

Doc. 300.1.2

Date: 25/02/2025

Higher Education Institution's Response

- **Higher Education Institution:**
American College

- **Town:** Nicosia

- **Programme of study**
Name (Duration, ECTS, Cycle)

In Greek:

Διοίκηση Επιχειρήσεων (2 έτη / 120 ECTS, Δίπλωμα)

In English:

Business Administration (2 years / 120 ECTS, Diploma)

- **Language(s) of instruction:** English/Greek

- **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 300.1.1/1 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. The answers' documentation should be brief and accurate and supported by the relevant documentation. Referral to annexes should be made only when necessary.*
- *In particular, under each assessment area and by using the 2nd column of each table, the HEI must respond on the following:*
 - *the areas of improvement and recommendations of the EEC*
 - *the conclusions and final remarks noted by the EEC*
- *The institution should respond to the EEC comments, in the designated area next each comment. The comments of the EEC should be copied from the EEC report **without any interference** in the content.*
- *In case of annexes, those should be attached and sent on separate document(s). Each document should be in *.pdf format and named as annex1, annex2, etc.*

We have studied the report of the External Evaluation Committee (EEC) consisted of Prof. Christian Asmussen, Prof. Johann Fortwengel, Prof. Edgar Löw and Mrs. Natasa Karletidou regarding the educational evaluation-accreditation of the Diploma in Business Administration carefully and thoroughly. We find that their report is objective and positive. Below we provide our response to all the recommendations for revisions/improvements noted in the EEC report. In addition, we refer to issues we felt they needed us to provide clarifications or further information. The revisions/improvements we made, have already been implemented and they are fully documented below and in the annexes provided.

1. Study programme and study programme's design and development (ESG 1.1, 1.2, 1.7, 1.8, 1.9)

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
Stakeholders are included in the programme design in terms of providing occasional input, but it could be an advantage to further formalize this process by, for example, establishing an advisory board of practitioners who regularly take stock of the fit of the programme with employer needs. Also, one could include alumni more actively and strategically such that the students are exposed to them and can draw on their experience.	Our institution has a well-established process for incorporating stakeholders' input into quality assurance procedures, as outlined in our policies (see Annex 1 – Quality Assurance). These procedures already ensure that stakeholders are actively involved in the design, monitoring, and review of our programmes. To further enhance these processes, we have recently revised our quality assurance procedures to further formalize stakeholder contributions. Stakeholders are now required to prepare detailed reports (see Annex 1 – Quality Assurance) on the relevance and alignment of the programme with current market and employer needs. This structured approach ensures a more robust and consistent integration of stakeholder perspectives. In addition to these enhancements, we have formalized alumni engagement through periodic feedback mechanisms. Alumni insights are now systematically evaluated and incorporated into programme updates. Moreover, we invite alumni to participate as guest speakers in our courses and events, providing current students with valuable exposure to real-world experiences and career pathways.	Choose level of compliance:
It could be more clearly communicated which courses are actually compulsory (i.e. courses that all students have to take). One might get the impression that students can freely mix and match in each of the course categories to get a certain number of ECTS, but since some courses serve as prerequisites for others, there are	We have revised the curriculum (Annex 2 – Revised Curriculum) to explicitly indicate which courses are compulsory for all students ensuring greater transparency in course selection and providing students with a clearer understanding of the structured progression of the program.	Choose level of compliance:

unarticulated constraints on this choice.		
<p>The limited scale and informal culture of the college (see strengths) also has potential risks, as the lack of formalized processes makes the outcomes highly reliant on some very competent and dedicated individuals. Hence, formalizing certain things could be useful next steps. One example is the management of overlap, synergies, and progression between courses: the students do not perceive this as a problem, but there may be unexploited opportunities to increase the cohesion between the courses, for example having an annual workshop with teaching staff where linkages between courses are explicitly identified and developed. Another example is to give the students “feedback on their feedback”, so that they have an idea how their input into the programme is being used by faculty and programme coordinators, thereby enhancing the motivation to give detailed and constructive feedback.</p>	<p>Department heads regularly review course syllabi to ensure alignment, progression, and appropriate content distribution across the curriculum. Additionally, the Director of Academic Affairs works closely with department heads and faculty to address any potential overlaps and ensure that courses are well-structured, interconnected and cohesively linked to support a smooth learning progression for students. In regard to students’ feedback, at the moment, we collect student feedback using the Students’ Faculty and Course Evaluation Form (Annex 3) and the Student Facilities and Services Evaluation Form (Annex 4), which are regularly completed by students and reviewed by faculty and the Internal Quality Assurance Committee. To enhance this process, we will ensure students are informed about how their feedback is utilized to improve the program by sharing regular updates highlighting key improvements and changes through email, the College’s learning platform, and notice board announcements.</p>	Choose level of compliance:
<p>Also, the flipside of the limited size is that the programme does not enjoy the scale economies that a larger programme would. Hence, with increased student numbers, the college could finance more services and facilities (for example, digital services, software, upgraded library facilities, sports, etc.). As there is also unexploited capacity at the college, aiming for a modest growth in students (for example with geographically targeted marketing of the programme) might generate additional resources (see also section 5) while mitigating risks from the changing competitive landscape faced by the college.</p>	<p>Currently, American College provides a range of well-equipped services and facilities that support our students and faculty. These include a well-stocked library with thousands of books, journals, and 24/7 access to digital resources, up-to-date computer laboratories, modern classrooms and specialized laboratories for practical learning experiences. The campus also features two cafeterias and a fully equipped gym providing fitness programs tailored to students’ needs. Furthermore, our learning management platform ensures students can access academic content asynchronously. As we aim for a modest increase in student numbers through geographically targeted marketing, we are committed to reinvesting in and expanding our services and facilities as student number grows. This will include further enhancements to our digital infrastructure, upgrades to library resources, and increased recreational and extracurricular offerings.</p>	Choose level of compliance:

On a more detailed level, the structure of the program objectives could be reconsidered. The program is aimed at students aiming to getting a diploma and prepares them for the labor market or to continue studying a bachelor programme, which is why objective (2) on “principles, policies, and theories” (and practical implementation) in this field could well be given first place.	We have elevated the objective on “principles, policies, and theories” (and their practical implementation) in the field of business administration to the first position (see Annex 2 – Revised Curriculum). This adjustment ensures alignment with the program’s aim of preparing students for the labor market or further academic studies in business administration.	Choose level of compliance:
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2. Student – centred learning, teaching and assessment (ESG 1.3)

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
Given the small size of the program, formal processes and systems are not appropriate, but the EEC would recommend considering the implementation of more informal fora where teaching staff and administrators could share information and good practice examples.	Despite the size of the program we have effective mechanisms in place to achieve the effective dissemination of information. Department heads regularly meet with faculty members to discuss academic matters, share updates, and exchange best practices. Similarly, administrative directors hold regular meetings with their teams to address operational issues and improvements. Joint meetings are also held to ensure continuous communication, collaboration, and the sharing of valuable insights to enhance the overall effectiveness of the program.	Choose level of compliance:
The links of the College to the local industry / market could be further improved, for example, by bringing in external guest speakers. This would help substantiate the links to practice of the content delivered, and it would also help students find internships and employment after their graduation.	At American College, we actively foster industry connections through guest speaker sessions and visiting instructors, which provide students with valuable insights, networking opportunities, and direct exposure to real-world business practices. Our guest speaker program brings in professionals from various sectors, including business, marketing, finance, hospitality, and technology, to share their expertise with students. These sessions help bridge the gap between theoretical learning and industry applications while also creating opportunities for internships and employment. The list of guest speakers (Annex 5 - Guest Speakers) demonstrates our ongoing commitment to engaging with industry professionals. Additionally, our visiting instructors program invites faculty members from other academic institutions to lecture at American College. This initiative enhances academic collaborations and exposes students	Choose level of compliance:

	to diverse teaching methods and international perspectives, further enriching their educational experience. The list of visiting instructors (Annex 66 - Visiting Instructors) reflects these efforts. We will continue to strengthen our industry ties by expanding these initiatives, ensuring students receive practical, industry-relevant knowledge while increasing their career prospects through networking and professional engagement.	
The material shared with the EEC includes short biographies of the teaching staff. However, it appears that not all teaching staff were mentioned, for example in the areas of accounting and auditing. Also, for others it might be helpful – in case these short biographies are offered to (potential) students as well – to highlight the connection to business administration of those lecturers where the relationship is not obvious (or the connection to the respective module is not seen from previous business experience or research interests).	We have reviewed the material submitted to the EEC and confirm that the short biographies of all the teaching staff, including those in the areas of accounting and auditing, were included in the application for reaccreditation. Additionally, some information about our teaching staff is already publicly available on the College's website, providing students and the public with essential details.	Choose level of compliance:
There are quite a few extra-curricular activities offered, and because of the relatively small size of the College it is difficult to offer much more here, such as sports clubs. However, students could be encouraged to contribute to volunteering activities, for example helping children with their homework. This might be one additional mechanism for the College to contribute to society.	We appreciate the committee's suggestion to encourage students to engage in volunteering activities as an additional mechanism for the College to contribute to society. In fact, we already organize a variety of impactful voluntary activities that actively involve our students, faculty, and staff, fostering a strong sense of community engagement and solidarity. Here are some examples of our recent initiatives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> "Together for a Christmas Smile!": This holiday season, we successfully organized a campaign in collaboration with the Cyprus Red Cross Society, where students, faculty, and staff collected and donated clothes, toys, and long-lasting 	Choose level of compliance:

	<p>food items to support those in need.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supporting PASYKAF: We held a fundraiser at the College to support the Cyprus Association of Cancer Patients and Friends (PASYKAF), during which students and staff sold raffle tickets. The collected funds were handed over to PASYKAF by our Marketing Manager and a student representative. Sponsorship of Charity Run in Kakopetria village: The College was a proud sponsor of a charity run dedicated to initiatives such as "Embrace with Love" and "Love Drop" and against bullying. This event was held in memory of Angelos Sofokleous and under the auspices of the Minister of Education. Our Marketing Manager also had the honor of awarding prizes to the winners. <p>These are just a few examples of the many volunteer activities we undertake, all of which actively involve our students, staff, and faculty. Through such initiatives, we aim to instill values of altruism, community involvement, and social responsibility in our students, while also making meaningful contributions to society.</p>	
Finally, the EEC encourages the College to strengthen the relationship to alumni of the program. Alumni could be invited to give guest talks to current students, and they might also help find employment of graduates and overall help further strengthen the reputation of the American College and the program.	American College already has an active Alumni Association (ACALA), which connects thousands of graduates around the globe. Our alumni represent the College in a variety of roles across private and public organizations worldwide, contributing to sectors such as business, hospitality and tourism. The American College Alumni Association keeps graduates informed about college news, events, academic and career opportunities, and developments	Choose level of compliance:

	<p>involving students and graduates. The association also gathers valuable information regarding alumni employment and career progress and invites graduates to participate in College activities. We strongly believe that this active alumni community fosters opportunities for knowledge exchange, professional networking, and collaboration. To further enhance alumni engagement, we will continue inviting them to deliver guest talks, share their professional journeys, and mentor current students. Alumni will also be encouraged to support graduate employment through networking and internship opportunities. By leveraging this vibrant alumni network, we aim to further strengthen the College's reputation and enhance the program's overall impact.</p>	
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3. Teaching staff (ESG 1.5)

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
Although the teaching is monitored (and evaluated by students) it might be fruitful to implement an instructor conference once a year as mentioned also in section 1. That might increase the understand of the general program and slight changes over time and avoid potential overlaps. It also increases the team spirit of the instructors of the program.	Effective mechanisms are in place to ensure consistent communication and alignment within the program. Department heads frequently meet with faculty to discuss academic matters, address course-related issues, and share updates. Additionally, joint meetings between departments promote collaboration, the exchange of ideas, and the coordination of teaching activities (see responses in Section 1). This approach helps maintain team cohesion, prevent overlaps, and support the continuous development of the program.	Choose level of compliance:
Faculty research activities could be further promoted and integrated into the classroom in a consistent way.	Our faculty actively engages in research across various disciplines, and we encourage them to bring their findings into their teaching through case studies, research-based discussions, and project-based learning. To further address this, we are taking steps to further promote faculty research and integrate it more consistently into the classroom. These steps include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faculty members are encouraged to incorporate their research findings and methodologies into course content, case studies, and class discussions, providing students with access to cutting-edge knowledge and practical insights • Faculty are encouraged to involve students in their research projects, offering opportunities for hands-on experience, critical thinking, and skill development. 	Choose level of compliance:

	We are committed to fostering a stronger connection between faculty research and classroom teaching and will work consistently to ensure that this integration contributes to a richer and more engaging educational experience for our students.	
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4. Student admission, progression, recognition and certification (ESG 1.4)

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
<p>The EEC would recommend that the American College actively tries to increase the number of applications over time. Currently, the College is not very selective in making offers and generally admits students as long as they pass the minimum requirements and standards, as is necessary to reach the target number of enrolled students. As the College is considering modest growth over the next few years, and with possible regulatory changes that may increase competition in the space, it would be advisable to slowly build up a buffer as a risk management strategy by trying to attract more applicants. This would help ensure the long-term viability and provision of the program.</p>	<p>We already employ a variety of promotional strategies to attract a diverse pool of prospective students and enhance the visibility of our programs. Moving forward, we will intensify and enhance these efforts to achieve even greater impact. Our enhanced efforts include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthening social media outreach and search engine optimization, with a focus on broader audience engagement through targeted campaigns that highlight our unique programs, extracurricular activities, and career opportunities. • Expanding high school outreach initiatives by intensifying information sessions, career counseling workshops, and partnerships with high schools to further introduce prospective students to the benefits of studying at American College. • Deepening engagement with our alumni network, amplifying their success stories and career achievements to more effectively showcase the value of an American College education. • Broadening scholarship opportunities and application incentives to attract high-performing students and further encourage early applications. • Enhancing our international recruitment efforts by increasing participation in virtual fairs and strengthening partnerships with overseas recruitment agencies. 	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>

	All of these efforts will be implemented without compromising the quality of education, close student interaction, and personalized attention that define our academic approach.	
Furthermore, the EEC would recommend the College to consider monitoring the success and employment outcomes of the graduates after their graduation. This would also help build an alumni cohort, which could support teaching via guest lectures, employment outcomes via the provision of internships and jobs, as well as the gradual build-up of reputation and standing of the American College in the local community.	<p>We recognize the importance of monitoring the success and employment outcomes of our graduates and building a strong alumni network. As such, we have decided to implement the following actions moving forward to effectively collect, monitor, and analyze information about our graduates' career paths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biannual online surveys through platforms such as Google Forms, SurveyMonkey, or JotForm, allowing graduates to provide employment-related information, including their career status and professional progress. • Frequent communication via social media platforms to maintain contact with graduates, foster a sense of community, and expand our network, making it easier to collect information. • Use of LinkedIn to locate College graduates and systematically track their career paths. • Follow-ups via text messages and telephone for non-responders, ensuring a higher response rate and comprehensive data collection. 	Choose level of compliance:
Another recommendation, also mentioned in section 1, would be to feedback to students what actions have been taken, if any, in response to student evaluations of the teaching provided. Even if no	As mentioned earlier in Section 1, we currently collect student feedback through the Students' Faculty and Course Evaluation Form (Annex 3) and the Student Facilities and Services Evaluation Form	Choose level of compliance:

<p>actions were necessary because of positive evaluations, it might be nice for students to have evidence that the feedback they give and student voice more generally is taken seriously and acted on, to the extent necessary and as appropriate.</p>	<p>(Annex 4), which are reviewed by faculty and the Internal Quality Assurance Committee. To enhance this process, we will keep students informed of how their feedback is used by sharing updates on key improvements and changes via email, the College's learning platform, and notice board announcements.</p>	
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5. Learning resources and student support (ESG 1.6)

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
Although the use of AI in students work is promoted, there is no official policy on this. Therefore, a policy needs to be put in place to ensure any risks of misuse while maintaining academic integrity. Furthermore, students expressed a desire for improvement to the cafeteria and suggested the possibility of free parking. Also, students suggested the introduction of sports clubs.	<p>We have developed a comprehensive policy that outlines clear guidelines for the ethical and responsible use of AI in academic activities (Annex 7 - Policy on the Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Academic Work). This policy ensures the preservation of academic integrity while mitigating potential risks of misuse. The policy addresses permitted and prohibited uses of AI tools, disclosure requirements, and the responsibilities of both students and faculty in maintaining compliance. It also includes measures to support students and faculty through workshops, resources, and access to approved AI tools. We are confident that this policy will provide a structured framework to guide the effective and ethical integration of AI in academic work.</p> <p>Regarding sports and other clubs, these were initially paused due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and while there was limited activity in the period following, we have now fully implemented them again. Students can now actively participate in a variety of clubs, including sports, to enrich their campus experience. As for the cafeteria, we have two facilities on campus. One of them is now operated by a dedicated vendor, offering a wide range of coffee, snacks, meals, and other options to meet the needs of our students and staff.</p> <p>Concerning parking, we have reached an agreement with the Municipality of Nicosia, allowing our</p>	Choose level of compliance:

	students to benefit from a 50% discount on parking fees, ensuring more affordable parking solutions.	
We also noted that the library's book collection requires regular updates, with resources/books suggested from tutors to ensure it remains relevant and up to date with current knowledge. Also, expanding remote access to the e-library would greatly benefit students by providing more flexibility and convenience in their studies.	Ensuring that our resources meet current academic and professional standards is something we continuously prioritize in light of student needs, curriculum updates, and evolving industry trends. To this end, we have an established procedure that allows faculty members to apply for the purchase of new books and resources for our library (see Annex 8 - Book-Journal Request Form). This ensures that our collection remains current and aligned with the specific requirements of our programs. Remote access to the e-library is now available to all students. To gain access, students are invited to complete a registration form and submit their request for remote access. This initiative aims to provide these students with greater flexibility and convenience in accessing academic resources during this critical phase of their studies.	Choose level of compliance:

6. Additional for doctoral programmes (ALL ESG)

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
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7. Eligibility (Joint programme) (ALL ESG)

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
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B. Conclusions and final remarks

Conclusions and final remarks by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
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C. Higher Education Institution academic representatives

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>Signature</i>
Dr. Charalambos Louca	Program Coordinator	
Click to enter Name	Click to enter Position	
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