and welcoming learning environment that the Organisation strives to foster. The Organisation seeks to educate members of the community, including all students and staff to recognize, understand and avoid biases, stereotypes and prejudices. Each member of the Organisation, including all students and staff must ensure that there is mutual respect and civility within debate and dialogue thus advancing a democratic society.

Candidates for open staff positions and prospective students applying to join EEC-ITIS are entitled to consideration based on their stated views and actions, and in a manner consistent



with the Organisation's equality and diversity policy. Efforts to discredit such candidates based on bias or stereotyping should not go unchallenged.

Actions that physically or otherwise interfere with the ability of an individual or group, including whether this is a staff member or a student, to assemble, speak, and share or hear the opinions of others (within time place and manner restrictions adopted by the Organisation) impair the mission and intellectual life of the Organisation and will not be tolerated.

Harassment, threats, assaults, vandalism, and destruction of property, will not be tolerated. Where investigation establishes that such unlawful conduct was targeted at an individual or individuals, including students and staff, based on discrimination prohibited by Organisation policy, management should consider discipline that includes enhanced sanctions. The level of sanctions applied rests on the Board of Directors upon recommendation from the Principal in case of offences committed by members of staff. The level of sanctions applied in the case of offences committed by a student, rests on the Board of Studies upon recommendation from the Principal in agreement with the Faculty Coordinator.

## **Annex 7**

### **7. Teaching Policy**

Besides the standard lecture format where lecturers are encouraged to engage with students, the following active learning methods - teaching modes of delivery are used where appropriate in the delivery of study units:

1. Case Study method which involves ambiguity in the solution of a presented problem, which creates a challenge for discussing the reasoning of proposed solutions and choosing the most appropriate one;
2. Play projects which involves learning by problem solving. These are most successful during practical sessions after theory or modelling has been taught.
3. Action Learning which allows the student to effectively solve problems in a group-work environment;
4. Peer Feedback where students provide other students with feedback about a class presentation;

The Institute believes that today's students are active learners rather than spectators. Lecturing staff at the Institute view themselves as participants in creating information and new ideas. Accordingly, instruction is based on three pedagogical principles – personalization, participation and productivity. This framework allows learning through authentic real-world contexts, carrying out projects from beginning to end, and solving problems as they arise, all of which constitute powerful learning strategies.

EEC-ITIS encourages lecturers to foster participation, personalize and customize learning, emphasize project and problem-based learning, encourage collaboration and communication, engage and motivate learners, and cultivate creativity and innovation. This forms the basis of choice of the type of assessment used in the various modules offered by the Institute.

## **Annex 8**

### **8. Assessment Policy**

There should always be one assessment for each study-unit. This can be made up of more than one element (assignment/exam; project/presentation; fieldwork, etc.). The following principles are applied in connection with assessments:

8.1 The volume, timing, and nature of assessments must be designed with the intention of enabling students to demonstrate the extent to which they have achieved the relevant intended learning outcomes;

8.2 All intended outcomes should be assessed;

8.3 Information to students about what is expected of them must be provided clearly and explicitly at the beginning of each study unit. This is provided by the lecturer and/or faculty coordinator via email;

8.4 Assessments must support student learning as well as measure achievement;

8.5 Assessments should provide a reliable and consistent basis for the recommendation of an appropriate mark.

8.6 Students are provided with helpful, clear and timely feedback on all assessed work. The examiner provides detailed feedback on the general strengths, weaknesses, and suggested improvements of an assessment. An individual email is sent to each student.

8.7 Students are assessed in a way that is fair, valid, and reliable. This is achieved through the adoption of unique session student index numbers, double-blind marking and independent moderators. The latter scrutinizes the marks awarded for all students, to verify that the marks are appropriate and consistent in relation to the assessment criteria for the particular piece of work. Thus, the sampling size for post-assessment internal verification is 100%;

8.8 Students are provided with timely results and information about progression decisions. Students are informed in their time-table what assessments are expected from them during that semester. Dates of their exam or submission (in the case of an assignment/project) is clearly stated; and so is the date when the results are published. This does not exceed four weeks after their examination or submission of assignment/project. In the case where the assessment of a study unit is composed of more than one component the deadline for submission of each component, and/or the date of examination shall be staggered and with a minimum of two weeks in between;

8.9 Information on any arrangements for re-assessment must be made available to students at the start of each module. This is clearly stated in a handout;

8.10 Assessments should provide a means by which lecturers can evaluate the effectiveness of their teaching;

8.11 In the case of assignments or projects, lecturers are advised to pass student's work through plagiarism identification software. The software is available from free sources on the internet.;

8.12 In the case of students who are visually impaired, necessary arrangements regarding size of text, or use of a large computer screen are made when sitting for exams;

8.13 When assessments are assignment or project-based, students are given instructions via email including the questions, details on the format of the assignment and also submission details within the first week from the commencement of the semester.

8.14 A reading week is allocated in the middle of the semester after the first four/five weeks of lectures in order to allow students self-study time to access the compulsory and additional reading text and engage in independent inquiry on aspects which would have already been covered or are set to be covered during the semester. A study week is allocated at the end of lecturing sessions and prior to examinations week in order to allow students time to revise and access reading material prior to the commencement of assessment.

8.15 A week of tutorials is organised prior to the submission of assignments/projects. The aim of the tutorial sessions is to support in a practical manner, the course participants in the implementation of the outcomes of the study units covered, which have a written assignment component. The tutorial sessions thus aim to provide an opportunity for more feedback and individual support to course participants to ensure that they feel assisted and encouraged throughout the learning experience.

8.16 In the case of dissertations, upon submission of the dissertation proposal form at the end of the research methods study unit, the dissertation proposal is vetted by the board of examiners. They may revert back to the student for further clarifications or changes. Upon approval of the dissertation title by the board of examiners, each student is assigned a dissertation supervisor who must be a member of the faculty. Students are expected to meet regularly with the dissertation supervisor and can avail up to 30 hours of face-to-face contact throughout. Upon submission of the dissertation, the supervisor is expected to draw up a report suggesting the mark according to the grading rubric. This is then communicated to the second examiner who may either revise the mark up or down or agree with the current mark, adding to the report. A viva voce session is held following the corrections of both examiners where the student is expected to defend the dissertation through a presentation and answer questions from the reviewing panel. The viva voce panel is appointed by the board of examiners and should include the faculty coordinator, the respective dissertation supervisor and three other faculty members. The dissertation supervisor must adopt an observatory role and cannot intervene on behalf of the student during the viva voce. Following the viva voce, the panel shall draw up a report deciding whether to confirm the mark or to revise the mark, providing reasons accordingly.

## **Annex 9**

### **9. Attendance Policy**

9.1 Unless otherwise specified, or expressly stated in the description of a study-unit as published in the syllabus, attendance for lectures, tutorials, seminars, practical or work placements, fieldwork and any other teaching session in whatever mode is obligatory. An attendance register is taken for each lecture.

9.2 On the basis of documented evidence, a lecturer may bar a student whose attendance in a study-unit is not satisfactory from being assessed in that study-unit and has not reached a minimum of 80% during a particular semester. In such cases a 0 mark and an F grade shall be assigned and recorded. The student would thus be automatically required to do a resit for all assessment components of that study units.

9.3 EEC-ITIS Malta, will not excuse students from missing lectures or other teaching activities. No rescheduling of lecturing-related activities, examinations or vivas will be approved to accommodate such commitments.

9.4 Students may be excused from lectures on presentation of a medical certificate or on exemption by the Faculty Coordinator and approved by the Principal for reasons which are justified prior such as family emergencies or extenuating personal circumstances.

## Annex 10

### 10. Examinations Policy

1. Unless otherwise specified, or expressly stated in the description of a study-unit as published in the syllabus, attendance for lectures, tutorials, seminars, practical or work placements, fieldwork and any other teaching session in whatever mode is obligatory. On the basis of documented evidence, a lecturer may bar a student whose attendance in a study-unit is not satisfactory from being assessed in that study-unit. **In such cases a 0 mark and an F grade shall be assigned and recorded. The student would thus be automatically required to do a resit for all assessment components of that study units.**

2. EEC-ITIS Malta, will not excuse students from missing lectures or other teaching activities, and neither will it tolerate late submission of assignments or any defaults in coursework due to work or unauthorised commitments. No rescheduling of lecturing-related activities, examinations or vivas will be approved to accommodate such commitments. Late submission of assignments or absence from examinations, presentations, tutorials, vivas or any other assessment components will result in automatic failure. **The student would thus be automatically required to do a resit for such components.**

3. As highlighted in the grading rubric, the pass rate shall be 45%.

4. Students who fail a study-unit in the first sit shall be allowed three supplementary assessments in order to obtain credits for the study-unit.

5. In any academic year, students shall only be eligible to be re-assessed in study-units to which not more than a total of 20 credits are assigned.

6. Students shall be allowed to sit for a study-unit for which they did not obtain credits for whatever reason, during the next scheduled assessment session of that study-unit, provided they had satisfied the attendance requirement of the study-unit and the deadlines for submission of coursework.

7. The Board of Examiners may impose special requirements on the student to make up for the missed teaching sessions in cases where the attendance requirement is not fully met prior to students taking a supplementary assessment.

8. In the supplementary assessment of a failed study-unit, students may be required to be reassessed either in particular component/s of the assessment or in all the components of the assessment as indicated in the description of the study-unit. An assessment component may be indicated as not having the possibility of a supplementary assessment, in which case the original mark obtained is retained.

9. Students who fail the assessment of a study-unit involving a work placement, or any other unit that requires assessment over a period of time, and when it is not practicable or possible for students to be re-assessed during the current year, shall not have the right to a supplementary assessment and shall:

either (1) be required to refer the study-unit to the following year if such referral is allowed

in terms of these regulations;

or (2) be required to re-do the unit during an additional year of study. Such an additional year may, at the discretion of the Board of Examiners, not be counted for the purpose of Course duration.

10. In cases, where a student fails a written examination component a supplementary resit session is held and a different examination paper is presented.

11. In cases, where a student fails an assignment, the student is required to re-do the assignment. The same titles and conditions as kept as those in the original session.

12. Resits carry an additional fee of EUR 50 per assignment and EUR 75 per examination session. The fee is to be paid for each component and may be subject to revisions from time to time according to the decision taken by the board of examinations.

13. Late submissions for assignments and/or projects are not tolerated and shall result in an automatic fail.

14. The Faculty coordinator may allow for an extension of the submission date of an assignment/project due to extenuating circumstances, upon consultation with the respective lecturer responsible for the delivery of the respective study unit. Students who are unable to submit an assignment/project within the deadline are to place a request by email addressed to the head of faculty at least 24 hours prior to the closing of the deadline, highlighting the reason for the request for extension along with any supporting documented evidence. The faculty coordinator shall communicate the decision and extension time granted within 24 hours. The length of the extension is at the discretion of the faculty coordinator in consultation with the respective lecturer responsible for the delivery of the respective study unit.

## Annex 11

### 11. Revision of Assessment Regulations Procedure

1. Enrolled students who are not satisfied that the final grade awarded to them in any study unit, may request a revision of their assessment. Subject to the provisions of any relevant regulations or to any procedural guidelines, including the payment of fees, a student may, not later than one week from the publication of the result of the Assessment, request that an examination paper or any other work submitted for Assessment be reviewed for the purpose of ascertaining that no error was made in the award of marks. Students may additionally request that the decision of the revision be elaborated in a detailed report.
2. Students wishing to apply for a revision of paper are requested to fill in the revision of assessment request form and submit this to the EEC-ITIS registrar within one week from the publication of the result of the Assessment.
3. The academic judgement of the original examiner/s is not reviewable. A recommendation to alter the result by the reviewing academics during the revision of assessment procedure can only be made if the change can be justified by objective criteria.
4. Two options are applicable when applying for a revision of paper:
  - I. Option A – a revision of paper only (fee of EUR 30.00 applies);
  - II. Option B - a revision paper including a detailed report prepared jointly by the reviewing examiner and the reviewing second examiner indicating the quality of the student performance in each question of the examination (fee of EUR 75.00 applies).
5. Irrespective of the option, the revision of paper exercise is always carried out rigorously. Applicable fees may change from time to time as approved by the Board of Examiners in conjunction with the Registrar and the final approval of the Principal.
6. The revision shall be undertaken by an examiner and a second examiner appointed by the Board of Examiners.
7. If the examiner and second examiner conducting the revision is in agreement with the published result, the examiners shall draw up a joint report and submit it to the Registrar, through the Head of the Faculty responsible for the Unit, for onward transmission to the student, if the student has requested a written report in addition to a decision.
8. If the examiner conducting the revision is of the opinion that there are objective grounds for changing the result either upwards or downwards, the examiner shall communicate the findings to the chairperson of the Board of Examiners, who shall convene a meeting of the Board of Examiners, including the examiner who conducted



the revision, to discuss the paper. If the examiner's recommendation is to revise the marks downwards, the Board of Examiners shall only agree to the recommendation if it results in a change of grade. A pass grade shall not be downgraded to a failing grade; if it is found that extra marks in a passing grade have been given by mistake, these marks shall be removed provided that the final percentage mark is not less than 45%.

9. When a written report is requested by the student, the report of the examiner conducting the revision shall inform the student about the quality of his performance in each item from the set comprising the assessment.
10. If after revision, a change in the result, whether upwards or downwards, is found to be necessary, all records, including the final classification, shall be amended accordingly. Any fee paid in connection with the request for revision shall be refunded in the following cases:
  - I. if the change in the marks changes the grade from a fail to a pass;
  - II. if there is an increase of 10 marks to the original result accompanied by a change in grade;
  - III. if an administrative error is detected.
11. Nothing in these regulations prevents students from discussing assessment questions, including the type of answers expected, with the lecturer and/or the Head of Faculty concerned. Such consultation is not a prerequisite, nor can it be used to extend the time limit provided to apply for the revision of assessment.
12. An appeal which questions the academic or professional judgement of those charged by the Board of Examiners with the responsibility for assessing students' academic performance or professional competence shall not be permitted.
13. Students wishing a review of their marks for dissertations are required to submit a request for revision of papers accompanied by a statement giving the reason why they feel their dissertation merited a higher mark. The additional examiner would examine the students' claims and the augmented Board of Examiners would be able to consider the appeal more effectively and reach a more just conclusion.
14. A request for a revision of assessment for any given study unit can only be submitted in cases where the student has failed an overall of two study units or less in one academic year or the equivalent of not more than 12 ECTS in one academic year upon the publication of the annual results. As per the general assessment regulations students who have failed more than two study units in one academic year or more than 12 ECTS in one academic year are required to repeat the academic year.
15. A request for revision of assessment shall only be considered for students whose academic year fee payment schedule is up to date upon publication of results. Students who choose to submit a request for a revision of assessment need to thus first ensure that the fees due for the respective academic year have been duly affected to EEC-ITIS.

## Annex 12

### 12. Assessment Grading Rubric

The most effective means of demonstrating that marking is free from bias or prejudice is to ensure that students' assessments are anonymous. However, the Institute recognizes that this is not always practically possible. Where assessment cannot be anonymous the Faculty Coordinator must ensure, (this is explained below) and be able to demonstrate, that marking is fair, reliable, consistent and transparent. In the case of assignments and projects students are fully informed, when they receive their task, on the marking criteria which is to be adopted when their work is assessed. In the case of examinations, the marks allotted for each section/sub-section of the paper is clearly stated. The processes involved until the results are published are explained to the students.

The following general principles are applied when marking assessments:

(a) Marking must be based on the quality of students' work and be free from bias or prejudice.

(b) No study unit marking should rely solely on the judgment of one marker.

(c) Where anonymity of candidates cannot be assured, double blind marking should be applied. The sampling size for assessment verification must always be 100%. A second examiner marks the assessment independently of the first examiner. Each examiner formulates his/her own judgment and neither is aware of the other's assessment decision when determining their own mark. The two markers then share their marks and feedback with each other and agree on the final mark to be awarded.

(d) The relevant marking criteria must be applied consistently.

(e) The Institute has a written marking criteria across the full range of marks available (0-100) as explained below.

Examiners shall appraise the student's performance in the assessment of Study-Units as a percentage mark and as a grade as indicated in the tables below. Both the percentage mark and the letter grade shall be recorded in the student's academic record. The percentage mark shall be used for the purpose of calculating the student's progress and for the award classification.

| Descriptor   | Mark Range | Grade |
|--|------------|-------|
| <b>Work displaying exceptional quality</b><br><br>Exceptional performance showing comprehensive and critical understanding, and application of the subject matter. Evidence of extensive additional reading/research/work. Exceptional understanding of how to apply case study material to support an informed and critical appreciation of the subject matter. | 81%-100%   | A+    |

|   |         |    |
|---|---------|----|
| <b>Work displaying comprehensive understanding</b>  | 71%-80% | A  |
| Performance showing a very good working knowledge of the subject matter. Evidence of a moderate amount of additional reading/research/work. Average understanding of how to apply case study material to support an informed and critical appreciation of the subject matter. |         |    |
| <b>Work displaying substantial understanding</b>  | 66%-70% | B+ |
| Above-average performance, with a working knowledge of the subject matter. Evidence of some additional reading/research/work.   |         |    |
| <b>Work displaying sound understanding</b>  | 61%-65% | B  |
| Average performance. Evidence of little additional reading/research/work.   |         |    |
| <b>Work displaying satisfactory understanding</b>   | 56%-60% | C+ |
| Adequate performance. No evidence of additional reading/research/work.  |         |    |
| <b>Work displaying satisfactory understanding with shortcomings</b>   | 51%-55% | C  |
| Adequate but inconsistent performance. No evidence of additional reading/research/work.   |         |    |
| <b>Work displaying basic understanding</b>  | 45%-50% | D  |
| Marginal performance, satisfying minimum criteria.  |         |    |
| <b>Work displaying inadequate understanding to varying degrees.</b>   | 0%-44%  | F  |

### I. Correcting examination papers

Examiners are requested to fill in the dedicated examination marking sheet providing a detailed justification for the mark allocated for each question. The justification should be in reference to the grading rubric set by faculty. In this regard examiners need to comment in detail on the following criteria identified below.

- How do you assess the level of critical appreciation and understanding of the subject matter?
- How do you assess the level of application of the subject matter?
- How do you assess the level of working knowledge of the subject matter?
- How is theory connected to the practical application of the subject matter?
- How do you assess the level of evidence of additional reading/research/work?
- How do you assess the level of critical analysis of different contributors/sources and/or theorists by the candidate?
- Is factual data correct?

- How do you assess the quality of case studies and examples to support the arguments presented in the answer provided?

This list is not exhaustive and examiners are encouraged to add other elements they deem appropriate in relation to the technicality of the question or the subject being covered, including comments on how the answer could have been improved or the question could have been tackled better. Examiners are requested to consult with the Examination Marking Sheet Guide for more details.

## **II. Assessing presentations**

Where a presentation, whether oral or supported by written material is listed as part of the assessment criteria of a study unit, lecturers are requested to provide a detailed report justifying the mark allocated for the delivery of the presentation. The justification should be in reference to the grading rubric set by faculty. In this regard lecturers need to comment in detail on the following criteria identified below.

- How do you assess the level of critical appreciation and understanding of the subject matter?
- How do you assess the level of application of the subject matter?
- How do you assess the level of working knowledge of the subject matter?
- How is theory connected to the practical application of the subject matter?
- How do you assess the level of evidence of additional reading/research/work?
- How do you assess the level of critical analysis of different contributors/sources and/or theorists by the candidate?
- Is factual data correct?
- How do you assess the quality of case studies and examples to support the arguments presented in the answer provided?

This list is not exhaustive and lecturers are encouraged to add other elements they deem appropriate in relation to the technicality of the question or the subject being covered, including comments on how the presentation could have been improved or the question could have been tackled better.

## **III. Correcting coursework/assignments/essays**

Examiners are requested to fill in the below dedicated marking table providing a detailed justification for the mark allocated for each assignment/essay and/or coursework. The justification should be in reference to the grading rubric set by faculty. In this regard examiners need to comment in detail on the following criteria identified below. These criteria cannot be changed. The marks allocated need to be justified in detail in the comments section as per below indicated guiding criteria. Nonetheless, this list is not exhaustive and examiners are encouraged to add other elements they deem appropriate in relation to the technicality of the question or the subject being covered, including comments on how each section could have been improved or tackled better.

|   | <b><i>Indicative Weighting</i></b> | <b>Comments</b>  | <b>Mark s</b> |
|---|------------------------------------|--|---------------|
| <b>Composition, organisation and expression; Use of language; Referencing</b>                       | 10%                                | <p>How do you assess the overall organisation of the assignment? Does this serve the answer all parts of the question adequately? Does this properly set out to investigate all aspects of the subject matter?</p> <p>How do you assess the use of language and expression? Does this adequately support and explain the arguments presented?</p> <p>Is there sufficient referencing throughout the assignment? Is this according to the established format?</p> |               |
| <b>Introduction and rationale; Formulation of research question/problem; Focus</b>                  | 20%                                | <p>How do you assess the rationale and introduction of the assignment? Does this serve to introduce the subject matter adequately?</p> <p>How is the research question formulated? Is this supported with enough factual, theoretical and applied evidence?</p>  |               |
| <b>Identification and Range of reading; Relation to research question; Independent research</b>     | 25%                                | <p>How do you assess the range of further reading and level of independent reading/research? How does this contribute to improve the quality of the analysis? How do you assess the level of theoretical input and the its level of analysis?</p>  |               |
| <b>Analysis &amp; evaluation of deliverables; Awareness of strengths and limitation of findings</b> | 25%                                | <p>How do you assess the quality of theoretical comparison presented?</p> <p>How do you assess the quality of the case studies presented? How do you assess the level of awareness of the candidate on the strengths and weaknesses of the subject matter?</p>   |               |
| <b>Conclusion; Contribution and Impact</b>  | 10%                                | <p>How do you assess the findings presented? How do you assess the conclusions presented?</p> <p>How do you assess the recommendations and way forward presented?</p> <p>How do you assess the opportunities identified for further research?</p>  |               |

|                     |     |   |  |
|---------------------|-----|---|--|
| <b>Bibliography</b> | 10% | Is the compilation of the bibliography sufficient? Is this according to the established format? |  |
| TOTAL Marks         |     |   |  |

General comments on submission:

Examiners are encouraged to add other elements they deem appropriate in relation to the technicality of the question or the subject being covered, including comments on how each section could have been improved or tackled better.

## Annex 13

### 13. Student Progression

For undergraduate students, progression recommendations include:

|  |  |
|--|--|
| Pass   | You have satisfied the examiners and can proceed to the next year of your course.  |
| Pass and Transfer/ Non Complete and Transfer | You have satisfied the requirements to transfer to another course in the coming academic year, if previously requested.  |
| Resit/Resubmit                               | <p>You have failed to satisfy the examiners in the assessments for one or more study-units, in line with the assessment policy. You are required to retake the assessment(s) and the mark you achieve will be capped at 45% for a pass.</p> <p>The Board of Examiners will then decide whether you are eligible to progress to the next level of your course (non-finalist students) or be awarded your degree (finalist students).</p>        |
| Sit/Submit                                   | You have failed to satisfy the examiners in the assessments for one or more study-units in line with the assessment regulations and have presented accepted evidence of mitigating circumstances. You are required to retake these assessments before you may progress to the next level of your course (non-finalist students) or be considered for the award of a degree (finalist students). The marks for these retakes will not be capped |
| Proceed and Re-sit                           | You have failed to satisfy the examiners in the assessments for a number of study units in line with the assessment regulations, and are required to progress to the next year of your course and retake the outstanding assessments alongside your other modules  |

|                               |   |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Proceed and Substitute        | You have failed to satisfy the examiners in the assessments for a limited number of study units in line with the assessment regulations, and are required to progress to the next year of your course and substitute approved new modules in place of your outstanding assessments.   |
| Proceed and Carry             | You have failed to satisfy the examiners in the assessments for a number of study units in line with the assessment regulations, and are required to progress to the next year of your course without retaking the outstanding modules. These outstanding fail marks will factor within the calculation your overall degree classification. |
| Repeat Semester 1             | You are required to repeat the first semester of the year on the grounds of mitigating circumstances. The marks for these repeated study-units will not be capped. In the second semester your studies will be temporarily suspended until you begin the next level of your course.   |
| Repeat Semester 2             | You are required to repeat the second semester of the year on the grounds of mitigating circumstances. The marks for assessments associated with these repeated study units will not be capped. In the first semester your studies will be temporarily suspended.   |
| Repeat year                   | You are required to repeat the whole year on the grounds of mitigating circumstances. The marks for these repeated study units will not be capped. This decision is only taken in exceptional circumstances.  |
| Resit without Residence (RWR) | You have failed to satisfy the examiners in the assessments for one or more study units in line with the assessment regulations and are required to retake these assessments in the following academic year before you are allowed to   |



|                       |   |
|-----------------------|---|
|                       | <p>progress to the next level of your course. The outstanding assessments must be completed 'without residence' (see below). Pass marks for the re-attempted assessments will be capped at 40%.</p>   |
| Sit without Residence | <p>You have failed to satisfy the examiners in the assessments for one or more study units in line with the assessment regulations, however you have presented accepted evidence of mitigating circumstances. You are required to retake these assessments in the following academic year before you are allowed to progress to the next level of your course. The outstanding assessments must be completed 'without residence' (see below). The marks for these re-attempted assessments will <i>not</i> be capped.</p> |
| Termination of course | <p>You have failed to satisfy the examiners and meet the Institute's progression requirements and/or scheme of degree classification and therefore your course of study at the Institute has been terminated.</p>   |

On completion of the course the student is presented with a certificate from the Institute. This declares the name of the student, course followed, and the date when completed. Furthermore, a transcript is also provided. This contains full details of the student together with the modules undertaken and the relevant results; the diploma/degree level.

## Annex 14

### 14. Academic Fraud

Any case of suspected academic fraud is always investigated. When investigating a case of suspected fraud, it is important to document all investigation phases and evidence to prove the fraud as meticulously as possible. It is also important that the student is given the right to submit an explanation on the demands and information which may have an effect on its decision.

A central principle in handling a case of suspected fraud is that the lecturer or other staff member who noticed the fraud does not personally carry out the investigation, does not request a statement on the matter from the student before it is resolved, and does not make decisions on possible consequences. The lecturer has the duty to document, as clearly as possible, the evidence on which the fraud allegation is based. An exception is a situation in which the lecturer assesses that the student's actions may be a result of incompetence rather than an evident attempt at fraud. In this case, the lecturer can decide not to start a fraud investigation but to guide the student to act appropriately. In these cases, the lecturer informs the student how s/he should correct the text before it is evaluated.

The investigation of a case of suspected fraud is handled by the Faculty Coordinator. If a fraud allegation is shown to be unfounded, a new possibility must be arranged as soon as possible for the student to complete the interrupted examination or study unit. Any suspected case of fraud must be clarified without delay and the decision must be announced to the student and to the person who suspected the fraud.

If the invigilator of an examination suspects or notices fraudulent practice, s/he must immediately intervene in it. Depending on the situation, the invigilator may, at his/her discretion, choose from the following two actions:

1. *Oral notification.* If the invigilator notices inappropriate items within the reach of a student or an attempt to discuss with another examinee, the invigilator may intervene in the matter by verbally notifying the examinee to observe the rules of examinations. If the question is only about a possible fraud attempt that will not occur again during the same examination, no other actions are taken.

2. *Interruption of the examination.* If a student does not observe the rules of examination regardless of an oral notification, or if the invigilator notices an obvious incident or an attempt at fraudulent practice, the invigilator shall interrupt the student's examination. The student must return the examination papers on which the invigilator marks whether the student admits or contests the realized or attempted fraudulent practice. The invigilator informs the student that s/he will be contacted by EEC-ITIS to clarify the matter. The invigilator shall record the reason for the interruption. After this, the examination papers are delivered normally to the examiner who has the responsibility to take further action.

The following procedure is adopted in dealing with identifiable cases of plagiarism in essays, reports, assignments and dissertations:

(a) The examiner has sole discretion to determine what academic sanctions are to be applied.

(b) In the case where the student does not use citations to identify quoted material; and does not insert a reference to the work in the bibliography appended to the assignment; then the student will be penalized by a reduction in marks. When there is wholesale plagiarism the student is awarded a fail.

(c) When an assignment contains a large amount of material which has been paraphrased from an existing source without citations, but lists the source in the bibliography appended to the assignment; then the student will receive a borderline pass.

(d) In cases where plagiarism is not clear the examiner meets the student, and if the student persuades the examiner that no academic misconduct occurred, then, the matter is closed and no further action is taken.

(e) In cases of suspected fraud, the lecturer responsible for a module or the supervisor of a final thesis must compile evidence on the suspected failings. They then report their allegation to the Faculty Coordinator and deliver the material to him/her. The investigation of the fraud allegation and the decision on its consequences are carried out by the faculty coordinator. The latter must hear the student (who must be given an opportunity to express his/her view on the matter presented) and then assess, on the basis of the hearing and evidence presented by the lecturer, if there is sufficient proof of fraudulent practice, and then decide on further actions. If there is not enough proof of fraudulent practice, the allegation is dropped and this is informed to the student and to the presenter of the allegation. If the allegation of fraud is seen to be true, this leads automatically to a failing grade for a completed examination, dissertation, assignment or other form of assessment within a study unit. In very serious cases, especially for repetitive fraud, the student will receive a failing grade for the whole course, unless there is a justified reason to do otherwise.

In addition to the Faculty Coordinator, it is recommended that another representative of EEC-ITIS, preferably the lecturer responsible for the delivery of the respective study unit, should also participate in the oral hearing. A report is made of the hearing. The report must indicate if the student admits to or contests to fraud and it must also include other details presented in the hearing. The report should be unanimous, that is, all participants must verify with a signature that the report corresponds to the discussion held at the meeting. If mutual understanding cannot be achieved in all matters, each participant of the hearing is entitled to enter a statement of disagreement in the report.

## Annex 15

### 15. Recognition of Prior learning

The purpose of this policy is to set out EEC-ITIS's approach to the recognition of prior learning (RPL) for student admissions.

This policy applies to all student admissions, and is part of its efforts to uphold fair and equitable education for students who may face challenges in meeting entry requirements based purely on accredited qualifications.

EEC-ITIS believes in the importance of developing and cultivating a diverse student community and highly values the range of qualifications and experiences that each individual student may bring. EEC-ITIS also aims to ensure that all suitable applicants may be able to study, and that suitability is not based solely on accredited qualifications; rather, many students have experience that is commensurate with formal education.

As such, it is the position of EEC-ITIS that all applicants have the opportunity to demonstrate that they have the skills and experience to succeed in their chosen programme, even in cases where they do not have the accepted qualifications. This policy outlines the process by which prior learning can be equitably and consistently assessed, to determine suitability for admission to their chosen programme.

Learning can be either formally accredited or experiential. Formal learning is delivered through an education institution, and has been assessed and certified by an accredited body. Experiential learning has not been formally assessed, but is gained through significant and relevant experience. This may be work experience or knowledge gained through other experiences outside of work.

#### Procedure

The full policy and procedures for the student admissions process for EEC-ITIS is outlined in the Student Admissions Procedure.

The procedure for recognition of prior learning during the admissions process requires that previous experience meets certain criteria. Whether an applicant meets these requirements is determined by EEC-ITIS, while reviewing the application. The criteria for recognising prior learning is the following:

- The experience and learning provided the applicant with knowledge that is relevant to the programme applied for and the required qualifications.
- The experience is of a sufficient academic level to the required qualification and sufficient to demonstrate the applicant's competence.
- The applicant can provide verifiable evidence that the experience and learning is valid and an outcome of their own efforts.
- The experiences are sufficiently recent to the time of application, to ensure that knowledge is still current.

## Transparency for Students

During programme enquiries or applicant interviews, applicants should be made aware of the requirements for the recognition of prior learning and their obligations in providing this information. Depending on the programme, there may be standard documentation required, or it may be discussed on a case-by-case basis.

In general, required supporting evidence may include:

- Certificates from non-accredited or informal qualifications, such as workplace or other elective training
- CV
- Personal statement from applicant
- Written reference letter/s from employer or other relevant individual
- Portfolio of prior work and learning
- Admissions interview to assess learning
- Other documentation or tasks as may be deemed relevant.

Failure to provide any of the above requirements may result in the application not being processed any further. The consideration of prior learning does not guarantee a successful application, if the provided documents do not meet the requirements determined by the deputy principal and registrar.

## Annex 16

### 16. Appeals policy

The purpose of this policy is to safeguard the interests of registered students. It should be used only when there are adequate grounds for doing so, as specified in the section below titled, 'Grounds for Appeal' and not simply if a student is dissatisfied with the outcome of his/her assessment or other decision concerning their academic position of progress.

An application for appeal may be made by a student if it is felt that one of the following actions occurred in the procedure following completion of the assessment. This is applicable to any Assignments or any other work which counts towards the overall grade for the module/programme as stated in the programme syllabus.

Grounds for Appeal

Special Circumstances:

1. There exists or existed personal circumstances affecting the student's performance of which, for good reason, the individual(s) or examinations board may not have been aware when the final decision concerning the awarding of marks was taken and which might have a subsequent effect on the decision.

Note: If a student wishes to appeal on such grounds then they must lodge a Special Circumstances claim by email to the Deputy Principal and Registrar. This must be done within five days from the publication of results.

2. That there may have been an administrative or procedural irregularity in the assessment process or in effectively following the regulations of the programme, which causes significant doubt as to whether the final decision may have been different if the irregularity had not occurred.

Note: An appeal which questions the academic or professional judgement of those charged with the responsibility for assessing a student's academic performance or professional competence shall not be permitted.

- Before submitting an appeal, a student is strongly advised to discuss this matter with his/her lecturer, supervisor, or Faculty Coordinator
- If a student still wishes to lodge an appeal they must lodge a claim by email to the Deputy Principal and Registrar. This must be done within five days from the publication of results.
- An appeal carries a fee of 75 EUR for each assessment component
- Students must submit evidence and substantiate their appeal, upon which the investigation shall be based.

Having considered the evidence, the Appeals Panel constituted by the Principal and two faculty members nominated by the Principal which do not presently sit on the examinations board, may:

- a) Reject the appeal, in which case the student, will be given reasons for this. If the appeal is rejected there is no further right to appeal by the student
- b) Refer the case back to the original individual(s) or examinations board for reconsideration taking into account the new information and any guidance from those reviewing the appeal. These individuals will have the authority to confirm or alter the original decision. There shall be no opportunity for the student to appeal against the decision of the individual(s) or examinations board,
- c) Revoke the original decision of the individual(s) or examinations board who marked/moderated the assessed work and allow the student the opportunity to satisfy the assessment requirements for continuation on the programme or element of the programme concerned.

Students will be notified of the outcome of the Appeals Panel in writing up to five working days after the panel has met. The decision of the Appeals Panel is final and cannot be appealed against. If the appeal is upheld then the appropriate appeal fee will be refunded to the student.

If the student is dissatisfied with the final decision made following the appeals procedure detailed above, then they may appeal against this decision within five working days of the decision being released by EEC-ITIS. The appeal shall be filed by email to the Deputy Principal and Registrar against a fee of EUR 75. EEC-ITIS must submit further evidence in support of the re-appeal on behalf of the student. Any re-appeal will be dealt with by the necessary individuals as deemed appropriate by the Principal.

## **Annex 17**

### **17. Complaints Policy**

The purpose of this policy is to provide a clear and orderly process through which all students and staff may process their complaints or grievances. This policy covers both academic and non-academic issues.

It is the policy of EEC-ITIS to provide an effective procedure for the resolution of academic and non-academic issues arising within the educational institution. To this end, a formal complaint and grievance procedure has been established for the use and benefit of all students and staff.

A student complaint is defined as an expression of dissatisfaction by one or more registered students about an action or lack of action taken, or about the service provided by the Institute.

EEC-ITIS views complaints as forming part of quality review and improvement, and are considered as valuable feedback rather than criticism.

The subject of complaint should relate specifically to one or more of the following:

- . a) Failure of the Institute to meet obligations outlined in the student handouts.
- . b) Misleading or incorrect information in promotional material provided by the Institute.
- . c) Concerns about the delivery of the modules, supervision, or administration.
- . d) Poor quality of facilities or learning resources.
- . e) Concerns regarding bullying or harassment by members of staff.

Complaints are treated seriously and students must not suffer any disadvantage or recrimination as a result of making a complaint in good faith. Students, in turn, must conduct themselves responsibly and treat members of the Institute with respect at all times.

In all cases, it is desirable that complaints are resolved informally and quickly (within two working days, at the latest, of the unsatisfactory circumstances occurring) with the Faculty Coordinator, and that the formal process is not required. Complaints must be substantiated with evidence, must be clearly explained, and the student should explain the outcome expected.

For academic complaints the Faculty Coordinator will make a thorough investigation in order to understand the underlying cause of the complaint. If this refers to a particular module, the lecturer concerned will be referred to for comments. In the case of an examination, then the Chairman of the Board of Examiners will be consulted.

For non-academic complaints the student's concerns are referred to the Principal who will look into the administrative matter in greater detail.



At all times students are invited to schedule an appointment with Principal, faculty coordinator, or module lecturer in order to discuss any problems or anxieties they might have. EEC-ITIS has an open-door policy and considers itself to be very student friendly.

When a student experiences conditions which are unjust, inequitable and/or a hindrance to effective learning or educational performance the student should seek resolution through these procedures without fear of reprisal or coercion. Disputes may involve issues such as alleged discrimination, non-professional practice, course schedule or complaints regarding the facilities. There may also be an issue regarding the assessment such as the process, conduct of the assessment process, the assessment criteria, or relevance of the assessment task to the intended programme learning outcomes.

It is EEC-ITIS's policy to make every effort to resolve disputes before they are escalated to the formal grievance. The Principal is responsible for the implementation of these procedures and the Board of Directors has final decision-making power in any action related to these procedures.

It is important that students are treated fairly and receive prompt responses to problems and concerns.

There are two types of matters which are addressed by this policy.

1. Complaints

A complaint is a concern that a lecturer or student wants to discuss informally with EEC-ITIS personnel in an effort to resolve the issue. Student concerns such as academic grade changes, reviews or appeals do not fall under the definition of a complaint. These are handed by the Faculty Coordinator.

2. Grievance (Reviewed by the Board of Directors):

A grievance may result from any incident taken against the member of staff or student which:

1. Violates EEC-ITIS policy, or involves inconsistent application of these same policies.
2. Violates any legal, human rights or the right to a safe educational environment.

A member of staff or student may only grieve those matters defined in sections a. and b. above.

#### General Rules and Processes for Filing a Complaint

1. Staff or students using this procedure are entitled to do so without fear of retaliation, interference or discrimination.

2. A complaint/grievance must be presented to the immediate authority within ten (10) days after the occurrence of the incident. Any claim not presented within the designated time frame shall be deemed waived.
3. For repetitive and/or ongoing incidents or circumstances, the complaint/grievance must be filed within ten (10) working days of the last occurrence of such incident or circumstance.

### Steps for Filing a Complaint

#### 1. Complaint Form and/or Discussion with Immediate Authority

Where a member of staff or student wishes to submit a complaint, they may either discuss the issue directly with a relevant staff or faculty member, or submit a Complaint Form. The member of staff or student should detail the basis for the complaint and if possible, identify or suggest a corrective action desired for resolution.

When a member of staff or student has submitted a complaint form, the Principal has two (2) working days to investigate the matter.

They will review the complaint and any relevant information, agree on a suggested course of action and discuss with the member of staff or student what action has or could be taken. The student and staff shall discuss the complaint in a manner which fosters resolution. The authority shall inform the staff or student upon full consideration of all the facts within three (3) working days of the initial discussion.

The principal must also compile a Complaint Corrective Action report to ensure that the complaint has been resolved.

#### 2. Written Grievance Report

If a member of staff or student and the immediate authority are not able to reach a mutually satisfactory resolution to the complaint, the student may submit a Written Grievance Report. The grievance report must be filed within one (1) calendar days from the date of the follow up discussion with the immediate supervisor.

The member of staff or student will have 3 calendar days from the incident in question (result published, letter or email received) to make their appeal with the relevant staff.

The student is required to state in writing their grievance, and sign and date this grievance. The Board of Directors or their delegates will then set up a meeting which should not be later than 2 days from when the appeal was made and inform the student in writing to attend the appeal hearing.

After the Board of Directors or their delegates hear the student explain his/ her grievance, it will then call other witnesses it feels could shed light on the issue and then issue a decision. The decision is to be made not later than 3 days from when the hearing took place and the decision is to be communicated to the student in writing.

The timelines above are subject to amendment on a case-by-case basis due to operational requirements, travel away from campus, in-depth investigations, etc. The Board of Directors or their delegates shall have final authority to resolve any disputes regarding the implementation of this Complaint Procedure, including determination of the appropriate decision makers.

## **Annex 18**

### **18. Student Placements**

The faculty coordinator organises and manages student placements through the close links that the Organisation has with the hotel industry in Malta.

The following steps are followed when sourcing a placement:

1. The Institute approaches parties regarding the possibility of offering a placement for students. The co-ordinator asks for a description of the placement provided by the organisation.
2. The placement description is checked by the Faculty Coordinator to ensure that it meets the programme and academic requirements.
3. A risk assessment of the placement Organisation is completed by the Faculty Coordinator.
4. The Faculty Coordinator ensures the placement is appropriate for the student's specific requirements.
5. The placement is approved by the Faculty Coordinator
6. Approval of the placement is recorded on the study unit's records.

Alternatively, students could take the initiative and come up with a likely placement. Full details are passed on to the co-ordinator who then follows steps 2 to 6 above.

Placements are normally in Malta but the Institute will not turn-down foreign placements. This, as long as it is viewed as being beneficial to the student.

Each programme will follow their specific requirements for matching students to placement opportunities. Generally, a student either applies for or is allocated a placement. In some cases, the Student can indicate their preferred placement but they are not guaranteed of any such preferences. Permission must be received from a student before their CV is sent to a placement organisation.

The matching of a student to a placement is a joint effort between EEC-ITIS and the placement organisation. However, the final decision rests with the placement organisation.

## Annex 19

### 19. Setting Examinations and Assignments

The Faculty Coordinator must approve the assessment criteria and feedback processes for all assignments as well as the form and content of prepared examination papers. Each examiner provides a post-assessment report which details where the student answered correctly, where they were close to correctly, and where the student answered incorrectly. A note on suggested improvements is also made available to the student. This must be in line with the correction instructions in the grading rubric.

For each study unit, a member of academic staff should be nominated as a second examiner. The Faculty Coordinator is responsible for approving this person. The nominated member should be from the same discipline as the study unit to which they have been assigned, but not involved in teaching on this study unit. The second examiner will be required to review all examination papers, assignments and instructions for assignments for the particular module and also review the corrections after the first examiner has finished the corrections.

All assignment deadlines set should be set by the Faculty Coordinator before publication to students in order to check for potential overlap between study units and these are included in the timetable at the beginning of the semester. When setting assignments consideration must be given to the need to eliminate opportunities for academic misconduct (plagiarism). At the start of their course students are informed on the meaning of plagiarism, and the consequences of presenting plagiarised work. In the event of misconduct a student receives an email informing that there is a plagiarism allegation which needs to be discussed and resolved. A meeting is set up with the examiner in order to determine the level of plagiarism involved. The examiner determines whether the matter should be dealt with as a minor or major misconduct, and whether the student is guilty or not of plagiarism. The meeting offers the opportunity for the student to explain his/her version of events.

In the case of examinations, the following procedures are followed:

- (a) All draft examination papers and should be completed no later than four weeks before the start of the relevant exam period. Draft assignments should be completed a week prior the start of the semester and disseminated to students via email within the first week of the semester.
- (b) All draft examination papers and draft assignments must be reviewed by the second examiner and faculty coordinator and improvements/revisions agreed with the lecturer.
- (c) Following any required revisions determined by the faculty coordinator, examination papers must be returned to the faculty coordinator for further amendments if required.
- (d) Examination papers should be prepared and stored only on computers which have physical and software security measures that are fit for purpose, i.e., it should be beyond reasonable doubt that examination papers have been kept secure at all stages of their preparation prior to use. Lecturers submit their examination paper scripts in enclosed envelopes and feedback reports via email. A dedicated computer with a reliable anti-virus software programme is used exclusively to store examination papers prior to printing.

(e) Standardization of the format and basic layout of examination papers and rubrics throughout the Institute should provide clarity and consistency for students and supports administration in preparations prior to and during examination sessions. A standard format is used for all examination papers through a template with a unique session student index number and thus the name of the student would not show to provide anonymity. Assignments are also provided on a dedicated template.

(f) Past examination papers must be made available via the library and students must be made aware of how to access these. An intranet system is in place which makes lecture notes, and past examination papers available to students.

## **Annex 20**

### **20. Policy for Reasonable Adjustments**

Some students with disabilities may require additional time for taking examinations. In such instances, lecturers will provide extended time accommodation. Extended time ensures that a student's performance is reflective of his/her mastery of material rather than the speed at which a student performs.

Students with disabilities may be approved for a separate "reduced distraction" space. The space may be an unused classroom. This accommodation is a quiet space where students have fewer distractions from fellow exam-takers and are thus better able to maintain focus.

Furthermore, if necessary, a member of staff may be required to read aloud exam questions.

Some students with disabilities might require a computer for essay exams. Using a computer allows students to avoid physical fatigue and/or to provide legible, better-organized answers to essays. Students making such a request may use a computer at the Institute. In the case of sight-impaired students, a computer with a large screen is provided. These would have to be pre-approved by the lecturer. A computer allows for word processing and assistive technology programmes without Internet access.

A student, not necessarily with disabilities, might request the use of a dictionary or spell check device during exams. This would avoid penalization for basic spelling and grammar errors when they are otherwise able to provide accurate responses to the questions be asked.

Students wishing to avail of above reasonable adjustments must inform the faculty coordinator in writing detailing the request and supporting medical evidence or another other material deemed relevant in order to justify the request. A report is drawn up by the faculty coordinator which is sent to the attention of the board of examiners within 5 working days. The board of examiners shall meet to evaluate the request and may convene a meeting with the student in order to discuss the matter further. The board may also seek the opinion of medical staff and/or any other professionals deemed relevant to shed light on the specific request. The board shall take a decision within 15 working days from the time the request is received by the faculty coordinator. The decision of the board of examiners is final and may however be appealed by students suing the appeals procedure for grievances.

## **Annex 21**

### **Academic Integrity**

Students are made aware of what constitutes academic integrity, and the consequences associated with breaching it. Students are advised that fundamental to academic work EEC-ITIS expects that the choices they make reflect integrity and responsible behaviour. Whether working on a problem, report, project, or assignment students should show integrity by avoiding

- (a) Plagiarism, desisting from purchasing papers or have someone writing a paper for them; avoid copying ideas, data, or extract wording without citing sources;
- (b) Unauthorized Collaboration with another student;
- (c) Cheating, by copying answers from another student, fabricating results, using electronic or other devices during examinations, and submitting assignments and projects that have been done for a previous module;
- (d) Facilitation Academic Dishonesty by allowing other students to copy your work, or by completing an assignment for another student.

The Faculty Coordinator ensures that:

- (a) Students are engaged in discussion about what is considered to be plagiarism.
- (b) Students have a clear understanding of what academic integrity at EEC-ITIS means.
- (c) Assignments given by lecturers are changed yearly, use original and unique data, and use tasks that require students to engage in and explain the rationale for the approach used.



## **Annex 22**

### **Recruitment of Staff**

#### Study Unit Lecturers

When a potential vacancy arises the answers to the following questions are assessed:

- (i) Is the study unit still to be delivered?
- (ii) For what period of time is the engagement required?
- (iii) Could the study unit be delivered by staff that have been already engaged?
- (iv) (iii) Does the job description need changing in view of study unit updating?

As minimum qualification, a lecturer will have completed an appropriate Master's degree in the area of specialization. Lecturers with a Ph.D. are preferred. These individuals have a track record with regard to experience and instruction in effective teaching within the discipline. Another requirement is that they should also show an enthusiasm for teaching undergraduates, and demonstrate a commitment to developing as an educational professional.

The Chairperson of the interviewing board shall be the principal and has to ensure that confidentiality is maintained during the short-listing and interview process. The board is also composed of the Faculty Coordinator and one nominated member of academic staff chosen by the Principal. Panel members need to be familiar with the code of practice of the Institute, and that the panel is correctly constituted. Furthermore, it is imperative that the documents sent by applicants are viewed only by panel members (in accordance with the Data Protection Act) because the documents will contain personal data.

If a shortlisting meeting is required, then it is up to the Chairperson to arrange this meeting with all members of the selection panel. During this meeting, the board decides which candidates should be invited to an interview. Unsuccessful candidates are immediately informed.

Prior to the interview the following considerations are made:

- (a) A decision is made on the format of the interview, the questions to be asked, and which selection criteria will be addressed by which member/s of the panel.
- (b) The core set of questions must be asked to all candidates, however this should not stop probing the candidate's answers by asking follow-up questions.
- (c) If presentations are to be included, then specific arrangements need to be made; e.g. availability of laptop, power-point.

EEC-ITIS has a duty to ensure that candidates are not subject to discrimination on the grounds of sex, marital status, civil partnership status, trans-gender status, pregnancy, sexual orientation, race, religion or belief, disability and age.

Steps taken to ensure reduced unfairness are as follows:

(a) Advertising: careful consideration is given to the wording used in job adverts to ensure that they are not written in a way that encourages people to believe that the position is only suitable for certain groups of people.

(b) Person specification: Our criteria for selection relates to the requirements of the job, relevant qualifications and relevant experience. The person specification is being drawn up objectively, taking care to ensure that all the criteria included are appropriate and relevant to the performance of the job in question. Criteria used in recruitment must not amount to indirect discrimination against people in certain groups, e.g. women, people in a particular age group.

(c) Shortlisting: when shortlisting takes place, it should be undertaken consistently and against the objective criteria set out in the job description and person specification. A record needs to be kept of the criteria under which job applicants are shortlisted.

(d) Interview: During the interview, the topics should be relevant to the selection process. Each candidate is assessed against the published criteria and use is made of an interview scoring grid. This is used to record decisions taken. Questions should be objective. Marital, family, domestic and age-related matters are irrelevant and could lead to unfair discrimination e.g. asking questions about childcare arrangements, in particular when interviewing female candidates, may be interpreted as direct sex discrimination.

At the interview, candidates should be asked to confirm their contact details and be advised of when they can expect to hear the outcome of the interview. After the interview, administration should contact the successful candidate to offer the appointment. Once the first-choice candidate has given a verbal acceptance, administration should contact the other interviewees to notify them that they have been unsuccessful. The Chairman should be willing to give verbal feedback to any unsuccessful candidates who request it.

#### Duties of the Study Unit Lecturers

The following are the duties expected of study unit lecturers:

1. Lecturers are responsible for designing the specific study unit content including learning outcomes, aims and objectives, course content and reading lists. These are to be revised periodically when the accredited programme is up for review. The study unit design is then peer reviewed by a second lecturer who has a background in the topic but is not engaged to lecture in it. This is then sent for the final approval of the faculty coordinator for further changes and vetting. Once finalised this is sent for the approval of the board of studies.
2. Lecturers are responsible to design assessments for the respective study units they are engaged to lecture including assignments, examination papers, projects and presentations as required. These are vetted according to the assessment procedure detailed in this manual earlier.
3. Lecturers are expected to design the teaching material for the delivery of lectures and submit this for the approval of the faculty coordinator up to one week prior to the

start of the semester. The faculty coordinator may suggest changes and/or improvements through either one-to-one meetings or else in writing.

4. Lecturers are responsible for the delivery of lectures. Lectures are expected to respect the timetable which would be issued and any changes in lectures need to be approved by the Faculty Coordinator and the Institute would need to be notified by the lecturer in case of any changes, up to 24 hours prior to the scheduling of the lecture.
5. Lecturers are responsible for timely correction of all assessments in line with the assessment procedures detailed earlier in this manual. Lecturers may also be requested to act as second examiners and to sit on one of the various faculty boards.
6. Lecturers are subject to regular appraisals in order to monitor their performance. A performance appraisal of each lecturer is done at the end of the calendar year by the Faculty Coordinator, which is then approved by the Principal and verified by the Board of Directors.

## Second Examiners

Second Examiners are appointed for all taught programmes delivered by the Institute. These individuals are central to the Institute's quality assurance and enhancement procedures. Their role is to act as independent assessors, and to ensure impartiality. Second Examiners provide one of the principal means for the maintenance of quality academic standards. The impartiality of a Second Examiner is paramount to ensuring equity for students and furthermore to ensuring the fair application of regulations. Second Examiner reports are an integral part of the Institute's procedures because they play a key role in maintaining academic standards, and ensuring comparability of standards with highest national norms. Their roles are explained below.

The faculty coordinator is responsible for approving Second Examiners. The faculty coordinator is also responsible for keeping a Second Examiner database with full details of qualifications and area expertise.

The criteria for appointment are as follows:

- . (a) Each Second Examiner's academic/professional qualifications should be appropriate in level and subject for examining the programme modules. This is typically an individual with a Ph.D.
- . (b) Each examiner's standing, expertise and experience should be such as to:
  - Enable fulfilment of the Second Examiner's responsibility as moderator by having expertise in the area of work to be examined.
  - Include expertise in the enhancement of the student experience.
- (c) Each examiner must have had significant recent examining experience as an internal

examiner at a well-standing Academic Organisation.

The Second Examiners are appointed before each academic term. Each examiner can expect to:

- (a) Receive feedback from the faculty coordinator on the response to their comments on corrected examination papers.
- (b) Sample course work and examination scripts.
- (c) Review dissertations as second examiner.
- (d) Attend viva-voce presentations as second examiner.
- (e) Informally meet the students for feedback.
- (f) Provide a report within two weeks of receiving the scripts/assignments.

The report is submitted to the Faculty Coordinator. This is then placed on the agenda of an Examination Board

## Annex 23

### Feedback and Student Support

#### Feedback

Feedback is an essential part of the student experience and helps to promote learning and assures quality academic standards. The following principles are applied as regards to feedback:

- (a) Effective feedback on assessment is a fundamental part of the learning and teaching process and is not separate from it.
- (b) Feedback practices should promote effective learning and support the academic development of students.
- (c) All students should receive parity of treatment. No distinction is made between students and each person is given enough opportunity for development, and enough space in order to provide feedback.
- (d) All feedback on assessment should be formative, ensuring that students are able to consider and digest comments on their work and are subsequently able to address weaknesses and build on their academic strengths.
- (e) All assessment and subsequent feedback should be rigorous, impartial and delivered in a timely manner. This is achieved through the use of second examiners, the provision of marking schemes by lecturers, and set timely goals.
- (f) Students must be informed about how and when they will receive feedback. <sup>[1]</sup><sub>SEP</sub>

Students have the opportunity to receive constructive feedback on their progress in a study unit before the final assessment of the module takes place. This may be done as a collective exercise by the lecturer for a group of students.

At the end of a study unit students receive generic feedback on their performance in the specific assessment. This is prepared by the lecturer. Students are presented with a summary of performance highlighting the more common issues, strengths and weaknesses identified during marking. Students requesting for more detailed feedback on their particular performance could make a formal request to the faculty coordinator who will then liaise with the lecturer. Feedback may take a variety of forms including individual face to face feedback, a class feedback session outlining common issues, written comments or some form of generic feedback including common areas for improvement, and an indication of the distribution of marks across the class.

A specific question within module evaluation could be asked about the appropriateness of the assessment and feedback on the study unit. The question should highlight the variety of forms that feedback may take.

## Student Support

This policy recognizes that each student is an individual and ensures appropriate personal support when needed. This responsibility falls on the faculty coordinator who reviews the student request and channels support towards the appropriate counsellor. The responsibility for initiating contact in respect of crisis support or additional requests for guidance lies with the student, but on the understanding that clear arrangements are in place to facilitate that contact. The organisation's counsellors help students identify and overcome barriers to their potential; develop their self-awareness and a range of life skills; and guide them in making informed choices in their academic, social and personal life. This information is readily available in module handbooks, and communicated to students during induction. When the nature of support required is academic in nature, the individual tutor liaises with the lecturer concerned.

## Annex 24

### 24. External Examining

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This provides a crucial element of *objectivity* and externality in helping EEC-ITIS to maintain academic standards at the appropriate level and to ensure that student performance is properly and fairly judged. As such, the role of external examiner plays a vital part in quality assurance and contributes greatly to quality enhancement.

External examiners are appointed for all programmes offered by the Institute. They are formally appointed when the periodic module and programme review takes place. The examiners should meet the following criteria:

16. (a) Holds academic/professional qualifications, appropriate in level and subject. This is typically a Masters qualification or a Ph.D
17. (b) Have experience of one of the following: developing a new programme in a relevant area, and directing an existing programme in a relevant area.
18. (c) Must be of good moral character and have an established track record.

Must not disclose to any person either during or at any time after engagement any confidential information supplied by the Institute in relation to the proposed programme. External examiners are full members of the relevant Board of Examiners and are invited to all meetings of the Board for the courses which they examine. Where attendance is prevented by exceptional circumstances, the external examiner must provide a written report on the examination prior to the meeting of the Board.

In carrying out their full role, External Examiners are expected to:

- (i) Comment on the syllabus, learning objectives and assessment scheme of the course and its delivery mechanism in the light of experiences of candidates' learning outcomes, comparable courses and awards elsewhere and developments within the discipline or field
- (ii) Comment on the assessments provided. The post-assessment verification sample is always 100%.
- (iii) Report on the overall standards achieved by candidates and in particular on the comparability of these standards with those of candidates on similar courses or programmes in other Higher Education institutions
- (iv) Report on the relationship between these overall standards, programme specifications (where available) and published national subject benchmark statements
- (v) Assess the soundness and fairness of the implementation of the assessment process
- (vi) Adjudicate where necessary, over the grade or class to be awarded to any particular candidate

(vii) Certify contentment with the assessment outcomes prior to their publication

(viii) Provide a written report to the Principal