Accreditation Report

for the New Undergraduate Study Programme in operation of:

Computer Science

Institution: International Hellenic University
Date: 31 October 2022

Report of the Panel appointed by the HAHE to undertake the review of the New Undergraduate Study Programme in operation of **Computer Science** of the **International Hellenic University** 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 new undergraduate study programme in operation of **Computer Science** of the **International Hellenic University** comprised the following five (5) members, drawn from the HAHE Register, in accordance with Laws 4009/2011 & 4653/2020:

1. **Prof. Emeritus George Vachtsevanos (Chair)**
   Georgia Institute of Technology, USA

2. **Dr Vasilis Friderikos**
   King's College London, UK

3. **Prof. George Papadopoulos**
   University of Cyprus, CY

4. **Prof. Sotiris Skevoulis**
   Pace University, USA

5. **Ms Evangelia Athanasiadi**
   University of Thessaly, GR

II.   Review Procedure and Documentation

The External Evaluation and Accreditation Panel (EEAP) attended a series of meetings via teleconference (zoom meetings) with the Department of Informatics of the International Hellenic University (IHU), which is located in the city of Kavala. The meetings took place on Monday the 24th of October and Tuesday the 25th of October 2022. The panel committee has been warmly welcomed to the virtual visit by the Head of the Department, Professor George Papakostas, and the Vice-President of Academic and Students affairs of IHU Professor Kalliopi Makridou. During this first meeting the HoD presented us a short overview of the undergraduate programme offered by the Department as well as research activities of the Unit and the vision for the future. During this first session there were plenty of opportunities for discussions and the Panel was actively engaged with the HoD to create a first in-depth view of the current state of affairs of the Department.

Following that introductory meeting the Panel met with OMEA & MODIP representatives and apologies have been received from one MODIP representative since she couldn't attend the meeting. There was no presentation during that session however the Panel had the opportunity to provide a wide set of questions to the OMEA and MODIP representatives so that to have a clearer view on the current state of affairs within the Department. Student support actions, Erasmus programme, available facilities for the students and overall day to day operation of the Department have been discussed during the meeting. Following that meeting the Panel had a private meeting to provide a synopsis of the findings and exchange ideas about different aspects. During the second day of the teleconference the Panel had the opportunity to discuss with academics and technical members of staff from the department.

Members of the Panel had ample opportunities to ask questions for a wide set of issues ranging from research activities in the Department and how those are reflected to teaching, the level of workload of the member of staff in the Department and other aspects related to the delivery methods and lab related components. Following that the Panel met with a number of students from the Department that ranged from second year students to finalists. The students have been asked various questions about their academic life and students expressed their perspective regarding the structure of the program, the challenges they are facing and their experiences so far from the Department and the University in general. Then the Panel had an on-line tour of the Department and of the campus via a pre-recorded video which covered only the Department and not any spaces across the University (like the Library, restaurants, etc). Nevertheless, the tour via the pre-recorded video allowed the Panel to immerse into the available facilities in the Department. The next meeting was the social partners including representatives from both the municipality, private companies and civil servants.

The Panel had an opportunity to explore how different partners interact with the Department, their view regarding the quality of the students and the offered Informatics program forms the Department. Finally, during the last meeting during the second day the Panel met with the HoD, the Vice-President of Academic and Students affairs of IHU and members of staff from the Department to provide them informal feedback but to also gauge their response and provide an opportunity for any further clarifications on matters that arose during the various meetings within the two days visit. The report as presented hereafter presents the collective findings of the Panel based on the two days meetings and private discussions that followed the visit.

III.   New Undergraduate Study Programme in operation Profile

The Undergraduate programme (UG) offered by the Department of Informatics of the International Hellenic University (IHU) (Kavala campus) is a four (4) year degree, comprising eight (8) semesters that correspond to 240 ECTS (European Credit Transfer System) credits. The UG programme awards its graduates with a Bachelor of Sciences (BSc) degree. The program offers 62 modules and in addition there is a final year individual project or an industrial placement option.

The individual project has one year duration whereas the duration for the industrial placement is 3 months. From the 62 offered modules a student in order to graduate is required to successfully complete 43(+3) modules. The UG programme covers a wide range of knowledge in the broad area of Computer Science and allows the student to immerse in areas across the breadth and depth of modern Computer Science technologies.

The study program can be considered as being a flexible one since from the 6th semester and onwards the students have compulsory as well as modules that they can select depending on their own personal preferences and the specialization that they would like to follow. Furthermore, there are modules available so that the students can fulfil the required professional qualifications for a career in secondary education as informatics teachers. The UG programme is accepting students each year and the Department has 10 full time faculty members, 2 teaching and lab assistants, 1 lab technician and supported by 2 professional administrators. The Department offers an orientation meeting with all new students in October every year. The UG programme in computer science was founded in the year 2019 and as a result there are still no graduates from the program.

PART B: COMPLIANCE WITH THE PRINCIPLES

Principle 1: Strategic Planning, Feasibility and Sustainability of the Academic Unit

Institutions must have developed an appropriate strategy for the establishment and operation of new academic units and the provision of new undergraduate study programmes. This strategy should be documented by specific feasibility and sustainability studies.

By decision of the institutional Senate, the Institutions should address in their strategy issues related to their academic structure in academic units and study programmes, which support the profile, the vision, the mission, and the strategic goal setting of the Institution, within a specific time frame. The strategy of the Institution should articulate the potential benefits, weaknesses, opportunities or risks from the operation of new academic units and study programmes, and plan all the necessary actions towards the achievement of their goals.

The strategy of their academic structure should be documented by specific feasibility and sustainability studies, especially for new academic units and new study programmes.

More specifically, the feasibility study of the new undergraduate study programmes should be accompanied by a four-year business plan to meet specific needs in infrastructure, services, human resources, procedures, financial resources, and management systems.

During the evaluation of the Institutions and their individual academic units in terms of meeting the criteria for the organisation of undergraduate study programmes, particular attention must be place upon:

a. The academic profile and the mission of the academic unit
The profile and mission of the department should be specified. The scientific field of the department should be included in the internationally established scientific fields of Higher Education, as they are designated by the international categorisation of scientific fields in education, by UNESCO (ISCED 2013).

b. The strategy of the Institution for its academic development
The academic development strategy for the operation of the department and the new study programme should be set out. This strategy should result from the investigation of the factors that influence the studies and the research in the scientific field, the investigation of the institutional, economic, developmental, and social parameters that apply in the external environment of the Institution, as well as the possibilities and capabilities that exist within the internal environment (as reflected in a SWOT Analysis: strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats). This specific analysis should demonstrate the reason for selecting the scientific field of the new department.

c. The documentation of the feasibility of the operation of the department and the study programme
The feasibility of the operation of the new department should be justified based on:
- *the needs of the national and regional economy (economic sectors, employment, supply-demand, expected academic and professional qualifications)*
- *comparison with other national and international study programmes of the same scientific field*
- *the state-of-the-art developments*

- ▪ *the existing academic map; the differentiation of the proposed department from the already existing ones needs to be analysed, in addition to the implications of the current image of the academic map in the specific scientific field.*

d. The documentation of the sustainability of the new department

Mention must be made to the infrastructure, human resources, funding perspective, services, and all other available resources in terms of:

- ▪ *educational and research facilities (buildings, rooms, laboratories, equipment, etc.)*
- ▪ *staff (existing and new, by category, specialty, rank and laboratory). A distinct five-year plan is required, documenting the commitment of the School and of the Institution for filling in the necessary faculty positions to cover at least the entire pre-defined core curriculum*
- ▪ *funding (funding possibility from public or non-public sources)*
- ▪ *services (central, departmental / student support, digital, administrative, etc.)*

e. The structure of studies

The structure of the studies should be briefly presented, namely:

- ▪ **The organisation of studies:** *The courses and the categories to which they belong; the distribution of the courses into semesters; the alignment of the courses with the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS).*
- ▪ **Learning process:** *Documentation must be provided as to how the student-centered approach is ensured (modes of teaching and evaluation of students beyond the traditional methods).*
- ▪ **Learning outcomes:** *Knowledge, skills and competences acquired by graduates, as well as the professional rights awarded must be mentioned.*

f. The number of admitted students

- ▪ *The proposed number of admitted students over a five-year period should be specified.*
- ▪ *Any similar departments in other HEIs with the possibility of student transfers from / to the proposed department should be mentioned.*

g. Postgraduate studies and research

- ▪ *It is necessary to indicate research priorities in the scientific field, the opportunities for interdisciplinary research, the challenges towards new knowledge, possible research collaborations, etc.*
- ▪ *In addition, the postgraduate and doctoral programmes offered by the academic unit, the research projects performed, and the research performance of the faculty members should be mentioned.*

Relevant documentation

- ▪ *Introductory Report by the Quality Assurance Unit (QAU) addressing the above points with the necessary documentation*
- ▪ *Updated Strategic Plan of the Institution that will include its proposed academic reconstruction, in view of the planned operation of new department(s) (incl. updated SWOT analysis at institutional level)*
- ▪ *Feasibility and sustainability studies for the establishment and operation of the new academic unit and the new study programme*
- ▪ *Four-year business plan*

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The Department of Informatics at the International Hellenic University which is based in the city of Kavala was established in the year 2019 (as a legacy from a previous TEI unit). The department runs an undergraduate (UG) programme in Computer Science resembling a program of studies in line with other well-established Computer Science / Informatics units in Greece but also at the international level. Currently, the Department welcomes approximately 200 students each academic year even though, and based on the provided documentation, the initial proposal as coming out from the Unit was for accepting approximately 100 undergraduates each academic year. Beyond the UG programme, the Department also offers two well-defined postgraduate (PG) courses. The first one is entitled "Advanced Information and Computer Technologies' that resembles the UK MPhil type of qualification where students are essentially prepared for further research studies and the second PG course is entitled ''Immersive Technologies - Innovation in Education, Training and Game Design'. Currently there are approximately 600 UG students, 121 PG students, 23 PhDs and 2 post-doctoral researchers hosted at the Department. The Department offers 62 modules out of which a student is required to enrol to 46 modules in order to graduate (this is equivalent to 240 ECTS credits). Final year project or an industrial placement is also part of the programme and can be offered to students. The Department spans across 2 amphitheatres (with a capacity of 70 and 100) and 7 labs that can be used for practical components in different modules and for research. There is also another bigger amphitheatre with a capacity of 300 that is shared with other Departments of the University. For every taught module in the curriculum and in both semesters the Department conducts electronic evaluations about the delivery of the module using questionnaires that are distributed to the students. The programme covers the wide area of computer science; students are exposed to the fundamental concepts that underpin computer science and as they progress in their studies there are more specialized modules to capture the breadth and depth of the area. In terms of the delivery of the modules, student feedback is considered. More specifically, the students are given a questionnaire that covers a wide range of questions and allows students to provide detailed feedback in a large number of aspects related to the quality of the teaching. The current participation is approximately within the range of 10 to 15 percent. Members of staff are heavily involved in state of art research and contribute to their corresponding research scope areas, during the discussions multiple pieces of evidence have been offered to the Panel to show how the research is linked to the teaching and propagate to the students in the Department.

II. Analysis

The number of admitted students is in line with other Computer Science / Informatics Departments within the national sector. However, the available facilities can be deemed as rather inadequate (in terms of classrooms, the size of the amphitheatres, lab sizes, etc.). Therefore, there is an urgent need for significant funding not only to improve the facilities, but also to create a Department that

members of staff are co-located in the same building/floor so that to create a sense of belonging and community for the students as well. Furthermore, based on the information we have seen the Panel believes that the current staff to student ratio is very large. Therefore, another area that needs to be improved is the number of permanent academic staff so as to decrease the current levels of staff to student ratio. The Department outlines that there is a need for 5 more academics to join the Unit but the case for support, the areas of interest should be detailed and fleshed out in a clearer manner so that firstly to provide a stronger case of support and secondly to create a holistic vision about the expansion. The PG programme is a very healthy one and there are already a significant number of PG students and PhD researchers. This is another clear indication of the significant research activity of members of staff in their individual scope research areas.

III. Conclusions

The Panel is satisfied with the synthesis and the quality of the offered modules that constitute the undergraduate programme in Informatics (aka Computer Science). Members of staff are research active, and they are heavily engaged in the day-to-day operation of the Department as they strive to provide a high-quality programme at both UG and PG levels. Their research and teaching roles are facilitated by professional administrative staff that provide services to both students and staff in the Unit in a robust and timely fashion. Overall infrastructure needs improvement, recruitment should be accelerated as well as the internal procedures for various aspects of academic life should be well documented and available to the students as well (such as for example issues pertaining to academic integrity, erasmus positions with key partners and personal tutoring).

Panel Judgement

Principle 1: Strategic planning, feasibility and sustainability of the academic unit	
a. The academic profile and the mission of the academic unit	
Fully compliant	**X**
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	
b. The strategy of the Institution for its academic development	
Fully compliant	**X**
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	
c. The documentation of the feasibility of the operation of the department and the study programme	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	**X**
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	
d. The documentation of the sustainability of the new department	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	**X**
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	
e. The structure of studies	
Fully compliant	**X**
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	
f. The number of admitted students	
Fully compliant	**X**
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

g. Postgraduate studies	
Fully compliant	**X**
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Principle 1: Strategic planning, feasibility and sustainability of the academic unit (overall)	
Fully compliant	**X**
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

R1.1 Detailed procedures should be in place for aspects related to academic integrity - those should be part of the student handbook.

R1.2 Procedures for amending/updating a module based on information gathered by multiple sources (student feedback, social partners, updates on the curriculum, etc.).

R1.3 The amalgamation of the core computer science modules with modules related to computer science teaching (especially in the first two years) should be justified and propagated in a clear manner to the students.

Principle 2: Quality Assurance Policy of the Institution and the Academic Unit

The Institution should have in place an accredited Internal Quality Assurance System, and should formulate and apply a Quality Assurance Policy, which is part of its strategy, specialises in the operation of the new academic units and the new study programmes, and is accompanied by annual quality assurance goals for the continuous development and improvement of the academic units and the study programmes.

The quality assurance policy of the Institution must be formulated in the form of a published statement, which is implemented by all stakeholders. It focuses on the achievement of special annual quality goals related to the quality assurance of the new study programme offered by the academic unit. In order to implement this policy, the Institution, among others, commits itself to put into practice quality procedures that will demonstrate: the adequacy and quality of the academic unit's resources; the suitability of the structure and organisation of the curriculum; the appropriateness of the qualifications of the teaching staff; the quality of support services of the academic unit and its staffing with appropriate administrative personnel. The Institution also commits itself to conduct an annual internal evaluation of the new undergraduate programme (UGP), realised by the Internal Evaluation Group (IEG) in collaboration with the Quality Assurance Unit (QAU) of the Institution.

The quality assurance policy of the academic unit includes its commitment to implement quality procedures that will demonstrate: a) the adequacy of the structure and organisation of the curriculum, b) the pursuit of learning outcomes and qualifications in accordance with the European and National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education, c) the promotion of the quality and effectiveness of the teaching work, d) the adequacy of the qualifications of the teaching staff, e) the promotion of the quality and quantity of the research work of the members of the academic unit, f) the ways of linking teaching with research, g) the level of demand for graduates' qualifications in the labour market, h) the quality of support services, such as administration, libraries and student care, i) the implementation of an annual review and audit of the quality assurance system of the UGP through the cooperation of the Internal Evaluation Group (IEG) with the Quality Assurance Unit (QAU) of the Institution.

Relevant documentation
- *Revised Quality Assurance Policy of the Institution*
- *Quality Assurance Policy of the academic unit*
- *Quality target setting of the Institution and the academic unit (utilising the S.M.A.R.T. methodology)*

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

Based on the documentation that has been submitted/provided to the Panel it is evident that a rigorous quality assurance framework has been adopted by the Department. The framework follows similar procedures that exist within the sector at both national and international level. The modules are very well defined and in addition to that the Panel agrees that the learning outcomes and qualifications acquired by the students are in accordance with the European and National qualifications framework for higher education. In terms of resources the available spaces, in terms of classrooms, labs and amphitheatres, are at the moment sufficient to offer a high-quality curriculum in the area of computer science but with the current availability and growth plan

envisioned the delivery of both theory and lab related components will become enormously challenging. These aspects have been extensively discussed during the different sessions and it was also evident from the online tour that it was offered to the members of the Panel. More specifically, delivery of the first 2 years modules face a number of challenges both in terms of the traditional mode of delivery due to the capacity constraints of the different classrooms but also for the lab components since there are instances where the same lab should be repeated so that to cover the whole cohort of students due to space limitations. Various sets of data are collected by the Department and analyzed. Findings are discussed during departmental meetings that are chaired by the Head of Department (HoD). Feedback from students is used after submitted questionnaires are analyzed. The HoD oversees the results and actions taken in case of a low score in a specific module. So far, feedback on the different offered modules is limited from the social partners and from the discussions with both members of staff and social partners it seems that there is not an official channel where such feedback could be reported and offered to the Department.

II.   Analysis

As already alluded above, one of the critical challenges in the current modus operandi of the Department and the envisioned growth in terms of both members of staff and PG students is space. The members of staff are able to deliver high quality lectures and labs, but space is becoming a factor that might provide significant risks in the near future in terms of keeping that offered quality and meeting the expectations from the students. All members of staff are experienced academics and active researchers. The Panel found that this is something that has been acknowledged and appreciated by the students since they felt privileged to be part of a Department where members of staff are active researchers. An issue of concern relates to the current retention rate and seems that this is a problem at the moment. The Department should keep a close eye on that, and a strategy should be implemented in order to ease this problem. The retention rate should be considered also vis-a-vis the space limitation aspect since teaching space problems can have a significant influence on the retention rate. Furthermore, as Covid-19 restrictions ease across the EU Member States emphasis should be placed on strategic Erasmus+ agreements and collaboration. At the current state of affairs Erasmus mobility organization is mainly offloaded to the Erasmus office, however the Department should seek a higher level of activity in order to create key strategic partnerships.

III. Conclusions

In broad terms the Panel is satisfied with the adopted quality assurance framework in the Department and more specifically with the quality of the UG program in Informatics. The Department is well organized and managed and the key overarching mission which is to offer a high quality UG program in Computer Science is largely fulfilled. Having said that, a number of challenges and risks do exist with the majority of them being mostly exogenous, i.e., requiring decision making at the University level.

Panel Judgement

Principle 2: Quality assurance policy of the Institution and the academic unit	
Fully compliant	**X**
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

R2.1 The creation of key strategic partnerships at the EU level via Erasmus agreements that originate from the Department and are supported by the University.

R2.2 Inarguably space limitation is a key constraint at the moment and has a significant impact on the quality of experience of the students. Consequently, the University should support the Department in terms of expanding the availability of teaching spaces for the Department in an equity manner compared with other Units of the University.

R2.3 The Department is an active research environment however some strategically important KPIs should be defined and those already in existence should be rationalized in terms of how they have been defined (in a quantitative and qualitative manner).

R2.4 Clear procedures should be defined in terms of updating/amadending a module. This should include, inter alia, a departmental discussion about proposed changes, feedback from students and social partners.

Principle 3:   Design, Approval and Monitoring of the Quality of the New Undergraduate Programmes

Institutions should design the new 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.

The Institutions develop their new undergraduate study programmes, following a well-defined procedure. The academic profile, the identity 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 European and National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education are described at this stage. An important new element in the structure of the programmes is the introduction of courses for the acquisition of digital skills. The above components should be taken into consideration and constitute the subject of the programme design, which, among other things, should include: elements of the Institution's strategy, labour market data and employment prospects of graduates, smooth progression of students throughout the stages of the programme, the anticipated student workload according to the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS), the option of providing work experience to the students, the linking of teaching and research, the international experience in study programmes of similar disciplines, the relevant regulatory framework, and the official procedure for the approval of the programme 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 Quality Assurance Unit (QAU).

Relevant documentation

- *Senate decision for the establishment of the UGP*
- *Curriculum structure: courses, course categories (including courses for the acquisition of digital skills), ECTS awarded, expected learning outcomes according to the EQF, internship, mobility opportunities.*
- *Labour market data regarding the employment of graduates, international experience in a related scientific field.*
- *Student Guide*
- *Course outlines*
- *Teaching staff (list of areas of specialisation, its relation to the courses taught, employment relationship)*
- *QAU minutes for the internal evaluation of the new study programme and its compliance with the Standards*

Study Programme Compliance

I.   Findings

The undergraduate programme in the Department of Computer Science has well-defined objectives, is well structured and comprehensive while maintaining an appropriate program structure. In general, students are actively involved in the pedagogical process through laboratory and programming assignments in several courses that provide valuable lessons for use in the workplace. The faculty is fully committed to providing additional research opportunities for students participating in ongoing research projects. In the academic year 2019-2020, a comprehensive bachelor's program was launched. Although the programme is still in its maturation phase, the EEAP notes that the Department maintains a monitoring committee responsible for the undergraduate programme (Επιτροπή Προγράμματος Σπουδών) that in collaboration with the other formal authorities (MODIP) oversee the implementation, progress, and potential future needs for flexible adjustment/modification in the undergraduate study programme. The programme offers 64 courses in total, out of which 33 are core courses and 31 specialization ones. From the 31 specialization courses, 18 courses must be taken as electives while the rest 12 are free electives. The learning objectives, expected outcomes, and sources of information are outlined in the Programme Study Guide (Οδηγός Σπουδών). The Study Guide is clearly structured, comprehensive, and informative. The committee understands that the undergraduate program does not receive any formal or informal advice from employers, local authorities and other external stakeholders on the quality of its graduates and learning outcomes.

II.   Analysis

EEAP finds that comparing the design of the curriculum of undergraduate studies in computer science with those of high-quality international/European and renowned programs and universities (i.e., University of Oxford, Stanford University, etc.) shows a compatible program. The program is also consistent with European standards thanks to the thorough application of the ECTS system. Although there is a well-established Erasmus program, the participation of incoming and transfer students still needs to be improved. The number of students taking advantage of Erasmus 's opportunities remains low in part due to the recent pandemic. The institutional strategy articulated and applied in the department's operations is clearly reflected in the programme.

Student interviews indicated that they are likely to prefer courses that focus on aspects of computer science, especially in the first two years of their studies, when they expect to be offered fundamental computer science courses. As stated by the department in the document **"B1.** Πρόταση Ακαδημαϊκής Πιστοποίησης ΠΣ" there is no formal procedure for receiving feedback from graduates and social partners on the effectiveness of the programme and the needs of society. This is an important aspect of programme quality monitoring.

III.   Conclusions

Essentially, the program adheres to the principles, recommendations, and regulations related to program design, approval, and monitoring. The department should take steps to involve stakeholders more actively in the review and evaluation process (for example, by distributing questionnaires to them about changing market needs, key content, study, etc.). Discussions with representatives from non-academic, public, and private businesses can be a valuable source of understanding and insight for the program. EEAP believes that future curriculum revisions should also include more formal and comprehensive consultation with stakeholders, outside experts, students, and prospective graduates. An advisory/consultation committee consisting of alumni and external stakeholders should be considered.

Panel Judgement

Principle 3: Design, approval and monitoring of the quality of the new undergraduate programmes	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	**X**
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

- The department should consider forming an alumni association. It should formalise her alumni network and strengthen relationships with alumni. They can be excellent ambassadors for its curriculum and research activities.
- While the links established between research and teaching in the undergraduate program slowly become more apparent as the program matures, the computer science programme should intensify efforts to further strengthen these links. This can be accomplished by regularly updating course content and providing more experiential learning experiences for students.
- Stakeholders and external experts/institutions from both the public and private sectors should be formally consulted in future revisions and planning of the curriculum. We strongly recommend the establishment of an external advisory board to work with the department.

Principle 4: Student-centred Approach in Learning, Teaching and Assessment of Students

The academic unit should ensure that the new 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.

In the implementation of student-centered learning and teaching, the academic unit:

- ✓ *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 application of 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*

Relevant documentation

- ▪ *Questionnaires for assessment by the students*
- ▪ *Regulation for dealing with students' complaints and appeals*
- ▪ *Regulation for the function of the academic advisor*
- ▪ *Reference to the planned teaching modes and assessment methods*

Study Programme Compliance

I.   **Findings**
     Regarding a Student-centred Approach in Education, it has been concluded that the Department seems to promote and maintain such an environment within the university community. This is implied by the up-to-date methods of teaching and the support that is given to various forms of research done by both the Teaching Stuff and the Students, as early as during their years as Undergraduates. The unit's uprightness when communicating the responsibilities of both the Tutors and the Students, as well as their concern for the student's needs -as it is shown by the existence of the biannual student satisfaction surveys-, are also noteworthy.

II. **Analysis**
     On the other hand, even though the Unit seems to be strong in terms of suppling the students with valuable information in order to prepare them for the next step in their career, they are weak in the organisation department, as it is highlighted by the lack of formal procedures for students to turn to in times of need. Furthermore, the low percentage of Students participating in the Satisfaction Surveys mentioned

above should also be mentioned, as it deducts from the advantage of being equipped with such procedures.

III. Conclusions

Overall, the Panel came to the conclusion that the Academic Unit is fairly strong in creating a Student-Centred Environment where the Students are free to express themselves and develop their academic skills. However, a few changes must take place in order for them to feel safe and welcomed in the community.

Panel Judgement

Principle 4: Student-centred approach in learning, teaching and assessment of students	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	**X**
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

R4.1 The creation of formal procedures that the students can use for their non-academic appeals too, such as a procedure that allows a student to denounce any type of possible harassment happening within the campus grounds or not.

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Principle 5: Student Admission, Progression, Recognition of Academic Qualifications and Award of Degrees and Certificates of Competence of the New Study Programmes

Academic units should develop and apply published regulations addressing all aspects and phases of studies of the programme (admission, progression, recognition and degree award).

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

- ✓ *the registration procedure of the admitted students and the necessary documents - according to the law - and the support of the newly admitted students*

- ✓ *student rights and obligations, and monitoring of student progression*

- ✓ *internship issues, granting of scholarships*

- ✓ *the procedures and terms for writing the thesis (diploma or degree)*

- ✓ *the procedure of award and recognition of degrees, the duration of studies, the conditions for progression and assurance of the progress of students in their studies*

as well as

- ✓ *the terms and conditions for enhancing student mobility*

Appropriate recognition procedures rely on relevant academic practice for recognition of credits among various European academic departments and Institutions in line with the principles of the Lisbon Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region. 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).

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

Relevant documentation

- ▪ *Internal regulation for the operation of the new study programme*
- ▪ *Regulation of studies, internship, mobility and student assignments*
- ▪ *Printed Diploma Supplement*

Certificate from the President of the academic unit that the diploma supplement is awarded to all graduates without exception together with the degree or the certificate of completion of studies

Study Programme Compliance

I.   Findings

Regarding the support of the Students, especially the newcomers, and the monitoring of their progression, the Panel has deemed the Unit sufficient enough. The first-year Students, following their briefing on the Departments operation details and their rights and responsibilities through a welcome ceremony, are being

monitored on their progression throughout the academic year both in the academic level with individual and group projects and frequent tests, as well as in the personal growth and adjustment to the university life level by a team of specialised advisors. As for the practical issues in hand, the Unit has made sure the students' needs are met by applying ECTS all across the curriculum, providing them a list of requirements and other useful information for their thesis and giving them the option of having a first contact with their field of work through Practical Training Courses, either through the Erasmus+ program, or in cooperation with one of the departments numerous social partners.

II. Analysis

As mentioned above, the Department is doing great in keeping up with the students' needs by offering them a variety of support methods to help them become accustomed to their new life and its responsibilities. Furthermore, regarding their years as academics, the Unit monitors and supports them with both traditional methods and innovative ones. The Units interest and support for the Practical Courses, as it is highlighted by the two different types they offer, is also remarkable.

III. Conclusions

Overall, it seems that the Department is highly connected with their responsibility as the transitional level between academic and industrious life by giving the students many choices in order for them to evolve into specialists in their field.

Panel Judgement

Principle 5: Student admission, progression, recognition of academic qualifications, and award of degrees and certificates of competence of the new study programmes	
Fully compliant	**X**
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

None.

Principle 6: Ensuring the Competence and High Quality of the Teaching Staff of the New Undergraduate Study Programmes

Institutions should assure themselves of the competence, the level of knowledge and skills of the teaching staff of the academic units, 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, the appropriate staff-student ratio, the suitable categories of staff, the appropriate subject areas and specialisations, 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 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 members (with respect to attendance requirements, performance, self-assessment, training, etc.); develop policies to attract highly qualified academic staff.

Relevant documentation

- *Procedures and criteria for teaching staff recruitment*
- *Regulations or employment contracts, and obligations of the teaching staff*
- *Policy for staff recruitment, support and development*
- *Performance of the teaching staff in scientific-research and teaching work, also based on internationally recognised systems of scientific evaluation (e.g., Google Scholar, Scopus, etc.)*

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The teaching staff is recruited via the established procedures by the Ministry of Education which follow a specific protocol as it is defined by the relevant laws. The same procedures guarantee the transparency of the process.

The obligations of the teaching staff comprise teaching with a workload of around 14 hours of overall teaching load (lectures, preparation, student support) per week, supervision of students (there is a rate here of around 140 students per member of teaching staff), participation in committees and other administrative duties, as well as research activities.

The faculty is currently 10 members strong. The Department employs also a number of teaching staff that teach courses that cannot currently be taught by regular academic staff. There is evidence that the teaching staff are regularly evaluated by students by means of questionnaires, which are filled and returned by around 10%-15% of the students, a percentage that is similar to those in other departments and institutions. Interviews with students provided evidence that the quality of teaching is overall satisfactory, although some

students expressed reservations as to the usefulness of the methodology applied in some courses or the syllabus of these courses.

The research activities of the teaching staff are extensive and cover a broad area in Computer Science. There is active involvement of students in the established departmental laboratories and the staff publish regularly in scientific fora (conferences and journals). The staff is also actively involved in attracting external funding for their research activities.

II.   Analysis

Despite the small size of the faculty, the Department has a very active research profile, and it is evident that the pursued research is at a high level of quality and international exposure. All faculty members are publishing regularly and are successful in attracting external funding that is used for the further development of the departmental labs.

However, the teaching workload as well as the administrative one is inappropriate and the high number of student intake every year retains an unacceptable situation in terms of teaching and administrative duties. As a further negative consequence, it is very difficult for the current staff to take even a short leave of absence for research activities (e.g., visiting other Universities), let alone taking advantage of sabbatical leaves.

III.   Conclusions

It is of the utmost importance that more faculty is hired over the next few years in order to reduce the teaching and administrative workload, which will further enhance the quality and quantity of the Department's research output. The faculty should also give incentives to students for filling and submitting the questionnaires, in order for student feedback to be statistically meaningful.

Panel Judgement

Principle 6: Ensuring the competence and high quality of the teaching staff of the new undergraduate study programmes	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	X
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

R6.1 Hire more academic personnel.

R6.2 Reduce the overall teaching workload for the regular faculty.

R6.3 Give more incentives for pursuing competitive research by means, e.g., of encouraging mobility, say, by taking sabbatical leaves or being involved in the Erasmus+ staff exchanges.

Principle 7: Learning Resources and Student Support of the New Undergraduate Programmes

Institutions should have adequate funding to meet the needs for the operation of the academic unit and the new study programme as well as the means to cover all their 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 resources, on a planned and long-term basis, to support learning and academic activity in general, in order to offer students the best possible level of studies. The above means include facilities such as, the necessary general and specific libraries and possibilities for access to electronic databases, study rooms, educational and scientific equipment, information and communication services, support and counselling services. When allocating the available resources, the needs of all students must be taken into consideration (e.g. whether they are full-time or part-time students, employed students, students with disabilities), in addition to the shift towards student-centred learning and the adoption of flexible modes of learning and teaching. Support activities and facilities may be organised in various ways, depending on the institutional context. Students should be informed about 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.*

Relevant documentation

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

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The Department is located at the outskirts of the city of Kavala, there is a shared large amphitheatre with another Unit of the University, 2 amphitheatres that belong to the Department and 7 laboratories that can be used for lab-based modules (or components of a module) as well as for research purposes. There are no dedicated learning spaces such as common rooms for students and/or study rooms. The academic staff members are taking an active role in pastoral care however there is no formally defined academic tutoring system at the moment. Students are encouraged to contact the course director for any academic related aspects regarding the programme. Within the context of the wider University there are a number of facilities available to the students including a gym, which according to the discussions with the members of staff is still not in use even though there is some time now that Covid-19 restrictions have been lifted. Depending on the

nature of the module different methods of delivery have been adopted in addition to the traditional projection-based style of delivery. A wide range of resources per module are available on a module space (moodle) to allow both for synchronous and asynchronous teaching activities. There is a library available for the students, but the tour didn't include a visit to the Library so that the Panel could assess the resources and space that is available to the students. Also, during the different sessions the Library resources were not part of any of the presentations. However, members of staff mentioned that key textbooks that are used in the different modules are available in the Library. In terms of services from the professional administration staff it seems that adequate and timely service is provided to the students even though contact hours are 2 hours per day (however during the discussions it was mentioned that this is just a formality and students are allowed to meet admin staff at different hours during the day). In terms of student mobility, aspects related to student awareness of the Erasmus scheme are mainly offloaded to the central Erasmus office. However, there is an Erasmus coordinator where students can contact to request more information about the scheme.

II. **Analysis**

There is no formal tutoring system established in the Unit at the moment. All students are directed to the course director for any issues pertaining to their studies. However, this creates a significant bottleneck and might defer students from creating a stronger bond with the department. To this end, for the provision of a better student support system across the whole duration of their studies it is encouraged that students from the 1st semester of their first year of studies are allocated a personal tutor that will act as their contact point to the Department. The resources available from the Library seem to be adequate however the Panel has not been provided specific information about the infrastructure available in the Library such as study rooms etc. In terms of teaching various different delivery methods are used and based on the discussions with the students they are in general satisfied with both the academic level and the lecturing methods used by module leaders. There are multiple instances where members of staff managed to successfully integrate aspects of their corresponding research into the taught modules; this clearly increases the quality of the teaching and students appreciate such state of art viewpoints in their area of expertise.

III. **Conclusions**

The Department has sufficient resources to support students in succeeding in their studies however the utilization of those resources is very high, and this creates significant risks in the mid to long term expansion of the Unit. Students are satisfied with the different modules and the available resources available per module but as mentioned above immediate actions needed in terms of increasing the members of staff, availability of spaces for teaching large cohort of students and lab spaces. Lectures are delivered using different delivery methods and student feedback is monitored and taken into account.

Panel Judgement

Principle 7: Learning resources and student support of the new undergraduate programmes	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

R7.1 The student handbook should provide information about the Library and the available resources.

R7.2 A tutoring system is encouraged to be adopted in the Department; in such a system students are assigned to a member of staff that will act as their contact point throughout their studies.

Principle 8: Collection, Analysis and Use of Information for the Organisation and Operation of New Undergraduate Programmes

The Institutions and their academic units 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.

> *Effective procedures for collecting and analysing information on the operation of Institutions, academic units and study programmes feed data into the internal quality assurance system. The following data is of interest: key performance indicators for the student body profile, student progression, success and drop-out rates, student satisfaction with the programme, availability of learning resources and student support. The completion of the fields of National Information System for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (NISQA) should be correct and complete with the exception of the fields that concern graduates in which a null value is registered.*

Relevant documentation

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

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The Department is responsible for overseeing the continuous improvement of its academic provision and research outputs, as well as the efficient operation of its academic services, in accordance with international practices and the guidelines provided by Hellenic Authority for Higher Education. An internal evaluation and assessment are conducted annually, consisting of student questionnaires, relevant information provided by the teaching staff and via the electronic environment accessible from the web (https://modip.ihu.edu.gr/). The Internal Evaluation Committee works in collaboration with MODIP to analyse and communicate the information obtained from the gathered data. The Quality Assurance goals of the International Hellenic University are based on its strategic plan and aim to provide specific and measurable KPIs for all its main activities. Efficiency measurements include quantitative and qualitative indicators which provide valuable and reliable information, and the collection of datasets encompassing the number and categories of indicators per quality objective, and their analysis and reporting for the purpose of supporting higher level decision-making.

The International Hellenic University provides an efficient IT infrastructure which ensures the collection of all relevant data. The overall process that the University employs, ensures that the anonymity and confidentiality is secured for the required data of all the above.

II. Analysis

The overall quality assurance process is well established and follows the prescribed good practices as those are sent by HAHE. External stakeholders have knowledge of the activities of the Department and the quality of its students.

Students seem to be overall satisfied with the offered courses and the learning outcomes as well as with the acquired knowledge by the program in total. There were some concerns about the relevance of the syllabus in some courses with what is expected in a mainstream Computer Science degree.

III.   Conclusions

There is an overall well-established and efficient mechanism for quality assurance, in terms of selecting and processing information as well as acting upon it.

Panel Judgement

Principle 8: Collection, analysis and use of information for the organisation and operation of new undergraduate programmes	
Fully compliant	**X**
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

R8.1 Increase the percentage of students returning filled questionnaires.

R8.2 As the program of study gradually reaches the final year, care must be taken for the Department to offer easy ways for the final year students to reach the industry sector and find employment.

R8.3 Once the first group of final year students has graduated, care must be taken to establish an alumni society, keep contact with the graduates and involve them in subsequent quality assurance exercises.

R8.4 Establish more formal processes for involving Advisory Board members, including but not limited to external ones like industrial market or (local) government players/partners and alumni in order to maintain the program innovation and align with the market requirements.

Principle 9: Public Information Concerning the New Undergraduate Programmes

Institutions and academic units should publish information about their teaching and academic activities in a direct and readily accessible way. The relevant information should be up-to-date, clear and objective.

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 new undergraduate programmes they offer, the intended learning outcomes, the degrees awarded, the teaching, learning and assessment procedures used, the pass rates and the learning opportunities available to their students. Information is also provided, to the extent possible, on graduate employment perspectives.

Relevant documentation
- *Dedicated segment on the website of the department for the promotion of the new study programme*
- *Bilingual version of the website of the academic unit with complete, clear and objective information*
- *Provision for website maintenance and updating*

Study Programme Compliance

   I. **Findings**
   Regarding the Department's website efficiency, the Panel has observed that it contains all necessary information one might need to know about the Institute. From accessibility information to even more specialised ones, those being the Course Outlines and other practical ones a Student might need, like the mode of attendance and the criteria for assessment, the Unit is providing them. Furthermore, the existence of information about the Teaching Staff and the Institute's distinction in the academic and research sector is worth mentioning.

   II. **Analysis**
   A website is the link between the University and the outside world, whether that being potential students or even potential partners. Therefore, it is important that it includes all the information one might need to know about a Department, in an easily accessible and straight-forward manner. The Academic Unit does exactly that by not only providing basic information about the whereabouts of the campus and other physiological information, but by also providing information about the courses' content and even about the Departments achievements in both English and Greek in an easily manageable environment. Furthermore, the provision of various ways to contact the university adds to the overall dignified site, the only downside being the lack of transport information to and from the campus grounds.

III. Conclusions

In conclusion, the Academic Unit presents itself online in way that leaves little room for clarifications, while still being concise, and easy to handle even by those who have little technical experience.

Panel Judgement

Principle 9: Public information concerning the new undergraduate programmes	
Fully compliant	**X**
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

R9.1 Adding information regarding transportation to and from the campus or even the city it resides in.

Principle 10: Periodic Internal Review of the New Study Programmes

Institutions and academic units should have in place an internal quality assurance system, for the audit and annual internal review of their new 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 the new 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: 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.

Relevant documentation

- *Procedure for the re-evaluation, redefinition and updating of the curriculum*
- *Procedure for mitigating weaknesses and upgrading the structure of the UGP and the learning process*
- *Feedback processes on strategy implementation and quality targeting of the new UGP and relevant decision-making processes (students, external stakeholders)*
- *Results of the annual internal evaluation of the study programme by the QAU and the relevant minutes*

Study Programme Compliance

I.   Findings

There is a well-established procedure in place for the monitoring and periodic review of the undergraduate programme. There is a clear distribution of responsibilities and roles of all parties involved in this process. The monitoring process involves all the appropriate stakeholders, namely the Internal Evaluation Team (OMEA), the Departmental academic and administrative staff, the current students, as well as relevant external parties such as representatives from the labour market and social partners. This process is taking place annually, covers all aspects of such an evaluation exercise (programme content, workload, student assessment, etc.) and its findings are reported to the University's Quality Assurance Unit (MODIP) for final approval. The documentation presented by the Department shows that the findings of the monitoring exercise are fed back into the programme for improvements and updates. The involvement of the students by means of filling questionnaires is documented but, in general, the response is rather low (10%-15%).

II.   Analysis

Overall, an effective mechanism is in place for internal feedback that is used for annual internal reviews and audits. The level of student participation via the questionnaires should be improved.

III.   Conclusions

This criterion is fully satisfied by the department.

Panel Judgement

Principle 10: Periodic internal review of the new study programmes	
Fully compliant	**X**
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

None.

Principle 11: Regular External Evaluation and Accreditation of the New Undergraduate Programmes

The new undergraduate study programmes should regularly undergo evaluation by panels of external experts set by HAHE, aiming at accreditation. The results of the external evaluation and accreditation are used for the continuous improvement of the Institutions, academic units and study programmes. The term of validity of the accreditation is determined by HAHE.

HAHE is responsible for administrating the programme accreditation process which is realised as an external evaluation procedure and implemented by a panel of independent experts. HAHE grants accreditation of programmes, based on the Reports submitted by the panels, 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 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.

Relevant documentation

▪ *Progress report on the results from the utilisation of the recommendations of the external evaluation of the Institution and of the IQAS Accreditation Report.*

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

EEAP found that the curriculum was designed and established in accordance with the relevant policies of the organisation in cooperation with the internal quality assurance system "MODIP". The program also strives to demonstrate the continuous improvement of educational methods, as well as the high quality and effectiveness of services, in line with international practices and HAHE principles and guidelines. Faculty and staff are aware of the importance of external review and the benefits it brings to the continuous improvement of the programme.

II. Analysis

The Department has established an Internal Review Committee (OMEA) made up of DEP/Student members and MODIP staff. Its function is to collect, analyze and annually present all data related to the university program. As part of these policies, the Institutional Quality Assurance Unit (MODIP) oversees the internal and external evaluation of the College's academic departments and their programs. EEAP is pleased with the reported periodic review of compliance with the Department's commitment to quality assurance policies and standards, as required by the HAHE Code of Practice.

Throughout the evaluation process, EEAP found that the computer Science faculty was fully aware of the importance of external assessment. At the same time, all the academic unit's stakeholders appear to be interested in participating in future programme assessment

activities. In this respect, the department must develop and strengthen a detailed action plan and a concrete roadmap to implement the recommendations made in this report.

Due to the recent establishment of the Programme, Principle 11 cannot be properly and fully evaluated; however, HAHE has authorized the EEAP to provide the review/principle review. Considering the documentation provided and submitted by the department and the understandings obtained from the current accreditation, EEAP expects that the department will be able to continue successfully conducting new external audits in the future.

III.   Conclusions

Many aspects of the Department of Computer Science and its functions confirm very good practices. The Department's commitment to the spirit and processes of quality assurance is evident in all principles and aspects. Passionate faculty and staff self-assess the program and its courses and demonstrate outstanding teamwork. Both groups work very hard to support the program and the students, both academically and personally. EEAP rates the principle as "fully compliant", based on the above considerations.

Panel Judgement

Principle 11: Regular external evaluation and accreditation of the new undergraduate programmes	
Fully compliant	**X**
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

- The Department is encouraged to continue its internal quality assurance procedures for annual internal assessment and evaluation of academic programs to achieve objectives through monitoring and evaluation for improvement continuous.
- Develop effective ways to increase student engagement in completing questionnaires to ensure consistent statistical results.

Principle 12: Monitoring the Transition from Previous Undergraduate Study Programmes to the New Ones

Institutions and academic units apply procedures for the transition from previously existing undergraduate study programmes to new ones, in order to ensure compliance with the requirements of the Standards.

Applies in cases where the department implements, in addition to the new UGPs, any pre-existing UGPs from departments of former Technological Educational Institutions (TEI) or from departments that were merged / renamed / abolished.

Institutions should implement procedures for the transition from former UGPs to new ones, in order to ensure their compliance with the requirements of the Standards. More specifically, the institution and the academic unit must have a) the necessary learning resources, b) appropriate teaching staff, c) structured curriculum (courses, ECTS, learning outcomes), d) study regulations, award of diploma and diploma supplement, and e) system of data collection and use, with particular reference to the data of the graduates of the pre-existing UGP. In this context, the Institutions and the academic units prepare a plan for the foreseen transition period of the existing UGP until its completion, the costs caused to the Institution by its operation as well as possible measures and proposals for its smooth delivery and termination. This planning includes data on the transition and subsequent progression of students in the respective new UGP of the academic unit, as well as the specific graduation forecast for students enrolled under the previous status.

Relevant documentation

- *The planning of the Institution for the foreseen transition period, the operating costs and the specific measures or proposals for the smooth implementation and completion of the programme*
- *The study regulations, template for the degree and the diploma supplement*
- *Name list of teaching staff, status, subject and the course they teach / examine*
- *Report of Quality Assurance Unit (QAU) on the progress of the transition and the degree of completion of the programme. In the case of UGP of a former Technological Educational Institution (TEI), the report must include a specific reference to how the internship was implemented*

Study Programme Compliance

I.   Findings

The Computer Science department is a newly founded Department with a novel curriculum. It is independent of Programme studies that existed in the old TEI institution. The department has put in place provisions for the conduct of former TEI students to complete their practical training.

II.   Analysis

The Department supports students of the former TEI to attend a supplemental credit programme that grants them a university-level degree. There are 1,352 students from the former TEI that, according to the passed law 4777/2021 will have six years, starting from the academic years 2021-2022, to complete the extra courses and be awarded the University

degree. Document B32 (Έκθεση Μετάβασης ΠΠΣ_Τμ. Πληροφορικής) provides a comprehensive, detailed and easy to follow roadmap for those former TEI students who wish to continue their studies in the new study programme.

III.   Conclusions

The EEAP deems the programme as fully compliant with regards to Principle 12.

Panel Judgement

Principle 12: Monitoring the transition from previous undergraduate study programmes to the new ones	
Fully compliant	**X**
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

The department should make an effort to contact those 1,352 students and encourage them to complete their studies.

PART C: CONCLUSIONS

The EEAP was overall impressed by the quality of the work performed at the department. Undoubtedly the department offers a very good Computer Science program. The EEAP has focused its report in highlighting areas for even further improvements.

I. Features of Good Practice

- There is a good functioning and cooperation between MODIP and OMEA.
- The adoption of teaching methodologies based on virtual classroom platform (e-class).
- Use of information technology for the delivery of teaching, teaching support and student information, both in person and online.
- The Department´s active involvement in extramural events is strong.
- There are strong ties with the private and public sectors in the region.
- Both academic and administrative staff exhibit an amazing team spirit that was evident in the meetings during the EEAP online interviews.
- Strong research output as a Unit.
- The department receives impressive funding from high quality research activities.
- Experienced and dedicated faculty members offer a great educational experience to students.

II. Areas of Weakness

- Incomplete communication and dissemination of the results of student's course evaluations process which leads to insufficient active participation of students in the development of the undergraduate programme.
- The number of students admitted in the programme by the department each year is significantly higher than the one the Department´s infrastructure and teaching capacity can handle in an effective way.
- Due to the lack of adequate number of faculty, the teaching load to all teaching staff is the same regardless of research productivity and graduate student supervision.

III. Recommendations for Follow-up Actions

- Consider the establishment of an external advisory board and establish more formal processes for involving Advisory Board members, including but not limited to external ones like industrial market or (local) government players/partners and alumni in order to maintain the program innovation and align with the market requirements.

- Consider hosting events such as Career Days or visiting related infrastructure facilities in business, institutions or other organisations in the region.
- The student handbook should provide information about the Library and the available resources.
- A tutoring system is encouraged to be adopted in the Department; in such a system students are assigned to a member of staff that will act as their contact point throughout their studies.
- Continue to reflect on the concept of student-centered learning and implement it in a more profound way in the new study programme.
- Establish new and improve existing procedures for filling and handling of student complaints as well as develop guidelines for students to formally report harassment of any type.
- As the program of study gradually reaches the final year, care must be taken for the Department to offer easy ways for the final year students to reach the industry sector and find employment.
- Establish a mechanism for assessing the quality of teaching at individual faculty member level, using feedback gathered by the OMEA from the student surveys, and design ways to implement a continuous improvement process for teaching.
- Promote actions to improve students' engagement in class evaluation questionnaires.
- Increase student participation in the governance and internal evaluation process. Make students the internal stakeholders of the academic experience.
- Detailed procedures should be in place for aspects related to academic integrity - those should be part of the student handbook.
- Procedures for amending/updating a module based on information gathered by multiple sources (student feedback, social partners, updates on the curriculum, etc.).
- The amalgamation of the core computer science modules with modules related to computer science teaching (especially in the first two years) should be justified and propagated in a clear manner to the students.
- The Department may wish to clarify how course evaluation results are processed and should regularly publicise aggregate data regarding student evaluations and report actions taken based on these evaluations.
- The creation of key strategic partnerships at the EU level via Erasmus agreements that originate from the Department and are supported by the University.
- Inarguably space limitation is a key constraint at the moment and has a significant impact on the quality of experience of the students. Consequently, the University should support the Department in terms of expanding the availability of teaching spaces for the Department in an equity manner compared with other Units of the University.

- The Department is an active research environment however some strategically important KPIs should be defined and those already in existence should be rationalised in terms of how they have been defined (in a quantitative and qualitative manner).

- Clear procedures should be defined in terms of updating/amending a module. This should include, inter alia, a departmental discussion about proposed changes, feedback from students and social partners.

- Hire more academic personnel and reduce the overall teaching workload for the regular faculty.

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IV.   Summary & Overall Assessment

The Principles where full compliance has been achieved are: **1, 2, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, and 12.**

The Principles where substantial compliance has been achieved are: **3, 4, and 6.**

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. **Prof. Emeritus George Vachtsevanos (Chair)**
   Georgia Institute of Technology, USA

2. **Dr Vasilis Friderikos**
   King's College London, UK

3. **Prof. George Papadopoulos**
   University of Cyprus, CY

4. **Prof. Sotiris Skevoulis**
   Pace University, USA

5. **Ms Evangelia Athanasiadi**
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