Accreditation Report
for the Postgraduate Study Programme of:

Public Policy and Management

Institution: Athens University of Economics and Business
Date: 24 July 2023

Report of the Panel appointed by the HAHE to undertake the review of the Postgraduate Study Programme of **Public Policy and Management** of the **Athens University of Economics and Business** for the purposes of granting accreditation.

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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 **Public Policy and Management** of the **Athens University of Economics and Business** comprised the following four (4) members, drawn from the HAHE Register, in accordance with Laws 4009/2011 & 4653/2020:

1. **Professor Symeon Giannakos (Chair)**
    Salve Regina University, Newport, RI, USA

2. **Professor Emeritus Joseph Joseph**
    University of Cyprus, Nicosia, Cyprus

3. **Professor Thomas Skouteris**
    American University of Cairo, Cairo, Egypt

4. **Ms Evangelia Lekaki, Student**
    Department of International and European Affairs, University of Piraeus, Piraeus, Greece

II.   Review Procedure and Documentation

It should be stated at the outset that the review of the Public Policy and Management postgraduate program in the Department of Management Science and Technology at the Athens University of Economics and Business took place during the same week as the review of the postgraduate program in International Negotiations of the Department of International and European Studies at the same university. Subsequently, some of the meetings overlap and this is made clear to avoid any confusion. Also, parts of the two reviews will overlap as well.

In preparation for the review, Dr Christina Besta, General Director of HAHE, held an online orientation meeting on Friday, June 16 at 15:00. On Monday, June 19, at 15:00 the External Evaluation and Accreditation Panel (EEAP), met online for one hour to plan the review process. HAHE had already made available to the AP preparation material such as guidelines, accreditation standards, and the accreditation template along with the Program's accreditation proposal and supporting documentation.

At 16:00 PM, the EEAP held its first official meeting of the review process. It met with the Director of the Public Policy and Management program, the director of the International Negotiations program, the Head of the Department of Management Science and Technology, the Head of the Department for International and European Studies, the Head of MODIP, MODIP staff, members of OMEA and members of each program's steering committee. Each program director presented the program overview, discussed each program's history and development, and answered questions from the EEAP. The Head of MODIP discussed each program's degree of compliance with the standards for quality accreditation.

At 17:00 of the same day, the EEAP met for 30 minutes with members of the teaching and administrative staff to discuss facilities, the library, classrooms, and laboratories. The EEAP was provided with links to video presentations of the various facilities of the University building each program is housed. The first day of the review concluded with a debriefing meeting of the EEAP.

On Tuesday the 20th at 15:00 the EEAP met with members of the faculty of the Public Policy and Management program and discussed hiring processes, teaching methods, student evaluations, research agendas, and faculty workloads. At 16:00 the EEAP met with current students in the program and discussed academic issues and concerns, academic advising, and the students' overall degree of satisfaction with their academic experiences. Following a short break, the EEAP then met with program graduates followed by a meeting with employers and social partners. They discussed the program's strengths and weaknesses and their relationship with the program and its faculty. Following a debriefing meeting, the EEAP came together for the closing meeting with the Department Head, the Program's director, the Head of MODIP, OMEA staff and faculty members of the program's steering committee.

All meetings were contacted in a cordial and professional manner and the review process was efficient and effective.

III.   Postgraduate Study Programme Profile

The Public Policy and Management program was created in 2009 as an interdisciplinary one between the Department of Economics, the Department of International and European Economic Studies, and the Department of Management Science and Technology. The Program at the time required a total of 9 obligatory courses, three obligatory courses for each of two concentrations (Public Policy and Public Management) and two electives. I addition the program required the completion of a thesis. All and all this were a large graduate program, which was nonetheless terminated in 2017 as part of a general overhaul undertaken by the Greek Ministry of Education. The program was reinstated in its current form in 2018. It now requires a total of eight obligatory courses for all students and four more for each of the two concentrations (Public Policy and Public Management). The program also requires a thesis.

For the year 2020-21 the program had a total of 83 applications and accepted 25, in 2021-22 it had 60 applications and accepted 23 and in 2022-23, it had 50 applications and accepted 18. Some of the students are part time and some are full time. Courses are offered over three three-month sessions. Full-time students can complete the program in one year, while part-times students can complete it in two years. Exam periods are scheduled for each three-month session. The program is designed for working professionals and classes are offered in the evening hours. Subsequently, near one hundred percent of graduates are employed. The program prides itself of being a high-ranking one in comparison with similar European programs.

The educational goals of the program aim to equip the students with the necessary skills for a successful career in the broader public sector; to build cooperation networks with the international scientific community; and to connect academic processes with the needs of the broader market. Specific strategies implemented to achieve the goals are not stated on the website of the program and were not included in the presentation made to the EEAP. However, references were made in the report of the advisor board made available to the EEAP. The main strategy mentioned there is to provide high level of instruction, most relevant teaching material, and high quality of services.

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 Quality assurance policy of the Department of Department of Management and Technology at Athens University of Economics and Business is stated clearly and the

Departments website: [Quality Policy | Athens University of Economics and Business (aueb.gr)](#)
It is well integrated into quality assurance policy of the University: [Quality Policy | Athens University of Economics and Business (aueb.gr)](#) Overall the policy aims in the implementation of procedures which ensure:

- *the adequacy of the structure and organization of the curriculum,*
- *the pursuit of learning outcomes and qualifications in accordance with the European and National Higher Education Qualifications Framework,*
- *promoting the quality and effectiveness of teaching,*
- *the suitability of the qualifications of the teaching staff,*
- *promoting the quality and quantity of the research work of the members of the academic unit,*
- *the ways in which teaching is linked to research,*
- *the level of demand for graduates' qualifications in the labour market,*
- *the quality of support services, such as administration, libraries and student care services,*
- *Carrying out the annual internal evaluation of the Undergraduate Program in the framework of the Internal Quality Assurance System in collaboration with the Internal Evaluation Team of the Department and the Quality Assurance Unit of the Institution.*

The program's accreditation application makes references to goals, but it is not clear what these are and what is the specific strategy applied to achieve them. When they are stated, they are done so in general terms.

II.   Analysis

As it will be demonstrated by this review, the program is structured in a sensible and logical way with highly qualified faculty and teaching standards. It provides a much-needed educational service to many professionals in the public sector and for that reason it is a highly sought-after program. It enjoys the availability of university services which are of high quality and adequate for graduate study.

III.   Conclusions

There is no doubt that the program provides a quality education. Documentation however is not always available or adequate. However, the quality assurance structure is in place and is well integrated with the department's OMEA and the university's MODIP.

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

- Provide better and more elaborate documentation, especially on how specific learning outcomes are achieved in terms of the methods used and their effectiveness
- Rely on different levels of measuring learning outcomes rather than the current predominant practice of final examinations
- Find ways to move away from the practice of allowing students to cut classes and repeat examinations

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 PRORAMME 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 institution's approach to developing postgraduate study programmes exemplifies a comprehensive and well-articulated process. Integral to this procedure is the incorporation of stakeholders, encompassing participants, data sources, and approval committees, ultimately resulting in programmes with clear objectives, projected learning outcomes, and employment prospects. The institution's transparency is evident in its publication of program details and structure in the student guide, facilitating student understanding and choice. Courses are designed with a keen emphasis on deepening knowledge and skill application, integrating research methodologies, and encouraging participation in research projects. The required documentation was provided in the dossier.

II. Analysis

The systematic process adheres to the European and National Qualifications Frameworks and the Dublin Descriptors for level 7, ensuring that expected learning outcomes align with recognized academic standards. The institution's commitment to continuous improvement is manifest in its ongoing evaluation of learning outcomes' achievement and the learning process' feedback. Notably, the programme design is influenced by various factors, such as institutional strategy, student involvement, labour market insights, and student workload calibrated to the ECTS for level 7. Furthermore, the program contemplates the possibility of providing practical work experience, connecting teaching and research, and upholding the relevant regulatory framework. All the above has been corroborated in the Committee's interviews with students, faculty, and external stakeholders, and reflected in the report of the Program's Advisory Committee. External stakeholders (e.g. employers) recommended further work in the direction of connecting students to the labour market through directed student learning at the workplace possibilities.

III. Conclusions

The institution demonstrates a model of postgraduate program development and approval that meets the requirements, striking a balance between academic rigor and real-world relevance. Its design and implementation process underscore a commitment to quality education, resulting in programs that are not only academically challenging but also meaningful in today's dynamic labour market. The regular assessment and transparent communication of learning outcomes stand as testament to the institution's dedication to student success. The Quality Assurance Unit's role in verifying program compliance reinforces the overall robustness and integrity of the process, solidifying the institution's reputation for delivering top-tier postgraduate education.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

The institution should reinforce post-graduate education through the institutionalization of alumni relations.

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 program demonstrates a strong commitment to delivering a flexible curriculum. It effectively utilizes government regulations to provide different delivery modes when needed

or requested by students. While there are efforts to incorporate different pedagogical methods, there is space for further enrichment of student-centered pedagogy. The program consistently administers course evaluations emphasizing the importance of student feedback. It actively promotes networking channels for students both during their studies and after graduation, fostering a strong sense of community. The relationships between students and teaching staff are highly functional, with professors readily available to guide students throughout their educational journey. Assessment methods are communicated in advance, although there may be room for improvement in terms of clarity and specificity of assessment criteria. The program has well-established academic advising and student appeals procedures, as evidenced by the relevant documentation.

II.   Analysis

By providing a part-time study option, the program demonstrates its commitment to accommodating the students' demanding schedules. As provided by state legislation for unexpected situations, there is also the option for a maximum of thirty percent of courses to be delivered remotely. The Study Guide shows that teaching is mainly carried out through lectures and audio-visual material. In some courses, guest speakers are invited, and case studies, analysis, polls, and practical application of tools are used. Although the attempt to integrate different tools in teaching is commendable, from the sake of further improving the program, more diverse student-centered teaching approaches could be adopted. Regarding the evaluation methods, they are communicated to the students in advance and are clear, but the intended learning outcomes to be achieved are not precisely mentioned. Near the end of each semester, the quality and efficiency of the teaching is evaluated through course evaluations. Students can also register their complaints through an appeals form, which is also available on the program's website, which sets out the specific procedure to be followed once the form is submitted. The professors are always available and close to the student, yet maintaining a relationship of mutual respect. This motivates and inspires students to remain active participants in the learning process and to want to delve deeper into their study subjects. The networking channels promoted by the program have well contributed to the development and maintenance of relationships between students, during and after their studies. However, there were hints for initiatives that will further strengthen the relationships of both students and of students and professors, creating a stronger sense of academic community. In conclusion, regarding the role of the academic advisor, it is observed that it has not yet been implemented in practice. However, this can be attributed to the fact that it was initiated recently and has not yet realized its potential.

III.   Conclusions

In conclusion, the program showcases a strong commitment to flexibility, accommodating students' needs through part-time and remote delivery options. The current teaching methods incorporate a variety of approaches, including lectures, audio-visual materials, and practical applications. Efforts to embrace more student-centered approaches are commendable and should be further expanded. The program effectively communicates evaluation methods in advance, but there is a need for clearer assessment criteria. Student course evaluations play a

valuable role in assessing teaching quality and driving continuous improvement. The establishment of a formal procedure for handling complaints highlights the program's dedication to student support. There is room for enhancing networking channels and fostering a stronger academic community. Going forward, the successful implementation of the recently initiated academic advisor role will provide valuable guidance and support to students, further enhancing their learning experience and overall satisfaction.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

- Enhance the academic advisor's role.
- Promote events that offer opportunities for all participants in the program for engagement and interaction to foster relationships and build a stronger sense of academic interest and community.
- Provide precise assessment criteria for each course.
- Try to incorporate more student-centered teaching approaches.

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 program provides all the necessary documents of evidence covering all aspects and phases of studies. Future students can be informed about the admission procedure, the required documents, tuition fees as well as the structure and content of the program through the website. There are well-defined procedures to monitor students' progression and all requirements for and rights of students are clearly stated. The Certificate and Diploma Supplement are adequately descriptive and ECTS is applied across the curriculum. There are also guidelines regarding thesis drafting and a Code of Research Ethics to inform and educate students on how to write properly respecting the intellectual property of others and maintaining academic integrity.

II.   Analysis

The Student Guide provides comprehensive information about the program's operation and offered courses, outlining what students can expect throughout their studies. The student admission procedures and required documents are also clearly stated in the study guide and the program 's website. While there are opportunities for students' mobility and internships, it was observed that is not extensively promoted. External stakeholders have suggested collaborations with public management services/public sector to provide internship opportunities for students. These opportunities not only offer practical experience but also

inspire students for their thesis work and/or provide real-world cases and data. The program ensures effective monitoring of students' progression through clear expectations of academic behaviour and compliance with examination and assessment regulations. For the implementation of the PSP thesis, there are defined quality requirements in place, along with a Thesis Handbook and a Code of Research Ethics. Students receive adequate support from their supervisors throughout their research projects. Furthermore, the program issues the Diploma Supplement automatically in both Greek and English languages, facilitating international recognition of the degree. It is important to also address a couple of inconsistencies. The program's regulation states that each faculty member can supervise up to five diploma theses, but the Panel was informed orally that the maximum is two. It is recommended to clarify and establish uniform information to avoid any confusion and anticipate them before they arise. Furthermore, there is a discrepancy in the tuition fees mentioned in the Decision of the Senate on re-establishment and other sources, with one indicating €5,500 and the others €5,200. However, the context and content of the PSP program have been effectively designed to align with the needs of the labour market. As a result, previous graduates have acquired valuable knowledge and skills that have equipped them to meet the demands of their respective fields of work and advance their careers.

III.   Conclusions

The regulation of studies and the Study Guide provide comprehensive information about the program, including the duration of studies, admission procedures, thesis guidelines, student support services, rights and obligations of students, tuition fees, scholarships, and opportunities for international mobility. Overall, the program demonstrates a commitment to providing clear guidelines, support, and resources to monitor students' progression, promote mobility opportunities, ensure compliance with quality requirements for the thesis, and offer comprehensive information for students. With ongoing efforts to enhance student mobility and further synergies with external organizations, the program has the potential to enrich students' educational experiences and foster their professional development even more.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

- Provide and encourage students to engage in mobilities and internships more.
- Information regarding tuition appear to be inconsistent across different sources of information.

PRINCIPLE 5: TEACHING **S**TAFF **O**F **P**OSTGRADUATE **S**TUDY **P**ROGRAMMES

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

The Department, recognising the importance of teaching and research, follows a clear, transparent, and fair process for the recruitment of qualified staff. Their expertise, international background, high qualifications, and enthusiasm enhance the quality of classroom teaching and research output. As this is an interdepartmental and interdisciplinary programme, the teaching staff comes from different departments. All of them are Ph.D. holders, active researchers, productive scholars, and dedicated teachers. New technologies are widely used in the classroom and in communicating with students. The staff-student ratio is very good.

II. Analysis

The teaching staff follow innovative and widely used pedagogical practices and instructional methods that meet international standards. There is enthusiasm and skills in utilizing new

technologies, both in the classroom and in interaction among faculty and students. The EEAP had the opportunity to interact with students and received the impression that they think very highly of their teachers. Current students as well as graduates talked with respect, gratitude and admiration about their professors, the departmental culture, and the learning environment. They confirmed that their teachers are committed, accessible, understanding, and ready to provide support and guidance. Overall, the teaching, encouragement and advising provided by faculty members are evident and highly appreciated by the students.

III. Conclusions

The Department and the University provide encouragement and adequate opportunities for the professional development of the faculty, although there is room for improvement. All teaching staff should be commended for the firm commitment, concentrated effort, and enthusiasm in maintaining high-quality teaching and research despite the obstacles and difficulties created by limited resources and other external factors for which the Department cannot be blamed. It is pointed out that there is a collaborative climate in the Department built on, and reflecting, mutual respect and collegial spirit, not only among faculty members, but also between students and teaching staff.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

- The excellent collegial atmosphere in the Department and accessibility of faculty by the students should be maintained and further enhanced, as it is instrumental in sharing experiences and getting feedback.
- Faculty members could intensify their efforts and enhance their high-quality research output, especially by publishing in international peer-reviewed journals and publishing houses.
- The Department and the University could seek ways and means to provide further support to faculty members to enhance research and intensify their efforts for attracting external funding, especially through international and European projects. This is in line with the broader need to address the general systemic problem of an inadequately funded public university system. Addressing this issue could also help meet, to some degree, the broader challenges which universities and departments are facing, such as attracting and retaining more faculty of international calibre.

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 LEARING 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-centered 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

It seems that the program responds to this Principle adequately. There are infrastructures and services available for students, and the administrative staff plays an important role in informing them about everything available to them. Students' access to several electronic services is facilitated by the fact that with a common password and username, they have access to all of them. The program uses the tuition fees to cover its operating expenses ensuring its smooth operation and its viability.

II.   Analysis

The university provides the necessary infrastructure in some of its buildings in the Public Policy and Management PSP to support learning and academic activity. There is also care for access to the teaching areas and for people with special needs. The classrooms are functional, equipped with a projector and microphone, and adequate enough in terms of technological equipment as stated by the teaching staff. The administrative staff is highly qualified and received the most positive comments related to the support provided throughout the entire study period. Also, during the first days of the study cycle, students are informed not only by the welcome ceremony but also by the Secretariat about all the available services that are available for use. They receive an informative email; however, this information is also accessible from other sources such as the Study Guide and the Internal Regulation for the operation of the Master's Program. That said, not all information is provided through the website. The library provides a wealth of printed and electronic material available to students, to enrich their academic journey. Support services are also provided for careers, international mobility, sports and cultural activities, and many more. However, what is missing is the role of the academic advisor in practice, who will significantly upgrade the entire learning experience for the student. Regarding the income derived from student tuition fees, these are mainly allocated for program sustainability purposes by covering operational costs, equipment costs, staff salaries, scholarships, etc.

III.   Conclusions

The university's Public Policy and Management program offers satisfactory infrastructure and support for learning. The buildings are equipped with necessary amenities, including accessible teaching areas. The administrative staff is highly qualified and does an excellent job of informing students about available services. The library offers a wide range of resources to enhance academic journeys and that could be also fostered with the active presence of an academic advisor. Additionally, the university provides support services for careers, international mobility, sports, and cultural activities. Student tuition fees contribute to program sustainability by covering operational costs, equipment, staff wages, scholarships, etc.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

Develop ways of encouraging more interaction between students and academic advisors.

PRINCIPLE 7: INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

INSTITUTIONS BEAR FULL RESPONISBILITY FOR COLLECTING, ANALYSING AND USING INFORMATION, AIMED AT THE EFFICIENT MANAGEMENT OF POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES AND RELATED ACTIVITIES, IN AN INTEGRATED, EFFECTIVE AND EASLILY 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 graduate program displays a commitment to Principle 7 of Information Management. An information system is in place to manage and monitor crucial data related to students, faculty, course structure, and student services. Key performance indicators, student profiles, progression rates, satisfaction levels, and the accessibility of learning resources are given consideration. Both students and staff are actively involved in the process of gathering and analysing data. Moreover, the program employs the National Information System for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (NISQA) and maintains a data collection system for the implementation of the Postgraduate Study Programme (PSP). The response rate in student evaluations of courses is high and statistically relevant providing a reliable basis for corroborating the above.

II. Analysis

The data collection and analysis methods are robust, contributing to decision-making processes and positively impacting student experiences and outcomes. Involving students and staff in the data collection process adds an element of transparency to the proceedings. The use of varied data sources, including NISQA reports and the PSP implementation database, provides a well-rounded understanding of the program's performance. This multifaceted approach helps identify areas that work well and those that may require attention, enabling an informed, data-driven approach to program enhancement.

III. Conclusions

The institution's adherence to Principle 7 is notable. The dedication towards collating, analysing, and utilizing data for the continuous improvement of the graduate program is apparent. The comprehensive and inclusive information management system assures quality and informs decisions. The active involvement of students and staff not only ensures a wide range of perspectives but also improves the relevance of the collected data. The graduate program appears to use information management as a critical part of its strategy to maintain standards and support student success. Overall, the Committee finds that the institution is fully compliant with Principle 7.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

Vital data and information should be readily available

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 institution abides by Principle 8, offering transparent and accessible information on its postgraduate study programs via its website. The information available, which includes intended learning outcomes, awarded degrees, teaching and assessment procedures, pass rates, and employment perspectives of graduates, is adequately detailed and up to date. A dedicated segment on the department's website is devoted to the postgraduate study program. Provisions for website maintenance and updating are apparent. The website does not represent the most advanced or dynamic designs seen in the field. Notable features of the website include a virtual tour and a section dedicated to student testimonials. However, while functional and informative, the website does not incorporate all advanced features that some contemporary university websites exhibit.

II. Analysis

The institution's efforts to provide clear and objective information about its postgraduate programs through its website are commendable, however, compared to some of the more advanced university websites, it falls somewhat short in terms of modern features and design. The Committee understands that possibilities for improvement are a function of available financial resources. The virtual tour and student testimonials are standout features, bringing the campus to life for prospective students and providing real-life experiences and insights. Nonetheless, compared to more technologically advanced university websites, there is room for improvement. Enhancements could include integrated live chat or AI chatbot functionality for immediate query resolution and personalized student portals for tailored information

access. Furthermore, some of the most advanced university websites feature a vibrant community section, including blogs or forums for students, faculty, and alumni, fostering a sense of community and ongoing engagement. Also, the adoption of accessibility features for differently abled users would improve inclusivity.

III.   Conclusions

The Institution's efforts to uphold Principle 8 through its website are commendable. With features like a virtual tour and student testimonials, it offers an interactive and authentic view of life at the institution. However, to meet the standards of more technologically advanced university websites, the institution could consider adding features like live chat or chatbot assistance, personalized student portals, a community section with blogs or forums, and improved accessibility features. Despite these areas for potential enhancement, the institution's dedication to maintaining an informative and accessible platform for its postgraduate study programs is evident and praiseworthy.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations
- To the extent that budget permits, modernize the website with the addition of new technologies.
- Ensure that information across different elements of the website is consistent.

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

The Department and the University have in place internal self-assessment procedures and mechanisms, which are part of an efficient quality assurance system, providing for regular monitoring, review and revision of the Programme. The internal quality assurance system aims at maintaining good Programme standards and an appropriate level of education while creating a supportive and effective learning environment for students. MODIP (Μονάδα Διασφάλισης Ποιότητας), OMEA (Ομάδα Εσωτερικής Αξιολόγησης), and the departmental Study Programme Committee (Επιτροπή Προγράμματος Σπουδών) play a significant role throughout the various stages of internal self-assessment. The outcomes of self-assessment

are properly recorded, analysed, shared and utilized, especially in formulating and communicating recommendations and action plans.

II. Analysis

Constant efforts are made to review and revise the Programme to ensure that it is up-to-date and in line with the latest research and pedagogical approaches. Revisions are also aimed at harmonizing its objectives and content with students' needs and expectations, maintaining international standards and following best practices. They also take into consideration the changing needs of society and the expectations of students who provide evaluations of courses and Faculty, as well as the overall learning environment.

III. Conclusions

The EEAP is convinced that the commitment of the Department and the on-going internal monitoring and evaluation ensure that high quality teaching and research are firm and clear objectives embedded in the Programme. The internal review and monitoring of the Programme reflect an academically rigorous and open departmental and internal university quality assurance process. All actions taken are communicated to all parties and stakeholders concerned. Overall, the internal quality assurance system in place works efficiently in monitoring, updating and promoting the continuous improvement of the Programme.

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

The departmental quality assurance committee may wish to consider having a more structured procedure -- such as scheduled meetings and time-frames -- to ensure that on-going monitoring and periodic reviews are sustained and further enhanced.

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

The Program has not been externally evaluated before. During the current external review, all stakeholders were actively engaged. The Department and the University worked diligently in preparing materials and presentations, as well as in organizing and hosting the virtual meetings with the EEAP. All the meetings included presentations, discussions, and question and answer sessions. The EEAP 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. Throughout the current external evaluation process, it was convincingly demonstrated 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 become better by enabling them to identify any problematic areas and find suitable solutions.

III. Conclusions

It is the impression of the EEAP that the Department and the University are committed to external evaluation as a key 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 have a positive impact on the Programme and contribute to its continuous improvement. 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

To maintain and further enhance the existing positive attitude toward the external review process, its findings, and recommendations.

PART C: CONCLUSIONS

I.   Features of Good Practice

- Faculty committed to students' academic welfare
- Well qualified faculty with strong research agenda
- Great support services for the students
- Highly capable students
- Well-structured program
- Strategically located

II.   Areas of Weakness

- Weak Alumni Association
- Inconsistent Website
- Limited student-centered teaching and learning
- Limited internship availability

III.   Recommendations for Follow-up Actions

- Provide better and more elaborate documentation, especially on how specific learning outcomes are achieved in terms of the methods used and their effectiveness
- Rely on different levels of measuring learning outcomes rather than the current predominant practice of final examinations
- Find ways to move away from the practice of allowing students to cut classes and repeat examinations
- The institution should reinforce post-graduate education through the institutionalization of alumni relations.
- Enhance the academic advisor's role.
- Promote events that offer opportunities for all participants in the program for engagement and interaction to foster relationships and build a stronger sense of academic interest and community.
- Provide precise assessment criteria for each course.
- Try to incorporate more student-centered teaching approaches.
- Provide and encourage students to engage in mobilities and internships more.
- Information regarding tuition appear to be inconsistent across different sources of information.

- The excellent collegial atmosphere in the Department and accessibility of faculty by the students should be maintained and further enhanced, as it is instrumental in sharing experiences and getting feedback.
- Faculty members could intensify their efforts and enhance their high-quality research output, especially by publishing in international peer-reviewed journals and publishing houses.
- The Department and the University could seek ways and means to provide further support to faculty members to enhance research and intensify their efforts for attracting external funding, especially through international and European projects. This is in line with the broader need to address the general systemic problem of an inadequately funded public university system. Addressing this issue could also help meet, to some degree, the broader challenges which universities and departments are facing, such as attracting and retaining more faculty of international calibre.
- Vital data and information should be readily available
- Develop ways of encouraging more interaction between students and academic advisors.
- To the extent that budget permits, modernize the website with the addition of new technologies.
- Ensure that information across different elements of the website is consistent.
- The departmental quality assurance committee may wish to consider having a more structured procedure -- such as scheduled meetings and time-frames -- to ensure that on-going monitoring and periodic reviews are sustained and further enhanced.
- To maintain and further enhance the existing positive attitude toward the external review process, its findings, and recommendations.

IV.   Summary & Overall Assessment

The Principles where full compliance has been achieved are: **1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, and 10.**

The Principles where substantial compliance has been achieved are: **3 and 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	

The members of the External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel

Name and Surname   **Signature**

1. **Professor Symeon Giannakos (Chair)**
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2. **Professor Emeritus Joseph Joseph**
   University of Cyprus, Nicosia, Cyprus

3. **Professor Thomas Skouteris**
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