Doc. 300.1.2

Date: July 2, 2021

Higher Education Institution's Response

- **Higher Education Institution:**
  American College

- **Town:** Nicosia

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

  In Greek:

  Δίπλωμα στο Ψηφιακό Μάρκετινγκ (2 έτη, 120 ECTS)

  In English:

  Diploma in Digital Marketing (2 years, 120 ECTS)

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

- **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 300.1.1/2 or 300.1.1/3 or 300.1.1/4) must justify whether actions have been taken in improving the quality of the programme of study in each assessment area.*

- *In particular, under each assessment area, the HEI must respond on, without changing the format of the report:*

    - *the findings, strengths, areas of improvement and recommendations of the EEC*
    - *the conclusions and final remarks noted by the EEC*

- *The HEI's response must follow below the EEC's comments, which must be copied from the external evaluation report (Doc.300.1.1 or 300.1.1/2 or 300.1.1/3 or 300.1.1/4).*

- *In case of annexes, those should be attached and sent on a separate document.*

We have studied the report of the External Evaluation Committee (EEC) consisted of Prof. Savvas Papagiannidis, Assoc. Prof. Christos Kolympiris, Assoc. Prof. Simos Chari and Lito Zymaride regarding the educational evaluation-accreditation of the Diploma in Digital Marketing carefully and thoroughly. We find that their report is objective and very 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 appendices provided.

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

Findings

The program requires a minimum of 120 ECTS credits to graduate. The students have to secure 48 ECTS credits from a list of modules in 'General Education', 42 ECTS credits from a list of 'Business Requirement' modules and 30 credits from the 'Major Requirement' modules (i.e., marketing and digital) list. The EEC strongly believes that a better restructuring and distribution of the ECTS credits needs to be considered. Students who specialize in a niche area of marketing (i.e., digital) are by default expected to undertake more marketing and niche subject related modules.

American College's Response

We have restructured the ECTS credits requirements for graduation to pay more emphasis on the Major Courses. Therefore, we have increased the Major Requirement credits by 12 (from 30 to 42) and reduced the General Education Requirements by 12 (from 48 to 36). See **Annex 1 (Revised Curriculum)** for ECTS credits requirements revised structure.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

The EEC recommends the college to reconsider the distribution of the ECTS credits. For a better restructuring of the program, the EEC suggests:

(a) the removal of unnecessary non-subject related modules from the 'General Education' list (e.g. Mathematics);

(b) that the American College re-instates all marketing specific modules that were removed (e.g., marketing strategy); and

(c) design two (minimum) new modules on digital marketing (e.g., Digital Marketing Strategy, Content Marketing, Email & mobile Marketing, Web Development etc.) and offer them alongside Digital Marketing, Social Media Marketing, and SEO & Web Analytics as Major Requirement modules. A total of minimum 5 modules on digital marketing should be included on this program, justifying the title of the program and its specialisation.

(d) Rebalance the ECTS by increasing the marketing subject related ECTS and lowering the general education ones.

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(e) Further, the EEC feels that that a gradual progressive design from foundational (i.e., offered in year 1) to specialised (i.e., offered in year 2) marketing and digital modules will benefit the program and the students experience significantly.

American College's Response

(a) We have removed the unnecessary non-subject related modules from the 'General Education' list. The courses removed were (i) ECO201 Principles of Macroeconomics, (ii) MTH201 Finite Mathematics, and (iii) MTH204 Statistics II;

(b) We have added in the Major courses list the course MAR308 Strategic Marketing;

(c) We have added two new courses on digital marketing to be offered as Major Requirement courses. The courses added are: (i) MAR209 Web Design and Analytics and (ii) MAR210 Content Marketing. We have revised the course title and other aspects of the course MAR208 Search Engine Marketing and Optimization. Additionally, we have added MAJ101 Internship in the list of Major courses.

(d) We have increased the Major Requirement (Marketing) credits by 12 and reduced the General Education Requirements by 12.

(e) To secure a gradual progressive design from foundational to specialised marketing and digital modules, MAR101 Principles of Marketing, MAR206 Digital Marketing, and CSC101 Fundamentals of Information Technology, will be offered in year 1 and more specialised courses such as MAR207 Social Media Marketing, MAR208 Search Engine Marketing, MAR209 Web Design and Analytics and Optimization and MAR210 Content Marketing will be offered in year 2.

The above revisions are shown in **Annex 1 (Revised Curriculum)**. Additionally, **Annex 2 (Course Descriptions)** includes the syllabi of the newly added or revised courses mentioned in points (b) and (c) above, and **Annex 3 (Internship)** includes all supplementary documentation for MAJ101 Internship.

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

Areas of improvement and recommendations

Nothing at the moment.

American College's Response

N/A

3. Teaching staff
(ESG 1.5)

Findings

All academic staff had qualifications well-above the on-offer programme, with the vast majority of them (80%) having a doctorate degree in the area of business administration. Even though there has been a sufficiently good correspondence between staff's qualifications/expertise and the modules delivered, it would have been welcome to see more staff with marketing as their core discipline feature in the faculty.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

Once the programme is established and recruitment is deemed to meet expectations, it is worth considering recruiting a full-time digital marketing expert or at least to recruit an additional part-time one, to build the critical mass of expertise in this area and reduce potential risk (overreliance on single individual).

American College's Response

Once the program is established and student recruitment meets expectations we will employ an additional part-time digital marketing expert to teach digital marketing courses.

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

Findings

No comments were provided.

American College's Response

N/A

Areas of improvement and recommendations

No comments were provided.

American College's Response

N/A

5. Learning resources and student support
(ESG 1.6)

Areas of improvement and recommendations

While, as outlined above, the EEC recognizes the College's strong infrastructure, it also urges the College to maintain its efforts towards further updating and enriching its infrastructure in terms of software, hardware, and library subscriptions.

American College's Response

We believe that our current infrastructure and facilities meet the needs of both students and faculty. However, constantly improving and upgrading all infrastructure (including ICT), library and online learning resources has been a standard practice at American College. We will continue strengthening the library content, facilities, and other forms of infrastructure in the light of faculty, student and educational environment changing needs.

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

The committee considers the proposed suggestions feasible that have minimal resource implications. They can build on the existing offering, minimizing resource investment and help strengthen other programs too by helping to recruit more students for existing modules.

American College's Response

We thank the committee for their cooperation and valuable insights. We took into account all EEC's comments for revisions/improvements and we have addressed to all of them. We have implemented all their suggestions, which we have described in the previous sections.

C. Higher Education Institution academic representatives

Name	*Position*	*Signature*
Dr. Andreas Petasis	Program Coordinator	
Click to enter Name	Click to enter Position	
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