

Doc. 300.1.2

Date: 15.10.2019

Higher Education Institution's response

- **Higher education institution: Global College**
- **Town: Nicosia**
- **Programme of study (Name, ECTS, duration, cycle)**
In Greek: Δίπλωμα στην Διαχείριση Ασφάλειας
120 ECTS | 2 έτη (Εξ αποστάσεως)
In English: Diploma in Security Management
120 ECTS | 2 years (Distance Learning)
- **Language of instruction: Greek**
- **Programme's status**
New programme: X
Currently operating:

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 and 2016” [N. 136 (I)/2015 and N. 47(I)/2016].

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) 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 deficiencies noted under the quality indicators (criteria)*
 - *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).*
- *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, 1.8, 1.9)

Findings, strengths, areas of improvement and recommendations of the EEC

Findings

The programme is coherent. It is based on a long standing programme in the non-distance learning mode with a significant number of graduates over the years. There are regular meetings with teachers and a well-developed Quality Assurance Framework.

The committee is very pleased to see that a Distance Learning (DL) unit has been established that coordinates the activities and has had a significant impact on the organization and the design of the programme.

We are also pleased to see that a Research framework has been established. It is still in its initial stage, but there is already a programme of activities and events for 2020. We look forward to this to be reflected in the programme in the near future, so that DL students can benefit from the initiatives.

The committee is pleased to see the establishment of support mechanisms for students and teachers, although they still have to be tested for DL students. The organization is actively looking to provide support for special needs of DL students.

Strengths

This is a unique program in Security Management within Cyprus. We met very enthusiastic and highly committed staff across both the academic and administrative departments. Staff members are actively engaged in the field and are aware of the latest developments in practice. The links with employers are well-established and provide good learning opportunities for students. This is a selling point for the program and this should be explicitly articulated in the course materials and publicity materials for DL students.

We are impressed by the colleges provision of bespoke handbooks for distance learners. The student handbook for DL Programs, for instance, is excellent.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

It would be helpful if the program builds on its existing network and develops further links with employers outside Cyprus in the countries of origin of the DL students. We are pleased to see the professional and graduate contacts are established, from the face to face programmes.

Deficiencies noted by EEC under the quality indicators (criteria)

No deficiencies noted by EEC under the quality indicators

Higher education institution response

We are very pleased that the EEC finds our programme coherent, well designed and with a clear structure. We developed the programme in a thoughtful and inclusive fashion with the involvement of the faculty members and various external stakeholders.

Following the report of the EEC during the first evaluation last February, we firstly focused on the positive points of their final remarks,

- the committee finds that the program is unique in the Greek speaking societies
- it is cohesive and applied. It is closely related to the contemporary needs of the society
- there is a strong commitment from the management, academic staff, and administration
- the teaching staff are well qualified and possess the specialist skills necessary to deliver this program
- the committee is pleased to see the amount of investment put it already into distance learning infrastructure and feels positive that is going to be continued in order to prepare the ground for improving our DL programme. Then we heavily invested in time, money and infrastructure to substantially implement the suggestions made by EEC, and we are delighted to see that according to the EEC's opinion, we are now ***"...compliant with what is required to deliver the distance learning programme in in Security Management"***. To be able to achieve this, we have:
 - established a Distance Learning Unit and appointed Dr. Nikolas Stylianides as DL Director, who has the full responsibility to implement and monitor the distance learning programmes.
 - developed a quality framework document, addressing specific dimensions of quality for the delivery of teaching, learning and assessment activities to distance learning students.
 - established the Global Research Institute that encourages our staff to involve in research activities within their field of expertise.

In addition:

- a student handbook has been prepared in order to provide students with a brief introduction to the skills necessary for becoming a successful online learner
- a quality framework document has been developed, addressing specific dimensions of quality for the delivery of teaching, learning and assessment activities to distance learning students who are studying online.

The guide seeks to draw attention to the distinctive characteristics of a fully online program (as opposed to a campus-based program which makes use of technology), touching on program design, delivery activities and the support provision offered to tutors and students.

Finally, all minor recommendations made during the first evaluation, are also fully implemented and were analyzed during the recent EEC's site visit.

We have established the Global Research Institute (GRI) as we strongly consider research as a vital tool for every programme of study. Nevertheless, in Security Management, which operates in a dynamic industry that is constantly changing and emerging.

The GRI's aim is to produce high quality knowledge intended for academic and industrial purposes, under various formats, including an e-journal, conferences and professional development courses.

Since we strongly believe and invest in partnerships, focusing on our direct connection with the market, our College collaborates with large organizations and companies, giving employment opportunities to our students. Even though we have managed over the years to build a vast network with notable organisations in Cyprus and Greece, and we are constantly trying to enlarge this network by adding more collaborations. Our next strategic step is to strengthen our links with the market in Greece.

This direct link with the industry is one of our strongest assets and it is something we are using in order to increase the numbers of our students in the conventional programme. Of course, this will now be now articulated in the distance learning programme as well.

2. Teaching, learning and student assessment (ESG 1.3)

Findings, strengths, areas of improvement and recommendations of the EEC

Findings

The committee was impressed with the interactive online platform. There were flexible options with different modes of delivery and learning as appropriate. There was a well thought out pedagogical strategy to cater for a variety of learning needs. Teaching and learning environment was very positive and interactive and meetings offer the opportunity to share good practices. There is well developed and flexible system for monitoring student problems and offering support.

Strengths

The committee were impressed with the 1:25 student – staff ratio

Areas of improvement and recommendations

The committee notes that the Global College is already actively thinking about better opportunities for distance learning students to participate in face to face interaction. The committee recommends considering a face to face induction and more opportunities for online collaborative work.

Deficiencies noted by EEC under the quality indicators (criteria)

Whilst the bibliographies are adequate for diploma level, the committee has some concrete suggestions for certain modules, which are included in annex 1

There are already good feedback mechanisms in place. As the course develops, the committee suggests the use of more adaptive feedback mechanisms for students after they complete their assessments.

It is noted that assessments matrices are used, the committee recommends that these are also included in the student handbook.

Higher education institution response

Since the first evaluation, we have managed to develop a pedagogical strategy in order to foster the different learning needs. We managed to upgrade the material on the interactive online learning platform and structure modern mechanisms in order to assess, monitor and assist our teaching staff and students.

This strategy will be constantly evaluated and upgraded by implementing a variety of tools and practices. Our main concern will always be the active interaction with our DL students; therefore, we are taking into consideration the suggestion of a face to face induction of our students and the provision of opportunities for online group tasks and projects.

Since we are using assessments matrices, and the committee recommends that these are also included in the student handbook, we have added the following information (resource) in the handbook.

Assessment Matrix

The assessment matrix provides a design aid to help identify an appropriate volume of assessment and range of assessment methods within a programme. The matrix is used in the programme approval and periodic programme review to demonstrate that programme outcomes are assessed, and that the volume of assessment and the methods used are appropriate. This information is also of value to students and staff.

As part of every programme, you will receive an assessment matrix and will be able to identify the following:

1. **Learning Outcomes:** *What will you know and be able to do when you graduate?*
2. **Assessment Methods:** *How will the outcome be measured? Who will be assessed, when, and how often?*
3. **Standards of Comparison:** *How well you should be able to do on the assessment?*

All the above will be presented in a table form. In case you need any clarifications, your tutor will be more than happy to assist you. In the introductory online course, you will be able to find more information and the chance to ask questions. You can always use the forum of every course for assistance.

The above resource has been added on page 7 (before the Evaluation section), of the Student handbook that now has become Second Edition - October 2019. We will also ensure that a set of predefined assessment criteria (rubrics) is clearly described, consistently used, and communicated to all teaching personnel and students.

Although our chosen bibliography is considered by the Committee as adequate for a diploma level, we feel very positive in implementing their suggestion, and therefore we have already proceeded with the following replacements and additions, as included in annex 1 of the EEC report:

DSM 117 - Terrorism

Replaced the book:

- Jackson, R., Javris, L., Gunning, J. and Breen-Smyth, M. (2011). *Terrorism: A critical introduction*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

with:

- William E. D. (2011). *Terrorism: An Investigator's Handbook*, 4th Ed. Anderson Publishing Co, Cincinnati, OH.
- Andrew S., PNLD, Clive W., Stuart O. (2013). *Blackstone's Counter-Terrorism Handbook*, 2nd Ed. Oxford University Press, UK.
- Willem K., & Joop Van Der Pligt, (2015). *The Psychology of Radicalization and Terrorism*, Routledge.

DSM 119 - Introduction to Criminology

Replaced the books:

- Βιδάλη, Σ. (2013) *Εισαγωγή στην εγκληματολογία*. Αθήνα: Νομική Βιβλιοθήκη
- Βλάχου, Β. (2017) *Ιστορική επισκόπηση των εγκληματολογικών θεωριών κατά τον 19ο αιώνα - Η γένεση της εγκληματολογίας*. Αθήνα: Νομική Βιβλιοθήκη

with:

- Σπινέλλη Κ. (2014). *Εγκληματολογία, Σύγχρονες και παλαιότερες κατευθύνσεις*, Νομική Βιβλιοθήκη, Αθήνα
- Φαρσεδάκης, Ι. (2005). *Στοιχεία εγκληματολογίας*. Νομική Βιβλιοθήκη, Αθήνα
- Larry J. Siegel (2017). *Criminology: Theories, Patterns and Typologies* 13th Ed. Cengage Learning.
- Τσίγκανου Ι., Κουτσούκου, Η., Λαμπράκη Ι., Λεμπέση Μ. (2016). *Το εγκληματικό φαινόμενο στην Ελλάδα σήμερα. Δεδομένα και αναγνώσεις*, Παπαζήσης, Αθήνα

General books for our library

- Σπινέλλη Κ., Κουράκη, Ν., & Κρανιδιώτη, Μ. (2018). *Λεξικό Εγκληματολογίας*, Αθήνα.
- Frank E. H., & Leah E. D. (2019). *Introduction to Criminology. Theories, Methods, and Criminal Behavior*, 10th Ed., Sage US.

3. Teaching Staff (ESG 1.5)

Findings, strengths, areas of improvement and recommendations of the EEC

Findings

The committee is impressed by the quality of the staff. The research environment will strengthen the staff further. Expanding training opportunities for teaching staff in the future is foreseen.

We know that the College has established itself in the relevant academic networks, including a collaboration with Roehampton.

There are now several staff members with a PhD or working on its completion, which the committee welcomes.

Strengths

There is robust system of teaching evaluations in place

Areas of improvement and recommendations

The committee would recommend considering involving an external examiner in the programme

Deficiencies noted by EEC under the quality indicators (criteria)

The committee notes the use of some specialists in the program but would welcome involving more professionals from the field as the course progresses

Higher education institution response

Our teaching staff has always been one of most valuable assets. The EEC recognises not only their skills, commitment and experience, but also the predefined practices and procedures the College has, in order to evaluate and upgrade their quality.

We are examining the possibility of including and involving an external examiner in the specific programme as well, having in mind a structured procedure which is the development process with the University of Roehampton, for some of our conventional programmes.

The involvement of professionals in the programme is within our priorities. These professionals though will not participate as academic staff but as guest lecturers that together with our academic staff will interact during the online lectures and discussions. The aim is to foster co-operation of various stakeholders in the industry and ensure the impact of produced knowledge both in academia and industry is disseminated and exposed to the students.

4. Students (ESG 1.4, 1.6, 1.7)

Findings, strengths, areas of improvement and recommendations of the EEC

Findings

There is a good support system in place for students which maybe have to be adapted more towards the needs of a diverse student populations and people with special needs.

Strengths

See other standards

Areas of improvement and recommendations

The committee recommends the College to pay particular attention to fraud prevention and plagiarism prevention and to ensure this is articulated to the students in their handbooks and in the course information.

Deficiencies noted by EEC under the quality indicators (criteria)

- *The student handbook addresses issues of harassment reporting but not of fraud prevention and rules with respect to the prevention of plagiarism etc. The committee recommends including them as well.*

Higher education institution response

We are satisfied to see that the EEC finds that our existing support system works well. Definitely it will be adopted and adapted based on the needs of our DL students. Our monitoring mechanisms are flexible and give solutions to all the necessary infrastructure of the programme. The monitoring mechanisms include supporting the students and not just monitoring them.

Based on the recommendation made by the EEC to pay particular attention to fraud prevention and plagiarism, we included in the student handbook the following information (resource):

Academic Integrity Statement

Academic integrity and honesty are fundamental to the academic work you produce at Global College. You are expected to complete coursework which is your own and which is referenced appropriately. The College has in place measures to detect academic dishonesty in all its forms. If you are found to be cheating or attempting to gain an unfair advantage over other students in any way, this is considered academic misconduct and you will be penalised accordingly.

Turnitin is used to identify instances of matched text across a wide range of online materials including journals, eBooks, websites and work submitted to the Turnitin database i.e. submissions from other institutions as well as Global College. The Turnitin database includes billions of web pages: both current and archived content from the internet, a repository of works students have submitted to Turnitin in the past, and a collection of documents, which comprises thousands of periodicals, journals, and publications.

The College requires a digital version of all assignment submissions. These must be submitted via Turnitin. They must be submitted as a Word file or a pdf file and must not include scanned in text or text boxes.

The above resource has been added on page 7 (after the Evaluation section), of the Student handbook that now has become Second Edition - October 2019.

5. Resources (ESG 1.6)

Findings, strengths, areas of improvement and recommendations of the EEC

Findings

During the onsite visit the committee was impressed by the infrastructure and facilities. There are specific facilities available for staff to create their distance learning materials.

Strengths

See earlier

Areas of improvement and recommendations

The physical library is still somewhat limited. For DL students access to online material will be more important, including online Journals and e-books (although the committee acknowledges their limited availability in the Greek language). We recommend that resources are invested in their provision as well as into making sure that students are aware of open sources in the relevant field of Security Management. The committee understood that links to online material are provided in the courses and welcomes this.

Deficiencies noted by EEC under the quality indicators (criteria)

No deficiencies noted by EEC under the quality indicators

Higher education institution response

We are pleased to see that the EEC finds the available resources fit for purpose. We are aware that for DL students the access to online material is very important, including journals and books. Currently we are subscribed with EBSCO and to various academic journals such as Emerald, Sage Research Methods Online, Taylor and Francis and Science Direct.

Our academic staff constantly upgrade their teaching material with books, articles and journals, in order to provide students with the latest developments in the specific field of study. This is a standard practice for every programme we offer. Therefore, we assure that our teaching staff, will continue enriching their teaching material with the latest research findings (theirs or others).

6. Additional for distance learning programmes (ALL ESG)

Findings

The committee is pleased with the pedagogical unit and the online infrastructure.

Quality assurance is ensured. There are exams and regular online activities so that tutors can monitor how students develop.

Strengths

A strength is that this innovative distance learning program is well-connected to the existing face to face program and well embedded in the organisational context. The organization has developed appropriate tools and procedures for the successful delivery of distance learning.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

Please see proceeding sections

Deficiencies noted by EEC under the quality indicators (criteria)

The prevention of exam fraud requires extra attention for DL students.

Higher education institution response

As already mentioned, we heavily invested in time, money, technical infrastructure and audio-visual design to substantially implement the EEC's recommendations and suggestions from the first evaluation, in order to develop a pedagogical unit and upgrade our DL department and become compliant with what is required to deliver quality distance learning programmes.

We are aware of the challenges and the distinctive characteristics of a distance learning programme (as opposed to a campus-based program which makes use of technology), therefore through our

quality assurance procedures we are touching on program design, delivery activities and the support provision offered to tutors and students. Simply by placing conventional learning materials online does not constitute good distance educational practice. The latter requires considerable investment in time, planning and resources. The Quality Framework for Distance Learning Manual has been designed to help distance learning teams to monitor the management and delivery of their program.

This programme is well-connected to the existing conventional programme, providing us with extra knowledge, tools and procedures in order to accomplish our goals.

Regarding the EEC's comment for preventing exam fraud requiring extra attention, we would like to note that for the mid-term evaluation (tests, coursework, assignments, projects, etc.), all DL students must use the online turnitin tool, while for the final examination and according to the standards and guidelines for quality assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG), all DL students must physically attend the exam on a date and place announced by the college. The final examination will be conducted and supervised by the College itself or under the supervision of trusted bodies operating in the countries where students exist.

Examination centres will be located in key geographical locations where registered students from different areas of habitation have easy access. The examination procedure will be structured based on the regulations of the Assurance Agency for the distance learning programs

7. Additional for doctoral programmes (ALL ESG)

Not applicable

8. Additional for joint programmes (ALL ESG)

Not applicable

B. Conclusions and final remarks

Conclusions and final remarks noted by the EEC

The committee concludes that staff from the Global College have responded positively to their previous evaluation. They have invested in two key areas. Firstly, the provision of a distance learning unit managed by an experienced member of staff. Secondly, the provision of a research unit managed by a qualified academic. In the opinion of the committee the Global College is now compliant with what is required to deliver distance learning provision in Security Management. To enhance the provision of research informed teaching the Global College could consider ways to enable access for distance learning students to their research activities. We would also encourage the facilitation of distance learning students to attend a face to face induction. Finally, whilst we approve of the quality of the learning materials, it is important that the course team stay abreast of the latest academic and professional development in this fast-moving field.

Higher education institution response

We would like to thank the External Evaluation Committee for their professional and academic approach during the on-site evaluation of the programme and for producing a very detailed, accurate and professional report. We also welcome the fact that they recognise our positive and professional response towards the previous evaluation.

It is evidenced that the program is well designed with a clear and coherent structure, as it was developed in a thoughtful and inclusive fashion with the involvement of the faculty members 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.

As shown in our response we have taken immediate actions by adopting the EEC's constructive suggestions and recommendations to further improve our programme and establish the appropriate e-learning environment. Overall, we have:

- established a pedagogical unit
- developed a quality framework manual and structured administrative procedures
- upgraded our research department by establishing the Global Research Institute
- improved our technical infrastructure
- updated the student handbook with additional resources
- revised the bibliography in specific courses

Considering the above actions and highlighting the comment made by the Committee that **“Global College is now compliant with what is required to deliver distance learning provision in Security Management”**, we would like assure, that since this program is part of our multilevel long-term strategic plan, we will further invest in numerous aspects in order to fulfill our goals.

Since the program has the appropriate structure, consistency and content; it is the only program delivered in Cyprus and Greece; it carries the remarkable experience we have gained over the past eight years it is offered in a conventional form; it is directly linked with the market; it is offered by our unique and experienced academic staff, we are certain that it will be a success.

We highlight again the very positive evaluation of our programme and we look forward for the final approval.

C. Higher Education Institution academic representatives

| <i>Name</i> | <i>Position</i> | <i>Signature</i> |
|-------------------------|---|------------------|
| Dr George Kriticos | General Manager | |
| Mr Makis Sepos | Academic Advisor | |
| Mr Andreas Kriticos | Director of Administration and Finance | |
| Dr Andreas Constantinou | Head of Research and Development Department | |
| Mr Neophytos Karkotis | Lecturer | |
| Mrs Eleni Toliopoulou | Students' Representative | |
| Mr Marios Michael | Students' Representative | |

Date: 15.10.2019