



ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ
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Εθνική Αρχή
Ανώτατης Εκπαίδευσης
Hellenic Authority
for Higher Education

Αριστείδου 1 & Ευριπίδου 2 • 10559 Αθήνα | 1 Aristidou str. & 2 Evripidou str. • 10559 Athens, Greece
Τ. +30 210 9220 944 • Ε. secretariat@ethaae.gr • www.ethaae.gr

Accreditation Report

for the Postgraduate Study Programme of: Management of migratory and refugee flows in Europe

Department: Sociology

Institution: University of the Aegean

Date: 07/01/2025



Με τη συγχρηματοδότηση
της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης



Πρόγραμμα
Ανθρώπινο Δυναμικό και
Κοινωνική Συνοχή



Report of the Panel appointed by the HAHE to undertake the review of the Postgraduate Study Programme of **Management of migratory and refugee flows in Europe** of the **University of the Aegean** for the purposes of granting accreditation

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Part A: Background and Context of the Review	5
I. The External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel.....	5
II. Review Procedure and Documentation	6
III. Postgraduate Study Programme Profile.....	8
Part B: Compliance with the Principles.....	9
PRINCIPLE 1: QUALITY ASSURANCE POLICY AND QUALITY GOAL SETTING FOR THE POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES OF THE INSTITUTION AND THE ACADEMIC UNIT	9
PRINCIPLE 2: DESIGN AND APPROVAL OF POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES.....	12
PRINCIPLE 3: STUDENT-CENTRED LEARNING, TEACHING, AND ASSESSMENT.....	16
PRINCIPLE 4: STUDENT ADMISSION, PROGRESSION, RECOGNITION OF POSTGRADUATE STUDIES, AND CERTIFICATION	20
PRINCIPLE 5: TEACHING STAFF OF POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES	22
PRINCIPLE 6: LEARNING RESOURCES AND STUDENT SUPPORT.....	25
PRINCIPLE 7: INFORMATION MANAGEMENT	28
PRINCIPLE 8: PUBLIC INFORMATION CONCERNING THE POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES.....	31
PRINCIPLE 9: ON-GOING MONITORING AND PERIODIC INTERNAL EVALUATION OF POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES	33
PRINCIPLE 10: REGULAR EXTERNAL EVALUATION OF POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES	35
Part C: Conclusions.....	36
I. Features of Good Practice.....	36
II. Areas of Weakness.....	37
III. Recommendations for Follow-up Actions.....	37
IV. Summary & Overall Assessment	38

PART A: BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT OF THE REVIEW

I. The External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel

The Panel responsible for the Accreditation Review of the postgraduate study programme of Management of migratory and refugee flows in Europe of the **University of the Aegean** comprised the following five (5) members, drawn from the HAHE Register, in accordance with Laws 4009/2011 & 4653/2020:

1. **Papakostas Apostolis** (Chair)
Södertörn University

2. **Karakasidou Anastasia**
Wellesley College

3. **Moennig Ulrich**
Institut für Griechische und Lateinische Philologie, Fachbereich Sprache, Literatur, Medien II, Fakultät für Geisteswissenschaften, Universität Hamburg

4. **Scafuro Adele**
Brown University

5. **Rapsomatiotis Aristeidis**
University of the Peloponnese

II. Review Procedure and Documentation

In reviewing the multi-disciplinary Postgraduate Study Programme of “MANAGEMENT OF MIGRATORY AND REFUGEE FLOWS IN EUROPE” of the School of Social Sciences of the University of the Aegean the External Evaluation and Accreditation Panel comprised of five (5) members, drawn from the HAHE Register, in accordance with Laws 4009/2011 & 4653/2020.

The objectives of the Panel, as described in the Guidelines for the Members of EEAP, are:

- to establish whether the data provided from the various resources is consistent among one another and reflect the actual situation.
- identify strengths and areas of weakness.
- engage in a constructive dialogue with the Institution, leading to reflection and continuous enhancement of the study programme.

Following a well-prepared schedule provided by HAHE, the Panel held several separate interactive virtual (by electronic means, ZOOM) meetings and visits for two days as follows:

On Monday, 09/12/2024, the following virtual meetings took place:

- with the Head of the School
- the Head of the coordinating Department
- with the Director of the Programme
- with MODIP members and staff, and Steering Committees/OMEA members
- an online tour of virtual classrooms, online platforms, and other facilities related to the Programme. The online tour was followed by a discussion about the facilities in which teaching and administrative staff participated.

On Tuesday, 10/12/2024, the following virtual meetings took place:

- with teaching staff of the Programme
- with students and alumni of the Programme
- with employers and social partners of the private and public sector
- meeting with the President of MODIP, the Head of the School, the Director of the Programme, members and staff of MODIP, and members of Steering Committees/OMEA members.

During the virtual meetings mentioned above, the Panel had the opportunity to meet, talk,

and interact with all the participants of all meetings. All the participants were encouraged to express their views and talk freely about their overall learning experience. They welcomed the opportunity to talk to the Panel and to voice their views. The discussions were very constructive and fruitful and were conducted in a cooperative manner and attitude. All the meetings included presentations, discussions, and question-and-answer sessions. During the last meeting the Panel made an informal presentation of some initial key findings.

The internal evaluation report and other extensive material were made available to the Panel electronically in advance through HAHE. More information and materials were made available during the meetings.

The Department worked diligently in preparing the internal evaluation report and other relevant materials and organizing and hosting the virtual meetings. It is the feeling of the Panel that the Department has performed an excellent job throughout the internal evaluation process and that the objectives of the process have been fully met. The efficiency and eagerness of the Department to answer questions and provide additional information and clarifications during the meetings are worth noting. The Panel wishes to express its thanks and appreciation to the Department and the University administration for their co-operation and professionalism.

This Accreditation Report is based on information collected and views expressed during the virtual meetings and on information contained in the internal evaluation report and other documents submitted before and during the virtual meetings.

III. Postgraduate Study Programme Profile

The Postgraduate Study Programme “MANAGEMENT OF MIGRATORY AND REFUGEE FLOWS IN EUROPE” started in 2022-2023. Postgraduate Studies Program lasts 3 semesters. Due to the location of the University the study of migration has received particular attention at both the undergraduate and the postgraduate level.

Specifically, the Postgraduate Programme aims to offer a holistic and multidisciplinary approach to migration and specific to compulsory migration. According to the statements of the Department this is one of the most important issues in contemporary history.

The language of the Programme is English, and it is taught in its entirety remotely. Programme completion requires 90 ECTS. During the two first semesters the programme is structured in eight courses, compulsory for all students. A mandatory thesis (20 ECTS) will be authored and defended during the third semester. A field practice (10 ECTS) is included during the same semester. The structure of the Programme follows thus conventional European standards.

The fee for the whole Programme is 3 500 Euros. For the academic year 2024-25, 23 students were enrolled , with 17 of them being females.

The Programme is well situated in the international field of migration studies and it is supported by academic staff from the Department and other universities in Greece and abroad. All teaching staff are Ph.D. holders who are active scholars and researchers in diverse areas of migration studies, sociology and other related disciplines.

PART B: COMPLIANCE WITH THE PRINCIPLES

PRINCIPLE 1: QUALITY ASSURANCE POLICY AND QUALITY GOAL SETTING FOR THE POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES OF THE INSTITUTION AND THE ACADEMIC UNIT

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD APPLY A QUALITY ASSURANCE POLICY AS PART OF THEIR STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT. THIS POLICY SHOULD EXPAND AND BE AIMED (WITH THE COLLABORATION OF EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS) AT THE POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES OF THE INSTITUTION AND THE ACADEMIC UNIT. THIS POLICY SHOULD BE PUBLISHED AND IMPLEMENTED BY ALL STAKEHOLDERS.

The quality assurance policy of the academic unit should be in line with the quality assurance policy of the Institution and must be formulated in the form of a public statement, which is implemented by all stakeholders. It focuses on the achievement of special goals related to the quality assurance of the study programmes offered by the academic unit.

Indicatively, the quality policy statement of the academic unit includes its commitment to implement a quality policy that will promote the academic profile and orientation of the postgraduate study programme (PSP), its purpose and field of study; it will realise the programme's goals and it will determine the means and ways for attaining them; it will implement appropriate quality procedures, aiming at the programme's improvement.

In particular, in order to implement this policy, the academic unit commits itself to put into practice quality procedures that will demonstrate:

- a) the suitability of the structure and organisation of postgraduate study programmes*
- b) the pursuit of learning outcomes and qualifications in accordance with the European and National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education - level 7*
- c) the promotion of the quality and effectiveness of teaching at the PSP*
- d) the appropriateness of the qualifications of the teaching staff for the PSP*
- e) the drafting, implementation, and review of specific annual quality goals for the improvement of the PSP*
- f) the level of demand for the graduates' qualifications in the labour market*
- g) the quality of support services, such as the administrative services, the libraries and the student welfare office for the PSP*
- h) the efficient utilisation of the financial resources of the PSP that may be drawn from tuition fees*
- i) the conduct of an annual review and audit of the quality assurance system of the PSP through the cooperation of the Internal Evaluation Group (IEG) with the Institution's Quality Assurance Unit (QAU)*

Documentation

- *Quality Assurance Policy of the PSP*
- *Quality goal setting of the PSP*

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The Department of Sociology closely cooperates with MODIP (QAU) and has aligned the Quality Policy of the PSP with the Quality Policy of the University of the Aegean. The implementation of the Quality Assurance Policy involves the participation of teaching, administrative, and technical staff. This policy includes annual feedback mechanisms designed to update, improve, and adapt to current conditions, thereby ensuring high-quality higher education and continuous self-assessment and improvement. Relevant committees within the academic unit include the Internal

Evaluation Group (OMEA), which consists of faculty members, and the Coordinating Committee (SE). The criteria for the internal evaluation processes encompass the following: 1) continuous staffing with qualified teaching personnel according to the needs of the PSP; 2) regular evaluation processes for the teaching staff; 3) promotion of research quality and engagement with relevant networks; 4) ongoing review of the curriculum to assess the suitability of its structure, along with the continuous collection of student feedback and implementation of the results; 5) monitoring changing conditions and adapting the curriculum accordingly; 6) aiming for societal impact through cooperation with social sector entities; 7) monitoring job market demands and adapting the PSP to meet relevant needs; 8) leveraging recommendations from external evaluations; 9) ongoing enhancement of electronic services and support measures for teaching staff and students; 10) transparent management of financial resources derived from tuition fees.

II. Analysis

The pursuit of learning outcomes and qualifications was found to be in accordance with the European and National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education at level 7.

Teaching staff was found to be appropriately qualified and active in research. The curriculum that is delivered follows current developments in the field.

The QAP is evaluated internally and by students who complete relevant questionnaires. The results of the questionnaires are properly analysed and results are taken into consideration.

III. Conclusions

The Quality Assurance Policy is very efficient, featuring appropriate quality goals that align with the institution's Quality Assurance Policy (QAP). The teaching team of the PSP demonstrates full compliance, fostering an established culture of evaluation that supports the achievement of the program's objectives. The connections with both the local community and the broader European community are very remarkable. Financial resources seem to be allocated efficiently. All teaching staff are well-qualified, actively engaged in research, and effectively incorporate research into their teaching practices.

Panel Judgement

Principle 1: Quality assurance policy and quality goal setting for the postgraduate study programmes of the institution and the academic unit	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

None

PRINCIPLE 2: DESIGN AND APPROVAL OF POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD DEVELOP THEIR POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES FOLLOWING A DEFINED WRITTEN PROCESS WHICH WILL INVOLVE THE PARTICIPANTS, INFORMATION SOURCES AND THE APPROVAL COMMITTEES FOR THE POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES. THE OBJECTIVES, THE EXPECTED LEARNING OUTCOMES AND THE EMPLOYMENT PROSPECTS ARE SET OUT IN THE PROGRAMME DESIGN. DURING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES, THE DEGREE OF ACHIEVEMENT OF THE LEARNING OUTCOMES SHOULD BE ASSESSED. THE ABOVE DETAILS, AS WELL AS INFORMATION ON THE PROGRAMME'S STRUCTURE ARE PUBLISHED IN THE STUDENT GUIDE.

The academic units develop their postgraduate study programmes following a well-defined procedure. The academic profile and orientation of the programme, the research character, the scientific objectives, the specific subject areas, and specialisations are described at this stage.

The structure, content and organisation of courses and teaching methods should be oriented towards deepening knowledge and acquiring the corresponding skills to apply the said knowledge (e.g. course on research methodology, participation in research projects, thesis with a research component).

The expected learning outcomes must be determined based on the European and National Qualifications Framework (EQF, NQF), and the Dublin Descriptors for level 7. During the implementation of the programme, the degree of achievement of the expected learning outcomes and the feedback of the learning process must be assessed with the appropriate tools. For each learning outcome that is designed and made public, it is necessary that its evaluation criteria are also designed and made public.

In addition, the design of PSP must consider:

- *the Institutional strategy*
- *the active involvement of students*
- *the experience of external stakeholders from the labour market*
- *the anticipated student workload according to the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) for level 7*
- *the option of providing work experience to students*
- *the linking of teaching and research*
- *the relevant regulatory framework and the official procedure for the approval of the PSP by the Institution*

The procedure of approval or revision of the programmes provides for the verification of compliance with the basic requirements of the Standards by the Institution's Quality Assurance Unit (QAU).

Documentation

- *Senate decision for the establishment of the PSP*
- *PSP curriculum structure: courses, course categories, ECTS awarded, expected learning outcomes according to the EQF, internship, mobility opportunities*
- *Labour market data regarding the employment of graduates, international experience in a relevant scientific field*
- *PSP Student Guide*
- *Course and thesis outlines*

- *Teaching staff (name list including of areas of specialisation, its relation to the courses taught, employment relationship, and teaching assignment in hours as well as other teaching commitments in hours)*

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The external committee thoroughly investigated this post-graduate program that offers academic knowledge and practical training to students on the timely theme of “Migrant and refugee flows.” The program is relatively young, since it began in 2022-2023 academic year. Although migrants and refugees slowly started entering Greece in the early 2000’s, they stormed the Greek islands in 2015. Mytilini (Lesvos) took the heaviest burden of managing the vulnerable newcomers, and the island’s society and culture were irreversibly transformed. It was therefore natural for the island’s University to respond to such challenge, and despite the fact that the Sociology department was already running two successful post-graduate programs, they took the challenge of offering this important third one. Instruction is in English and all readings are readily accessible electronically or through inter-library local loans. Classes are held remotely, allowing Greek and international students to join the virtual community. In addition, professors and students participate in a summer school held in the island of Oinousses. The tuition fees (3500 Euros, paid in three installments) are affordable and students expressed certainty that the funds were spent fairly and transparently.

The program offers an Interdisciplinary approach to the study of this unique historical event.

The committee found that the program was well designed, and reached out to a number of experts and scholars from abroad. It included international and European Organizations, such as Frontex, EUAA, UNCHR, and several NGO’s. Half of the professors are sociologists, but the program also has European Academic partners (Erasmus-Mundus, MITRA, etc.). In other words, it aspires to serve both the academy and society. It prepares students for a job market that needs this kind of expertise. And, it offers academic and sociological tools to students who are already working in this field of migration (e.g. MSF, European Immigration Commission, Frontex, etc.). This MA degree definitely helps them find jobs upon graduation, or widens their knowledge for those working in the field.

II. Analysis

The history and academic profile of the program are impressive. And, despite the question the committee had whether the MA granted is an extension of the BA degrees that the students bring, or is it on a higher level than their BAs, we found

that it is surprisingly both. For example, a number of students were graduates of the Greek Police Academy or Military School, and therefore this MA is an extension of their BA degrees. It offers valuable training to those who monitor in daily life the lives of the refugees and migrants, or asylum-seekers. But we also spoke with students with BAs in academic fields, and this MA was definitely an extension of their first degree, especially because it offered practical training. The committee found this duality impressive: it functioned well academically, but it also brought students from diverse backgrounds together. They learn how to ask the right questions and how to solve the problems of the vulnerable newcomers. Who are the vulnerable peoples? How do we judge vulnerability? Students acquire the necessary methodological tools for spotting the problems, offering solutions and hearing the voices of the vulnerable. They receive knowledge about the history of migration, and about migration as discourse, theories of migration, modern Islam, and performativity among others. The history and the academic profile of the Program is excellent.

III. Conclusions

The degree of compliance to the standards of Quality Accreditation is excellent as it pertains to the design and approval of the program. The current status of the Program, as it was described by professors, students, and local social partners is admirable and promising. The academic demands are high and there are no areas of concern on that front. It could potentially become stronger academically if it reached out and collaborated more with other departments, such as Social Anthropology and History. Anthropologists have established an ‘Observatory’ for migration problems, with which this Program collaborates, but it might benefit from expanding this and other academic connections. Time is needed, of course, for more ties to be created between students. Academically, another recommendation would be to include more courses on gender and sexuality differences, as well as a more gender balanced teaching staff.

Panel Judgement

Principle 2: Design and approval of postgraduate study programmes	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

None

PRINCIPLE 3: STUDENT-CENTRED LEARNING, TEACHING, AND ASSESSMENT

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD ENSURE THAT POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES PROVIDE THE NECESSARY CONDITIONS TO ENCOURAGE STUDENTS TO TAKE AN ACTIVE ROLE IN THE LEARNING PROCESS. THE ASSESSMENT METHODS SHOULD REFLECT THIS APPROACH.

Student-centred learning and teaching plays an important role in enhancing students' motivation, their self-evaluation, and their active participation in the learning process. The above entail continuous consideration of the programme's delivery and the assessment of the related outcomes.

The student-centred learning and teaching process

- *respects and attends to the diversity of students and their needs by adopting flexible learning paths*
- *considers and uses different modes of delivery, where appropriate*
- *flexibly uses a variety of pedagogical methods*
- *regularly evaluates and adjusts the modes of delivery and pedagogical methods aiming at improvement*
- *regularly evaluates the quality and effectiveness of teaching, as documented especially through student surveys*
- *strengthens the student's sense of autonomy, while ensuring adequate guidance and support from the teaching staff*
- *promotes mutual respect in the student-teacher relationship*
- *applies appropriate procedures for dealing with the students' complaints*
- *provides counselling and guidance for the preparation of the thesis*

In addition

- *The academic staff are familiar with the existing examination system and methods and are supported in developing their own skills in this field.*
- *The assessment criteria and methods are published in advance. The 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 learning process.*
- *Student assessment is conducted by more than one examiner, where possible.*
- *Assessment is consistent, fairly applied to all students and conducted in accordance with the stated procedures.*
- *A formal procedure for student appeals is in place.*
- *The function of the academic advisor runs smoothly.*

Documentation

- *Sample of a fully completed questionnaire for the evaluation of the PSP by the students*
- *Regulations for dealing with students' complaints and appeals*
- *Regulation for the function of academic advisor*
- *Reference to the teaching modes and assessment methods*

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The Postgraduate Study Programme (PSP) under review demonstrates a thoroughly student-centred learning environment, incorporating flexible delivery modes, robust assessment methods, and active student engagement throughout the learning process. From the outset, new students receive clear guidelines on the PSP's purpose and objectives through an introductory event, which establishes a supportive context and ensures they are well-prepared for their postgraduate

studies.

Transparency in teaching and assessment is evident in the explicit learning objectives and evaluation criteria, which are made available at the beginning of each course through the Department's website and repeated during initial class meetings. Students benefit from predefined deadlines and timetables, allowing them to manage their studies effectively and balance professional commitments with academic responsibilities. Faculty members employ a range of participatory teaching methods—including case studies, student-led presentations, and open discussions—that foster meaningful engagement and respect for diverse backgrounds. This approach strengthens students' autonomy, nurtures mutual respect between instructors and learners, and maintains a shared sense of responsibility for academic progress.

Central to the PSP's implementation is the extensive use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT), particularly important since the programme is offered entirely at a distance. Through interactive online platforms, students receive lecture materials, engage in class discussions, and collaborate on assignments. These platforms also allow for timely feedback, ensuring students can refine their understanding and continually progress toward the intended learning outcomes.

The programme stands out for its encouragement of experiential knowledge and real-world applicability. By discussing professional experiences in a classroom setting—albeit a virtual one—students connect theory with practice and benefit from each other's unique perspectives. The faculty's willingness to provide extra support outside class hours, including online consultations and additional readings, further enriches the learning experience and underscores the commitment to student success.

Opportunities for continuous improvement are also present. Although students report high levels of satisfaction with the content and organisation of the PSP, they have expressed interest in additional in-person or field-based activities— such as summer schools or international visits—to further enhance practical skills and foster networking. Still, this desire for further experiential elements does not detract from the PSP's overall strong performance in student-centred learning; rather, it points to an avenue for further programme enrichment.

Overall, the PSP fully meets the requirements of Principle 3, exhibiting effective student-centred pedagogy, transparent assessment, and a learning environment that values student autonomy and professional development. By maintaining and expanding upon current good practices—such as regular feedback, interactive online delivery, and clear academic guidance—this PSP solidifies its exemplary standing in postgraduate education and remains well-equipped to adapt to evolving student needs.

II. Analysis

The PSP clearly demonstrates a commitment to student-centered learning. By employing a diverse set of pedagogical methods, ranging from interactive seminars to case studies and research projects, the programme caters to various learning preferences and professional backgrounds. Students assume an active role in their own learning process, indicated by their in-class presentations, their significant contribution to classroom discussions, and their sharing of professional experiences.

The regular use of ICT supports an engaging remote learning model. Online platforms foster consistent communication and the exchange of resources, which appears to successfully replicate the interactive elements found in face-to-face learning environments. Additionally, the PSP's design addresses adult learners' needs, particularly those who balance work commitments with their studies.

In terms of assessment, the programme's structure emphasises clarity and fairness. Students have early access to evaluation criteria, submission guidelines, and timetables, enabling them to prepare and plan accordingly. The PSP's approach to assessment is both transparent and flexible, focusing on student progress, depth of learning, and practical application of knowledge. Feedback—both informal and formal—contributes to the students' sense of autonomy and responsibility.

Although the programme excels in providing online resources and learning activities, there is still potential for enrichment. In-person or hybrid learning events, international exchange opportunities, and summer schools could further expand students' exposure to real-world experiences and foster networking within the academic community.

III. Conclusions

Given the extensive use of student-centred methods, the flexibility of delivery modes, the robust assessment and feedback mechanisms, and the proactive use of ICT, the PSP is found to be Fully ****Compliant**** with Principle 3. Most elements of student-centred learning and assessment are effectively implemented, although some areas could be further strengthened by incorporating additional experiential and face-to-face learning events.

Panel Judgement

Principle 3: Student-centred learning, teaching, and assessment	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

- Introduce field trips specific to the PSP, as well as relevant summer schools, or short intensive workshops—either locally or internationally—to cultivate hands-on experiences and allow for deeper interpersonal connection among students and faculty.
- Facilitate more group-based projects and networking activities (face-to-face or online) to foster a sense of academic community and peer learning in the distance-learning context.
- Continue using student feedback surveys and ongoing evaluations to refine and adapt teaching methods and course materials, ensuring the PSP remains dynamic and responsive to changing professional landscapes.

PRINCIPLE 4: STUDENT ADMISSION, PROGRESSION, RECOGNITION OF POSTGRADUATE STUDIES, AND CERTIFICATION.

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD DEVELOP AND APPLY PUBLISHED REGULATIONS COVERING ALL ASPECTS AND PHASES OF STUDIES (ADMISSION, PROGRESSION, THESIS DRAFTING, RECOGNITION AND CERTIFICATION).

All the issues from the beginning to the end of studies should be governed by the internal regulations of the academic units. Indicatively:

- *the student admission procedures and the required supporting documents*
- *student rights and obligations, and monitoring of student progression*
- *internship issues, if applicable, and granting of scholarships*
- *the procedures and terms for the drafting of assignments and the thesis*
- *the procedure of award and recognition of degrees, the duration of studies, the conditions for progression and for the assurance of the progress of students in their studies*
- *the terms and conditions for enhancing student mobility*

All the above must be made public in the context of the Student Guide.

Documentation

- *Internal regulation for the operation of the Postgraduate Study Programme*
- *Research Ethics Regulation*
- *Regulation of studies, internship, mobility, and student assignments*
- *Degree certificate template*

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The Department of Sociology at the University of the Aegean has developed and published regulations covering all aspects and phases of study. Documentation presented to the EEAP includes: 1) the regulations of the PSP, which encompass the rules concerning admission and the monitoring of students' progress; 2) the Research Ethics Regulation; 3) the regulations regarding internship issues; 4) the regulations concerning student mobility (including recognition); 5) the regulations pertaining to the drafting of assignments and the thesis; 6) the regulations concerning remote teaching; and 7) a specimen of the diploma and the diploma supplement. All these regulations are published on the institution's website and are thus accessible to the students. The application for the admittance to the programme and the electronic copies of the supporting documents are submitted to the Electronic Application Submission System "Nautilus." Students confirmed that all aspects of their studies, from admission to the awarding of diplomas, are communicated to them in a very transparent manner. The EEAP noticed a very high degree of student satisfaction.

II. Analysis

The institution has established clearly defined regulations that are well documented and communicated to all stakeholders. Students are very well supported from admission to the program until the awarding of the degree. The submission of all required documents via the system "Nautilus" ensures the transparency and objectivity of the application and admission process. The EEAP concludes that all aspects concerning student admission, progression, recognition of postgraduate studies, and certification are fully transparent and appropriate.

III. Conclusions

All matters, from the beginning to the completion of studies, are governed by the Department's internal regulations. All relevant regulations are made public through the Student Guide, along with a number of additional documents, and are published on the Department's website.

Panel Judgement

Principle 4: Student admission, progression, recognition of postgraduate studies and certification	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

None

PRINCIPLE 5: TEACHING STAFF OF POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD ASSURE THEMSELVES OF THE LEVEL OF KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS OF THEIR TEACHING STAFF, AND APPLY FAIR AND TRANSPARENT PROCESSES FOR THEIR RECRUITMENT, TRAINING AND FURTHER DEVELOPMENT.

The Institution should attend to the adequacy of the teaching staff of the academic unit teaching at the PSP, the appropriate staff-student ratio, the appropriate staff categories, the appropriate subject areas, the fair and objective recruitment process, the high research performance, the training- development, the staff development policy (including participation in mobility schemes, conferences, and educational leaves-as mandated by law).

More specifically, the academic unit should set up and follow clear, transparent and fair processes for the recruitment of properly qualified staff for the PSP and offer them conditions of employment that recognise the importance of teaching and research; offer opportunities and promote the professional development of the teaching staff; encourage scholarly activity to strengthen the link between education and research; encourage innovation in teaching methods and the use of new technologies; promote the increase of the volume and quality of the research output within the academic unit; follow quality assurance processes for all staff (with respect to attendance requirements, performance, self-assessment, training, etc.); develop policies to attract highly qualified academic staff.

Documentation

- *Procedures and criteria for teaching staff recruitment*
- *Employment regulations or contracts, and obligations of the teaching staff*
- *Policy for staff support and development*
- *Individual performance of the teaching staff in scientific-research and teaching work, based on internationally recognised systems of scientific evaluation (e.g. Google Scholar, Scopus, etc.)*
- *List of teaching staff including subject areas, employment relationship, Institution of origin, Department of origin*

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

Teaching staff are adequate, and the teaching staff-student ratio is satisfactory. Staff are appropriately trained, and their research specialisations match the programme of study. The recruitment process appears to be fair, objective and transparent, in accordance with national standards and following national regulations.

Several new staff have been hired in recent years. This is important for the dynamic of the PSP and the department as a whole, as new staff usually bring cutting edge research in academic units and this PSP is no exception. All staff are research active and (despite the lack of funds) strive to remain mobile, attend

conferences and link with other departments in Europe. There are stable research leave (sabbatical) arrangements and generally we were given the impression that career development is not hindered in any way by structural factors, or implicit academic hierarchies.

II. Analysis

All staff are highly specialised and produce significant research. Scholarly activity is overall encouraged and research outputs are significant and closely linked to what is taught at programme level. There are no irregularities in how staff are hired or develop career-wise. There are two areas where we would like to draw the team's attention to.

First, although instituted in practice, staff did not seem to be fully aware of the importance of research-led teaching at discursive level. Second, and perhaps as a result, the department lacks a stable and structured seminar series that would bring together academics, postgraduate research and taught students as well as external speakers (either from other universities in the country, or from abroad). As a result, the research culture of the department is not as developed as one would expect and there is the need to create spaces for dialogue, presentation of research and critical debate. Such spaces have also a 'mentoring' character and they can become contexts for productive peer-review and advancement of knowledge in the field.

The department, as a whole, has a positive reputation. It can and it does attract highly qualified academic staff who are familiar with new technologies in research and teaching. Funded and unfunded research is published in international publishing houses (such as Routledge) and staff maintain productive research links with colleagues at national and European levels.

III. Conclusions

It has been stated that by the Department that hiring and development processes are transparent, adequate and follow national regulations. Staff are aware of how to develop their career; they are appropriately trained and conduct research that closely matches the subjects taught on the PSP. Nevertheless, the departmental research culture can be strengthened with the introduction of research spaces, peer-review and mentoring practices. The department does not seem to hinder professional development, but we are not sure that it facilitates adequately the production of scholarly activity and the exchange of research knowledge between all strata of the academic community (including research and taught postgraduate students).

Panel Judgement

Principle 5: Teaching staff of postgraduate study programmes	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

The development of a stable seminar series (weekly or fortnightly) with the participation of academic staff, research and taught postgraduate students.

The development of a 'local' annual conference where staff, research students and postgraduate taught students will be able present their work, discuss and offer peer-review comments in a constructive manner. This will familiarise both PSP and research students with the format of presenting original research in appropriate fora.

The development of mentorship structures that could facilitate professional development, sharing resources and networking, the exchange of ideas and good practice.

PRINICPLE 6: LEARNING RESOURCES AND STUDENT SUPPORT

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD HAVE ADEQUATE FUNDING TO COVER THE TEACHING AND LEARNING NEEDS OF THE POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMME. THEY SHOULD –ON THE ONE HAND- PROVIDE SATISFACTORY INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES FOR LEARNING AND STUDENT SUPPORT, AND – ON THE OTHER HAND- FACILITATE DIRECT ACCESS TO THEM BY ESTABLISHING INTERNAL RULES TO THIS END (E.G. LECTURE ROOMS, LABORATORIES, LIBRARIES, NETWORKS, NETWORKS, CAREER AND SOCIAL POLICY SERVICES ETC.).

Institutions and their academic units must have sufficient resources and means, on a planned and long-term basis, to support learning and academic activity in general, so as to offer PSP students the best possible level of studies. The above means include facilities such as the necessary general and more specialised libraries and possibilities for access to electronic databases, study rooms, educational and scientific equipment, IT and communication services, support and counselling services.

When allocating the available resources, the needs of all students must be taken into consideration (e.g. whether they are full-time or part-time students, employed students, students with disabilities), in addition to the shift towards student-centred learning and the adoption of flexible modes of learning and teaching. Support activities and facilities may be organised in various ways, depending on the institutional context. However, the internal quality assurance proves -on the one hand- the quantity and quality of the available facilities and services, and -on the other hand- that students are aware of all available services.

In delivering support services, the role of support and administration staff is crucial and therefore this segment of staff needs to be qualified and have opportunities to develop its competences.

Documentation

- *Detailed description of the infrastructure and services made available by the Institution to the academic unit for the PSP, to support learning and academic activity (human resources, infrastructure, services, etc.) and the corresponding firm commitment of the Institution to financially cover these infrastructure-services from state or other resources*
- *Administrative support staff of the PSP (job descriptions, qualifications and responsibilities)*
- *Informative / promotional material given to students with reference to the available services*
- *Tuition utilisation plan (if applicable)*

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The University of the Aegean provides a variety of resources to meet the academic and administrative needs of its Postgraduate Study Programme (PSP). Although the University hosts physical infrastructure—including classrooms, amphitheatres, laboratories, and a library—this particular programme is delivered through distance learning. As a result, the PSP primarily relies on digital platforms for both synchronous and asynchronous communication. Specifically, teaching is conducted through Zoom, while the *openclass eClass* platform serves as a hub

for sharing course materials, announcements, and interactive communication among students and faculty.

Beyond these digital learning tools, the University's library system offers broad access to both physical and electronic collections. Students can explore various databases and digital libraries using the institution's virtual private network (VPN) or by visiting the library in person. Furthermore, the library facilitates borrowing arrangements with external libraries closer to students' places of residence, underscoring the University's commitment to resource accessibility.

The funding for the PSP seems presumably adequate, indicating the institution's capacity to continue providing the necessary academic and technological support. On the administrative front, the PSP benefits from a departmental secretariat consisting of three staff members, one of whom is allocated exclusively to postgraduate programmes. This dedicated staff member effectively handles inquiries, enrolment procedures, and day-to-day tasks for all postgraduate students in the department.

II. Analysis

From an overall perspective, the University's provision of physical and digital resources is robust, aligning with the core requirements of Principle 6. Although the PSP is delivered online, the breadth of available facilities suggests that any in-person needs—such as optional on-campus events—can be accommodated. More importantly, distance learners benefit from a stable virtual ecosystem, evidenced by the consistent use of Zoom for lectures and *openclass eClass* for comprehensive course management.

One of the key strengths identified is the University's library support structure. With VPN-based remote access and the possibility of borrowing through external libraries, the institution demonstrates strong resource-sharing practices. This ensures that distance learners are not hindered by their geographic location. Additionally, the availability of IT support, well-trained administrative staff, and proactive communication channels signals a robust commitment to student welfare and academic success.

Given the PSP's reliance on technology, it is important to continue monitoring the effectiveness of the chosen platforms and to provide ongoing professional development for administrative and support staff. Regular assessments of how well Zoom, eClass, and library services meet evolving student demands will ensure that resources remain relevant and user-friendly.

III. Conclusions

Overall, the PSP fulfills the requirements of Principle 6 in a ****fully compliant**** manner. Through adequate funding, reliable technological infrastructure, extensive library resources, and dedicated administrative support, the PSP ensures that students are well-equipped to engage with the programme from any location. Students benefit from clear pathways to both digital and physical

resources, as well as from comprehensive support services facilitated by the secretariat. The University's well-organized system of learning resources and student support stands as a commendable model for effective distance education delivery.

Panel Judgement

Principle 6: Learning resources and student support	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

- Ensure that all students, especially those studying remotely, are regularly informed of available services, including library resources, interlibrary loan options, and counselling or career services.
- Continue to review and update the functionalities of Zoom and openclass eClass to ensure that the platforms remain user-friendly and well updated with the appropriate learning material.

PRINCIPLE 7: INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

INSTITUTIONS BEAR FULL RESPONSIBILITY FOR COLLECTING, ANALYSING AND USING INFORMATION, AIMED AT THE EFFICIENT MANAGEMENT OF POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES AND RELATED ACTIVITIES, IN AN INTEGRATED, EFFECTIVE AND EASILY ACCESSIBLE WAY.

Institutions are expected to establish and operate an information system for the management and monitoring of data concerning students, teaching staff, course structure and organisation, teaching and provision of services to students.

Reliable data is essential for accurate information and decision-making, as well as for identifying areas of smooth operation and areas for improvement. Effective procedures for collecting and analysing information on postgraduate study programmes and other activities feed data into the internal system of quality assurance.

The information collected depends, to some extent, on the type and mission of the Institution. The following are of interest:

- *key performance indicators*
- *student population profile*
- *student progression, success, and drop-out rates*
- *student satisfaction with their programmes*
- *availability of learning resources and student support*

A number of methods may be used to collect information. It is important that students and staff are involved in providing and analysing information and planning follow-up activities.

Documentation

- *Report from the National Information System for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (NISQA) at the level of the Institution, the department, and the PSP*
- *Operation of an information management system for the collection of administrative data for the implementation of the PSP (Students' Record)*
- *Other tools and procedures designed to collect data on the academic and administrative functions of the academic unit and the PSP*

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The Department of Sociology at the University of the Aegean operates an information system for managing and monitoring data related to students, teaching staff, course structure and organisation, as well as the provision of services to students. The documentation submitted to the EEAP includes: 1) Data from the years 2015 to 2023, collected through the NISQA and provided annually by the Academic Unit (via IQAS and significantly supported by the QAU), covering staff, economic information, infrastructure, research activities, student demographics, student mobility, and internationalisation; 2) Information regarding the University system; and 3) Information concerning the Open eClass

platform. Additionally, the EEAP has received data on student progression, success rates, and drop-out rates. Both students and staff contribute to the provision and analysis of this information, as well as to follow-up activities. The Academic Unit utilizes platforms provided by the University of the Aegean and national institutions such as the HaHe and the Ministry of Education. All information provided to the EEAP is anonymised to ensure the protection of personal data.

II. Analysis

The Academic Unit has established an efficient information management system through both internal structures (at the departmental and university levels) and in collaboration with external institutional partners.

III. Conclusions

The PSP is fully compliant with the accreditation criteria.

Panel Judgement

Principle 7: Information management	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

None

PRINCIPLE 8: PUBLIC INFORMATION CONCERNING THE POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD PUBLISH INFORMATION ABOUT THEIR TEACHING AND ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES RELATED TO THE POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES IN A DIRECT AND READILY ACCESSIBLE WAY. THE RELEVANT INFORMATION SHOULD BE UP-TO-DATE, OBJECTIVE AND CLEAR.

Information on the Institutions' activities is useful for prospective and current students, graduates, other stakeholders, and the public.

Therefore, Institutions and their academic units must provide information about their activities, including the PSP they offer, the intended learning outcomes, the degrees awarded, the teaching, learning and assessment procedures applied, the pass rates, and the learning opportunities available to their students. Information is also provided on the employment perspectives of PSP graduates.

Documentation

- *Dedicated segment on the website of the department for the promotion of the PSP*
- *Bilingual version of the PSP website with complete, clear and objective information*
- *Provision for website maintenance and updating*

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The Department of Sociology transparently publicizes its educational and academic activities. The department disseminates information about its activities, including the programmes and courses it offers, expected learning outcomes, degrees awarded, teaching and learning methods, evaluation processes, and learning opportunities. All relevant information is available on the department's website. Essential documents such as curricula, degree requirements, course descriptions and internal regulations for the PSP are available both in Greek and English language. There are specific sections offering: a) A Department overview (scientific profile, career prospects, department heads); b) Personnel (academic, administrative, and technical staff); c) Research (research laboratories, IT lab, Jean Monnet Chair); d) programmes offered; e) internships, and f) Erasmus opportunities. A wealth of documents related to the PSP, including study regulations, quality policies, and ethical codes for research, are also published. Some of the students reported that they became aware of the PSP via eduguide.gr.

II. Analysis

Relevant information published on the website in Greek is extensive, while the equivalent in English is limited to essential documents. Additionally, the structure of the departmental website is confusing; one can enter from the university's website, but from the departmental website, one cannot return to the university's homepage. The EEAP considers the fact that students become aware of the PSP through eduguide.gr to be indicative of the efficiency of the public information policy of the Department.

III. Conclusions

The PSP is substantially compliant with the accreditation criteria.

Panel Judgement

Principle 8: Public information concerning the postgraduate study programmes	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	X
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

Given that the program is taught in English, one would expect the website to be fully bilingual, in Greek and English. Also, the structure of the website needs to be fixed. A pathway should be established to allow navigation from the Department's website to the main site of the university.

PRINCIPLE 9: ON-GOING MONITORING AND PERIODIC INTERNAL EVALUATION OF POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES

INSTITUTIONS AND ACADEMIC UNITS SHOULD HAVE IN PLACE AN INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM FOR THE AUDIT AND ANNUAL INTERNAL REVIEW OF THEIR POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES, SO AS TO ACHIEVE THE OBJECTIVES SET FOR THEM, THROUGH MONITORING AND POSSIBLE AMENDMENTS, WITH A VIEW TO CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT. ANY ACTIONS TAKEN IN THE ABOVE CONTEXT SHOULD BE COMMUNICATED TO ALL PARTIES CONCERNED.

The regular monitoring, review, and revision of postgraduate study programmes aim at maintaining the level of educational provision and creating a supportive and effective learning environment for students.

The above comprise the evaluation of:

- a) the content of the programme in the light of the latest research in the given discipline, thus ensuring that the PSP is up to date*
- b) the changing needs of society*
- c) the students' workload, progression and completion of the postgraduate studies*
- d) the effectiveness of the procedures for the assessment of students*
- e) the students' expectations, needs and satisfaction in relation to the programme*
- f) the learning environment, support services, and their fitness for purpose for the PSP in question*

Postgraduate study programmes are reviewed and revised regularly involving students and other stakeholders. The information collected is analysed and the programme is adapted to ensure that it is up-to-date.

Documentation

- *Procedure for the re-evaluation, redefinition and updating of the PSP curriculum*
- *Procedure for mitigating weaknesses and upgrading the structure of the PSP and the learning process*
- *Feedback processes concerning the strategy and quality goal setting of the PSP and relevant decision-making processes (students, external stakeholders)*
- *Results of the annual internal evaluation of the PSP by the Quality Assurance Unit (QAU), and the relevant minutes*

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

This Program has not been externally evaluated, but during this review, all professors and administrative staff expressed their eagerness to improve and revise. The Program and the University worked diligently in preparing and presenting internal evaluation reports and other pertinent materials that indicate that internal evaluations and monitoring are very important. They embraced this external review with professionalism, that we believe is also present in their internal evaluation process. They revealed a commitment in following the process of quality assurance. Overall, their positive approach toward quality assurance is

reassuring that the Program will continue to monitor and evaluate its progress.

II. Analysis

Since the program is relatively young, the number of internal reviews is limited, but very promising. The external committee found that the program is constantly monitoring any problems/concerns that develop or anticipate to develop. They conduct both formal and informal periodic internal evaluations. They take into consideration the students and their critiques of the program. Student voices matter in these reviews, although the majority of them are positive and they praise the curriculum, as well as the required independent fieldwork and research. Assessment methods and criteria are clearly communicated. By combining interim progress reviews, final evaluations, and feedback recommendations, the Program ensures that students receive excellent guidance to achieve excellence.

III. Conclusions

The degree of compliance to the standards of Quality Accreditation is excellent as it pertains to the on-going monitoring and internal evaluation of the Program. The current status of monitoring and internal evaluation is strong and there are no possible areas of concern. The committee is certain that if problems arise, professors are ready to help and re-evaluate. Despite its young age, the Program has performed an excellent job in internal evaluation process and that the objectives of the process have been fully met.

Panel Judgement

Principle 9: On-going monitoring and periodic internal evaluation of postgraduate study programmes	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

None

PRINCIPLE 10: REGULAR EXTERNAL EVALUATION OF POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES

THE POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES SHOULD REGULARLY UNDERGO EVALUATION BY PANELS OF EXTERNAL EXPERTS SET BY HAHE, AIMING AT ACCREDITATION. THE TERM OF VALIDITY OF THE ACCREDITATION IS DETERMINED BY HAHE.

HAHE is responsible for administrating the PSP accreditation process which is realised as an external evaluation procedure, and implemented by panels of independent experts. HAHE grants accreditation of programmes, based on the Reports delivered by the panels of external experts, with a specific term of validity, following to which, revision is required. The quality accreditation of the PSP acts as a means for the determination of the degree of compliance of the programme to the Standards, and as a catalyst for improvement, while opening new perspectives towards the international standing of the awarded degrees. Both academic units and Institutions must consistently consider the conclusions and the recommendations submitted by the panels of experts for the continuous improvement of the programme.

Documentation

- *Progress report of the PSP in question, on the results from the utilisation of possible recommendations included in the External Evaluation Report of the Institution, and in the IQAS Accreditation Report, with relation to the postgraduate study programmes*

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

This Programme has not been externally evaluated in the past. During the current external review, all stakeholders were actively engaged. The Department and the University worked diligently in preparing materials, and presentations and organising and hosting virtual meetings with the Panel. All the meetings included presentations, discussions, and question-and-answer sessions. The Panel had the opportunity to meet, talk, and interact with all the participants of all meetings. The discussions were very constructive and fruitful and were conducted in a cooperative manner and attitude. The efficiency and eagerness of the Department to answer questions and provide additional information and clarifications during the meetings are worth noting.

II. Analysis

Based on the materials submitted and the information gathered during the online presentations and discussions, it appears that all members of staff (teaching and administrative), as well as students, alumni and other stakeholders, are aware of the importance of external review, its usefulness and the contribution it can make in improving the Programme. The current external evaluation process showed that the University and the Department are committed to the letter, spirit and process of quality assurance and external review. There is already in place a step-by-step action plan for utilizing the findings and recommendations of the external

evaluation. As they pointed out during the meetings, it will help them improve by enabling them to identify problematic areas and find suitable solutions.

III. Conclusions

The panel's impression is that the Department and the University are committed to external evaluation as a vital component of a quality assurance system. They worked diligently to facilitate the current review and meet its objectives. Overall, their positive approach toward quality assurance and external review is expected to impact the Programme and contribute to its continuous improvement positively. However, more tangible results and a more meaningful assessment regarding this Principle will be possible when a second external evaluation is carried out.

Panel Judgement

Principle 10: Regular external evaluation of postgraduate study programmes	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

Continue the efforts to improve the Programme.

PART C: CONCLUSIONS

I. Features of Good Practice

The Postgraduate Programme aims to offer a holistic and multidisciplinary approach to migration, with specific emphasis on compulsory migration. The language of the Programme is English, and it is entirely taught remotely. The Programme is well situated in the international field of migration studies and it is supported by academic staff from the Department and other universities in Greece and abroad. All teaching staff are Ph.D. holders who are active scholars and researchers in diverse areas of migration studies, sociology and other related disciplines.

It is stated that the Programme was designed based on the up-to-date international

standards and combines academic knowledge and practical research experience. All teaching staff should be praised for their firm commitment, concentrated effort, and enthusiasm to reach this point despite the obstacles and difficulties created by limited resources and other external factors. A cooperative atmosphere, mutual respect and collegial spirit were demonstrated during the accreditation process. The teaching staff has the appropriate qualifications, which are continuously cultivated by development activities at the Department. The curriculum is organized according to the latest trends in the scientific field. The Programme was praised by the social partners, students and alumni, and it is supported by the leadership of the University. The Programme delivers a student-centered education that cultivates diverse perspectives and independence and prepares students for important roles in social life. It prioritizes transparent student selection and a full-time attendance model. The Regulation of Studies document provides comprehensive guidance. The Programme actively encourages and values regular student course evaluations to drive continuous improvement.

II. Areas of Weakness

The academic environment around the Programme needs to be strengthened.

III. Recommendations for Follow-up Actions

-The development of a stable seminar series (weekly or fortnightly) with the participation of academic staff, research and taught postgraduate students.

- The development of a 'local' annual conference where staff, research students and postgraduate taught students will be able present their work, discuss and offer peer-review comments in a constructive manner. This will familiarise both PSP and research students with the format of presenting original research in appropriate fora.

- The development of mentorship structures that could facilitate professional development, sharing resources and networking, the exchange of ideas and good practice.

Introduce specific to the PSP field trips, summer schools, or short intensive workshops—either locally or internationally—to cultivate hands-on experiences and allow for deeper interpersonal connection among students and faculty.

- Facilitate more group-based projects and networking activities (face-to-face or online) to foster a sense of academic community and peer learning in the distance-learning context.
- Continue using student feedback surveys and ongoing evaluations to refine and adapt teaching methods and course materials, ensuring the PSP remains dynamic and responsive to changing professional landscapes.
- Ensure that all students, especially those studying remotely, are regularly informed of available services, including library resources, interlibrary loan options, and counselling or career services.
- Continue to review and update the functionalities of Zoom and openclass eClass to ensure that the platforms remain user-friendly and well updated with the appropriate learning material.
- Given that the program is taught in English, one would expect the website to be fully bilingual, in Greek and English. Also, the structure of the website needs to be fixed. A pathway should be established to allow navigation from the Department's website to the main site of the university.

IV. Summary & Overall Assessment

The Principles where full compliance has been achieved are:

1, 2, 3, 4, 5 , 6 ,7, 9, 10

The Principles where substantial compliance has been achieved are:

8

The Principles where partial compliance has been achieved are:

None

The Principles where failure of compliance was identified are:

None

Overall Judgement	
Fully compliant	X

Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

