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EHL CASE STUDY

Boost Vocational Development with an Education Partnership

How a Greek Education Group Made
Vocational Education Attractive



Vocational Education: a plan B for many Greek students

Greek education has always been characterized by a strong demand for general education and, by extension, for high quality, university level education. Vocational education and training has historically garnered only minimal interest for young people. Young people look upon vocational education and training as a last resort, despite research data which shows vocational education graduates facing fewer difficulties in finding work than general education graduates.

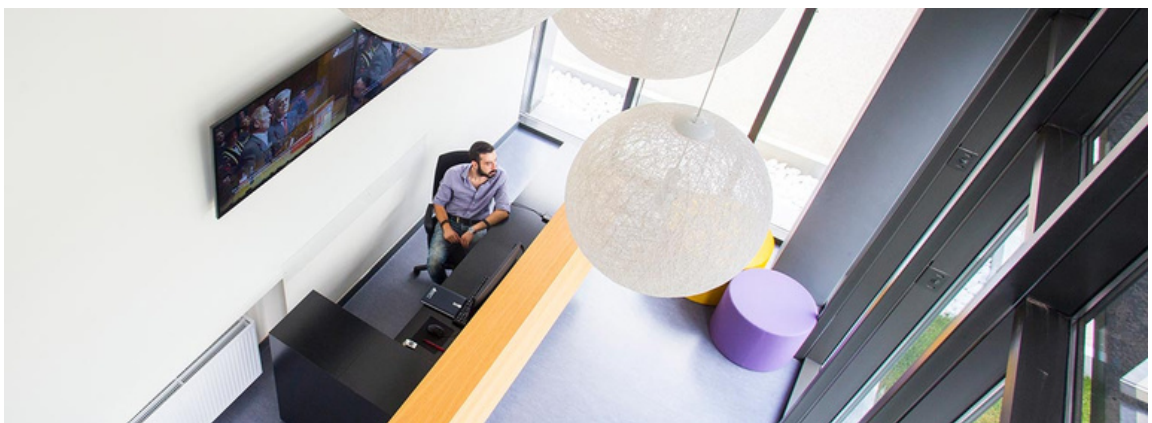
Vocational Development: a need for Greece

The worlds of education, training, and operations have been quite apart in Greece. As a result, the skills needed by the labor market are not always anticipated, and young graduates struggle to find positions that match their qualification. The government seeks to reinforce work-based components of education and training, to address the challenges Greece currently faces, such as competitiveness, youth unemployment and social inclusion. Reconciling students and parents with Vocational Training and promoting it as an educational option of equal standing, has thus become an essential element of the Greek government's reforms.

The case of MC Metropolitan College: partnering to build an attractive vocational offer

MC Metropolitan College is the fastest growing private College in Greece and ranked first among Greece's private colleges in tertiary education in Webometrics Ranking of World Universities. It stands out for its high quality of university courses offered and its renowned academic personnel. Over 7'650 students are enrolled in the more than 74 programs Metropolitan College is offering. MC's vision is about programs that emphasize both theory and practice, providing students with a solid professional background in their chosen field of study. The vocational Education model is therefore a perfect match for their strategy.

MC faced a challenge: how to elevate its brand locally and attract more students from around the world, while strengthening its commitment to the Vocational Education and Training (VET) agenda of Greece?





MC Metropolitan College sought an education partner to help address the challenge.

MC's goals for such an education partnership were:

- Upgrading and expanding apprenticeships
- Strengthening the link between its programs and the labor market
- Increasing the mobility of its VET graduates
- Promoting the attractiveness of Vocational Education and Training
- Improving the governance and monitoring of its VET system
- Achieving excellence in Vocational Education and Training
- Scalability of solution through its campuses across Greece

7 Criteria to select the right education partner for Vocational Development

MC saw that a success factor for its partnership was the coherence and alignment of the partner's values and focus on the dual education model. MC's recognized the importance of establishing clear criteria upfront to select its partner:

- An internationally renowned and trusted brand to match MC's commitment to education excellence.
- Shared interests, a shared vision for the project and shared values for their relationship
- Common objectives to achieve at project completion.
- Commitment of each partner to make a real effort to participate in the partnership.
- Teamwork with partners committed to working together for their mutual success.
- Trust, with an open and honest communication and problem-solving mindset.
- Synergistic Relationship, with joint efforts and collective resources expanding the impact of each partner.

Based on these criteria, EHL, ranked as the #1 Hospitality Business School and whose entire program portfolio is rooted in the renowned Swiss dual education model, became an obvious choice for partnership. MC thus joined forces with VET by EHL in 2019.

How MC ensured the success of its vocational development partnership

After two years of operations, MC's leaders consider that 4 actions laid the ground for a successful partnership with VET by EHL.

- Define and confirm the partnership concept: the partnership process was started well in advance of signing the contract, with a careful review of the partner selection criteria and in-depth discussions about the mutual expectations of such a partnership.
- Secure Senior Management Support and commitment. A visible top management support and commitment sent the vital message that partnering was the preferred business solution. Senior managers demonstrated their support for partnering by personally attending the partnering workshops.
- Plan marketing activities with the partner. The marketing activities were discussed upfront to reach an alignment on how brands could be promoted and associated in the Greek market. With agreed guidelines, MC was then able to optimize its brand awareness opportunities in an agile manner.
- Implement quality assurance upfront. This enabled VET by EHL and MC to have mutual trust that their brand reputation would be maintained as MC developed its program and that the expected levels of excellence would be achieved.
- Localize the solution and grow the relationship. MC translated the contents of VET by EHL into Greek, amplifying its market reach and rolled the program out to a second campus in Athens, with additional locations for VET by EHL in Rhodes and Thessaloniki in the Pipeline.

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Tourism related studies have started to gain the importance and validity they deserve and are gradually becoming a conscious choice. We, at SETE, are true believers that learning never stops in an industry such as ours, and we applaud this initiative between Metropolitan College and EHL

Mr. Giannis Retsos, President of the Greek Tourism Confederation



What to expect from a vocational education development partnership

In Metropolitan College's case, the partnership with VET by EHL resulted in 4 major benefits:

1. Increased quality of education with tried and tested curriculum from EHL, MC has the insurance that it is offering its students the world's most reputable education for the hospitality industry.
2. Maintained autonomy: the partnership model let MC works autonomously for quick adaptations to local market evolutions. In parallel, by joining the network of VET by EHL schools, MC is able to exchange best practices with similar institutions in other countries.
3. More students. Through co-branding, Metropolitan College can leverage the EHL brand in their country aligned with Swiss quality, experience and values.
4. Increased graduate employability. The model promotes work-based learning and employers involvement. It is complemented by some of EHL's best practices for preparing students to enter the job market such as organizing career events, providing students with CV clinics, interview preparation and advice.

All in all, the lesson to be taken from this initiative is the positive effect that partnering for vocational development can have on education and employment of Greek youth.



Conclusion

Public stakeholders and private institutions should recognize the potential of international education partnerships in facilitating vocational development. Such cooperation not only set local institutions on the path to success, but help address the sometimes negative perception of Vocational Education with students and their parents, thanks to world-class quality and graduate outcomes.

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With its all-long tradition in hospitality, Switzerland recognizes the value of Greece as a place worth visiting. It seems to me that this state of mind should also take place in the fields of hospitality management education. I hope that this new partnership we are celebrating today will lead to economic opportunities and develop here in Greece

H.E. Olaf Kjelsen, The Ambassador of Switzerland to Greece.



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