Doc. 300.1.1/2

Date: 27/1/24

External Evaluation Report

(E-learning programme of study)

- **Higher Education Institution:**
  Global College

- **Town: Nicosia**

- **School/Faculty (if applicable):** School/Faculty

- **Department/ Sector: Security Sector**

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

  In Greek:

  Programme Name

In English:
  Security Management (2 Years/120 ECTS, Diploma)
  Distance-Learning

  Programme Name

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

- **Programme's status:** Currently Operating

- **Concentrations (if any):**

  In Greek: Concentrations
  In English: Concentrations

A. Introduction

This part includes basic information regarding the onsite visit.

The onsite visit was undertaken on 26 January 2024. It consisted of the following elements:

09:00 – 09:10

- A brief introduction of the members of the External Evaluation Committee

09:10 – 09:50

- A short presentation of the Institution and discussion

- A meeting with <u>the members of the Internal Evaluation Committee</u> (Q&A Session)

Name(s) of presenter(s)/participant(s):

Num.	NAME	POSITION
	George Kriticos	General Director
	<u>Andreas Kriticos</u>	Director of Administration & Finance
	<u>Leonidas Neocleous</u>	Programme Quality Administrator
	<u>Charalambos Kapetanios</u>	Lecturer

09:50 – 10:00

- A meeting with the Head of the relevant department and the Coordinator(s) of the programme for a **short presentation of the School's/Department's structure**

Name(s) of presenter(s)/participant(s):

Num.	NAME	POSITION
	<u>George Yiapanas</u>	Co-ordinator
	<u>Stavros Ioakim</u>	Co-ordinator (Distance)

10:00 – 11:00

This session included:

 * Discussion regarding the content and the standards of the programme of study, criteria for prospective students, the learning outcomes and ECTS, and the persons involved in the programm's design and development.

 * Discussion on the process of teaching and learning and the student-centred teaching methodology, the practical trainings and the student assessment.

 * Discussion on the Student admission, processes and criteria, progression, recognition and certification.

Num.	NAME	POSITION
	<u>George Yiapanas</u>	Co-ordinator

	Stavros Ioakim	Co-ordinator (Distance)

11:10 – 12:10

- A meeting with the **Head/Coordinator** and members responsible for the E-Learning unit for a brief presentation and a Q&A Session.

Num.	NAME	POSITION
	Sergios Karayan	Distance Learning Director

12:10 – 13:15

A meeting with members of the teaching staff **ONLY**

Num.	NAME	POSITION
	Erotokritos Protopapas	Lecturer
	Evangelia Philippou	«
	Christodoulou Andreas	«
	Marios Papaevriviades	«
	Charalampos Mathios	«
	Ioannis Yiannakou	«
	Stavros Ioakim	«
	Zenon Savvides	«
	Alexandros Papadopoulos	«
	Demetra Chrysostomou	«

13:15 – 14:30

- A meeting with students and graduates **ONLY**

14:43 – 15:00

- A meeting with members of the administrative staff **ONLY** (QA session)

Num.	NAME	POSITION
	Christina Kriticou	HR
	Elena Loizou	Course Secretary
	Ioanna Poyatzi	Librarian

	Stalo Michael	Student Affairs

15:00 – 15:20

- A visit to the premises of the institution (including the library, computer labs, teaching rooms)

Name(s) of participant(s):

Num.	NAME	POSITION
	George Yiapanas	Co-ordinator
	Stalo Michael	Student Affairs

15:20 - 15:45

- *A meeting ONLY between the EEC members, to sum up and discuss for any additional clarifications needed, before the Exit Discussion*

Name(s) of participant(s):

Num.	NAME	POSITION
	George Kriticos	
	George Yiapanas	

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B. External Evaluation Committee (EEC)

Name	Position	University
Brian Rappert	Professor - Chair	University of Exeter
Christos Xenakis	Professor - Member	University of Piraeus
Laura Georg Schaffner	Professor- Member	University of Strasbourg
Santi Caballe Llobet	Professor - Member	Universitat Oberta de Catalunya
Panagiotis Chrysanthou	Student Member	University of Cyprus

C. Guidelines on content and structure of the report

- *The external evaluation report follows the structure of assessment areas.*

- *At the beginning of each assessment area there is a box presenting:*
    - *(a) sub-areas*
    - *(b) standards which are relevant to the European Standards and Guidelines (ESG)*
    - *(c) some questions that EEC may find useful.*

- *The questions aim at facilitating the understanding of each assessment area and at illustrating the range of topics covered by the standards.*

- *Under each assessment area, it is important to provide information regarding the compliance with the requirements of each sub-area. In particular, the following must be included:*

Findings

A short description of the situation in the Higher Education Institution (HEI), based on elements from the application for external evaluation and on findings from the onsite visit.

Strengths

A list of strengths, e.g. examples of good practices, achievements, innovative solutions etc.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

A list of problem areas to be dealt with, followed by or linked to the recommendations of how to improve the situation.

- *The EEC should state the compliance for each sub-area (Non-compliant, Partially compliant, Compliant), which must be in agreement with everything stated in the report. It is pointed out that, in the case of standards that cannot be applied due to the status of the HEI and/or of the programme of study, N/A (= Not Applicable) should be noted.*

- *The EEC should state the conclusions and final remarks regarding the programme of study as a whole.*

- ***The report may also address other issues which the EEC finds relevant.***

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

Sub-areas

1.1 Policy for quality assurance
1.2 Design, approval, on-going monitoring and review
1.3 Public information
1.4 Information management

1.1 Policy for quality assurance

Standards

- *Policy for quality assurance of the programme of study:*
  - *has a formal status and is publicly available*
  - *supports the organisation of the quality assurance system through appropriate structures, regulations and processes*
  - *supports teaching, administrative staff and students to take on their responsibilities in quality assurance*
  - *ensures academic integrity and freedom and is vigilant against academic fraud*
  - *guards against intolerance of any kind or discrimination against the students or staff*
  - *supports the involvement of external stakeholders*

1.2 Design, approval, on-going monitoring and review

Standards

- *The programme of study:*
  - *is designed with overall programme objectives that are in line with the institutional strategy and have explicit intended learning outcomes*
  - *is designed by involving students and other stakeholders*
  - *benefits from external expertise*
  - *reflects the four purposes of higher education of the Council of Europe (preparation for sustainable employment, personal development, preparation for life as active citizens in democratic societies, the development and maintenance, through teaching, learning and research, of a broad, advanced knowledge base)*
  - *is designed so that it enables smooth student progression*
  - *is designed so that the exams' and assignments' content corresponds to the level of the programme and the number of ECTS*
  - *defines the expected student workload in ECTS*
  - *includes well-structured placement opportunities where appropriate*
  - *is subject to a formal institutional approval process*

o *results in a qualification that is clearly specified and communicated, and refers to the correct level of the National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education and, consequently, to the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area*

o *is regularly monitored in the light of the latest research in the given discipline, thus ensuring that the programme is up-to-date*

o *is periodically reviewed so that it takes into account the changing needs of society, the students' workload, progression and completion, the effectiveness of procedures for assessment of students, student expectations, needs and satisfaction in relation to the programme*

o *is reviewed and revised regularly involving students and other stakeholders*

1.3 Public information

Standards

- *Regarding the programme of study, clear, accurate, up-to date and readily accessible information is published about:*
  - o *selection criteria*
  - o *intended learning outcomes*
  - o *qualification awarded*
  - o *teaching, learning and assessment procedures*
  - o *pass rates*
  - o *learning opportunities available to the students*
  - o *graduate employment information*

1.4 Information management

Standards

- *Information for the effective management of the programme of study is collected, monitored and analysed:*
  - o *key performance indicators*
  - o *profile of the student population*
  - o *student progression, success and drop-out rates*
  - o *students' satisfaction with their programmes*
  - o *learning resources and student support available*
  - o *career paths of graduates*

- *Students and staff are involved in providing and analysing information and planning follow-up activities.*

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You may also consider the following questions:

- *What is the procedure for quality assurance of the programme and who is involved?*
- *Who is involved in the study programme's design and development (launching, changing, internal evaluation) and what is taken into account (strategies, the needs of society, etc.)?*
- *How/to what extent are students themselves involved in the development of the content of their studies?*
- *Please evaluate a) whether the study programme remains current and consistent with developments in society (labour market, digital technologies, etc.), and b) whether the content and objectives of the study programme are in accordance with each other?*
- *Do the content and the delivery of the programme correspond to the European Qualifications Framework (EQF)?*
- *How is coherence of the study programme ensured, i.e., logical sequence and coherence of courses? How are substantial overlaps between courses avoided? How is it ensured that the teaching staff is aware of the content and outputs of their colleagues' work within the same study programme?*
- *How does the study programme support development of the learners' general competencies (including digital literacy, foreign language skills, entrepreneurship, communication and teamwork skills)?*
- *What are the scope and objectives of the foundation courses in the study programme (where appropriate)? What are the pass rates?*
- *How long does it take a student on average to graduate? Is the graduation rate for the study programme analogous to other European programmes with similar content? What is the pass rate per course/semester?*
- ***How is it ensured that the actual student workload is in accordance with the workload expressed by ECTS?***
- *What are the opportunities for international students to participate in the study programme (courses/modules taught in a foreign language)?*
- *Is information related to the programme of study publicly available?*
- *How is the HEI evaluating the success of its graduates in the labor market? What is the feedback from graduates of the study programme on their employment and/or continuation of studies?*
- *Have the results of student feedback been analysed and taken into account, and how (e.g., when planning in-service training for the teaching staff)?*
- *What are the reasons for dropping out (voluntary withdrawal)? What has been done to reduce the number of such students?*

Findings

The programme is divided into four semesters of study. Overall, the EEC regarded it is well developed and coherent. It is intended to provide an overview of national and international security issues through practice- and case-based teaching that is informed by theory. The courses either explicitly address security themes or they offer introductions to fields of study through issues in security. The wide range of security topics addressed means that students will receive a comprehensive diploma level overview.

The programme fulfils the necessary requirements for an academic programme for security management and appears fully compliant with the respective regulations.

Strengths

The programme has a number of strengths:

- The courses covered span over an impressive range of security topics (such as 'Infrastructure Security', 'Sport Events Security', 'VIP Protection').
- Its design and content have benefited from external expertise; notably through part-time staff with external security-related job roles, collaborations with external security-related organisations in Cyprus as well as the professional expertise of its (work experienced) students.
- The courses offered are only for Security Management students and tailored to their needs.
- It is clearly preparing students for sustainable employment and personal development.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

While recognising the novel and productive function the Security Management Diploma plays, the EEC offers the following recommendations to improve its design:

- In light of the ever changing and growing relevance of digital forms of crime, the EEC recommends that the programme strive to further incorporate training in digital skills within the overall content of the diploma. We note the course offered on 'Introduction to Information Security', but regard coverage of cyber and digital crimes as worthy of further integration within other courses.
- The course descriptions not explicitly security-themed are written in a generic fashion, without a sense of how matters of security will be addressed (e.g., 'Management', 'Marketing', 'Occupational Psychology'). We recommend these be revised in order to enable (prospective) students to better gauge their content.
- Participation in Erasmus+ is welcomed, but the EEC also recommends that visitations are undertaken with a wide range of participating countries to ensure students are able to experience as much as possible of the diversity in working conditions and cultures in Europe.

Please select what is appropriate for each of the following sub-areas:

Sub-area		Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant
1.1	Policy for quality assurance	Compliant
1.2	Design, approval, on-going monitoring and review	Compliant
1.3	Public information	Compliant
1.4	Information management	Compliant

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

> **Sub-areas**
>
> **2.1 Process of teaching and learning and student-centred teaching methodology**
> **2.2 Practical training**
> **2.3 Student assessment**
> **2.4 Study guides structure, content and interactive activities**

2.1 Process of teaching and learning and student-centred teaching methodology

Standards

- *The e-learning methodology is appropriate for the particular programme of study.*
- *Expected teleconferences for presentations, discussion and question-answer sessions, and guidance are set.*
- *A specific plan is developed to safeguard and assess the interaction:*
  - *among students*
  - *between students and teaching staff*
  - *between students and study guides/material of study*
- *Training, guidance and support are provided to the students focusing on interaction and the specificities of e-learning.*
- *The process of teaching and learning supports students' individual and social development.*
- *The process of teaching and learning is flexible, considers different modes of e-learning delivery, where appropriate, uses a variety of pedagogical methods and facilitates the achievement of planned learning outcomes.*
- *Students are encouraged to take an active role in creating the e-learning process.*
- *The implementation of student-centered learning and teaching encourages a sense of autonomy in the learner, while ensuring adequate guidance and support from the teacher.*
- *Teaching methods, tools and material used in teaching are modern, effective, support the use of modern educational technologies and are regularly updated.*
- *Mutual respect within the learner-teacher relationship is promoted.*
- *The implementation of student-centred learning and teaching respects and attends to the diversity of students and their needs, enabling flexible learning paths.*
- *Appropriate procedures for dealing with students' complaints regarding the process of teaching and learning are set.*

2.2 Practical training

Standards

- *Practical and theoretical studies are interconnected.*
- *The organisation and the content of practical training, if applicable, support achievement of planned learning outcomes and meet the needs of the stakeholders.*

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2.3 Student assessment

Standards

- *A complete assessment framework is designed, focusing on e-learning methodology, including clearly defined evaluation criteria for student assignments and the final examination.*
- *Assessment is consistent, fairly applied to all students and carried out in accordance with the stated procedures.*
- *Assessment is appropriate, transparent, objective and supports the development of the learner.*
- *The criteria for the method of assessment, as well as criteria for marking, are published in advance.*
- *Assessment allows students to demonstrate the extent to which the intended learning outcomes have been achieved. Students are given feedback, which, if necessary, is linked to advice on the e-learning process.*
- *Assessment, where possible, is carried out by more than one examiner.*
- *A formal procedure for student appeals is in place.*
- *Assessors are familiar with existing testing and examination methods and receive support in developing their own skills in this field.*
- *The regulations for assessment take into account mitigating circumstances.*

2.4 Study guides structure, content and interactive activities

Standards

- *A study guide for each course, fully aligned with e-learning philosophy and methodology and the need for student interaction with the material is developed. The study guide should include, for each course week / module, the following:*
  - *Clearly defined objectives and expected learning outcomes of the programme, of the modules and activities in an organised and coherent manner*
  - *Presentation of course material, and students' activities on a weekly basis, in a variety of ways and means (e.g. printed material, electronic material, teleconferencing, multimedia)*
  - ***Weekly schedule of interactive activities and exercises (i.e. simulations, problem solving, scenarios, argumentation)***
  - *Clear instructions for creating posts, discussion, and feedback*
  - *Self-assessment exercises and self-correction guide*
  - *Bibliographic references and suggestions for further study*
  - *Number of assignments/papers and their topics, along with instructions and additional study material*
  - *Synopsis*
- *Study guides, material and activities are appropriate for the level of the programme according to the EQF.*

You may also consider the following questions:

- *Is the nature of the programme compatible with e-learning delivery?*
- *How do the programme, the material, the facilities, and the guidelines safeguard the interaction between students, students and teaching staff, students and the material?*
- *How many students upload their work and discuss it in the platform during the semester?*
- *How is it monitored that the teaching staff base their teaching and assessment methods on objectives and intended learning outcomes? Provide samples of examination papers (if available).*
- *How are students' different abilities, learning needs and learning opportunities taken into consideration when conducting educational activities?*
- *How is the development of students' general competencies (including digital skills) supported in educational activities?*
- *How is it ensured that innovative teaching methods, learning environments and learning aids that support learning are diverse and used in educational activities?*
- *Is the teaching staff using new technology in order to make the teaching process more effective?*
- *How is it ensured that theory and practice are interconnected in teaching and learning?*
- *How is practical training organised (finding practical training positions, guidelines for practical training, supervision, reporting, feedback, etc.)? What role does practical training have in achieving the objectives of the study programme? What is student feedback on the content and arrangement of practical training?*
- ***Are students actively involved in research? How is student involvement in research set up?***
- *How is supervision of student research papers (seminar papers, projects, theses, etc.) organised?*
- ***Do students' assessments correspond to the European Qualifications Framework (EQF)?***
- *How are the assessment methods chosen and to what extent do students get supportive feedback on their academic progress during their studies?*
- *How is the objectivity and relevance of student assessment ensured (assessment of the degree of achievement of the intended learning outcomes)?*

Findings

Global College's Security Management Diploma conforms in its procedures with the application for external evaluation, taking a student-centric approach. The EEC could witness a strong engagement of course coordinators, lecturers as well as students with regard to the courses as well as the diploma degree as a whole. Supportive tools that are being used are modern and take recent developments into account (e.g., "Grammarly" against AI plagiarism, most common e-learning (i.e., Moodle) and teaching communication platforms (i.e., MS Teams)). Classes have a complete assessment framework that is communicated to the course coordinators and lecturers. The rubrics and other relevant pedagogical changes are communicated to coordinators and lecturers at the beginning of each semester, and further updated in formal as well as informal meetings throughout the semester. The assessment structure is clearly described in the syllabi. Students are being informed at the beginning of the semester on the assessment forms and rubrics. Student feedback shows that the students are aware of their tasks and assignments.

Formal procedures for student appeals are in place and complemented by an open and supportive environment through the student affairs office. Bibliographic references are available.

The discussion with lecturers and course coordinators shows a dense number of activities and exercises that foster students' understanding of practical problems, applying a use-case approach fostering problem-solving by finding practical solutions (e.g., incidents response, presentation of real-life scenarios inspired by the professions of the course coordinators and lecturers and according argumentation). Erasmus+ funding is used for on-site company visits in Europe.

The study handbook for distant learning is of particular good quality.

Strengths
The programme meets students' needs and expectations before, during, and after having passed the programme. Several students acknowledged that the education and training they received in the courses could be applied in their daily work and helped them advance in their career. Prominent alumnus support the success of the programme as well as students moving on from the diploma to higher degrees such as the Bachelor in Security Management or joint Master programme in Criminology.

The EEC notes that students benefit from a good student-teacher ratio (1/25) and student feedback is very positive.

Areas of improvement and recommendations
Further on-going assessments throughout the semester to support continuous learning (e.g., mid-term exams or mini quizzes).

Encouraging diversity in the overall programme description to make the programme more appealing to female students (currently around 10% of student population).

Further, ongoing improvement of the digitalisation of course activities (e.g., online quizzes on Moodle for the conventional programme).

Bibliographic references are sometimes outdated and/or in need of supplementation through more recent material. Most recommendations from the last audit related to bibliographies have not been taken into account, e.g.,
> **Bibliography suggestions**
> **Instead of**
> Δασκαλάκης, Δ. (2014) Βιομηχανική κοινωνιολογία και βιομηχανικές σχέσεις. Εκδόσεις Παπαζήση
> Κοντιάδης, Ξ. (2008) Εισαγωγή στην κοινωνική διοίκηση και τους θεσμούς κοινωνικής ασφάλειας. Εκδόσεις Παπαζήση.
> **These**
> ➢ Σταμίρης Γιάννης, *Εισαγωγή στην Κοινωνιολογία*, ΤΕΛΕΘΡΙΟ, 2012.
>
> ➢ William Little, *Introduction to Sociology* – 1st Canadian Edition
>
> https://opentextbc.ca/introductiontosociology/
> a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License, BCcampus, 2014 open textbooks.
> https://www.asanet.org/sites/default/files/savvy/introtosociology/Documents/Field%20of%20sociology033108.htm
> ➢ OpenStax*, Introduction to Sociology* 2e, Rice University
>
> Houston, Texas https://openstax.org/details/books/introduction-sociology-2e;

Please select what is appropriate for each of the following sub-areas:

Sub-area		Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant
2.1	Process of teaching and learning and student-centred teaching methodology	Compliant
2.2	Practical training	Compliant
2.3	Student assessment	Compliant

Findings

Global College's Security Management Diploma conforms in its procedures with the application for external evaluation taking a student-centric approach. We could witness a strong engagement of both course coordinators and lecturers as well as students with regard to the courses as well as the diploma degree as a whole.

Classes have a complete assessment framework that is communicated to the course coordinators and lecturers. The rubrics and other relevant pedagogical changes are communicated to coordinators and lecturers at the beginning of each semester and further updated in formal as well as informal meetings throughout the semester. The assessment structure is clearly described in the syllabus. Students are being informed in the beginning of the semester on the assessment forms and rubrics. Student feedback shows that the students are aware of their tasks and assignments. Formal procedures for student appeals are in place and complemented by an open and supportive environment through the student affairs office.

The discussion with lecturers and course coordinators shows a dense number of activities and exercises that foster students' understanding of practical problems applying a use-case approach fostering problem-solving by finding practical solution e.g., incidents response, presentation of real-life scenarios inspired by the professions of the course coordinators and lecturers and according argumentation.

The nature of the programme is compatible with distance learning delivery, and the methodology provided is appropriate for the particular programme of study.

The College's learning management system facilitates online teaching, learning and administrative tasks. This is a Moodle installation that offers essential online services. The platform provides both synchronous (via MS Teams) and asynchronous tools, ensuring students can interact with lecturers, peers, and materials. E-assessment options, including quizzes with immediate feedback, are available for evaluating student understanding. Although more complex e-assessment forms exist for evaluating competencies, such as critical thinking, these specific assessment procedures were not demonstrated during the meetings. Each course offers at least 9 hours of teleconferences (either 9 sessions of 1 hour each or 6 sessions of 1.5 hours), ensuring sufficient live interaction between teachers and students. These teleconferences are recorded for those students unable to attend in real-time, though most students typically do.

Collaboration between teachers and students, and among students, takes place synchronously via teleconferences and asynchronously through Moodle's online forums and supported by the Google ecosystem (Docs, Drive, etc.). Student collaboration is further encouraged through group work activities though the design, procedure and

technical support for these activities were not presented.

Summative assessments are supported by final exams contributing to 60% of the final grade. Formative course assessments mainly include assignments and mid-term examinations, contributing to the remaining 40% of the final grade.

The study programme is centred around students' capability to follow and succeed in the courses (e.g., change of the course "Introduction to self-defence" to offline only.)

Strengths
The programme meets students' needs and expectations before, during, and after having passed the programme. Several students acknowledge that the education and training they received in the courses could be applied in their daily work and helped them advance in their career. Prominent alumnus support the success of the programme as well as students moving on from the diploma to higher degrees such as the Bachelor in Security Management or joint Master programme in Criminology.

The EEC considers the college's distance learning model to be in line with the specific profile of online students who have professional and family duties, and need to learn effectively and in a timely fashion. The EEC notes that students benefit from a good student-teacher ratio (1/25) and student feedback is very positive.

The provision of personalised feedback in the submitted assignments and during the teleconference sessions, as well as the feedback based on rubrics, are considered best practices. In addition, the EEC recognises the many benefits of collaboration among students promoted by collaborative activities and discussions organised in online teams. Finally, the very detailed weekly study guides, which allow the students to determine the work to be done every week, are also considered a best practice. The EEC urges the College to maintain these strong elements of their distance learning model while reinforcing them when possible.

Areas of improvement and recommendations
The EEC recommends providing online students with continuous assessment throughout the programme. Considering that the 60% allocation for the final exam cannot be reduced by law, the EEC suggests taking part of the remaining 40% to be distributed between the mid-term assignments and weekly interactive (formative) activities. This approach will help ensure that students remain continuously engaged in the e-learning process.

The EEC believes that continually evaluating the quality assurance of distance learning by non-mandatory external accreditation organisations (EDEN, EFQUEL, EADTU, etc.) is a good practice. Therefore, the College is encouraged to apply for these external accreditations to evaluate the quality of its distance learning programmes.

The EEC suggests that the College considers possible challenges if the programme attracts international students from remote time zones, emphasising the need for more asynchronous online interaction and collaboration.

The EEC recommends that the College encouraging diversity in the overall programme through encouraging the enrolment of female students.

Bibliographic references are sometimes outdated and/or in need of supplementation through more recent material. Most recommendations from the last audit related to bibliographies have not been taken into account, e.g.,

Bibliography suggestions
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➢ Σταμίρης Γιάννης, *Εισαγωγή στην Κοινωνιολογία*, ΤΕΛΕΘΡΙΟ, 2012.

➢ William Little, *Introduction to Sociology* – 1st Canadian Edition

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https://www.asanet.org/sites/default/files/savvy/introtosociology/Documents/Field%20of%20sociology033108.htm
➢ OpenStax, *Introduction to Sociology* 2e, Rice University

Houston, Texas https://openstax.org/details/books/introduction-sociology-2e;
https://d3bxy9euw4e147.cloudfront.net/oscms-prodcms/media/documents/IntroductionToSociology2e-OP_D8IepwZ.pdf

Please select what is appropriate for each of the following sub-areas:

Sub-area		*Non-compliant/* *Partially Compliant/Compliant*
2.1	Process of teaching and learning and student-centred teaching methodology	Compliant
2.2	Practical training	Compliant
2.3	Student assessment	Compliant
2.4	Study guides structure, content and interactive activities	Compliant

3. Teaching staff *(ESG 1.5)*

> **Sub-areas**
>
> **3.1 Teaching staff recruitment and development**
> **3.2 Teaching staff number and status**
> **3.3 Synergies of teaching and research**

3.1 Teaching staff recruitment and development

Standards

- *Institutions ensure the competence of their teaching staff.*
- *Fair, transparent and clear processes for the recruitment and development of the teaching staff are set up.*
- *Teaching staff qualifications are adequate to achieve the objectives and planned learning outcomes of the study programme, and to ensure quality and sustainability of the teaching and learning.*
- *The teaching staff is regularly engaged in professional and teaching-skills training and development.*
- *Training, guidance and support are provided to the teaching staff focusing on interaction and the specificities of e-learning.*
- *Promotion of the teaching staff takes into account the quality of their teaching, their research activity, the development of their teaching skills and their mobility.*
- *Innovation in teaching methods and the use of new technologies is encouraged.*
- *Conditions of employment that recognise the importance of teaching are followed.*
- *Recognised visiting teaching staff participates in teaching the study programme.*

3.2 Teaching staff number and status

Standards

- *The number of the teaching staff is adequate to support the programme of study.*
- *The teaching staff status (rank, full/part time) is appropriate to offer a quality programme of study.*
- *Visiting staff number does not exceed the number of the permanent staff.*

3.3 Synergies of teaching and research

Standards

- *The teaching staff collaborate in the fields of teaching and research within the HEI and with partners outside (practitioners in their fields, employers, and staff members at other HEIs in Cyprus or abroad).*
- *Scholarly activity to strengthen the link between education and research is encouraged.*
- *The teaching staff publications are within the discipline.*
- *Teaching staff studies and publications are closely related to the programme's courses.*
- *The allocation of teaching hours compared to the time for research activity is appropriate.*

You may also consider the following questions:

- *Is the teaching staff qualified to teach in the e-learning programme of study?*
- *How are the members of the teaching staff supported with regard to the development of their teaching skills? How is feedback given to members of the teaching staff regarding their teaching results and teaching skills?*
- *How is the teaching performance assessed? How does their teaching performance affect their remuneration, evaluation and/or selection?*
- *Is teaching connected with research?*
- *Does the HEI involve visiting teaching staff from other HEIs in Cyprus and abroad?*
- *What is the number, workload, qualifications and status of the teaching staff (rank, full/part timers)?*
- *Is student evaluation conducted on the teaching staff? If yes, have the results of student feedback been analysed and taken into account, and how (e.g., when planning in-service training for the teaching staff)?*

Findings

The teaching staff is considered adequate to ensure the programme's teaching goals. All the teaching personnel have proper qualifications as well as the professional expertise to inspire the students and achieve the foreseen learning outcomes. The process of staff recruitment is mainly based on the professional activity in the local society, and it is closely related to business and the public sector of Cyprus. As a result, the teaching staff has on-field experience, training, and development, which is beneficial for such a kind of programme. Considering the above, it is obvious that some academic features are missing or are not fully covered (e.g., like teaching staff mobility, and their involvement in true research activities). However, these findings cannot be considered as significant shortcomings since the teaching personnel were found to have great enthusiasm about their job, they have a strong motivation for teaching the new professionals and colleagues in this sector, and the skills are appropriate for a diploma level programme.

The College demonstrated cohesive teams of staff who are knowledgeable in the field with strong professional and industrial backgrounds. Furthermore, the College's Distance Learning (DL) unit provides staff with comprehensive training, guidance and technical support to familiarise themselves with the unique aspects of e-learning. This approach not only facilitates teaching members' understanding but also promotes innovation in the use of emerging educational technologies.

Strengths

The teaching staff have a great enthusiasm for their duties. They are mainly active members of the local security management ecosystem, and they inspire their students by following a use-case-driven educational approach. The majority of them have a personal motivation for their teaching duties and as active professionals in the underlying field, they have personal goals for improvements and development, both as teachers and as individuals.

The EEC recognises the College's commitment to delivering quality online education through its dedicated DL unit and investment in staff development. Training programmes are certified as professional development related to distance learning, and they ensure that teaching members are well-prepared with the essential tools and knowledge to effectively support students in the online learning environment.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

It will be beneficial for the programme to encourage research and staff mobility (e.g., visitations, research collaborations, conference attendance) following some academic standards. Moreover, since there is a process of digitalisation in almost all sectors of society and the economy it will be beneficial for the programme to invest: (i) in digital skills as part of continuing professional development, (ii) international relations (not only with Greece) and (iii) further familiarisation with the English language for both staff and students. These measures for staff should improve students' learning. On (iii), the EEC has noted difficulties in English communication among some staff members, which corresponds with the fact that only some students are able to communicate effectively in English, despite their aspirations to improve their technical English skills for industry relevance. The EEC recommends that the College offer training programs aimed at enhancing the English proficiency of its staff. This would enable them to better impart these improved language skills to students.

For transparency, it will be beneficial for the College to develop a formal policy for the recruitment and development of its teaching staff.

Please select what is appropriate for each of the following sub-areas:

Sub-area		Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant
3.1	Teaching staff recruitment and development	Compliant
3.2	Teaching staff number and status	Compliant
3.3	Synergies of teaching and research	Compliant

4. **Student admission, progression, recognition and certification** *(ESG 1.4)*

Sub-areas

    4.1 Student admission, processes and criteria
    4.2 Student progression
    4.3 Student recognition
    4.4 Student certification

4.1 Student admission, processes and criteria

Standards

- *Pre-defined and published regulations regarding student admission are in place.*
- *Access policies, admission processes and criteria are implemented consistently and in a transparent manner.*

4.2 Student progression

Standards

- *Pre-defined and published regulations regarding student progression are in place.*
- *Processes and tools to collect, monitor and act on information on student progression, are in place.*

4.3 Student recognition

Standards

- *Pre-defined and published regulations regarding student recognition are in place.*
- *Fair recognition of higher education qualifications, periods of study and prior learning, including the recognition of non-formal and informal learning, are essential components for ensuring the students' progress in their studies, while promoting mobility.*
- *Appropriate recognition procedures are in place that rely on:*
  - *institutional practice for recognition being in line with the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention*
  - *cooperation with other institutions, quality assurance agencies and the national ENIC/NARIC centre with a view to ensuring coherent recognition across the country*

4.4 Student certification

Standards

- *Pre-defined and published regulations regarding student certification are in place.*

- *Students receive certification explaining the qualification gained, including achieved learning outcomes and the context, level, content and status of the studies that were pursued and successfully completed.*

You may also consider the following questions:

- *Are the admission requirements for the study programme appropriate? How is the students' prior preparation/education assessed (including the level of international students, for example)?*
- *How is the procedure of recognition for prior learning and work experience ensured, including recognition of study results acquired at foreign higher education institutions?*
- *Is the certification of the HEI accompanied by a diploma supplement, which is in line with European and international standards?*

Findings

The College's Moodle platform provides a wide range of learning analytics tools designed to monitor student progression and performance. These tools use log data from students allowing the identification of poor participation and the incompletion of activities. However, it remains unclear how instructors systematically employ this data, in accordance with established procedures, to support students. Moreover, learning benefits related to these tools, such as improved performance and reduced dropout rates, were not demonstrated.

Strengths

A strength was noted around the low dropout rate (3-5%). Furthermore, student feedback is actively sought on an ongoing basis throughout the course delivery and at the course's end, achieving a high participation rate of 60% for the e-learning component. However, it remains unclear how effectively this feedback is used by the College for specific measures of continuous quality improvement.

Additionally, many students managed to secure jobs or promotions after completing the programme.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

Students voiced a desire for more tailored English language lessons specific to the terminology used in their field. Furthermore, despite working full-time jobs and implementing programme insights in their workplaces, students expressed a willingness to incorporate further practical lessons into their curriculum. Lastly, there was a shared sentiment among students for an increased emphasis on digital skills lessons and applications, aligning with the evolving demands of their professional landscape.

The EEC encourages the College to implement advanced learning analytics mechanisms, particularly those based on AI and Machine Learning. These tools can monitor and predict student performance and dropout rates, enabling the institution to take proactive corrective actions.

Please select what is appropriate for each of the following sub-areas:

Sub-area		Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant
4.1	Student admission, processes and criteria	Compliant
4.2	Student progression	Compliant
4.3	Student recognition	Compliant
4.4	Student certification	Compliant

5. **Learning resources and student support** *(ESG 1.6)*

Sub-areas

5.1 Teaching and Learning resources
5.2 Physical resources
5.3 Human support resources
5.4 Student support

5.1 Teaching and Learning resources

Standards

- *Weekly interactive activities per each course are set.*
- *The e-learning material and activities take advantage of the capabilities offered by the virtual and audio-visual environment and the following are applied:*
  - *Simulations in virtual environments*
  - *Problem solving scenarios*
  - *Interactive learning and formative assessment games*
  - *Interactive weekly activities with image, sound and unlimited possibilities for reality reconstruction and further processing based on hypotheses*
  - *They have the ability to transfer students to real-life situations, make decisions, and study the consequences of their decisions*
  - *They help in building skills both in experiences and attitudes like in real life and also in experiencing - not just memorizing knowledge*
- *A pedagogical planning unit for e-learning, which is responsible for the support of the e-learning unit and addresses the requirements for study materials, interactive activities and formative assessment in accordance to international standards, is established.*
- *Adequacy of resources is ensured for changing circumstances (change in student numbers, etc.).*
- *All resources are fit for purpose.*
- *Student-centred learning and flexible modes of e-learning and teaching, are taken into account when allocating, planning and providing the learning resources.*

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CYPRUS AGENCY OF QUALITY ASSURANCE AND ACCREDITATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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5.2 Physical resources

Standards

- *Physical resources, i.e. premises, libraries, study facilities, IT infrastructure, are adequate to support the study programme.*
- *Adequacy of resources is ensured for changing circumstances (change in student numbers, etc.).*
- *All resources are fit for purpose and students are informed about the services available to them.*

5.3 Human support resources

Standards

- *Human support resources, i.e. tutors/mentors, counsellors, other advisers, qualified administrative staff, are adequate to support the study programme.*
- *Adequacy of resources is ensured for changing circumstances (change in student numbers, etc.).*
- *All resources are fit for purpose and students are informed about the services available to them.*

5.4 Student support

Standards

- *Student support is provided covering the needs of a diverse student population, such as mature, part-time, employed and international students and students with special needs.*
- *Students are informed about the services available to them.*
- *Student-centred learning and flexible modes of learning and teaching, are taken into account when allocating, planning and providing student support.*
- *Students' mobility within and across higher education systems is encouraged and supported.*

You may also consider the following questions:

- *Evaluate the supply of teaching materials and equipment (including teaching labs, expendable materials, etc.), the condition of classrooms, adequacy of financial resources to conduct the study programme and achieve its objectives. What needs to be supplemented/ improved?*
- *What is the feedback from the teaching staff on the availability of teaching materials, classrooms, etc.?*

- *Are the resources in accordance with actual (changing) needs and contemporary requirements? How is the effectiveness of using resources ensured?*
- *What are the resource-related trends and future risks (risks arising from changing numbers of students, obsolescence of teaching equipment, etc.)? How are these trends taken into account and how are the risks mitigated?*
- *Evaluate student feedback on support services. Based on student feedback, which support services (including information flow, counselling) need further development?*
- *How is student learning within the standard period of study supported (student counselling, flexibility of the study programme, etc.)?*
- *How students' special needs are considered (different capabilities, different levels of academic preparation, special needs due to physical disabilities, etc.)?*
- *How is student mobility being supported?*

Findings

The courses have complete syllabi plus highly detailed weekly student-centred study guides, which include relevant information (such as summary, learning objectives, expected results, bibliography, self-assessment exercises and recommended study time). In addition, the DL unit offers a comprehensive student handbook, very well presented and engaging. This is considered by the EEC as a best practice.

The College's DL unit is responsible for providing pedagogical support for the creation and evaluation of online courses. This unit ensures study materials, interactive activities, and both formative and summative assessments align with international standards. The DL unit also offers a Quality Framework and a Faculty Handbook for DL programmes, detailing guidelines for distance learning course development and delivery. These documents are valuable references that ensure consistent quality across the College's distance learning courses. Finally, the DL unit is currently exploring the integration of cutting-edge AI and Large Language Model technologies (ChatGPT, Bard, etc) into their online programmes. The EEC acknowledges the efforts and concerns of the DL unit to continuously improve the distance teaching and learning experience.

Strengths

The DL unit is considered a best practice, with significant potential due to its structure, resources and services devoted to enhanced distance learning. The EEC believes that the Unit can be a powerful support for guaranteeing and maintaining the quality of the teaching provided while offering a solid base to staff members seeking to enhance their distance learning expertise.

Online courses incorporate multi-format learning materials (including e-books, articles, videos, and audio), all beneficial for distance learning. In addition, recorded teleconferences and video lectures include the instructor (under privacy permission) in all videos for non-verbal cues, and include subtitles for accessibility.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

The EEC notes that many required readings consist of entire volumes, which may not be practical for online students needing to study efficiently. It is urged to provide clear and explicit guidance in the study guides on the relevant sections of these volumes, along with the recommended study time, to make the course readings more manageable while helping students plan their study effectively. The EEC believes there is room for improvement in this area.

The EEC suggests exploring the use of interactive videos to enhance engagement among online students during teleconferences, with features like quizzes, navigation options and additional resources embedded in the videos (e.g., Mentimeter).

The EEC recommends the student handbook include the policies and practices associated with AI and Large Language Model-assisted writing.

Please select what is appropriate for each of the following sub-areas:

Sub-area		*Non-compliant/* *Partially Compliant/Compliant*
5.1	Teaching and Learning resources	Compliant
5.2	Physical resources	Compliant
5.3	Human support resources	Compliant
5.4	Student support	Compliant

D. Conclusions and final remarks

The Security Management Diploma is a practical, distinctive, and socially important programme that serves public and commercial sectors in Cyprus and beyond. The teaching staff are well connected with relevant public organisations and industries.

As highlights of the previous sections, we note the following strengths and recommendations:

* The teaching staff of the programme has the necessary expertise, skills, and capacity to achieve the learning goals. However, in the future, the College could invest more in its continued development and improvement, especially concerning its international relationships (e.g., conference participation, academic visits, and collaborations) and digital technology training.
* The programme's strength lies in its thoughtful course material and teaching staff support, creating a welcoming learning environment. To further enhance the student experience, it is recommended to integrate more diverse reading materials and practical lessons, addressing specific language needs and emphasising digital skills relevant to the security industry.
* The diploma has a clear student centric-approach profiting from a high degree of experience of the lecturers as well as the students.
* The nature of the programme is compatible with distance learning delivery, and the methodology provided is appropriate for the particular programme of study.
* A VPN infrastructure should be installed in order to facilitate student access to online library services remotely.
* The EEC recommends providing online students with continuous assessment throughout the course by integrating the weekly interactive activities in the assessment model contributing to the final grade. This approach will help ensure that students remain continuously engaged in the e-learning process.
* The EEC also recommends providing clear guidance in the study guides on the relevant sections of the compulsory volumes to study, along with the recommended study time, to make the course readings more manageable while helping students plan their study effectively.

E. Signatures of the EEC

Name	Signature
Brian Rappert – Chair	
Christos Xenakis	
Laura Georg Schaffner	
Santi Caballe Llobet	
Panagiotis Chrysanthou	
Click to enter Name	

Date: 21/1/24