

21 May 2020

Dear Valued Colleagues,

**Re: THE-ICE Accreditation Update**

On behalf of THE-ICE Assessment Panel, we are pleased to provide a statement in response to inquiries received regarding how THE-ICE accreditation/re-accreditation processes will assess changes made by member institutions, in response to the challenges of COVID-19.

This statement is issued to assure members that changes implemented in accordance with national or territorial requirements in response to the pandemic, which have been well-handled and documented appropriately, will not imperil the institution's accreditation status.

It is recognised that THE-ICE members have responded swiftly and effectively to the crisis, showing flexibility and creativity towards teaching and assessment approaches and formats. Furthermore, THE-ICE acknowledges the need for and challenge of modifying established practices, such as moving from face-to-face to online delivery, changes to assessment, rescheduling and deferment of internships. THE-ICE considers that member institutions must exercise their own responsibility and autonomy when making changes to teaching and student assessment, but provides the following to assist institutions with this process;

- The guiding principles are **quality assurance and enhancement**. Whilst changes will not necessarily result in quality enhancement, they should be implemented with the intent to (at least) maintain quality.
- The test for changes undertaken is whether they are:
  - **reasonable** (would other experienced educators confronted with similar challenges and/or circumstances make the same, or comparable, decision?).
  - **appropriate** (to the nature and scale of the challenges/ circumstances faced).
- The following should be recorded and documented for accreditation purposes:
  - The **rationale** for any substantive changes.
  - The **decision-making process** (how were decisions reached?).
  - The **dissemination process**, which should ensure timely, accessible, and comprehensive information is available to students, faculty and external stakeholders.
  - The **support mechanisms**, providing tools, systems and resources for students and faculty.
- The **effectiveness** of the changes made should be monitored and recorded.
- The COVID-19 crisis provides an opportunity for **positive change and learning** (e.g. reflection about future crisis preparedness) and key learnings (i.e. those aspects that might be retained, or significant limitations that become evident) should also be recorded.

Since we can all benefit from the sharing of experiences, and in the spirit of THE-ICE as an open and transparent organisation, members are invited to engage in active dialogue about issues confronted. The series of webinars hosted by THE-ICE provides a potential medium for this exchange.

THE-ICE will continue to partner with member institutions in the pursuit of high-quality hospitality and tourism education and, since it is particularly important to work together during challenging times, thanks you all for your continuing support.

Kind regards



**Prof. Brian King**

**Chair, THE-ICE Assessment Panel**