Doc. 300.1.2

Date: Date.

Higher Education Institution's Response

- **Higher Education Institution:**
  American University of Beirut – Mediterraneo

- **Town:** Paphos

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

  In Greek:

  Διεθνείς και ελεύθερες σπουδές

  In English:

  B.A. Global Liberal Arts, 4 Yrs, 240 ECTS

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

- **Programme's status:** New

- **Concentrations (if any):**

  In Greek: Concentrations
  In English: Concentrations

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.*

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
The University ought to include external stakeholders in the External Review Process beyond "external experts".	The university will proceed accordingly in all future program planning.	Choose level of compliance:
The website could include a dedicated Complaints link and Information Disclosure link for students, following the AUB example.	The Office of the Registrar is already in the process of creating an online Complaints and Information Disclosure system for students that will be integrated into the university's Student Information System (Jenzabar).	Choose level of compliance:
Staff should systematically use Turnitin and not only be encouraged to do so.	This recommendation is being forwarded to the Committee for Teaching and Learning for discussion and implementation. We will recommend that information about how to use Turnitin be systematically shared with all faculty members, and that the policy developed by the committee on the use of Turnitin be included in the university syllabus template used by all faculty members.	Choose level of compliance:
The development of a comprehensive GenAI policy should be treated as a matter of urgency.	The university has developed a current AI policy that applies to all courses and is incorporated into the AUB Mediterraneo syllabus template. A standing faculty committee devoted to Gen AI use in academia continues to monitor the policy and to develop it as the technology evolves. Responsible use of Gen AI will continue to be a priority going forward.	Choose level of compliance:
We suggest the aspect of "Global Studies" to be dropped from the title. The Committee strongly prefers the title of "Global Liberal Arts" or similar, which in our view reflects the content of courses more adequately.	Title has been modified and the program will appear as such in all uses.	Choose level of compliance:

In order to meet the aspirations indicated by the reference to the global in the title, courses ought to include readings and themes from a truly global background more systematically.	The revised syllabi shared in Annex 2 reflect this recommendation, which will be recommended as a principle for syllabus design in the program.	
Details about courses provided in the course descriptions ought to meet common standards and be of sufficient detail.	The revised syllabi presented in Annex 2 reflect efforts to standardize and add sufficient detail to all syllabi.	
Course GSLA 200 ought to specify more concretely what kinds of methods it will teach.	The revised course description for the course (now called GLAS 200 and GLAS 201) reflects this recommendation. See pages 12-16 of ''Annex 2 Revised Course Descriptions.''	
The University may want to consider inclusion of the Global Citizenship course in the core curriculum, while moving the Cyprus course to the electives.	The revised curriculum in ''Table 2 Revised Course Distribution per Semester'' shows that Global Liberal Arts students will be required to take PSPA 300 Global Citizenship course as part of their General Education requirements. Students will continue to be required to take the course GLAS 105 Modern Cyprus: Politics and Society as one of their core courses. Given that the university predominantly attracts international students, GLAS 105 is very important for their understanding of the country where they live and study.	
The University ought to collect and analyse data on student progression systematically.	The Office of the Registrar currently systematically collects and analyses data on student progression for all programs.	

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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
In light of the workload involved in the writing of a BA Thesis, the University may reconsider the number of ECTS attached to it.	The revised course description for the thesis reflects this recommendation. The thesis project will be allotted a total of 24 ECTS over the course of two semesters. (GLAS 400: 12 ECTS during Semester 7 and GLAS 401: 12 ECTS during Semester 8) To compensate for this change, GLAS, the internship and career workshop 301, will still be required, but will be a zero-credit requirement. Additionally, the course that was previously listed as GLAS 202 Social Inequalities will become a compulsory course taken as part of the students General Education program	Choose level of compliance:
The process of thesis supervision ought to be further specified and structured.	The recommended change is reflected in the revised course description for the thesis. Individual faculty members will advise student thesis projects. Faculty members will be compensated by receiving a course release after supervising a specified number of projects. GLAS faculty members will assess all final projects as a team. Thesis projects will be assessed according to a Pass/Fail system.	Choose level of compliance:
Assessment criteria should be standardised more systematically and published in the coursebook.	Implementation of these recommendations have been referred to the Committee for Teaching and Learning in FAS and the Office of the Registrar for review and action.	Choose level of compliance:
The university ought to consider differentiating between formative and summative assessments.	While many courses do incorporate formative assessment practices, such as drafting and revision; student conferences; low-stakes writing activities; and problem-	Choose level of compliance:

	solving sessions, the recommendation will be shared with the Committee on Teaching and Learning to ensure knowledge about distinguishing formative assessment from summative assessment is disseminated to all faculty members.	
The university may want to develop second marking procedures. This applies particularly to the Thesis.	Concerning exams in general, these recommendations will be referred to the Committee for Teaching and Learning in FAS. In terms of the Thesis project in GLAS, the recommendation will be incorporated into the thesis guidelines. Thesis projects will be assessed by a team of GLAS full time faculty members according to a customized rubric.	Choose level of compliance:
The student appeal process ought to be formalised further.	This recommendation will be addressed through the implementation of the Complaints and Information Disclosure system for students that will be integrated into the online Student Information System (Jenzabar). Students may petition for an appeal through this system, which will direct their petition to the appropriate body.	
The university may want to consider the inclusion of some external oversight over assessment.	It is not common practice in North American universities and colleges to engage external oversight for assessment within courses.	
Standards of assessment ought to be maintained rigorously. The university ought to put into effect monitoring mechanisms for the spread of marks within and across courses.	Final grades in all courses are reviewed and discussed by program evaluators and the dean before being finalized on the AUB student information system. This ensures rigor and fairness in our grading system.	

3. Teaching staff
(ESG 1.5)

Areas of improvement and recommendations **by EEC**	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
The university ought to gradually minimise the dependence on staff either seconded or visiting from the mother campus in Beirut without increasing the teaching load of local staff. Prospective students ought to be made aware of any restrictions in the choice of electives because of limited staff capacities. Non-permanent staff should be systematically supported in career development.	The university has in place a plan for continuous full-time hiring year by year as the student population grows and up until the programs arrive at steady state, which is currently estimated to be six full-time professorial rank faculty members. The first search was conducted this year. While collaboration and exchange with faculty in AUB Beirut will always continue, the programs in Paphos are expected to be self-reliant within the next five to six years.

When it is fully staffed, the program will be in a position to offer six or more electives each semester. This number of electives can be sustained, because it does not only depend on the enrollment in the GLAS program. Elective offerings will serve all students in all majors, who can take those that have been certified to fulfill General Education requirements.

In the interim, until the program is fully staffed, students will be informed of any restrictions in the number of electives that will be available to them. Students will be able to take electives at AUB Beirut as well as through exchange agreements with other universities.

In terms of career development and faculty development, the university does not differentiate between full time and part time staff members. All may access professional development workshops and mentoring; may benefit from the university's support for grant proposal writing and grant administration; and may apply for full time or tenure track positions as these open up. | Choose level of compliance: |
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4. Student admission, progression, recognition and certification
(ESG 1.4)

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Students ought to be advised in the second year about possible elective pathways in correspondence with their prospective Master degree programmes.	A required one-hour advising meeting for each student with a group of at least three faculty members has been newly incorporated into semester 3. In the meeting, students will discuss their personal aspirations for study and faculty members will advise them on elective pathways.	Choose level of compliance:
Degree certification must be in line with the regulations set by the Lisbon Convention.	Noted.	Choose level of compliance:
Care should be taken to process student data in line with the requirements set by EU General Data Protection Regulation. In this context, the panel is concerned about the use of GoogleDocs in the application process.	This point is well taken and is being conveyed to the university administration for reconsideration of the practice.	Choose level of compliance:
Procedures for how to deal with students who have failed a module must be formalised, including provisions for retake exams, and in particular if the module is compulsory for the student to progress further.	As per AUB Mediterraneo rules and regulations, any compulsory failed needs to be retaken. If the failed course is a pre-requisite for other courses, the Board of Deans can approve that the course be taken as a co-requisite. If the course is required for graduation in the student's last year at the university, the Board of Deans can approve that the course is retaken as a tutorial (one-on-one basis) in order to avoid any delay in graduation.	Choose level of compliance:
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Areas of improvement and recommendations **by EEC**	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
The university may consider providing free online textbook access wherever these are required in courses.	Faculty members are encouraged to take advantage of the databases and e-books available for free through the AUB Libraries system when deciding upon course textbooks. The recommendation to offer free online textbook access for all required course texts will be proposed to the university administration. Faculty members will be informed about fair use policy and copyright concerns related to course materials.	Choose level of compliance:
Relations between student representatives and university management ought to be formalised.	The student body is represented by the University Students Council (USC). The USC consists of students that were elected by their fellow students. The USC provides students with the opportunity to participate in decision making at the university level. It operates as a liaison between the student body and university administration. It is responsible for studying matters of university-wide student interest and submitting recommendations to the proper university authorities, to defend the right of all students to have freedom of speech and an opportunity to express their opinions responsibly and within the bounds of the Student Code of Conduct, to communicate to the student body information on university issues, and to initiate and promote student activities in coordination with the university.	Choose level of compliance:
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6. Additional for doctoral programmes
(ALL ESG)

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7. Eligibility (Joint programme)
(ALL ESG)

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B. Conclusions and final remarks

Conclusions and final remarks by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
The panel highly welcomes the establishment of a globally oriented liberal arts programme in Cyprus. We have been impressed with the dedication of staff, the financial resources and the development of teaching and learning facilities. The programme meets or exceeds most standards in the different fields of assessment.	AUB – Mediterraneo thanks the panel of external evaluators for their thoughtful and rigorous assessment of the proposal for the BA in Global Liberal Arts. We welcome their contributions to the strengthening our program and our institutional practices.	Choose level of compliance:
We see areas of improvement in the programme design, assessment and student progression.	Recommendations in these areas have studied and action has been taken on each one. This response document details actions taken on each of the suggested areas of improvement.	Choose level of compliance:
In particular, we believe that the suggested name of the programme does not adequately reflect its content and thus ought to be changed.	To reflect this recommendation, the name of the program has been changed to Global Liberal Arts.	Choose level of compliance:
We also encourage the further formalisation and mutual alignment of assessment procedures and criteria as well as more robust procedures for student progression in cases in which student have failed modules.	This recommendation has been addressed within the proposed program and will continue to be addressed as an ongoing effort across all programs at the university.	Choose level of compliance:
We are confident that the university and programme staff will be able to address these issues and make the programme thrive in the future.	We thank the reviewers for their efforts, confidence and trust and we hope that our responses are acceptable.	Choose level of compliance:

C. Higher Education Institution academic representatives

Name	Position	Signature
Wassim El Hajj	Rector	
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