



BRITISH ACCREDITATION COUNCIL INSPECTION REPORT

INTERIM INSPECTION (International HE)

INSTITUTION: New York College, Athens

ADDRESS: 38 Amalias Avenue
Athens 105 58
Greece

HEAD OF INSTITUTION: Mr Elias Foutsis

Accreditation status: Accredited

Date of inspection: 28 April 2014

ACCREDITATION COMMITTEE DECISION ON ACCREDITATION: Accreditation continued 10 July 2014

PART A - INTRODUCTION

1. Background to the institution

New York College (the College) was founded in 1989 with the assistance of the State University of New York, to provide Greek students with the opportunity to receive an American university education leading to an accredited degree. Over the years the College's curriculum has developed so that the College offers programmes from accredited institutions in the USA, UK, Switzerland and France.

At the time of the last inspection in 2011, the relationships with the State University of New York, the University of Greenwich and the Institut Universitaire Kurt Bosch were well established and recruitment to these programmes was strong. It had recently commenced an MBA programme from the Paris Graduate Management School and an online MBA from the National American University. At that time, applications to the College were reported to be 10% lower than the previous year, reflecting the economic crisis affecting Greece. The College had opened campuses in Prague, Tirana and Belgrade as well as a campus in Thessaloniki in 2001.

2. Brief description of the current provision

The College offers programmes at bachelor, masters and doctoral levels from British (Universities of Greenwich and Bolton), American (State University of New York, Empire State College and National American University) and French (Pole ESG-Ecole Superieure de Gestion and Universite Toulouse 1 Capitole) accredited institutions. The College holds a licence from the Greek Ministry of Education to offer programmes at level 4 and above on both campuses. The Athens campus has 56 full-time and 65 part-time teaching staff and 45 administrative staff. The Thessaloniki campus has 10 full-time and 21 part-time teaching staff and nine administrative staff. The Athens campus has 739 full-time and 157 part-time students and there are 124 full-time and one part-time student studying on the Thessaloniki campus.

3. Inspection process

The inspection was undertaken in Athens by one inspector in half a day. The Thessaloniki campus was not visited although a member of its staff attended the meeting with the inspector in Athens. The inspector met the President and Director of Student Life and had a meeting with The Director - Corporate affairs, Director - Operations, Programme Manager - European Programmes and the Recruitment Coordinator. The inspector also scrutinised documentation relating to the College's response to the previous inspection report and developments within the College since the last inspection.

4. Inspection history

Preliminary visit:	24 January 2001
Full inspection:	29 and 30 January 2001
Interim inspection:	18 February 2002
Full inspection:	15 and 16 May 2006
Interim inspection:	27 April 2010
Full inspection:	18 and 19 May 2011

PART B – JUDGEMENTS AND EVIDENCE

The following judgements and comments are based upon evidence seen by the inspector during the inspection and from documentation provided by the institution

1. Significant changes since the last inspection

Since the previous inspection there have been a number of changes to programmes offered. The partnership with the Institut Universitaire Kurt Bosch ended in 2012, although there are still some students completing their programmes. Low recruitment levels led to the La Salle MA in Clinical Counselling not being offered this year and changes in Greek law meant that the College could no longer offer non-degree programmes, leading to the discontinuation of the two Edexcel programmes. The College has a new partner, Universite Toulouse 1 Capitole, with which it delivers a bachelor and a masters programme in management.

Although the main Athens site is a listed building which limits the changes that can be made, there has been considerable investment in the college infrastructure including €300,000 for two laboratories on the Kallithea site to support human biology and biomedical programmes. The computing provision has also been upgraded on all sites.

There have been some changes to staffing levels, including reduced reliance on part-time teaching staff, and some restructuring including replacing the former General Manager role with two Directors, one with responsibility for academic matters and the other for operations/administrative matters.

In response to changes in Greek law, the Thessaloniki provision is now a campus of New York College rather than a separate entity.

2. Response to actions points in last report

The 2011 full accreditation report for the Athens operation listed a number of Requirements and Recommendations. The College has made a positive response to these.

Requirements that must be met before the first inspection after reaccreditation

The contingencies handbook must be made available at all College sites.

This has been done. All staff receive the handbook which is comprehensive and has a red cover to stress its importance.

The College must undertake a review of its website provision as a matter of urgency.

This has been done. The new website is much brighter and more informative and gives improved coverage of the Thessaloniki provision.

The College must be able to demonstrate how it has integrated teaching pedagogy into its staff development programmes.

The College planned to use the University of Bolton's Postgraduate Diploma in Education to develop its staff's pedagogical knowledge and skills. However, it was not approved by the Greek government. Consequently, the College has sought to engage with its partner institutions to deliver staff development in this field. However, further work remains to be done to formalise arrangements and to evaluate its effectiveness.

The College must create a student committee as a conduit for information to senior management.

This has been done. The Director of Student Life, appointed in March 2013, has overseen student elections to the newly formed Student Committee. There are separate committees for Athens and Thessaloniki.

The College must produce a document that indicates to staff the expected levels of feedback to students about their performance.

Some progress has been made to ensure that staff are better informed of expectations. However, in order to ensure a more consistent level of feedback across programmes it needs to be strengthened and formalised. In particular, it needs to be a College-level document rather than programme-specific. The College must set its own standards and ensure that all its students, regardless of programme of study, benefit from it.

Recommendations to institution

The College should keep the library usage at the Kallithea site under review.

The Kallithea library provision has been enhanced, including improved access for students. Software is used to monitor usage and produce monthly reports.

The College should consider creating a detailed health and safety policy document.

This has been done. Work is continuing on translating it in to Greek to improve its accessibility to all staff. Health and safety policy is included in some, but not all, programme handbooks. Such generic information is best included in a college-level Student Handbook which would ensure that all students, regardless of programme of study, have access to it.

The College should consider identifying personnel for formal first-aid training.

Two staff have been trained and the College plans to extend this to other staff.

The College should continue to monitor attendance patterns and do everything possible to ensure students are aware of their obligations in this respect.

The College has raised student and staff awareness of the need for high levels of attendance. The policy and penalties are included in all programme handbooks. Attendance is monitored through a database management system. The next full accreditation inspection will prove an opportunity to gauge its effectiveness.

The College should review its systems in order to ensure that all necessary learning materials are available to students either at the commencement of their courses or prior to assessments taking place.

An improved system for ordering learning materials has been introduced. The next full accreditation inspection will provide an opportunity to evaluate its effectiveness and gauge student satisfaction.

The College should consider instituting an annual College-wide assessment of all its quality assurance procedures for its own purposes rather than simply responding to the requirements of the partner institutions.

The College underwent a successful evaluation by the Ministry of Education in April resulting in the renewal of its licence. Although it required the College to undertake some assessment of its performance, and senior staff do discuss quality issues, the College continues to rely largely on its partner institutions for quality assurance. Thus, the approach remains largely externally driven with the focus primarily at programme level. Further work is required if the College is stamp its identity across its provision rather than be merely a collection of disparate

programmes. A more formal in-house approach to quality assurance would enable the College to identify and measure what value it adds to its programmes. An important element in developing an overarching college ethos would be the production of a college-wide Student Handbook containing generic college information to supplement the more detailed programme information contained in programme handbooks.

3. Compliance with BAC accreditation requirements – spot check

3.1 Management, Staffing and Administration

	Met	Partially met	Not met	NA
The standards are judged to be	✓			
Comments				
Changes have been made to strengthen this area.				

3.2 Teaching, Learning and Assessment

	Met	Partially met	Not met	NA
The standards are judged to be	✓			
Comments				
The College is striving to enhance this area through staff development activities including classroom observation.				

3.3 Student Welfare

	Met	Partially met	Not met	NA
The standards are judged to be	✓			
Comments				
The appointment of a Director of Student Life provides greater cohesion to this area.				

3.4 Premises and Facilities

	Met	Partially met	Not met	NA
The standards are judged to be	✓			
Comments				
Substantial investment has raised the standard of premises and facilities.				

PART C – SUMMARY OF STRENGTHS AND ACTION POINTS

Institution’s strengths

The College has responded positively to the previous inspection report and demonstrates a commitment to quality enhancement and to supporting and enhancing student achievement. For example, staff development events, classroom observations, stricter enforcement of the student probation policy, improvement to the infrastructure and the appointment of a Director of Student Life are focused on enhancing the student learning experience. Staff are able and committed.

Actions required	Priority H/M/L
The College should produce a document setting out minimum standards expected by the College for feedback on student work across all programmes and ensuring that these are met.	M
The planned extension of first-aid training to more staff should be completed.	L
There should be more formal review at college-level of its overall performance, informed in part by individual programme reports.	L
The programme of staff development events should be continued; attendance and effectiveness should be monitored and they should be incorporated into the formal staff appraisal system.	L
A college-wide Student Handbook should be produced providing generic information, including health and safety, to supplement individual programme handbooks	L

COMPLIANCE WITH STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

Declaration of compliance has been signed and dated.	YES
Further comments, if applicable	