ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ

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ΑΡΧΗ ΔΙΑΣΦΑΛΙΣΗΣ ΚΑΙ ΠΙΣΤΟΠΟΙΗΣΗΣ
ΤΗΣ ΠΟΙΟΤΗΤΑΣ ΣΤΗΝ ΑΝΩΤΑΤΗ ΕΚΠΑΙΔΕΥΣΗ

HELLENIC REPUBLIC

H Q A

HELLENIC QUALITY ASSURANCE
AND ACCREDITATION AGENCY

Accreditation Report
for the Undergraduate Study Programme of:

Economics
Institution: University of Ioannina
Date: December 21, 2019

Report of the Panel appointed by the HQA to undertake the review of the Undergraduate Study Programme of **Economics** of the **University of Ioannina** for the purposes of granting accreditation

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PART A: BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT OF THE REVIEW

I.   The Accreditation Panel

The Panel responsible for the Accreditation Review of the Undergraduate Study Programme of **Economics** at the **University of Ioannina** comprised the following three (3) members, drawn from the HQA Register, in accordance with the Law 4009/2011:

1. **Assist. Prof. Michael Talias** (Chair)
    Open University of Cyprus

2. **Prof. Pascalis Raimondos**
    QUT Business School, Australia

3. **Prof. Konstantinos Serfes**
    Drexel University, USA

II.   Review Procedure and Documentation

The accreditation visit was conducted between 16 and 21 December 2019. The Panel was briefed by the HQA, via Skype, on Monday 16 December 2019 and then went on to spend three days on site (at the University campus) meeting various stakeholders ranging from members of the Department's and the University's Quality Assurance teams, academic faculty teaching on the programme, current and past students, external stakeholders (from both the private and public sector). The Panel then convened to consider the voluminous documentation produced by the Department and the HQA, as well as the evidence collected during the on-site visits.

The Accreditation Panel visited the premises of the Ioannina University on December 16, 17 and 18, 2019 and conducted a series of meetings. On 16 December the panel was greeted by the university Vice-Rector/the President of MODIP and the Head of Department of Economics. The Panel had also a meeting with OMEA & MODIP representatives. At the end of the first day, the members of the panel discussed and finalized their impressions of the first day and prepared for the second day of visit.

During the second day, the panel had meetings with teaching staff members, undergraduate students and graduates. The Panel also met various employers from the region, social partners and had the opportunity to visit classrooms, lecture halls, libraries and other facilities. At the end of the second day the panel had a discussion about the outcomes and prepared for the next steps.

During the third day, the Panel had a meeting with OMEA and MODIP representatives. The second meeting of the day was a closure meeting with the Vice Rector/ President of MODIP, the Head of the Department, OMEA and MODIP. In the afternoon the Panel discussed the findings and continued working on the draft Accreditation report.

The last two days the Panel worked in the conference room at the hotel to finalise the Accreditation report. While the Panel prepared its final version of the report, the Panel contacted the Head of the Department and the OMEA representatives for more clarifications.

III. Study Programme Profile

The Department of Economics at the University of Ioannina was founded in 1996 and its operation started in the academic year 1998-1999. The mission of the Department is twofold: i) the development of the economic discipline and ii) the training of graduates as high quality professional economists. The Department consists of 19 faculty members: 3 Professors, 3 Associate Professors, 12 Assistant Professors and 1 Lecturer. The Department also has one member of the Laboratory Teaching Staff (EDIP) and two members of the Specialized Laboratory Technical Staff (EIB).

On a yearly basis, the Department of Economics welcomes approximately 240 undergraduate and 15 postgraduate students.[1] One has to also add the transfer students from other Universities which increases the undergraduate population considerably (to about 350 students). An important objective is the active participation of students in the various activities of the Department. In this way, the involved students can gain a solid scientific basic research, as well as a practical, experience in a specific area of Economics.

The current undergraduate programme started in the academic year 2014 - 2015 as a result of the External Evaluation of the Department in January 2014. This programme is structured in two parts: (i) part A contains the compulsory courses and (ii) part B contains the elective courses. The first part, which is the core of the program, contains 21 compulsory courses that all students attend in the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th semesters. Part B contains 28 optional courses, of which students must choose 15, which are offered in the 6th – 8th semester. Students are required to choose 5 elective courses per semester. During part B, students can either choose a non-specialized degree, within the framework of free choice of courses, or choose to specialize in one of the following two directions: (i) Economic Analysis & Policy and (ii) Applied Economics & Quantitative Methods. It is noted that the acquisition of a specialized degree course requires the attainment and successful examination of at least eight (8) courses from the list of electives.

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[1] We note that postgraduate students do not pay any tuition fees. We will come back to this in Principle 5.

PART B: COMPLIANCE WITH THE PRINCIPLES

Principle 1: Academic Unit Policy for Quality Assurance

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 ALL INSTITUTION'S AREAS OF ACTIVITY, AND PARTICULARLY AT THE FULFILMENT OF QUALITY REQUIREMENTS OF UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMMES. THIS POLICY SHOULD BE PUBLISHED AND IMPLEMENTED BY ALL STAKEHOLDERS.

The quality assurance policy of the academic unit is in line with the Institutional policy on quality, and is included in a published statement that is implemented by all stakeholders. It focuses on the achievement of special objectives related to the quality assurance of study programmes offered by the academic unit.

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 programme, its purpose and field of study; it will realise the programme's strategic goals and it will determine the means and ways for attaining them; it will implement the appropriate quality procedures, aiming at the programme's continuous improvement.

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

a) *the suitability of the structure and organization of the curriculum;*

b) *the pursuit of learning outcomes and qualifications in accordance with the European and the National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education;*

c) *the promotion of the quality and effectiveness of teaching;*

d) *the appropriateness of the qualifications of the teaching staff;*

e) *the enhancement of the quality and quantity of the research output among faculty members of the academic unit;*

f) *ways for linking teaching and research;*

g) *the level of demand for qualifications acquired by graduates, in the labour market;*

h) *the quality of support services such as the administrative services, the Library, and the student welfare office;*

i) *the conduct of an annual review and an internal audit of the quality assurance system of the undergraduate programme(s) offered, as well as the collaboration of the Internal Evaluation Group (IEG) with the Institution's Quality Assurance Unit (QAU);*

Study Programme compliance

The academic unit has a quality assurance policy for the undergraduate programme in question. This policy is consistent with the University's policy and is appropriate for the programme. It includes a commitment to continuous improvement through the involvement of OMEA and MODIP. A number of documents related to quality assurance has been made available to the relevant parties. These documents include relevant, measurable and achievable goals in relation to learning outcomes, research output and student satisfaction. These goals are monitored annually.

Panel judgement

Principle 1: Institution Policy for Quality Assurance	
Fully compliant	**X**
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

N/A

Principle 2: Design and Approval of Programmes

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD DEVELOP THEIR UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMMES FOLLOWING A DEFINED WRITTEN PROCESS WHICH WILL INVOLVE THE PARTICIPANTS, INFORMATION SOURCES AND THE APPROVAL COMMITTEES FOR THE PROGRAMME. THE OBJECTIVES, THE EXPECTED LEARNING OUTCOMES, THE INTENDED PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS AND THE WAYS TO ACHIEVE THEM ARE SET OUT IN THE PROGRAMME DESIGN. THE ABOVE DETAILS AS WELL AS INFORMATION ON THE PROGRAMME'S STRUCTURE ARE PUBLISHED IN THE STUDENT GUIDE.

Academic units develop their programmes following a well-defined procedure. The academic profile and orientation of the programme, the objectives, the subject areas, the structure and organisation, the expected learning outcomes and the intended professional qualifications according to the National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education are described at this stage. The approval or revision process for programmes includes a check of compliance with the basic requirements described in the Standards, on behalf of the Institution's Quality Assurance Unit (QAU).

Furthermore, the programme design should take into consideration the following:

- *the Institutional strategy*
- *the active participation of students*
- *the experience of external stakeholders from the labour market*
- *the smooth progression of students throughout the stages of the programme*
- *the anticipated student workload according to the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System*
- *the option to provide work experience to the students*
- *the linking of teaching and research*
- *the relevant regulatory framework and the official procedure for the approval of the programme by the Institution.*

Study Programme compliance

The programme meets this principle and is designed according to the prevailing standards. The structure of the programme is clearly presented in the annual study guide. The Department has established a clear procedure for the revision/reappraisal of its undergraduate programme. The revision process involves various internal and external stakeholders (via the Curriculum Development Committee and the External Consultative Committee). It is meant to take account of developments in the labour market, current trends in the relevant fields of expertise, the views of students (via the teaching evaluations) etc.

The annual study guide is comprehensive and offers a wealth of relevant information to students attending the programme. Faculty expose students to recent research in economics, by assigning research articles for presentations, "referee reports", and/or reproducing empirical results.

We noted that the students do not have to write a bachelor thesis. The faculty during our discussions indicated the low faculty/student ratio as the main obstacle for this.

We commend the Department for working in close ties with the local business community. A prime example of this is a work-integrated-learning (WIL) programme, where students are

employed through a competitive process, for two months, by private or public companies and funded by the government. The stakeholders from the private and public sector, during our meeting, overwhelmingly supported this programme, but expressed a preference for a longer duration, e.g., 4 months. A longer employment would provide stronger incentives to an employer to invest in the training of a student. However, given that funding is fixed, such a change would imply that fewer students were exposed to WIL. Moreover, the Department has responded to the needs of the local business community by offering special topic courses, e.g., in Health Economics and Entrepreneurship. This notwithstanding, the need for similar courses in other growing and important sectors, such as tourism, was also mentioned. In summary, most of the stakeholders from the private and public sectors recognized the importance of a student having a solid training in economics with some knowledge of accounting and finance.

The need for additional business-oriented courses, such as general marketing, was also expressed by some recent graduates during our meeting with them.

Students should also have the opportunity to take courses for credit from other departments, such as psychology, mathematics and education. While it was mentioned to us that some students indeed take courses from other Departments, it was also noted that the cooperation among Departments in terms of inter-departmental course offerings can be improved.

Panel judgement

Principle 2: Design and Approval of Programmes	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

We recommend the Department to:

- increase the duration of the WIL from 2 to at least 4 months
- consider offering additional elective business courses, such as the ones mentioned above
- work with the University to facilitate inter-departmental course offerings

Principle 3: Student-centred Learning, Teaching and Assessment

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD ENSURE THAT THE UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMMES ARE DELIVERED IN A WAY THAT ENCOURAGES STUDENTS TO TAKE AN ACTIVE ROLE IN CREATING THE LEARNING PROCESS. THE ASSESSMENT METHODS SHOULD REFLECT THIS APPROACH.

Student-centred learning and teaching plays an important role in stimulating students' motivation, self-reflection and engagement 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, enabling 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;*
- *reinforces 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 students' complaints.*

  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;*
- *the regulations for assessment take into account mitigating circumstances;*
- *assessment is consistent, fairly applied to all students and carried out in accordance with the stated procedures;*
- *a formal procedure for student appeals is in place.*

Study Programme compliance

Overall, the programme offers flexibility to students (e.g. through the availability of different pathways involving several elective courses) and entails the use of different modes of delivery (including tutorials). The example of flip-class as a method of delivery is used in some courses and was mentioned as a nice alternative to traditional teaching methods. Such innovations are left to the will of individual instructors and are not supported centrally by the University. Such support could promote a widespread adoption of innovative teaching approaches.

The Department also carries out regular student satisfaction surveys. Furthermore, there is a formal student grade appeal process but there is also an informal one whereby students may approach the relevant academic and ask for feedback on or re-evaluation of exams.

During our meetings some students noted the need for a more formal training in soft skills, presentations skills etc. They also expressed an interest in having more public lectures and, in general, opportunities to engage with outside experts.

Panel judgement

Principle 3: Student- centered Learning, Teaching and Assessment	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

We recommend the Department to:

- engage more with alternative teaching methods, where appropriate
- institute a series of public lectures on topical issues (such an initiative does not have to be very costly)
- spread the use of tutorials and seminars as widely as possible within this programme so as to promote active learning on the part of the students;
- widen the use of mid-terms and problem sets

Principle 4: Student Admission, Progression, Recognition and Certification

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

Institutions and academic units need to put in place both processes and tools to collect, manage and act on information regarding student progression.

Procedures concerning the award and recognition of higher education degrees, the duration of studies, rules ensuring students progression, terms and conditions for student mobility should be based on the institutional study regulations. Appropriate recognition procedures rely on institutional practice for recognition of credits among various European academic departments and Institutions, in line with the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention.

Graduation represents the culmination of the students´study period. Students need to receive documentation explaining the qualification gained, including achieved learning outcomes and the context, level, content and status of the studies that were pursued and successfully completed (Diploma Supplement).

Study Programme compliance

The Department makes an effort to welcome new students by providing them with a wealth of information when they enroll in the programme. It has also established the commendable system of student advisors (one for each of the four years). While we understand that the current legal framework does not promote the monitoring of students' annual progress, the department has established the rule that a student can take no more than the number of courses s/he is supposed to take in that semester plus three (v+3 rule), and in any given semester a student must take the courses that s/he has not passed in previous semesters. This appears to be a simple way to introduce "prerequisites", and indeed a very useful way of taking students through Part A of the programme. However, it may be restrictive for students who are in Part B of their studies.

The Department formally complies with the ECTS framework and issues a Diploma Supplement for its graduates.

As mentioned in Principle 2, the Department has instituted a practical training scheme involving employers from the public and private sectors. Students receive 2 ECTS points on top of the points they have to accumulate for their degree.

Student mobility is also encouraged via the Erasmus+ programme. We noted the excitement of students about the opportunity to visit other Universities, as well as the opportunity to interact with Erasmus students who visit the University of Ioannina.

Panel judgement

Principle 4: Student Admission, Progression, Recognition and Certification	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

We recommend the Department to:

- increase the ECTS points for the practical training scheme, in conjunction with an increased duration (as recommended in Principle 2), and make it a more integral part of the degree and in that case to investigate whether it is legally possible to implement this with zero or very low remuneration
- keep the v+3 rule for Part A of the programme and remove it from Part B
- Introducing prerequisites for the core courses would be ideal for ensuring student progression, but we understand that the sheer size of the undergraduate population makes this difficult

Principle 5: Teaching Staff

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD ASSURE THEMSELVES OF THE QUALIFICATIONS AND COMPETENCE OF THE TEACHING STAFF. THEY SHOULD APPLY FAIR AND TRANSPARENT PROCESSES FOR THE RECRUITMENT AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE TEACHING STAFF.

The Institutions and their academic units have a major responsibility as to the standard of their teaching staff providing them with a supportive environment that promotes the advancement of their scientific work. In particular, the academic unit should:

- *set up and follow clear, transparent and fair processes for the recruitment of properly qualified staff and offer them conditions of employment that recognize 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 members (with respect to attendance requirements, performance, self-assessment, training etc.);*
- *develop policies to attract highly qualified academic staff.*

Study Programme compliance

The Department is bound to follow the national legal framework for the recruitment of academic staff. It offers a supportive and attractive environment to them, e.g. through the provision of funding (although very limited) for active conference attendance, sabbatical leave, opportunity to supervise and work with Ph.D. students, staff mobility (Erasmus+) and reduced administrative responsibilities for junior faculty. Current teaching loads seem to be appropriate. The teaching staff is regularly evaluated by students through questionnaires. The Department also encourages activities that seek to strengthen the link between teaching and research. A few research clusters operate within the Department and the faculty has developed research networks with researchers in other Universities in Greece and abroad.

We commend the Department's initiative to organize a bi-annual conference (IMAEF) which has managed to gain very good reputation. Moreover, a more recent initiative by the Department involves a bi-annual summer school that aims to expose advanced students and staff to cutting-edge methodologies in economics.

The Department has experienced in recent years high mobility amongst its faculty. We see this as a positive sign to the fact that the Department has attracted high quality researchers from its inception. At the same time, however, the Department's low research budget may have been a contributing factor for this high mobility. The Panel feels that, given the high quality of faculty, an increase in the available resources would have a sizeable impact on the Department's performance.

Panel judgement

Principle 5: Teaching Staff	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	**X**
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

We recommend the Department to:

- investigate ways to increase funding for research activities such as seminars[2], traveling to conferences and provide incentives/rewards for high quality research and teaching
- introduce tuition fees to postgraduate courses, which will enhance the quality of the programme and create a win-win opportunity for the Department, the University, and the local community

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[2] One possibility is the Fulbright Intercountry Lecturing Award.

Principle 6: Learning Resources and Student Support

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD HAVE ADEQUATE FUNDING TO COVER TEACHING AND LEARNING NEEDS. 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, BOARDING, CAREER AND SOCIAL POLICY SERVICES ETC.).

Institutions and their academic units must have sufficient funding and means to support learning and academic activity in general, so that they can offer to students the best possible level of studies. The above means could include facilities such as libraries, study rooms, educational and scientific equipment, information and communications services, support or 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 or international students, students with disabilities) and 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 ensures that all resources are appropriate, adequate, and accessible, and that students are informed about the services available to them.

In delivering support services the role of support and administrative staff is crucial and therefore they need to be qualified and have opportunities to develop their competences.

Study Programme compliance

Funding is largely provided by the state. The Department's and the programme's facilities appear to be adequate in terms of office space for staff, computer labs and library resources. The computer labs provide students with an opportunity to use advanced statistical and econometric packages. In addition, the Department has plans to establish an experimental lab.

Administrative support is reported to be satisfactory. We commend the existence of counselling services across the University. The Department makes an active use of the Internet (e.g. via ecourse) for the dissemination of programme- or course-specific information.

Students and staff raised the issue that the Department does not have its own building, which according to them has a negative impact on the quality of the programme. Moreover, classrooms have not been designed to accommodate such large student cohorts. In particular, most rooms have neither comfortable nor spacious enough seats and are too long so that those who sit at the back cannot see the whiteboard or hear the instructor. The Department has partly responded by installing TV monitors in the middle of the long classrooms. These monitors project the power-point slides, but still do not help the students see what is written on the whiteboard.

Panel judgement

Principle 6: Learning Resources and Student Support	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	**X**
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

We recommend the Department to work with the University in improving the classrooms. This can be done either by building new facilities or renovating existing ones according to international standards.

Principle 7: Information Management

INSTITUTIONS BEAR FULL RESPONSIBILITY FOR COLLECTING, ANALYSING AND USING INFORMATION, AIMED AT THE EFFICIENT MANAGEMENT OF UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMMES OF STUDY 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 as well as to the academic community.

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

The information gathered 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 programme(s)*
- *availability of learning resources and student support*
- *career paths of graduates*

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

Study Programme compliance

The Department regularly conducts student evaluations per course. Aggregate scores are disseminated at Departmental and University levels; course-specific scores are seen by a restricted group of administrators. There is clear evidence of systematic data gathering in relation to student profiles, elements of student progression, research activity, graduate satisfaction and career information presented in tables demonstrating trends across years and allowing direct interpretation and comparison, etc.

Panel judgement

Principle 7: Information Management	
Fully compliant	**X**
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

N/A

Principle 8: Public Information

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD PUBLISH INFORMATION ABOUT THEIR TEACHING AND ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES WHICH IS CLEAR, ACCURATE, OBJECTIVE, UP-TO-DATE AND READILY ACCESSIBLE.

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

Therefore, institutions and their academic units provide information about their activities, including the programmes they offer, the intended learning outcomes, the qualifications awarded, the teaching, learning and assessment procedures used, the pass rates and the learning opportunities available to their students, as well as graduate employment information.

Study Programme compliance

The structure of the programme, mode of attendance, degree awarded, the CVs of teaching staff are available online. Brief course outlines are available online. They include a description of the applicable assessment method. The applicable Policy for Quality Assurance is also available online. The published information appears to be up to date, clear and easily accessible. Indeed, the Department's web-page is very well designed.

Panel judgement

Principle 8: Public Information	
Fully compliant	**X**
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

N/A

Principle 9: On-going Monitoring and Periodic Internal Review of Programmes

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

Regular monitoring, review and revision of study programmes aim to maintain the level of educational provision and to create a supportive and effective learning environment for students.

The above comprise the evaluation of:

- *the content of the programme in the light of the latest research in the given discipline, thus ensuring that the programme is up to date;*
- *the changing needs of society;*
- *the students' workload, progression and completion;*
- *the effectiveness of the procedures for the assessment of students;*
- *the students' expectations, needs and satisfaction in relation to the programme;*
- *the learning environment, support services and their fitness for purpose for the programme*

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. Revised programme specifications are published.

Study Programme compliance

There is a procedure in place for the Department's self-assessment of the study programme. The University's Quality Assurance Unit (MODIP) has adopted a model for the internal review of the University's programmes. The Department has also instituted and activated the relevant external consultative committee which brings together, inter alia, non-academic actors such as representatives of employers. There is a self-assessment, the results of which are shared within the Department and communicated to the interested parties.

Panel judgement

Principle 9: On-going Monitoring and Periodic Internal Review of Programmes	
Fully compliant	**X**
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

N/A

Principle 10: Regular External Evaluation of Undergraduate Programmes

PROGRAMMES SHOULD REGULARLY UNDERGO EVALUATION BY COMMITTEES OF EXTERNAL EXPERTS SET BY HQA, AIMING AT ACCREDITATION. THE TERM OF VALIDITY OF THE ACCREDITATION IS DETERMINED BY HQA.

> *HQA is responsible for administering the programme accreditation process which is realised as an external evaluation procedure, and implemented by a committee of independent experts. HQA grants accreditation of programmes, with a specific term of validity, following to which revision is required. The accreditation of the quality of the programmes acts as a means of verification of the compliance of the programme with the template's requirements, and as a catalyst for improvement, while opening new perspectives towards the international standing of the awarded degrees.*
>
> *Both academic units and institutions participate in the regular external quality assurance process, while respecting the requirements of the legislative framework in which they operate.*
>
> *The quality assurance, in this case the accreditation, is an on-going process that does not end with the external feedback, or report or its follow-up process within the Institution. Therefore, Institutions and their academic units ensure that the progress made since the last external quality assurance activity is taken into consideration when preparing for the next one.*

Study Programme compliance

The previous external evaluation (organized by the HQA) was carried out in 2014 and was provided to the Panel. The Department has reported its implementation of actions in response to several of the recommendations that were included in the report of 2014. Staff members appear to be aware of the importance of external review and its potential contributions to improvement. Various stakeholders appear to be actively engaged in the external review. After the submission of the 2014 evaluation report, the Department discussed the committee's recommendations and implemented a large part of them, including some that relate to the undergraduate programme. These actions appear in the Department's progress report in March 2019.[3] This report was written in collaboration with the Department's internal evaluation team (OMEA) as well as the University's Quality Assurance Team (MODIP) on the basis of HQA's model report and guidance.

Panel judgement

Principle 10: Regular External Evaluation of Undergraduate Programmes	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

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[3] See, "Πρόταση ακαδημαικής πιστοποίησης προγράμματος προπτυχιακών σπουδών" March 2019.

Panel Recommendations

N/A

PART C: CONCLUSIONS

I. Features of Good Practice

- The use of IT (e.g. ecourse), and the dissemination of information via the Department's well-designed web page
- Practical training (WIL) for students
- Beneficial collaboration with the local business community
- The use of study advisors
- Doctoral students teach tutorials to undergraduate students
- The accessibility of faculty to students
- The presence of research-active staff amongst teaching faculty
- Dedication of faculty to the goals of the Department
- Bi-annual conference and summer school

II. Areas of Weakness

- The absence of formal, systematic training in terms of teaching skills across the University, at least for junior faculty
- The need for greater use of mid-terms and problem sets, to the extent that the current applicable framework allows it
- The Department should try to find ways to increase the available resources to fund seminars, submission fees, conferences, and other research and teaching activities
- The University's stand against tuition fees in postgraduate programmes
- The physical condition of some classrooms

III. Recommendations for Follow-up Actions

1. Increase the duration of the WIL from 2 to at least 4 months
2. Consider offering additional elective business courses
3. Work with the University to facilitate inter-departmental course offerings
4. Engage more with alternative teaching methods, where appropriate
5. Institute a series of public lectures on topical issues
6. Spread the use of tutorials and seminars as widely as possible
7. Widen, where possible, the use of mid-terms and problem sets
8. Increase the ECTS points for the practical training scheme (WIL)
9. Keep the v+3 rule for Part A of the programme and remove it from Part B
10. Investigate ways to increase funding for research activities
11. Provide incentives/rewards for high quality research and teaching
12. Introduce tuition fees to postgraduate courses
13. Work with the University to improve the classrooms

IV. Summary & Overall Assessment

The Principles where full compliance has been achieved are:

Principle 1: Academic Unit Policy for Quality Assurance

Principle 2: Design and Approval of Programmes

Principle 3: Student-centred Learning, Teaching and Assessment

Principle 4: Student Admission, Progression, Recognition and Certification

Principle 7: Information Management

Principle 8: Public Information

Principle 9: On-going Monitoring and Periodic Internal Review of Programmes

Principle 10: Regular External Evaluation of Undergraduate Programmes

The Principles where substantial compliance has been achieved are:

Principle 5: Teaching Staff

Principle 6: Learning Resources and Student Support

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	

The members of the Accreditation Panel for the Undergraduate Programme Economics of the University of Ioannina

Name and Surname   Signature

- **Assist. Prof. Michael Talias (Chair)**, Open University of Cyprus, Nicosia, Cyprus

- **Prof. Pascalis Raimondos**, Queensland University of Technology, Brisbane, Queensland, Australia

- **Prof. Konstantinos Serfes**, Drexel University, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA