

Doc. 300.1.2

Date: 22.12.2021

Higher Education Institution's Response

- **Higher Education Institution:**
Global College
- **Town:** Nicosia
- **Programme of study**
Name (Duration, ECTS, Cycle)

In Greek:

Διαχείριση Ασφάλειας «4 Έτη/240 ECTS, Πτυχίο»

In English:

Security Management (4 years, 240 ECTS, Bachelor of

- **Language(s) of instruction:** Greek – English
- **Programme's status:** Currently Operating
- **Concentrations (if any):**

In Greek: Concentrations

In English: Concentrations



The present document has been prepared within the framework of the authority and competencies of the Cyprus Agency of Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Higher Education, according to the provisions of the “Quality Assurance and Accreditation of Higher Education and the Establishment and Operation of an Agency on Related Matters Laws” of 2015 to 2021 [L.136(I)/2015 – L.132(I)/2021].

A. Guidelines on content and structure of the report

- *The Higher Education Institution (HEI) based on the External Evaluation Committee's (EEC's) evaluation report (Doc.300.1.1 or 300.1.1/2 or 300.1.1/3 or 300.1.1/4) must justify whether actions have been taken in improving the quality of the programme of study in each assessment area.*
- *In particular, under each assessment area, the HEI must respond on, without changing the format of the report:*
 - *the findings, strengths, areas of improvement and recommendations of the EEC*
 - *the conclusions and final remarks noted by the EEC*
- *The HEI's response must follow below the EEC's comments, which must be copied from the external evaluation report (Doc.300.1.1 or 300.1.1/2 or 300.1.1/3 or 300.1.1/4).*
- *In case of annexes, those should be attached and sent on a separate document.*

1. Study programme and study programme's design and development

(ESG 1.1, 1.2, 1.7, 1.8, 1.9)

Findings

The curriculum of the programme is well developed. It gives the required academic background to security and risk and then deepens this background with practice-focused elements that are combined with broader elements such as psychology and legal aspects. Students appreciate this mix, especially since a considerable number of them have a professional background in security services. The wide array of topics covered in the latter years of the programme and in the optional courses offers most of the content needed in a practice-focused security studies programme. The only content components that appear missing is critical thinking about the concepts of security and risk, and a module focusing on the idea of resilience.

English language training involves a challenging set of issues in the programme. Students would wish for more English training, particularly in the context of possible employment in the international security industry. The introduction of a second course programme offered in English is not going to solve this issue for students still wishing to attend the Greek language programme. Additional work in this respect is required. Further, quality assurance in teaching delivery could be systematised and strengthened.

Apart from these rather minor shortcomings, the programme fulfils the necessary requirements for an academic programme for security management and appears fully compliant with the respective regulations.

Strengths

The practical focus of the programme is strong and responds well to the needs of the security industry. The well-established network of the teaching staff appears as a very useful background in this regard. Students seem overall content with the programme, which is raised even by students who take the programme mainly for promotional purposes. In this sense, the programme is able to bridge the gap between an academic programme and high-level professional training, which is a considerable achievement.

Particularly helpful appears the internships that students have to take as a requirement for successfully completing the programme. The internship module appears to be well thought through and can support students in creating professional networks as part of their studies. The academic staff is helpful in supporting students without existing links in the industry to find suitable positions for such internships, which is an indispensable requirement for the success of this component.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

Two areas of improvement can be identified: the development of the content of the courses, as well as of the programme as a whole, could be more systematic and undertaken as a joint enterprise of the teaching staff. During the evaluation it was rightly noted that the content of the programme needs to reflect the needs of the security sector as well as the interests of the students. These factors are indeed taken into account when the overall programme of the modules is designed. However, the rapid development in the fields of security and risk management require the constant work on course content, as does the need to incorporate student feedback. These processes could be more systematically structured.

Secondly, students raised concerns about the lack of sufficient training in English. Current plans to open a second



security studies programme in English will not be able to address these concerns for the students taking the Greek language programme. Against this background, the programme should incorporate further English language skills throughout the Greek language programme.

HEI's response

We are pleased to see that the EEC finds that the program is well developed and gives the required academic background to our students. The wide array of topics [and the content] is something that we invest in, for the success of this unique program. The internship in combination with the links and synergies we managed to build over the years with the industry, is indeed a success story. Students gain great value due to this network.

However, while redeveloping the program, students expressed some concerns regarding the level of the English language they are required to have [and gain], throughout their studies, to be able to work abroad or in international companies. This was also our concern during the internal evaluation of the program. English training is nowadays mandatory, especially for students who want to pursue international positions in the industry. Therefore, we upgraded the curriculum, and we now have two compulsory courses [BSM 005 English language I and BSM 010 English language II]. At this point, we would like to point out that all students who attended the evaluation, are following the current curriculum with only one course of English language.

Regarding the second recommendation, the fact that the academic staff engaged with this program is highly active in the industry allows them to develop their teaching material according to their daily experience and add real-life scenarios in their course. The academic staff has the freedom to develop the content of their teaching material, adopt current trends and take into consideration the daily issues in the field of security. Our students are also part of this process, and their experience in the field [since most of them work in the industry] is considered a valuable tool for upgrading the program yearly.

This on its own, enables students to gain actual knowledge of the security field, increase their ability to solve problems, strengthen their critical thinking and link theory with practice. This is why our academic staff is purposefully chosen based on their academic qualifications and their position in the industry.

Both recommendations are considered a value for us. It is something that we constantly and systematically evaluate and over the years managed to embed in the program's curriculum.

2. Student – centred learning, teaching and assessment (ESG 1.3)

Findings

Overall, the programme offers effective, modern and supportive teaching that enables students to encounter a diverse set of substantive topics. Through recruiting students of varied backgrounds and experiences, the programme is able to offer a diverse range of opportunities for peer-to-peer learning. The programme provides a range of theoretical and applied learning opportunities. Assessment is one area for further improvement.

Strengths

Practical training integrated with theoretical consideration is offered through a number of modules across varied years in the programme (notably the Internship).

Areas of improvement and recommendations

There are a number of ways in which assessment can be improved:

1. The element of formative assessment could be clearer within module descriptions. In addition, at the level of the programme overall, steps could be taken to ensure formative assessment varies between modules.
2. Within modules descriptions the specific forms of assessment during the mid and final portions of the module could be more specific to enable to students to understand the module expectations. This may well be an issue that goes beyond the Global College itself, but we note it here.
3. The programme overall would benefit from further practice-based forms of assessment (e.g., non test-based assessment) for practice-orientated modules.

HEI's response

It's nice to see that the EEC identifies the modern and effective teaching methods that our staff apply, enabling students to interact and engage themselves during classes. To strengthen critical thinking, all assessments are based on case studies, real-life scenarios and problem-solving.

The philosophy of this program, as built throughout the last five years and so, is to assess each module according to its characteristics, learning outcomes and structure. However, flat assessment rates exist across the program: 10% for attendance and participation; 30% for mid-term evaluation; and 60% for the final face-to-face written exam. At the beginning of each semester, students receive a detailed course outline for each module, specifically informing them about their weekly sessions, content, assessment dates and methods, submission dates, evaluation criteria, etc. These details vary from module to module, keeping through the percentages mentioned above.

Regarding the mid-term evaluation [30%], our academic staff is free to utilize various methods i.e., written test(s), group project, individual coursework, portfolio quizzes /case studies, etc. As for the final exam [60%], all students are assessed with a written exam, and their physical presence is required. The final exam could be in the form of a written test or an open-book exam. All the above are communicated well in advance, so students know what to expect.

However, something that was discussed in detail during the evaluation and the EEC quotes as a recommendation, is the element of incorporating formative assessment throughout the program. Currently, some modules utilise the formative assessment method, and this varies between them. It is not something that the academic staff is required



to adopt, however they are free to apply if they believe that it will give value to their course. The structure of this program supports formative assessments, however not in the form of a systematic approach. Students are “assessed” in this form, regularly, during class, since most modules adopt class exercises, non-test-based exercises and group work, and they receive formal feedback while presenting their answers and findings in class.

Consequently, formative assessment is an element that this program utilises, however, not in the form of a systematic approach. To fine-tune things and align the current methods with the EEA’s recommendation, we have added in the assessment brief of the following modules, the element of a formative assessment:

- BSM 001 Security principles
- BSM 002 Introduction to self-defence
- BSM 007 Principles of risk analysis
- BSM 011 Infrastructure security
- BSM 015 Risk management
- BSM 016 Workplace investigations
- BSM 017 Sports events security management
- BSM 020 VIP protection I
- BSM 023 Asset protection
- BSM 025 VIP protection II
- BSM 027 Hostage situation management
- BSM 031 Physical protection systems
- BSM 032 Applied criminology and criminal law
- BSM 036 Self-defense techniques
- BSM 038 Crime scene

The teaching staff has the freedom to choose any formative assessment method that suits best their course, while students will be informed in advance that formative feedback is not binding for their final marking.

3. Teaching staff (ESG 1.5)

Findings

This BA degree programme is supported by a range of professionals with varied backgrounds commensurate with the requirements for the nature of the theoretical and applied topics taught. The teaching hours are capped, thereby helping to ensure the teaching is distributed across a range of staff. Procedures exist for enabling student feedback.

Strengths

In recent years, the curriculum has been revised in-line with student and assessor feedback. It has also become more sustainable through the inclusion of a wider range of teaching staff and a decrease in the concentration of teaching to a limited number of individuals.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

The extent of formal research (in the form of peer-reviewed publication, funded projects and conference presentations) is highly variable between staff, thereby diminishing the prospects for teaching to be informed by research. While time and funds are now allocated to support research-related forms of professional development, it will take some time for these to lead to more widespread achievements.

HEI's response

Indeed, the program is supported by a range of professionals [practitioners] with remarkable and unique experience in the industry. Their perceptual subject is consistent with the course(s) they are required to teach. We consider our teaching staff a great asset for this program, and an added value since the curriculum has been revised taking into consideration their feedback.

However, the limited formal research work in the form of peer-reviewed publications and conference presentations from the teaching staff [practitioners] is identified as a weakness. The EEA recognises the efforts and work done by the Department of Research and Development, which was established by Global College in August 2018. The has as its main goal education, research and social promotion. The mission of this department is to support the academic staff in terms of their development and production of research work.

This department helps our academic staff to improve their research work, publish articles and participate in international conferences. The objectives of the Department are:

- Promoting a plan for the development of academic staff
- Encourage the academic staff to develop research towards their teaching subject
- Presentation of research proposals at local and/or international conferences
- Support the involvement of the academic staff in national and/or international professional organizations active in their field of expertise

The department has been allocated the amount of 25K to fund for the promotion of Research at the College. The department operates in an autonomous environment, with the financial and technical support of our Institution. For this purpose, the amount of € 25000 has been approved for the period September 2019 - August 2021, and the same amount was renewed for the period September 2021 - August 2023. To date, the department has organized a



significant number of seminars and conferences [both face-to-face and online] with the participation of our academic staff and students, while several conferences were held in the form of an open discussion, with the participation of the public. The comments, as well as the results - conclusions that were drawn, were extremely positive. Recent conferences organised by the department, in the field of Security are:

- Panel discussion: Security in the wake of Covid-19 pandemic | ONLINE - [2021]
- Risk management in the age of uncertainty | ONLINE - [2020]
- Panel discussion: The benefits of applied criminology for society - [2018]

The main speakers of the event were the distinguished professors of Criminology, Dr Andreas Kapardis from the University of Cyprus, Dr David Farrington and Thomas Olphin from Cambridge University, Dr Bryanna Fox (ex-FBI agent) from South Florida University and Dr Olivia Hambly from the University of Huddersfield. The speakers analyzed the benefits of Applied Criminology to society and stressed the necessity of research as a tool in policing.

- Anti-terrorism and Security: The contribution of Cyprus Police through the years - [2018]

In the field of research, in January 2020 the first edition of the Cyprus Business & Management Review was officially announced, entitled Business Management and Financial Challenges in the Contemporary Era of Economic Uncertainty, an edition which we hope will attract the interest of both academia and of the students. We hope that shortly our Institution will present its first results in the field of research and publications.

Furthermore, our Institution supports research by reducing teaching hours to 9 (12 max in some cases) per week, provided that up to 6 hours are appropriately and systematically devoted to research and/or professional activities related to their perceptual subject.

Publications are valued by a special committee and rewarded based on their importance and the journal in which they are published.

To further respond to this recommendation, the department organised on 20th December 2021, a workshop involving the teaching staff engaged in the specific program and explained the research options that our Institution offers, mainly emphasising the research-led teaching necessity. During the workshop, a list of research topics has been prepared and already circulated among the staff and students, inviting them to engage. The relevant topics are in the areas of risk management, cyber security, security in social science, sports grounds safety management, policing in Cyprus, and crime and social policy.



4. Student admission, progression, recognition and certification

(ESG 1.4)

Findings

The policies and procedures regarding admission, progression, recognition and certification are well-defined, clearly set and appropriate.

Strengths

The student drop-out rate (cited as 10%) is a notable achievement in relation to the varied life stages of the student body (in terms of age, special needs, etc.).

Areas of improvement and recommendations

n/a

HEI's response

Our Institution's policies and procedures regarding the admission, progression, recognition and certification have been examined by the EEA, and have been described as well-defined, clearly set and appropriate. The program's 10% drop-out rate is quoted as a notable achievement.

The EEA has no recommendations under this assessment area.

5. Learning resources and student support

(ESG 1.6)

Findings

The programme offers appropriate support for a varied student population. Dedicated staff are in place to deal with student queries and problems. Efforts have been made to improve student facilities in recent years.

Strengths

The support structure enabled a shift to on-line learning with the onset of Covid-19; one that appears to have enabled responses tailored to individual student needs.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

None, however, an on-site inspection would be needed to properly assess this matter.

HEI's response

Our Institution supports students in various ways and on various matters concerning their life and studies.

Our structures enable us to operate in a dynamic environment and shift to different learning methods to adapt to constant changes and support the individual students' needs.

The EEA has no recommendations under this assessment area, however, we are waiting for a scheduled on-site inspection if needed, to assess this matter.



6. Additional for doctoral programmes (ALL ESG)

Findings

n/a

Strengths

n/a

Areas of improvement and recommendations

n/a



7. Eligibility (Joint programme) (ALL ESG)

Findings

n/a

Strengths

n/a

Areas of improvement and recommendations

n/a

B. Conclusions and final remarks

The BA in Security Management is a distinctive and practically-orientated degree programme that serves public and commercial needs in Cyprus and beyond. The staff are integrated with relevant public organisations and industries. The curriculum has notably improved in recent years, now including a diverse range of topics that mix academic and practical learning.

In terms of areas for improvement:

1. To ensure the international relevancy of the degree, English should be further embedded across the modules so that students have both English-based knowledge of themes in security management and the ability to interact with others in the security sector.
2. Continuous and formative forms of assessment could be further specified and diversified.
3. Efforts should be undertaken to strengthen the relation between teaching and staff research; including the introduction of further research-led teaching.

HEI's response

First, we would like to welcome the fact that the External Evaluation Committee recognises the fact that the program is a distinctive and practically-orientated degree programme that serves public and commercial needs in Cyprus and beyond.

It is proven that the program is well designed with a clear and coherent structure, as it was developed thoughtfully and inclusively with the involvement of the faculty members, the students, and various external stakeholders. In addition, the well qualified and experienced teaching staff, and the strong links with the industry, give great value to our program.

Summarising the main actions already taken by our institution we have:

- upgraded the curriculum, and we now have two compulsory English courses [BSM 005 English language I and BSM 010 English language II], as we strongly believe that English training is nowadays mandatory, especially for students who want to pursue international positions in the industry.
- added the systematic formative assessment element in the assessment brief of specific modules throughout the program [see p.6 above]. Now, our teaching staff have the opportunity to choose any formative assessment method that suits best their course. Students will be informed in advance that formative feedback is not binding for their final marking.
- held a workshop involving the teaching staff engaged in the specific program and explained the research options that our Institution offers, mainly emphasising the research-led teaching necessity. During the workshop, a list of research topics has been prepared and already circulated among the staff and students, inviting them to engage. The relevant topics are in the areas of risk management, cyber security, security in social science, sports grounds safety management, policing in Cyprus, and crime and social policy.

It can be evidenced from the above points, that we have responded positively to every recommendation quoted by the EEC, something that clearly strengthens our program.



We assure, that since this program is part of our multilevel long-term strategic plan, we will invest in numerous aspects to fulfil our goals. The success of the programme is based on our three-pillar concept, which includes the appropriate structure, consistency and content of the program, the adequacy of our academic staff and the direct link with the industry. Taking into consideration that the program has the appropriate structure, consistency, and content, that it is the only program delivered in Cyprus and Greece, the remarkable experience we have gained over the last ten years that the program is offered, the direct link with the industry and the unique experience of our academic staff, we are certain that the program will continue to be a success.

At this point, we would like to send our regards to the EEC for their exceptional, thorough, fruitful, and valuable input and for the productive discussions we had during the online evaluation.

Looking forward to the final approval.

C. Higher Education Institution academic representatives

Name	Position	Signature
George Yiapanas	Program coordinator	
Leonidas Neocleous	Quality Assurance	
Evangelia Philippou	Quality Assurance	
Andreas Kritikos	Director of Administration and Finance	
Pavlina Charalambous	Lecturer	
Stavros Ioakim	Lecturer	
Charalambos Kapetanios	Lecturer	
Katerina Skoufari	Students' Representative	
Katerina Tsielepa	Students' Representative	

Date: 22.12.2021

