

Doc. 300.1.2

Date: 24 March, 2022

# Higher Education Institution's Response

- **Higher Education Institution:**  
American College

- **Town:** Nicosia

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

**In Greek:**

Τεχνικός Ηλεκτρονικών Υπολογιστών και Δικτύων (2  
έτη / 120 ECTS, Δίπλωμα)

**In English:**

Computer and Network Technician (2 academic 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 300.1.1/2 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. Giuseppe Di Fatta, Prof. Christina Lioma, Prof. Zhiguo Ding and Mr. Michail Michail regarding the educational evaluation-accreditation of the Diploma in Computer and Network Technician 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 annexes provided.

## 1. Study programme and study programme's design and development

*(ESG 1.1, 1.2, 1.7, 1.8, 1.9)*

### EEC – Areas of Improvement and Recommendations:

The College may want to formalize the process to approve the creation or changes to the programmes and courses, where written documents should be provided to keep track of the justifications for these actions and the specific added/changed content.

The College may also want to carry out more formalized moderation activities for the evaluated programme. For example, for the exam papers, it will be useful to carry out internal/external moderation in order to avoid any simple typos and ambiguous exam questions. If possible, moderation towards the students' marks should be also carried out.

Furthermore, the college needs to carry out a thorough review to the programme structure for a balanced coverage in some topics. For example, there is currently not sufficient coverage for Linux and Unix shell scripting, although the students informed the committee of the desire to gain more knowledge towards this topic. Another example is that teaching activities on Excel and PowerPoint might be unnecessarily associated with credits on this programme. The programme contains an elective course on Excel spreadsheets (6 ECTS) and an elective course on Powerpoint presentations (6 ECTS points). The number of ECTS points for each of these courses is too high.

Feedback is another aspect the College can improve. For example, explicit written feedback on assessed coursework will be very useful to students.

There are no staff-student meetings at the college as part of this programme. The student body is represented in various committees by student representatives, which are chosen by the college and not elected by the student body itself. This point should be addressed. Both staff-student meetings and elected student representatives by the student body directly are standard practices.

### American College's Response:

The College has a formal policy on quality assurance. The relevant policy document (Annex 1 – Quality Assurance) explains the 'principles, procedures and administrative practice upon which the College's academic quality mechanisms are based'. The relevant document on quality assurance provides the purposes, responsibilities and details on the procedures to approve and develop a new program of study, to monitor the quality of education offered, to review and evaluate existing programs of study, to revise existing programs of study and to discontinue of an existing program of study. Based on EEC recommendation it was decided that minutes with all details (including minor syllabus changes) in annexes will be prepared in relation to the meetings of ad-hoc committees formed to create or revise an existing program of study to keep track of the justifications for these actions and the specific added/changed content.

The College implements moderation and sample second marking to students' examinations in both undergraduate and postgraduate levels, to avoid typos, other errors, ambiguous exam questions, and to verify that the marks are appropriate and consistent. The Policy (Annex 1) aims to protect the academic integrity, and ensures that fair, valid and reliable standards and criteria are followed in final examinations or other forms of assessment decided by the Quality Assurance Committee.

We have revised the syllabus of the courses CSC127 Computer Networks II, CSC218 Network Security, and CSC225 Network Security II, so to sufficiently cover Linux and Unix shell scripting, as recommended by the EEC. The revised syllabuses are found in Annexes 2, 3, and 4.

The two courses on Excel spreadsheets and on PowerPoint presentations only form examples of free elective courses that students in the program can choose, based on the American system of Education we operate at the College. Students can select which elective course to take, from all available courses offered at the College. We believe that the above two courses form great examples students of this program can take as free elective courses, since these two are related to Computer Science and IT. It should also be noted that the number of ECTS points for each course (e.g. Excel Spreadsheets) are based on the student workload. More specifically, students' workload sums up to 150 hours, which includes 39 hours of class attendance, 52 hours of examination (mid-term and final) preparation, 27 hours for assignment preparation, and 30 hours for independent study (the remaining 2 hours are for the final examination).

Feedback has always been given to students in regard to their progress and coursework. Knowing the significant impact feedback has on learning, we regularly remind our faculty members that they have to provide constructive and timely written feedback throughout the semester on all coursework (i.e. individual and group activities, assignments, projects, etc.) as to enable students to learn from this feedback and to incorporate this learning into later assessment activities.

Changes have been made so that the student representatives in the Quality Assurance Committee are appointed by the Student Union which is elected by the students. The change is added in Annex 1 – Quality Assurance, in the Organization, Administration and Faculty Handbook (Annex 5, pg. 18), and on the College's Website (<https://www.ac.ac.cy/en/the-college/quality-assurance>). In addition to the student participation in the College Committees, it was decided that program coordinators organize two staff-student meetings in a semester (one during and one at the end of the semester) as part of the feedback process, and to discuss issues of concern, such as learning techniques, curricula improvements, syllabus context, infrastructure, assessment, and others.

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

### EEC - Findings:

It does not appear that any visiting lectures are held by, for instance, industrial speakers or external academics, in order to diversify the teaching approach.

### American College's Response:

Inviting guest lecturers and practitioners has always been a standard practice for all programs offered at American College. Guest speakers' invitations have been reduced due to the pandemic restrictions, but the practice will resume upon lessened Covid-19 measures.

### EEC – Areas of Improvement and Recommendations:

It is not clear to the EEC whether advanced or innovative teaching methods are used in this programme. The EEC could not find evidence of explicitly student-centered teaching delivery. In relation to this, it would be a good idea to include small group-based exercises during lectures, to increase student engagement and digestion of the teaching material.

In order to align the programme with international HE standards and similar programmes, the EEC recommends the implementation of a strategy for introducing best practices, such as didactic training for staff, a standard approach to assessment criteria, more innovative teaching and assessment methods, linking teaching and assessment to real-world problems.

The EEC recommends inviting some experts from outside the College to talk about the jobs and careers available in the sector to help students to mature an autonomous view of their future profession.

There is no exam script moderation prior to the exams. A few randomly selected exam papers are checked by senior management after the conclusion of the exams. Moderation of the exam material prior to the exam is highly recommended.

A policy to provide written feedback along with the assessment should be introduced for coursework.

### American College's Response:

We have enriched our teaching methods with a mixture of contemporary and innovating methods. These methods include lectures, power point presentations (offline and online teaching), problem solving, class discussion, group work, role play, individual assignments, groups projects, case study discussion, simulation exercises, article and case discussion and project presentations. In addition, we utilize class practical trainings, practical trainings in laboratories, social media integrations in class, guest speakers, and field trips. Another teaching technique that we have adopted is the formative assessment to provide immediate feedback, understanding and evaluation before the end of taught material. This promotes active learning in between the lessons. Moreover, we are creating learning stations by splitting the students and by rotating them as we consider this an effective learning technique. Stations for instance contain either listening to a lecture, watching videos, reading an article, or completing an exercise or puzzle. Then, we conclude with a class discussion or allocate questions to students. Furthermore, another teaching technique we have adopted is experiential learning which allows students to comprehend theory and academic content and how

the taught content is applied to real-life experiences. Additionally, we apply the blended learning technique that combines classroom instructions with online learning resources and content and related software to deeper grasp the essence of that communicated material.

As recommended by the EEC, to align the program with contemporary practice, the Director of Academic Affairs along with the Department Head and Program Coordinator now continuously look for best practices in regards to assessment criteria and techniques, innovative teaching and faculty training. Some of the highly regarded institutions in Europe to look for and benchmark best practices include -but not limited to-: The University of Edinburgh, the Technical University of Munich, the University of Manchester, the Technical University of Catalonia, The National (Metsovian) Technical University of Athens, and others. All the best practices will then be conveyed to all our faculty members.

Inviting guest lecturers and practitioners has always been a standard practice for all programs offered at American College. Guest speakers' invitations have been reduced due to the pandemic restrictions, but the practice will resume upon lessened Covid-19 measures, hence students will participate in presentations concerning recent technology and software developments, employment issues and career progression, and future trends on the field of Networks and Information Technology in general.

The College applies moderation and sample second marking to students' examinations in both undergraduate and postgraduate levels, to avoid typos, other errors, ambiguous exam questions, and to verify that the marks are appropriate and consistent. The Policy (Annex 6 – Moderation and Second Marking Policy) aims to protect the academic integrity, and ensures that fair, valid and reliable standards and criteria are followed in final examinations or other forms of assessment decided by the Quality Assurance Committee.

Based on EEC recommendations a Student Feedback policy was introduced and applied since its introduction, outlining the importance of providing feedback to students, the principles and standards of feedback, and the responsibilities of faculty members. The Student Feedback policy is found in Annex 7.



### 3. Teaching staff (ESG 1.5)

#### EEC - Findings:

The panel discussed with current lecturing staff on various issues of staff training and development. From the conversation, it seems that there is a lack of understanding, for instance, about personal development and promotion criteria. The College documentation on the promotion process should be more detailed, particularly on the criteria for promotion. They should cover teaching, research, admin and leadership, professional development and international esteem.

The normal teaching load of 12 hours (delivery) for lecturers is relatively high, considering normally twice as much time is needed to prepare the delivery, marking, and dealing with student enquiries.

The EEC has seen no clear evidence to suggest that regular professional and teaching focused training have taken place.

From the discussion, there seems to be limited support for developing research grant proposals both in terms of central service and time allocation.

#### American College's Response:

The College Policy and relevant documentation on faculty performance appraisal and promotion has been revised to cover qualifications, experience, teaching, research, admin and leadership, professional development and international esteem. The revised policy has already been communicated to all faculty members. More details on the revised policy are found in the *American College's Response to the Areas of Improvement and Recommendations* section below.

12 hours teaching load is the norm for private institutions of higher education in Cyprus. Anything less would make our operation non-viable. However, this teaching load is reduced in the case of increased research or administrative work.

At American College we believe that in order to increase and improve the quality of education of the programs of study offered, faculty should also continuously upgrade their knowledge and skills. In that framework, we implement specialised in-house training seminars and workshops throughout the year, addressed to all faculty ranks and positions. In Annex 8 (Staff Development activities) all faculty training activities are listed, including training seminars, conferences and more. In addition, the College provides subsidy for participation in non-in-house seminars and other professional development activities. We have also recently implemented compulsory training sessions for faculty members in areas such as pedagogy (e.g. June 23, 2021, 'Teaching Models Seminar by Pedagogy Expert'), using technology in teaching, and intelligence gathering in higher education which has analysed all stages in data gathering, analysis, and dissemination of results. For newly hired faculty we hold biannual orientation seminar which cover teaching methods and practices, student pedagogical approaches, effective communication, college policies and regulations, faculty right, duties and responsibilities, organizational structure, and many more. The most recent orientation seminar took place on Wednesday, 2 February 2022.

Research is essential and significant at American College thus it is supported in various ways. Research is supported financially through Departmental and Individual Budgets (Annex 9 – Internal Funded Policy), which faculty members can use in any way they see effective in enhancing their research skills and built their network. Furthermore, faculty engaging in research receive teaching workload relief. This teaching load deduction is extended further as their research output increases



significantly. All research results and output are disseminated to all faculty members, and depending on the topic and nature of the research output, this is also distributed to all students and external collaborators. The little activity on external funded research at the moment is due to the fact that currently our faculty members are focused on publications in International peer reviewed journals.

### **EEC – Areas of Improvement and Recommendations:**

Given that the current number of students on this programme is modest, the number of staff in the department seems to be adequate, i.e. 4 full time and 3 part time. However, it does mean that each lecturing staff needs to deliver many courses for this programme. This poses a very high demand on specialized knowledge for each lecturer and on their workload. However, a sustainable solution to this issue would be increasing the number of applications and consequently enrolments. From the conversation with current lecturing staff, it is apparent that members of staff are not very clear on promotion requirements. The documentation provided on promotion is inadequate. Management should formalise career pathways and promotion criteria better and communicate them to staff. Staff performance evaluation should have the aim to empower staff and enable staff to perform. The career pathway is unclear in several respects. It should provide necessary details on all key aspects, including teaching, research, administration and leadership, professional development, and international esteem. It also should include criteria for each aspect and specification on required evidence. Promotion to senior positions should also include independent external assessment. It is not clear if students receive feedback with their grades as a standard practice, and if so, in what format. The college staff informed us that all students receive written feedback with their grades. The students we interviewed informed us that they receive no written feedback with their grades. Feedback is discussed orally in the class. Feedback should be written and should be private to each student. This should be standard practice for all courses in the program.

### **American College's Response:**

According to our teaching load policy (see Annex 5 - Organization, Administration and Faculty Handbook) which is in accord with other private academic institutions in Cyprus, the teaching load of a full-time Lecturer and Assistant Professor is 12 hours per week per semester (24 hours per week per 2 semesters). The current number of staff is thus adequate –as also noted by the EEC- at the moment given the number of current students enrolled.

Faculty members in this program teach courses only in the area of their specialization and expertise. For example, Panayiotis Demetriou teaches IT Essentials, Sofia Pratzioti teaches Introduction to Computing, Giorgos Georgiou teaches Computer Programming, George Lialiaris teaches System Administration courses, and Sakis Papalexiou teaches Computer Networks and Network Security courses.

We have revised the College's policy for faculty performance appraisal and promotion. Initially, we have revised the amount of research credits received by faculty for their research output, as well as the basis for credits allocation; instead of using multiple Journal Quality lists, the research credits will be allocated on the basis of the impact factor of the published work. Details about research credits can be found in Annex 5 (pg. 18). Research credits gained is an essential indicator for the annual appraisal of faculty members mainly for the purposes of salary increments as well as for teaching workload reduction; however, research credits will no more be used as a criterion for faculty promotion, and this has been removed from the Faculty Ranks minimum requirements (Annex 5, pg. 14) and from the promotion criteria (Annex 5, pg. 43). Specific revised minimum requirements

for faculty ranks are found in (Annex 5, pg. 14), taking a holistic view of faculty achievement, covering academic qualifications, experience, teaching, and research. In terms of the latter, it covers research output, funding capture, professional activity, esteem, and can take many forms such as papers presented in conferences, articles published in academic journals and daily press, contribution in events, funded research and others (Annex 5, pg.18). Furthermore, the criterion “existence of vacancy” has been removed. It should be noted that currently the members of the committee for faculty promotion consisted of the College Director, a Department Head and one Academic. This has been revised so that the Academic should be an external hence to achieve an independent objective assessment. All the above revisions have already been communicated to all faculty members.

A Student Feedback policy is introduced outlining the importance of providing feedback to students, the principles and standards of feedback, and the responsibilities of faculty members. The Student Feedback policy is found in Annex 7.

#### **4. Student admission, progression, recognition and certification**

*(ESG 1.4)*

##### **EEC - Findings:**

However, the use of the English language in the programme is limited: all technical courses are currently taught in Greek.

The purpose of the English language certificate as an admission requirement is not clear and could be reconsidered, unless a plan to deliver some of the courses in English is made.

The low number of students in the programme suggests that there may be a need to review and reconsider the general aim of the programme and the marketing strategy to attract applicants. For example, from the extra material requested by the EEC the tight link between the programme and several industrial certifications became evident. It is not clear if and how this information is available to prospective applicants.

##### **American College's Response:**

There is a wide use of the English language in the program, as all textbooks and additional material are in English. Further, PowerPoint presentations and terminology are also in English language thus the English language certificate exists as an admission requirement.

Upon re-accreditation of the program, the advertising and promotional activities for the program will be enhanced as to attract more students. The promotional activities will also lay emphasis on the several professional certifications linked to the program and on the practical/vocational nature of the program. These aspects will be communicated to both new and current students.

##### **EEC – Areas of Improvement and Recommendations:**

The teaching, learning and assessment procedures related to options after failing an exam, and the number and conditions for re-examination or repetition of a course are not readily accessible. They are not included in the Students Orientation Handbook. The EEC could not readily access this information in any of the written documentation provided, nor on the website of the College. The website of the College provides very little information about how a student can request a re-examination, but no information on the options after failing an exam, and the number of re-examination or repetition of the course allowed. The College representatives informed the EEC that students who fail a course must repeat the course, unless medical reasons are provided that justify failing the exam (in that case a re-exam can be arranged). The College representatives also informed the EEC that a course can be repeated twice maximum. This is very important information that needs to be formalised, written down and made readily accessible to everyone, at least on the Students Orientation Handbook and possibly on the College website. The EEC also notes that when a student fails a course and has to repeat the course, the student has to wait until the course is offered again. This can create delays and complications in the progression of the student across the programme, for instance when the failed course is a prerequisite for further compulsory courses in the upcoming semester. The EEC recommends that all students who fail a course have the opportunity to take a re-exam without having to repeat the course. This is in line with international standards, and it also facilitates the smooth progression of students across the programme.

The English language certificate as an admission requirement should be reviewed or a plan to deliver some of the technical courses in English should be made.

The strong link between the programme and the industrial certifications could be exploited better to attract more applicants. This opportunity should also be promoted to the students, who should be explicitly supported to gain at least one or two certifications of the several they could take.

### **American College's Response:**

According to the suggestions of the EEC, we have revised the process for re-taking examinations. In summary, students can request a re-examination when have failed an examination/a course or have missed an examination due to medical reason or other emergency. In both cases, students have the opportunity for re-taking the examination, during the resit period, which occurs one-week prior to the beginning of the new semester (two resit periods during an academic year). Students have the possibility for taking 1 re-examination per course. If they do not succeed in receiving a passing grade, then they must retake the Course. To apply for a make-up examination, students need to visit their academic advisor, and complete a Make-up Examination Request form and submit it for approval to the Office of Student Affairs. They will be notified shortly on the resit days, times, and other details. In the case of students who have missed an examination due to medical reason or other emergency, re-taking examinations does not remove the rights of students for taking 1 re-examination per course, in the case of failure. Re-taking examination though for this reason, lies on the approval by the office of Student Affairs. The above are provided in detail, in the Students Orientation Handbook (Annex 10, pg. 15), and on the College Website (<https://www.ac.ac.cy/en/academic-affairs/make-up-examination>).

There is a wide use of the English language in the program, as all textbooks and additional material are in English. Further, PowerPoint presentations and terminology are also in English language thus the English language certificate exists as an admission requirement.

Upon re-accreditation of the program, the advertising and promotional activities for the program will be enhanced as to attract more students. The promotional activities will also lay emphasis on the several professional certifications linked to the program and on the practical/vocational nature of the program. These aspects will be communicated to both new and current students.

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

### EEC - Findings:

There is no computer laboratory running Linux operating system.

### American College's Response:

We have installed the Virtual Box, enabling faculty members and students to run any operating system, including Linux Ubuntu, in our window desktop. The ISO file for Linux Ubuntu has been downloaded, and installed inside the virtual machine Virtual Box.

### EEC – Areas of Improvement and Recommendations:

The students interviewed by the EEC found some of the computational equipment of the programme outdated, such as the laptops they use for practice in their practical sessions.

Students are given no storage, no VPN, no online account, no College email. Outside the College, they have no access to important resources, such as Windows 365. Outside the premises of the College, students have no access to library facilities (no access to eBooks, online curricula, scientific subscriptions).

In the labs, there is one account shared by all students. Having a common account for all is not a good practice, nor a standard practice. The EEC highly recommends revising and improving this aspect.

The College has a Career Service that, according to the College documentation, puts students in contact with employers, that helps students to write a CV, and that helps students prepare for interviews. However, it seems that there is little or no demand for these services from the students. It is recommended that the Career Service proactively seeks out the students to promote and offer these services. Another improvement could be to collect and store student CVs on a database, so that employers can search this database.

The EEC did not see evidence that student mobility is supported within and across higher education systems.

### American College's Response:

We continuously upgrade our facilities and especially those related to technology. The students of the Diploma in Computer and Network Technician use for practice during their practical sessions the i5 8GB Ram Windows 10 Professional PCs found in the Computer Network Laboratory (B410). In addition, to satisfy teaching needs we recently bought 1 Cisco Router, 1 24-port Cisco Switch and 1 PoE 48-port Cisco Switch.

Personal storage is provided to all students of the College in order to store personal files which they can quickly and easily access from both the College facilities and remotely. Additionally, based on EEC recommendations students were provided with a College email, remote access (through VPN) to College computer facilities and access to the College's online library (Proquest, with more than 125 billion digital papers, ebooks, dissertations, newspapers, governmental archives, and many more) from outside the College facilities.



As recommended by the EEC, a separate account has been created for each student when accessing the computer labs.

At American College we operate the AC Career Office with the role to link students to the market and especially with the organizations we formed collaborations with. Further, the role of the Career Office is to provide support and advice to students seeking employment. The Career Office offers any services and support activities such as: (i) Announces vacancies of partner organizations and helps students get in touch with these organizations, (ii) Provides students with tips and advice on writing CVs and preparing for interviews (iii) Organizes seminars related to employment issues (such as writing a CV and interview preparation), and (vi) Organizes bi-annually seminars on EUROPASS (profile, CV, vacancies, etc.). The students currently enrolled in this program are all employed, hence the little or no demand for the services offered by the career office. As recommended thought, we are building a CV database to collect and store student CVs, for easy access for employment purposes by our external collaborators (for those students who have granted their approval for the use of their CV for employment purposes).

The College participates in Erasmus program during the last 10 years. More specifically, we have engaged in Student Mobility for studies, Student Mobility for Placements, Staff Mobility for Teaching, and Staff Mobility for Training. Due to the unpleasant effects of the pandemic to the society in general, our engagement in mobility programs were suspended since March 2020. Following the end of the pandemic, we will vigorously engage in mobility programs as we did in the past.



## 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

### EEC - Findings:

The EEC identified a number of key strengths that could make the programme more successful in attracting applicants. The industry-oriented training of the programme is suitable to provide valuable graduates to the industry of the sector. This aspect should be better presented in the website and in the marketing material.

Overall, the programme has a consistent design with clear aim and objectives to meet job market demands. The level of support available to the students is good. The quality of the technical infrastructure can and should be improved.

The EEC also identified a number of key areas for improvement and therefore, the following recommendations are made:

- A formal process to approve the creation and changes to programmes and courses with written documents as record should be introduced.
- An internal and/or external formal moderation process of the assessment material (coursework and exams) as well as for the exam marking should be introduced.
- A review to the programme structure should be carried out to deliver a balanced coverage of some topics such as Linux and Unix shell scripting, Excel and PowerPoint.
- A standard policy for written feedback to assessment elements to be provided to the students should be introduced.
- Regular and formal staff-student meetings should be introduced.
- Student representatives should be elected by the student body directly.
- A general process to support and expand best practices in Teaching & Learning with didactic training for staff should be introduced.
- Career pathway and promotion criteria should be better defined and communicated to staff members.
- The English language certificate as an admission requirement should be reviewed or a plan to deliver some of the technical courses in English should be made.
- The strong link between the programme and the industrial certifications could be exploited better to attract more applicants. At the same time, the College should make an explicit plan and investment to support and promote this opportunity to the students.
- The Teaching & Learning and assessment procedures related to retaking exams and the repetition of a course should be made readily accessible to the students. The EEC recommends that all students who fail a course have the opportunity to retake the exam at least once without having to repeat the course.
- The IT and computing infrastructure requires some improvements and an investment in this area may significantly improve the student experience.

### **American College's Response:**

As described in our responses in sections 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 above:

- Upon re-accreditation of the program, the advertising and promotional activities for the program will be enhanced as to attract more students. The promotional activities will also lay emphasis on the several professional certifications which are linked to the program.
- We continuously upgrade our facilities and especially those related to technology. In order to improve the student experience and satisfy teaching needs we recently bought 1 Cisco Router, 1 24-port Cisco Switch and 1 PoE 48-port Cisco Switch.
- The formal process to approve the creation and changes to programs and courses was revised.
- The activities of the moderation process currently in place were intensified.
- The syllabuses of the program were revised thus to cover Linux and Unix shell scripting.
- A standard policy for written feedback to assessment elements was introduced.
- Regular and formal staff-student meetings were introduced.
- The policy for Student representatives in committees was revised so that they are elected by the student body.
- The activities to support and expand best practices in Teaching & Learning with didactic training for staff were intensified.
- Career pathway and promotion criteria were refined and communicated to staff members.
- Since English language proficiency is required by the students as the program of study is currently delivered, the English language certificate needs to remain as an admission requirement.
- Following re-accreditation, the program's advertising and promotional activities will be expanded in order to attract more students, highlighting the various professional certifications that are linked to the program. The link of the program to the various professional certifications is being promoted to existing students as well as new students.
- The process of retaking examinations was revised.

As a conclusion, we want to state that we took into account all EEC's comments for revisions/improvements and we have implemented all necessary revisions/improvements. Once again we would like to thank the members of the External Evaluation Committee for their objective and very positive report.

### C. Higher Education Institution academic representatives

| <i>Name</i>         | <i>Position</i>         | <i>Signature</i> |
|---------------------|-------------------------|------------------|
| Sakis Papalexiou    | Program Coordinator     |                  |
| Click to enter Name | Click to enter Position |                  |
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**Date:** 24 March, 2022

