



ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ
HELLENIC REPUBLIC



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Accreditation Report
for the New Undergraduate Study Programme in
operation of:

Physiotherapy
Institution: International Hellenic University
Date: 11 July 2022



Επιχειρησιακό Πρόγραμμα
Ανάπτυξη Ανθρώπινου Δυναμικού,
Εκπαίδευση και Διά Βίου Μάθηση
Με τη συγχρηματοδότηση της Ελλάδας και της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης



Report of the Panel appointed by the HAHE to undertake the review of the New Undergraduate Study Programme in operation of **Physiotherapy** 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 **Physiotherapy** 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. **Dr. Mary Andrianopoulos (Chair)**, Professor, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, Massachusetts, United States of America
2. **Dr. Vassilios Vardaxis**, Professor, Des Moines University, Des Moines, Iowa, United States of America
3. **Dr. Stefanos Volianitis**, Associate Professor, Qatar University, Doha, Qatar
4. **Mr. Eleftherios Bournousouzis**, Panhellenic Association of Physiotherapists, Athens, Greece
5. **Ms. Ilektra Tsoulfidi**, Student of Nursing, Hellenic Mediterranean University, Heraklion, Greece

II. Review Procedure and Documentation

The External Evaluation and Accreditation Panel (EEAP) attended an orientation remotely via Zoom delivered by Dr. Christina Besta, General Manager of the Hellenic Authority of Higher Education (HAHE) on June 29, 2022. The procedures and criteria for the evaluation of the new Physiotherapy (PPS) undergraduate programme were reviewed at that time. HAHE also provided eight different documents for the panel to review in advance of the accreditation process and site visit (e.g. code of ethics, P1B standards, P13B mapping grid guidelines for accreditation, P14B template, etc.). The evaluation of the physiotherapy programme took place on July 11-16, 2022. Three of the five panel members attended on site and two participated remotely. A member of the panel used their smart phone to take pictures during the tour of the laboratories, computer lab, classrooms and auditoriums, main and smaller health science libraries. The photographs were shared and discussed with the members attending remotely during a Zoom meeting. The panel met with the following individuals:

University, OMEA and MODIP representatives and staff

- Thomas Apostolou, Professor and Department Chair of Physiotherapy
- Alexandra Christara Papadopoulou, Professor
- Paris Iakovidis, Assistant Professor
- Faidra Eleftheriou, Professor, Biochemical Sciences and MODIP
- Stamatis Angelopoulos, Vice President for Research

Faculty, Teaching staff and Secretariat

- Ilias Kallistratos, Professor
- Maria Tsiliggiri, Professor
- Georgios Koutras, Associate Professor
- Anna Chalkia, Assistant Professor
- Ioanna Chatziprodrmidou, E.D.I.P.
- Emmanouil Trevlakis, Lecturer
- Stavroula Kapageridou, Lecturer
- Dimitrios Chatzitheodorou, Lecturer
- Dimitrios Lytras, Lecturer
- Konstantinos Kasimis, Lecturer

Undergraduate Physiotherapy students ranging from 4th to 6th semester

Student representation was comprised of nine students (three females and six males). One student had a physical disability and used a wheel chair.

Stakeholders, Employers, and Clinical partners

- Mr. Dimitrios Koukoulis, Head of Physiotherapy Dept., Papageorgiou General Hospital
- Mr Dimitrios Pasvantis, Head of Physiotherapy Dept., Interbalkan Medical Center
- Mr. Ioannis Saridakis, Association of Cancer Patients of Macedonian – Thrace
- Mr. Aggelos Boudouris, Freelancer of physical therapy
- Mr. Dimitrios Katsoupakis, Freelancer of physical therapy
- Dr. Magdalini Tsolaki, Professor of Psychiatry, Aristotle University - Thessaloniki, Chairwoman Greek Federation of Alzheimer Disease
- Mr. Georgios Mathas, Head of Development Sector of National Paralympic Committee
- Dr. Vaios Dafoulis, Head of Child Psychiatry, Department of Ippokrateio General Hospital
- Mr. Drossos Christopoulos, Head of International Road Races of Alexander the Great
- Ms. Maria Askeridou, Head of Rehabilitation Department, Armonia Rehabilitation Center

Documentation

The panel reviewed 38 documents that were submitted by the Physiotherapy Department ranging from a table of contents, the department's academic summary proposal for accreditation of the new undergraduate programme in physiotherapy at IHU, a summary of three departmental quality indicators for the 2018-2019, 2019-2020, and 2020-2021 academic years, two quality indicators related to the undergraduate programme for the 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 academic years, etc. Documentation was well-organised using a number system ranging from B0 (table of Contents) to B32 (MODIP report on transition). In addition, the panel requested some additional material that were not available in the original packet. The following were forwarded to the panel at their request: faculty curriculum vitae (CV); description of the doctoral students' training and/or qualifications to serve as teaching and research assistants; and description of the system used to guide undergraduate students for selection of topics for their theses. A supplemental table was forwarded to the panel by the Vice President for Research (Dr. Stamatis Angelopoulos) of research grants that the physiotherapy faculty and/or clinical stakeholders received over the past 10 years. During the site visit, Professor Papadopoulou supplied the panel with hardcopy samples of theses that students completed under her direction.

III. New Undergraduate Study Programme in operation Profile

The International Hellenic University (IHU) Alexandria campus is located in Sindos, which is approximately 17 km outside of Thessaloniki, the second largest city in Greece. The IHU campus consists of five schools (Geosciences, Health Sciences, Social Sciences, Engineering, and Economics and Business Administration). The Physiotherapy Department is housed in the School of Health Sciences, which was founded in 1974 as a four-year Higher Educational institution (HEI) and subsequently merged with three former Technical Educational Institutions (TEIs), the Alexandria Technological Educational Institution of Thessaloniki (ATEI), TEI of Central Macedonia, and TEI of Eastern Macedonia and Thrace. As a result of this merger, the physiotherapy programme has grown substantially in size with a current student body of 130 undergraduate who are admitted annually, thus adding to the current size of the student body prior to the merger of the TEIs. According to documentation provided to the panel, the physiotherapy program is the second most sought after programme for prospective undergraduate students after the Department of Physiotherapy in Athens. Upon successful completion of the four-year undergraduate programme in physiotherapy, students are awarded a Bachelor of Science degree.

The four-year undergraduate programme is comprised of eight consecutive semesters (semesters A-G) from which undergraduates earn 30 European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) per semester. A new feature of the physiotherapy programme at IHU is that undergraduates will accrue a total of 240 ECTS to earn a cycle one degree (Bachelor's degree) under Greece's and the European Union's legal framework that governs HEIs and their mobility under the ECTS. In addition, students are required to complete a thesis during the fourth academic year (10 ECTS) and four months of practicum (in comparison to six under the former ATEI programme).

According to the department's accreditation summary report of the new Department of Physiotherapy programme at IHU, there is currently a significant demand for physical therapists in Greece. As such, the current administration in the department indicated that they are well-positioned to educate and train a cadre of undergraduate students to meet the supply and demand of the labour market in Greece.

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 placed 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

a. The academic profile and the mission of the academic unit

The mission of the department is to provide high quality education to students in theoretical knowledge, advanced technological skills in physiotherapy, clinical practical training, transfer of research-to-practice, and experiences that lead to life-long learning as determined by the UNESCO international categorization of scientific fields in education. Through the use of SMART technologies and training in research methodology, in preparation of the thesis in the fourth year of study, the department aims to increase the mobility of students. All courses in the department use the Moodle platform for posting lecture notes and assignments that students can access on- and off-campus using smart phones and other computer devices. Laboratories are equipped with basic instrumentation and other specialized technologies to enhance theoretical, clinical, and research experiences.

b. The strategy of the Institution for its academic development

The administration and faculty in the department report that they monitor developments in both the scientific and educational communities on national and international levels. Faculty and administrators strive to develop collaborations with other HEIs in Physiotherapy in Greece and abroad. Modern technologies are used by faculty, staff and students for academic coursework, laboratory experiences and clinical practice. Opportunities are available for undergraduate students to study abroad through the ERASMUS programme. The department's Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis outlines four areas of strengths (absorption of physiotherapy graduates into the workforce, calibre of faculty, being among a few physiotherapy departments in the country, opportunities to conduct research), three weaknesses (significant shortage of faculty and staff, limited resources to purchase supplies, laboratory equipment, etc.), two opportunities (faculty "know-how", the potential for inter-departmental collaborations), and two perceived threats (understaffing and replacement hires, and other obstacles).

c. The documentation of the feasibility of the operation of the department and the study programme

The justification to train and educate more students in physiotherapy is based on the perceived supply and demand of physiotherapists in Greece. The increased demand of physiotherapists in the country has led to the recent establishment of the 5th Physiotherapy Department at the University of Sparti, which has added to the number of pre-existing physiotherapy programmes in the country. The department at IHU aligns with the curricula of other physiotherapy departments in Greece (e.g. Athens and Lamia) and in other countries within the European Union (EU).

d. The documentation of the sustainability of the new department

The department reports that they have the infrastructure to support the viability of the new physiotherapy undergraduate programme in terms of equipment, classrooms, and laboratories. The existing infrastructure includes: one 150 seat auditorium; four classrooms that can accommodate 40-70 students; six laboratories for teaching and clinical training; two

fully equipped research laboratories; one computer lab with approximately 24-30 workstations, one printer, one projector, and software for some laboratory courses. The IHU has one main library on campus equipped with computer stations and seating for students to work on site. The main library has Wi-Fi connectivity via Eduroam. Students can access the library's e-journals and e-books on- and off-campus. A smaller, specialty library exists on campus for the health sciences.

The department currently consists of five professors, one associate professor, two assistant professors, two EDIP faculty, one EBIT faculty, two part-time faculty, and three administrative staff. Twelve doctoral students are currently enrolled in the department and the panel was told that the doctoral students assist with teaching undergraduate courses. Faculty attend and present at professional and scientific conferences with faculty co-authors and students pending on the availability of funding for professional travel. Scholarly productivity, professional attendance at conferences, and service positions held with professional associations are evident for some faculty. Faculty also submit their work for publication.

An updated strategic plan outlines the physiotherapy programme's proposed implementation and sustainability of the new undergraduate programme across several axes. Clearly defined objectives are accompanied by action plans and methods for measuring outcomes. A two-year business plan for the 2022 and 2023 years reflect specific goals and objectives to be achieved, current indicators, action plans, and the responsible parties for oversight of each objective and timeline.

e. The structure of studies

According to the department's study guide, students accumulate 240 ECTS over the course of four years by completing a total of 45 courses in the new programme. Among the 240 ECTS credit hours earned over the four-year period, 104 hours are from theoretical coursework, 48 hours from dedicated laboratory experiences, and 72 from clinical practice experiences. The thesis is now required for all students during the fourth year of study.

f. The number of admitted students

As a result of the merger of three TEIs (former ATEI, TEI of Central Macedonia, TEI of Eastern Macedonia and Thrace), the new Physiotherapy Department at IHU has an enrolment of 130 undergraduate students annually. The merger has added to the current size of the existing student body that preceded this merger. It is important to note that the number of students admitted annually is set by the Ministry of Education in Greece.

g. Postgraduate studies and research

The department offers post-graduate studies and research opportunities for master's and doctoral students. It is possible for students to earn a master's degree in the fifth consecutive year. Prospective graduate students complete the post-graduate curriculum by taking a set of elective courses in the department. The department also offers students the opportunity to earn a doctoral degree. Doctoral students must engage in empirical research to earn a doctorate. A description of the 12 doctoral students' research focus, the names of their faculty mentors, courses they have completed, and the projected timeline for completion of their degrees are all well-outlined.

I. Analysis

The metric to support the need to increase the number of the physiotherapists in the country and the creation of the new physiotherapy programme was based on alumni opinions. No objective workforce data were cited from published resources or professional associations of physiotherapists in Greece to support the shortage of physiotherapist in the country. Marketing analyses were not conducted to empirically support the supply and demand or unemployment of physiotherapists in Greece. The department is able to accommodate transfer and ERASMUS students, yet data that compare the student body sizes of other physiotherapy programmes in Greece (e.g. Athens, Patra, Lamia, Sparta) with the current size of the student body in physiotherapy at IHU were not reported.

The department's curriculum aligns well with other physiotherapy departments in Greece and within the EU. A total of 240 ECST credit hours are required to complete the new physiotherapy programme, which includes the required thesis in the fourth year. It is commendable that the department will require students to complete a thesis in the new physiotherapy curriculum as this will enable undergraduate students to engage in research. These efforts may inspire undergraduates in the department to pursue post-graduate studies for a master's or doctoral degree.

A significant concern is the current number of faculty and staff to effectively educate, train, and advise the current student body of 130 students. The department projects that they will have 13 faculty in year 2022, which will increase to 16 faculty in year 2025. However, the panel was informed that they will only have a total of 10 faculty during the fall 2022 semester. The department is relying on the 12 doctoral students to supplement teaching and research efforts, especially in light of the mandatory thesis in the fourth year. The number of support staff (secretariat) has downsized from three to only one.

The department has the basic infrastructure to educate and clinically train undergraduate students in theory and clinical practical aspects in physiotherapy. SMART technologies and students' access to the library's search engines and electronic books through IHU's e-library are also minimal given the current size of the student body. According to the nine student representatives with whom the panel met, SMART technologies primarily include the use of the Moodle platform to access coursework and the library's digital resources. Instrumentation and equipment located in the laboratories are used mostly for demonstration purposes in courses and not for hands-on clinical training or research to complete the thesis. Student representatives indicated that their off-campus clinical placements provide them more opportunities to receive hands-on training using instrumentation for the evaluation and treatment of patients with physiotherapy needs. According to nine off-campus stakeholders from regional hospitals and rehabilitation centers, they cannot accommodate more physiotherapy undergraduate students to complete their practicum training at their facilities. The nine student representatives also wanted to have greater access to the computer lab located within the Physiotherapy Department to complete coursework and thesis studies.

There was general consensus among faculty that there is minimal support for continuing education opportunities. The supplemental documents provided to the panel at their request by the Vice President for Research supports that some faculty have success securing internal or external funding. The panel was also provided a summary of the courses that comprise the new physiotherapy curriculum organised by course name, semester taught, number of credit hours, course objectives, references, and the form of evaluation. Course syllabi lacked content regarding the manner in which the final grade in the course was going to be weighted and calculated, with very few exceptions. The nine undergraduate student representatives currently enrolled in the department (ranging from 4th to 6th semester) also expressed concern that their final grade was primarily based on one final exam grade at the end of the semester. Most students indicated that they prefer to be graded across a variety of performance measures (exams, quizzes and assignments) that were clearly weighted.

Of significant concern is the completion of the mandatory thesis in the fourth year of the programme. It is not evident that the theses completed by students in the new physiotherapy programme are scholarly in nature or offer students enriching culminating experiences. During the meeting with the panel, one faculty member reported that 75% of the theses completed are literature reviews, 5% empirical research studies, and 20% other (e.g. case studies), indicative of a wide range and inconsistency in the quality and scientific merit of the thesis project.

II. Conclusions

It is evident that the Physiotherapy Department currently has a cadre of ambitious and talented faculty and staff. Current coursework reflects the breadth and depth of the new physiotherapy curriculum. Although the infrastructure, laboratories, and SMART resources are minimal, they can be better utilised to educate and train the undergraduate students. Course syllabi should be better organised to not only include course objectives, but also the specific knowledge and skills required to successfully complete the coursework and practicum experiences. Student expectations, qualitative, quantitative summative and formative assessments, and the weighting of theoretical and clinical competencies across all courses should be clearly outlined. Off-campus practicum experiences are available to students. However, greater communication and organisation with off-campus supervisors and stakeholders are warranted in the best interest of assessing students using both qualitative and quantitative metrics. A wider range of educational and clinical experiences to assess students' performance and the transfer of theory to clinical practice contributes to better acquisition of course content and life-long learning.

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	
Substantially compliant	X
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	
Substantially compliant	X
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	
Substantially compliant	X
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

- The panel recommends that the Physiotherapy Department determine the supply and demand and market trends of physiotherapists by conducting actual surveys of alumni, stakeholders, and professional associations of physiotherapy in Greece and the EU. The use of published empirical data and resources by professional associations of physiotherapists in Greece to determine the workforce needs and employment rates in the country and within the EU are essential when determining the feasibility and supply and demand. This will also allow the physiotherapy programme to better align their curriculum and any revisions to the existing curriculum (e.g. areas of specialization) to supply and demand trends and the education of students in physiotherapy to better meet the needs of the country and their mobility within the EU.
- Course syllabi that explicitly state not only course objectives, but the specific knowledge and skills to be acquired are essential. Summative and formative assessment using qualitatively and quantitatively methodologies will allow the Physiotherapy Department to evaluate students' performance in courses. The weighting of each assignment and course objective should be explicitly stated, including the manner in which the final grade is calculated. This will allow students to not only understand course requirements, student expectations and accountability, but also students' strengths, weakness and areas that need improvement.
- Current coursework needs to provide students better opportunities to acquire both theoretical knowledge and clinical competencies in light of the shortage of faculty and laboratory staff. Better use of laboratory experiences by having students perform mock diagnostics, hypothetical clinical case studies, small group assignments, and clinical simulations will assist students to transfer theory to clinical practice. Theoretical and clinical assignments that focus on demonstrating evidence-based practices will also help students develop critical thinking skills and life-long learning.

- Students should be exposed to more empirical research opportunities by engaging in actual research under the direction of faculty or supervision of doctoral students. Systematic reviews of the literature should not be the standard for completing the thesis. However, if students conduct systematic reviews of the literature, using scientific methods for analysing and synthesising reviews can be potentially a very effective life-long learning experience. Analysis and synthesis of published data should include applying sets of psychometric criteria (e.g. reliability, validity, statistical significance, etc.) so that students can evaluate the scientific merit and level of evidence-based practice of studies. Meta-analyses are also very scientific and powerful methods to assess whether the outcomes obtained from a literature review have significant effect size providing that students can control for independent and dependent variables studied across studies.
- Collaborations with colleagues and students at other medical, educational, and research universities or institutions in Greece and abroad may foster greater scholarly research productivity, such as publications and securing internal and external research funding.
- Greater organisation, collaboration and bi-directional communication with off-campus supervisors and stakeholders will assist the department with the placement of students off-campus for hands-on practicum experiences.
- Updating and cleaning the existing laboratories will improve the appearance and quality of the students' experiences.
- The Physiotherapy Department's website needs to be updated and made more interactive to allow students and external traffic to better navigate the website. Essential information regarding student services, procedures, and contact people should appear in both the student guidebook and the website. The website should include universal designs to increase its access and mobility of students internationally.

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

Quality assurance and improvement of the physiotherapy programme is a continuous process and includes several internal and external evaluation procedures. External evaluations are conducted regularly to ensure that the Physiotherapy Department is fulfilling its mission and objectives. The department's roles and responsibilities, methods for assessing and measuring quality assurances, and the parties responsible for their oversight were approved on February, 2022, by the department's assembly. The department's assembly includes faculty

representatives who teach theoretical courses, laboratory teaching staff, special technical laboratory, administrative staff, and an undergraduate curriculum committee appointed by the department's assembly. The department's assembly also monitors students' performance for coursework and final exams. The assembly recommends minor and major changes regarding the curriculum and its implementation. Informational meetings with students are held to support rational choices of students' studies. Mandatory advising of students is currently not required.

The department participates in events with the Panhellenic Association of Physiotherapists and other scientific professional bodies. Members of the department have served or are currently serving on state, social and scientific organisations. The department works in close collaboration with the quality assurance unit (MODIP) periodically to collect and assess outcome data and implement its strategic plan. The programme's performance measures, outcomes, and plans for improvement are also documented and approved by various institutional communities. The department reports that they are in compliance with the national standards for physiotherapy departments in Greece and broad.

II. Analysis

Methods for assessing and measuring outcomes, the quality of the institution and the academic unit are evident on a number of axes and policies. The decisions of the regulatory bodies are recorded in the respective minutes of the assemblies as well as in internal institutional documents. The physiotherapy programme is monitored by various institutional and internal committees for quality assurances and compliance with legislative bodies. MODIP representatives with whom the panel met indicated that it is their responsibility to collect and analyse outcome data and provide continual feedback to the Physiotherapy Department. The administrators and core faculty in the Physiotherapy Department have earned doctorate degrees, yet very few faculty have track records of publishing in peer-reviewed journals and securing external/internal funding to conduct research and support graduate students. As such, there is limited evidence that teaching and clinical practice are linked to empirical research. Mentoring and advising undergraduate and post-graduate students can be problematic if faculty are not active and successful publishing in refereed journals and securing funding to support their research and attend conferences. Some of the core faculty in the department are currently advising and mentoring doctoral students.

III. Conclusions

It is evident that the Physiotherapy Department has several mechanisms to assess its mission, goals, objectives, and annual benchmarks for the department's continual assessment and improvement. Based on a review of the documentation that were provided to the panel and information stated during the site visit, it is evident that there is not a well-organised system for sharing existing data collected by MODIP with the department. It is also not evident whether the Physiotherapy Department incorporates changes for the continual improvement of its curriculum based on feedback received by the numerous statutory, faculty, and student committees. Is it also not clear if clinical stakeholders and partners at hospitals and rehabilitation centers are surveyed to provide continuous assessment and constructive feedback regarding student performance at off-campus practica as no data were available for

review. It is also not clear if the department surveys off-campus stakeholders regarding the number of students they can accommodate for practicum experiences per semester and year.

The new physiotherapy programme at IHU has not incorporated some of the recommendations provided by the panel during its last external evaluation conducted in 2014 under its old curriculum as an ATEI. Student guidance and feedback during the fourth year of study was found to be lacking at that time. This is consistent with the feedback provided to the panel by the nine student representatives during the site visit, especially pertaining to advising and mentoring of required coursework, services available on campus, mobility with the ERASMUS programme, and the required thesis.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

- A system for advising and mentoring students on an annual basis is strongly recommended.
- A systematic bi-directional system should be implemented for sharing of specific data collected by MODIP. Continual improvements and quality assurances to the programme should be based on factual data, outcomes and constructive feedback.
- Although the new curriculum in physiotherapy at IHU has incorporated some of the panel's recommendation from the external evaluation conducted in 2014, it is concerning that some of the recommendations have not been incorporated to date.
- It is recommended that clinical stakeholders at hospitals and rehabilitation centers be surveyed to not only provide their assessment and constructive feedback regarding student performance at practicum settings, but to better coordinate the number of students each placement can accommodate by semester and annually.

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 physiotherapy has a short-term strategic plan for the 2021-23 years that pertain to the design, approval and monitoring of its quality. The programme's overarching goals are as follows: 1) continuous improvement for educating students through the department's system for monitoring the programme and the expected learning outcomes that lead to continuous evaluation and changes; 2) development of high quality research based on international developments; 3) promotion of research partnerships, utilisation and dissemination of information to benefit the society; 4) improvement of infrastructure, functions and services; and 5) improvement of financing through research funds.

II. Analysis

The new physiotherapy programme is structured in a manner such that it makes it possible for students to acquire basic knowledge during their four years of studies. Students transition through the curriculum in a logical manner by first completing general education courses followed by specialty courses and practica experiences that allow students to acquire theoretical knowledge and clinical competencies. This transition allows students to be better prepared to pursue postgraduate studies. The programme's curriculum and clinical training ensures that graduates have the necessary knowledge and skills for a professional career in health care, education or scientific research. The programme also helps to prepare students for employment as autonomous physiotherapy professionals working in private practice, primary health care hospitals and other facilities.

The academic and clinical training aspects of the physiotherapy programme are designed based on the standards outlined for departments of physiotherapy in Greece and EU. Students earn greater than 1000 hours of clinical practice consistent with the requirements of other physiotherapy programmes at universities in Greece (and the old TEI programme) that have been in existence for greater than 50 years. The structure of the programme is rational. However, the procedures for periodically evaluating and revising the physiotherapy programme for continual improvement are not well-articulated. There does not seem to be an effective process in place for academic faculty to incorporate continual improvements in theoretical and clinical coursework based on periodic feedback with the goal of improving the programme's curriculum. The student guide book has not been well-disseminated to students the last few years, probably due to social distancing restrictions imposed as a result of the COVID 19 pandemic.

III. Conclusions

The Physiotherapy Department's curriculum is consistent with universal standards and expectations for physiotherapy programmes in Greece and the EU. However, the department should provide students greater opportunities to develop digital and technical skills to better prepare them to enter the physiotherapy profession in the future.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

It is recommended that the Physiotherapy Department establish a bilateral mutual beneficiary relationship with the students' board and the national Physiotherapy Association and surrounding municipalities. This will allow students to increase their recognition and presence among the clinical professions. Students will be able to secure better paying jobs for graduates in physiotherapy, including being exposed to new opportunities of services available to them.

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

The Physiotherapy Department offers an undergraduate Bachelor's Degree in physiotherapy that requires students to earn 240 ECTS credit hours over an eight-semester period (30 credit hours per semester). The degree's curriculum consists of 45 courses. The course work is subdivided into four categories of courses: general knowledge (11); special knowledge (9); specialization courses (20); and electives (5). The course content and variety of topics are within the international standards and vary from two to eight ECTS credits per course, except for the thesis and the practical training courses, which are both offered during the eighth semester at 10 ECTS credits each. The number of courses offered by the department specific to the degree is within the range offered by leading physiotherapy schools in the EU. Teaching methods used in the department vary depending on the type of course (practical or theory-based).

In the department's accreditation proposal, the department indicated that they are providing the following forms of instruction to their students:

- Teaching methods that are appropriate and flexible with respect to delivery modes for theoretical or laboratory content in each course. Coursework is student-centered and

includes lectures, faculty accessibility/availability, hands-on individual and team-learning experiences, increased student/teacher interactions during clinical/laboratory courses, and according to the content taught and limited to the material, support instruments, and space.

- Access to lecture content is through the Learning Management Systems (Moodle), internet resources, and faculty personal sites with content-learning supplemental material.
- The student learning assessment process varies predominantly by course type.
 - Student learning on theoretical courses is evaluated based on summative assessments in the form of comprehensive examinations at the conclusion of the course and at the end of each respective semester and during the September examination period. Some courses use the interim assessment process in the form of midterm examinations and assignment delivery.
 - Student learning laboratories, skill-based courses, in addition to the use of a criterion /cumulative assessment processes occurs throughout the term.
- The effectiveness of courses and teaching evaluations are completed by students on scheduled times and days defined by MODIP. However, it is left up to the course instructors to inform and encourage students to participate in this process. Course and instructor evaluations are shared via site postings of MODIP or DIPAE. The outcomes of course evaluations and ratings are used by the respective instructors, the chair of the department, and the OMEA coordinator for course and teaching improvement purposes.
- Student representatives indicated that specific special learning or mobility needs are given on a course-by-course basis and that pertinent accommodations are provided after consultation with the department chair, support adviser, and course instructor.
- As of October 2021, the department initiated an academic advising process to provide student support in terms of communicating information, services, academic planning, response to issues, and career guidance.

The process for managing student complaints or appeals related academic, study support, student life, and harassment issues includes completing a general complaint form with guidance by the student advisor. Mechanisms to resolve student issues are handled on an individual basis. The formal progression of the complaint, if not resolved, is directed to the department chair, and if needed, to the respective Faculty of Academic Affairs office.

II. Analysis

Following review of the department's accreditation proposal, other various documents, and following the site visit, the panel observed the following:

With regard to the student-centered learning, the department encourages teaching modes or methods that promote respect among students and faculty members.

- The programme allows for limited student accessibility to the learning spaces outside of teaching time.

- Students reported limited accessibility to the teaching staff outside of teaching time.
- Limited clinical laboratory infrastructure (materials and instruments) relative to the number of students in the courses.
- The number of available sites for the individual practical training (during semester 8) are inadequate relative to the number of students in the programme.

With regard to student assessment, the following were observed:

- Summative assessments are mainly used, yet there is limited evidence regarding the use of formative assessments.
- The assignment type, weight, and assessment criteria (e.g. rubrics) are not consistently published in advance and in most cases, are not available in detail on course syllabi.
- Limited opportunities within courses for student assessment and progression over the duration of the course delivery (semester).

With regard to student learning assessment the following were observed:

- It is unclear how the feedback process works on student learning assessment.
- The language used to communicate student learning objectives on the syllabi is not consistent across courses, and in most cases does not reflect the guidelines of the European Qualifications Framework and the Bloom's taxonomy.
- A method/process of assessment for student learning on specific learning objectives, «Μαθησιακά αποτελέσματα» that is included in the course syllabi, does not appear to exist.

With regard to course and teaching assessment the following were observed:

- Course and teaching assessments are done on a regular basis to assess the student satisfaction with the course content, mode of delivery, including instructor strengths and shortcomings. This process accumulates a plethora of information and student feedback available to the individual instructors, the department chair and the OMEA coordinator.
 - The follow up on each instance (each time the course is delivered) and the effects that it has over time for revision and improvement purposes is unclear.
 - It is also unclear if comparative (across courses and instructors) share outcomes from aggregated data or benchmarks (norm- or criterion-referenced) or benchmarks (norm- or criterion-referenced) exist.

III. Conclusions

The department makes serious efforts towards student-centered approaches in learning, teaching, and student assessment. These efforts appear to have a positive effect on student learning; however, factors such as the recent pandemic, the timeline of the development and implementation of some of these processes, etc., is unclear. The limitations in infrastructure,

the inconsistency of their implementation, and the extremely large student/staff ratio can be alleviated by reducing workload and maximising their impact on students.

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

- Further develop a structured procedure for teaching evaluations and effectiveness and integrate the process with continuous development of the teaching staff, especially for the teaching assistants (EDIP members and EBIT) to ensure alignment with novel teaching methods.
- Increase the link between teaching and research by further utilisation of the department’s research facilities for targeted course content.
- Create more opportunities for students to access learning spaces, instructors, and learning material and instruments, to facilitate student autonomy in knowledge and skill development.
- Enhance communication with area stakeholders with bi-directional benefits aiming to increase the practice training sites available to students during the 8th term. In exchange, the department can offer continuing education opportunities to off-campus stakeholders. An alumni database can also be created and enhanced to assist in this effort.
- Increase the number of opportunities (examinations and/or assignments) for student assessment purposes in theoretical and practical courses. This information should be clearly outlined and consistent on course syllabi. Establish a feedback process so that students can monitor their learning and performance progression over the duration of the academic term.
- Establish a clear assessment process of student learning related to learning objectives for each course. Enhance the current syllabus template to include the specific method of assessment for each of the student learning objectives per course.
- Consistent use of Bloom’s taxonomy terms is recommended across all courses to communicate and describe student learning objectives on course syllabi.
- Implement and enhance the proactive aspects (forward focus) and the student advising process (established during the 16/13.10.2021 meeting).

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

Students were unaware of the role of the academic advisor with respect to monitoring their academic progress of coursework and completion of their degree program. As such, students reported never taking advantage of these services or opportunities to seek counselling or guidance from their advisor. In addition, even though the students expressed knowledge of

the ERASMUS programme, they were unaware of the programme's function and its student mobility capacity, thus students never pursued such possibilities. Students expressed overwhelming confusion about the necessary documentation needed to register in the department during the first semester and received limited guidance and assistance on this matter.

With respect to completing the thesis requirement, students were satisfied with the level of preparation/training and supervision they were receiving. However, none of the student representatives interviewed indicated that they had any experience preparing a thesis since they were still completing coursework in semesters prior to the last academic year. The department has defined a set of quality requirements for the implementation of the thesis and a thesis handbook exists. The procedures and terms for completing the thesis are well-described in the Study Guide. Academic supervision for theses is provided by full time academic faculty and doctoral students. One area of concern is the lack of formal training of doctoral students (as evidenced by the Doctoral Qualifications and Requirements document provided by the department upon request). Student testimonies suggest that there is no systematic and organised procedure for receiving and registering newly admitted students.

Based on the student testimonies, there is a significant degree of satisfaction regarding the quality of the internship (practical training) and appreciation of the professional skills acquired. Similar views were expressed in the meeting with the stakeholders, employers and social partners. Specifically, the employers expressed being highly appreciative of the skills and the level of professionalism students exhibited during their internships. The department has developed a network including social professional bodies to support the clinical training component of the programme.

The Study Guide and the Internal Regulations and Policies documents describe in detail the operation of the new physiotherapy undergraduate programme. Both of these documents are posted on the department's webpage. The department does not have the possibility to grant scholarships.

Students reported that ECTS is applied across the curriculum. The Diploma Supplement is issued to all graduates in both Greek and English. The physiotherapy programme aims to enhance the students' mobility to study abroad by participating in either the ERASMUS+ Studies or ERASMUS+ Practical training programmes.

II. Analysis

There is a significant discrepancy between the content and the description of the items noted above and in the official departmental documents (i.e. Study Guide and Internal Regulations and Policies) and the student representatives' testimonies. For example, even though the role of the academic advisor is well-established and described in these official documents, students have no knowledge of these resources.

Similar discrepancies exist between what was reported and experienced by the student representatives pertaining to procedures for registration and the level of support available to newly admitted students and what is reported in the detailed Study Guide. Furthermore, the

limited use of the ERASMUS programme (e.g. 15 students in the past five years) suggests that there is insufficient dissemination of relevant information to students of academic services and resources available to them.

It is evident that students are primarily responsible for staying informed of essential knowledge of services and policies. The lack of dissemination and knowledge of institutional and departmental procedures has implications not only for students, but also for the quality of their studies. Specifically, lack of proper academic advising of students affects not only their progression and timely graduation, but also the academic competence of the graduates.

Another area of concern is the academic supervision provided to the students during the preparation of their thesis. The limited number of academic staff to mentor between 130 to 180 undergraduate students necessitates that a significant portion of supervision of the thesis requirement is going to be delegated to doctoral students. Even though doctoral students have the capacity to supervise undergraduate theses, the department has only limited formal training of doctoral students. Consequently, the quality and calibre of the student thesis can be potentially compromised due to the lack of formal training of doctoral students. Principle 6 that follows also addresses preparation of teaching staff in teaching pedagogy.

III. Conclusions

Based on information reported in the documents reviewed by the panel, the department has developed regulations that address many aspects and phases of academic studies in the physiotherapy programme (admission, progression, recognition and degree award). However, students have limited knowledge of these procedures. In addition, the large student to staff ratio (50:1) and limited and variable supervisory capacity of the doctoral students can compromise the academic quality of the theses produced by undergraduate students.

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	
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	X
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

- The department should actively disseminate relevant and essential information to increase the quality of the education provided to students. It is paramount that the students are informed of all academic resources available to them and provisions established by the department. It is suggested that the department establish a first semester advising meeting whereby all the students are required to attend.
- Since doctoral students are involved in mentoring and supervising undergraduate theses, it is recommended that the department establish a formal training programme (e.g. formal seminars or short courses) to better prepare the doctoral students in this capacity.
- As noted in the strategic planning document, the department aims to reduce the ratio of students to staff by increasing the number of qualified academic staff.

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 eligibility criteria for formal academic appointments are outlined in the legislation. However, it is not possible, or within the scope of the panel, to confirm whether these criteria are followed.

Based on faculty testimony, even though there are established departmental policies allowing for staff development as mandated by law, there are limited funds for professional development among faculty. Nevertheless, one such established developmental opportunity is offered by the Socrates/ERASMUS programmes that allows for the mobility of one academic staff member to engage in teaching exchange activities within participating institutions. These opportunities seem to be the exception rather than the norm within the past five years.

The teaching workload due to the high student – faculty ratio (50/1) is excessive and can be considered as hindering engagement in research activities. With respect to research

productivity among faculty, a critical weakness that was identified by the panel was the lack of a Research Strategy and research focus in specific scientific areas among faculty in the department.

Faculty and teaching staff undergo periodic evaluation to assess their teaching effectiveness through student surveys as evidenced in the summary documents provided by MODIP. As previously mentioned, there is significant concern regarding the level of teaching and supervision competency of doctoral students.

A review of the faculty CVs supports that faculty make significant efforts to engage in research. Nevertheless, research output is rather limited, as evidenced by the h-index and citations of academic staff (e.g. Google Scholar).

II. Analysis

With regard to the teaching competence of the academic staff, it is evident that successful delivery of teaching objectives depends on the experience of individual faculty members and staff. There is no formal pedagogical training offered by the department to ensure uniformity and high standards of teaching delivery.

With regard to student evaluations of faculty, although they are performed regularly there is no established process for continually improvement in the quality of teaching delivery. The rather limited research output of the academic staff is critically affecting the link between teaching and research.

III. Conclusions

The relatively limited staff mobility combined with the lack of formal training in teaching for academic staff and doctoral students raises concerns regarding the quality of teaching delivery.

The limited research productivity among faculty critically encroaches on the research pillar of the department and students from engaging in enriching experiences that lead to the generation of new knowledge, self-sufficiency and life-long learning opportunities. Similarly, the range and depth of available experimental projects are limited in which students can engage to complete their required thesis.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

- It is strongly recommended that the department establish a formal teacher training programme to enhance the professional development of academic staff. It is essential for doctoral students to receive pedagogical training if they are to assume a vital role in teaching and supervising undergraduate students in the department.
- In the absence of funds for extensive academic staff mobility, peer observation is one cost-effective method that colleagues can help raise the teaching standard within the department.
- It is suggested that the department establish a Research Strategy outlining individual faculty research foci in specific scientific area or through collaborative efforts to increase research productivity. An increase in research output will diffuse into the teaching delivery and improve the link between teaching and research, which is critically lacking.

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 following information was reported in the documents provided to the panel and during the meetings with student representatives, academic staff and stakeholders.

The funding resources come from two sources: 1) the regular and extraordinary grants from the Ministry of Education and the grant of the Public Investment Programme (PDE); and 2) the operational budget from the special account of research funds (ELKE).

The department has the necessary facilities for students (classrooms, laboratories, Information Technology infrastructure) to ensure an appropriate teaching and learning environment for the new undergraduate programme. The programme would significantly benefit more artificial intelligent programmes (e.g. online atlas) and facilities given the number of students.

There are insufficient support services available to the students, such as boarding facilities, residence halls for students, career counselling, a student welfare office, and sport/cultural facilities. Moreover, the students are not well-informed about the availability of existing services, knowledge of their rights as students, and the mechanisms in place for students to exercise their rights or to self-advocate. Administrative staff is currently not adequate.

II. Analysis

On the department's current website (www.phys.ihu.gr), there are links to various sources relevant to both the students and staff in the department. In the documents available to the panel for review and information provided during the site visit, the website for the new undergraduate programme in physiotherapy collapsed due to problems with the server. As a result, the new website is still under construction. Members of the department's administration informed the panel that the new website contains the necessary information to better serve students and staff. The students in the department make good use of the services for borrowing educational material, office space, and the use of other peripherals, such as printers, scanners, photocopying machines, the electronic reading room, etc. The smaller library housed in the School of Health Sciences is available to students as well.

III. Conclusions

Due to the geographical location of the department on the IHU campus in Sindo and limited transportation services for students to commute to campus, it is necessary for students to have more suitable space on-campus for them to spend their time more effectively between classes.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

It is recommended that students be equipped with updated facilities and resources, as well as being given greater access to existing facilities, so that they may conduct research, study, and work on-campus. For example, the following will improve the calibre and quality of the students' education in the new physiotherapy undergraduate program at IHU: a) computers rooms with windows; b) independent study rooms; c) more access to work stations, electronic databases, educational and scientific equipment; and d) student apartments.

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 and Analysis

The department uses an information management system developed by MODIP AND DIPAE to annually collect, analyse, report, and use information for the organisation and operation of the programme. This information management system is under continuous development and is enriched with inputs from teaching and administrative staff and other members of DIPAE under the oversight of MODIP. The information collected through this process is used to generate data reports and indicators related to personnel and students, as well as educational, research, and functional processes in the department. The mechanism of data collection allows for assessment and continual improvements over time.

This information system includes data pertinent to the programme offered, courses, students, teaching personnel, publication records and indexes, student evaluations (of the programme, courses, and the faculty), personnel evaluations of the department's infrastructure, staff and student awards, and the annual internal assessments of the programme offered by MODIP.

This information management system is central to the institution (DIPAE) and supports its teaching, research, and administrative processes, and is accessible by all university members during their matriculation. It appears that this information system in its full capacity and is predominantly used by the institution (DIPAE) and at the central or national levels for interdepartmental and inter-institutional needs to assess outcomes, progress, and continual improvements.

According to the accreditation report, the information management system is used by the department for assessment of their productivity, with respect to: 1) research; 2) teaching workload and effectiveness; and 3) course evaluations and student learning outcomes of programme objectives. The department uses this system for the reporting periods between the 2018-19, 2019-20, and 2020-21 academic years, related to: a) personnel/financial resources, services, and overall departmental research productivity and projects; and b) curricular and course information, practical training, student performance and graduation rates, as well as student-faculty ratios. These reports provide data on an annual basis for the items noted above for 1 and partially for 2 and 3. However, teaching effectiveness, course evaluation, and objective assessment of student learning data were not available for the panel to review in aggregate form in reports.

In addition, there seems to be an internal central data system on a departmental level that contains the processes and work of committees and aims to archive pertinent information for reporting and demonstrating progress over time.

II. Conclusions

The department has embraced its responsibilities to collect and analyse information for the management of the physiotherapy programme of study and its quality using periodic and efficient assessments. The information management system is relatively new to the department and has a limited number of annual reports available to date. Nonetheless, an effort should be made to use the aggregate data and information collected across time to further study the underlying reasons and variables that impact various departmental indicators, such as low graduation rates, etc.

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

The department is encouraged to continue with their analysis of the information provided by the information management system developed by MODIP and DIPAE. The department should make the data more transparent and available across all stakeholders. Benchmarks should be established as a function of the outcomes from course evaluations, instructor effectiveness, graduation rates, and timelines for continual improvements.

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 and Analysis

There is information published on the DIPAE's central website detailing institutional and departmental policies regarding the physiotherapy programme's structure, mode of attendance, criteria for assessment, the degree awarded, teaching faculty CVs, and an outline of the new curriculum in physiotherapy at IHU. Practical information regarding accommodations, public transport and a map are available on both DIPAE's main website and the department's specific website. The DIPAE's central website appears to be up-to-date, detailed, and user-friendly and easy to navigate.

However, on the Department of Physiotherapy's specific website, not all of the relevant information noted above are described in much detail or linked to the appropriate webpages for cross-referencing purposes. For example, the academic unit Policy for Quality Assurance is only linked to DIPAE's main website as a separate stand-alone, detailed webpage. The same link is not available on the current Departmental of Physiotherapies website, in addition to live links pertaining to information regarding IHU's facilities, services available to students, etc. Furthermore, the study guide section located on the department's current website only shows the old physiotherapy curriculum and areas of study, which appear to be the study programme from the former ATEI. The department's current website is difficult to navigate.

II. Conclusions

The IHU's main website provides students with the necessary information in detail, which appears to be up-to-date. However, the Department of Physiotherapy's website falls short on

several levels and does not provide important information regarding the new physiotherapy curriculum. During the panel's meeting with the cohort of students, students' representatives expressed concern about not being able to obtain basic information regarding the new curriculum, course sequences and descriptions, and other important details (e.g. where students will complete their practicum or clinical practice experiences, such as hospitals, clinics and external agencies, etc.). Furthermore, the Department of Physiotherapy's website is difficult to navigate since it does not include critical and accurate information for students (e.g. administrative staff, student surveys, frequently asked questions, certification ceremony for graduate students, etc.). Lastly, the department's website should be available in other frequently spoken languages, such as English, for the mobility of prospective foreign and ERASMUS students. The panel was informed by MODIP and OMEA that the department's website is already under construction, but a functional server is needed to host their website on IHU's platform.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

- It is critical for the Department of Physiotherapy to promptly address the issue with the department's website. The new website should be available to current and prospective students, be clear, up-to-date, and easy to navigate. It is of primary importance that prospective undergraduate and post-graduate students, as well as students who desire to study through the ERASMUS programme, to be fully informed of the department's curriculum, facilities and hours of operation, and student services. The department's website should contain live links to relevant information on DIPAE's webpage, procedures, policies, and services available to them at IHU, etc.
- The department's website should incorporate features of universal design, such as its availability in a dominant language (e.g., English). The website is currently available only in Greek at this time, thus hindering mobility of students (e.g. ERASMUS).
- It is recommended that new undergraduate students in the department be provided an orientation to the content available on the department's website and the mechanism with

which to access information about the curriculum, IHU's policies, support services available on campus, especially for students with special needs or those who require accommodations.

- Although the panel was made aware of the problem affecting the department's website, an optimal timeline should be set to resolve issues and the successful launching of the website prior to the start off academic semester.

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

The department lists several mechanisms for assessing and measuring the performance outcomes and its continuous improvement. In addition to the benchmarking measures and outcomes reported as quality indicators for both the department and the undergraduate programme over the 2018-2021 academic years, specific objectives, targets and action plans are evident. The accreditation report lists several standing and various ad-hoc committees, including student committees, that assess the department and its curriculum and the need for change. The list of committees that are instrumental in assessing the department's effectiveness and success in meeting its objectives are numerous and includes: professional practice committee of students; ranking committee; transfer student committee; study guide committee; periodical and editorial committee; counselling committee to support students; departmental committee to update and maintain the website; committee that monitors the lecture halls and programme's hours of operation, the ERASMUS programme committee, public relations committee for communication with cultural institutions, material - equipment

inventory and replacement committee, graduate thesis committee, bioethics and ethics committee, laboratory committee, committee that oversees students' welfare and the needs of students with disabilities, gender and equality committee, and final exam committee. MODIP is also responsible for collecting outcome data related to demographic data, students' performance, and faculty course evaluations, with which the department can assess and implement change and continual improvement.

II. Analysis

Numerous benchmarks and targets are outlined for the department to assess its current performance, weaknesses, and need for improvement. Student committees serve to provide feedback as a means to improve the quality and effectiveness of the programme. MODIP serves as the body responsible for collecting and analysing outcome data on several dimensions. There does not appear to be a systematic and meaningful mechanism for collecting, analysing, and reporting outcomes and feedback from the plethora of 17 committees, including MODIP, to allow for continuous improvement to occur on a departmental level.

III. Conclusions

It is evident that the department has several mechanisms to assess its mission, goals, objectiveness, and benchmarks for continual assessment and improvement. However, based on the review of the documents that were available to the panel and information stated during the site visit, it was evident that there is not a well-organised system for sharing data collected by MODIP and the specific feedback provided by 17 committees or so to assess the department's current performance and its need for change. It is not evident whether the department incorporates student feedback and the feedback provided by the 17 committees to continually improve the curriculum and the department's operations in a meaningful manner. The feedback provided by the nine students representatives supports that there is need to improve sharing of information related to theoretical and clinical coursework, off-campus practicum placements, and completion of the thesis in year four.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

- The department should consolidate some of 17 committees enumerated under Section I (Findings) for Principle 10. Group membership per committee should be based on each committee's overarching mission, objectives, and the intended purpose of the type of feedback that each committee shares in common. This will facilitate and contribute to the department's ability to make continually improvements based on feedback and data that is presented in a less fragmented manner.
- It is recommended that the department's policies be well-articulated and disseminated among the student body. The feedback provided by the HEHA should be condensed into fewer, but relevant subcommittees to evaluate students' examination, institutional, and departmental policies. The website for sharing information should include universal designs in English (e.g. Queensland, etc.) will allow all participants on campus to engage in resources that are based on feedback and objective outcome data.
- A well-organised and bi-directional system should be implemented for sharing specific data collected by MODIP with the department. Quality assurances and continual improvement in the department should be based on factual data.

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 and Analysis

Based on input provided to the panel during the site visit, faculty members in the Physiotherapy Department are aware of the importance of the external review and its contributions to the programme's continual improvement. However, faculty members' responses to several of the panel's questions were quite vague and incongruent with input provided by the nine student representatives and off-campus stakeholders on the same matters and/or issues.

As presented to the panel by members of MODIP during the current site visit, issues identified during the first external evaluation back in 2014 and the recommendations provided by the panel for continual improvement of the department at that time have been taken into account by MODIP and faculty members.

II. Conclusions

It was evident to the panel that there was a discrepancy between students' knowledge of information pertaining to the new physiotherapy curriculum, completion of the thesis in the fourth year, university services, policies and procedures, and institutional and departmental facilities, etc. Similarly, although the off-campus stakeholders of the programme/academic unit were actively engaged in the current external review process and appeared to be eager to be involved, discrepancies were also noted in the feedback provided by the stakeholders

and the members of the department during the site visit. For example, the stakeholders were eager to provide enriching off-campus practicum experiences to students in the physiotherapy programme, but expressed concern about being able to accommodate more placements and supervision for a student body of 130. Faculty members and administrators did not provide details in the documentation or information during the site visit about some of these pending issues.

Although MODIP and faculty members have made efforts for continual improvement based on the past external evaluation panel’s recommendations of the older ATEI physiotherapy curriculum, it is evident that the department has neither addressed some issues nor implemented the panel’s recommendations from 2014. A designated number of faculty did not seem to embrace the importance of implementing the recommendations identified during the first evaluation for continual improvement of the newly formed Department of Physiotherapy at IHU.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

- Although all the members of MODIP and OMEA were aware of the previous external evaluation review (Institution external evaluation, IQAS accreditation), they have not made significant changes for the evolution of the new Physiotherapy Department and its continual improvement. As shown in the quality target indicator document regarding the projected goals for the 2023 academic year of the department at IHU, the objectives outlined in the document are the same as the recommendations from the previous external evaluation in 2014 and the institution’s evaluation in 2019. It is of primary importance, that the objectives and target indicators that have been set by the department be implemented soon to benefit both the faculty and students and the department’s continual improvement.

- It is suggested that the faculty's teaching hours and workload be reduced, so that students can be better served and educated.
- Laboratories need to be updated with the latest technological equipment so that students in physiotherapy can practice and acquire clinical competencies. This will allow students to be better prepared to enter the workforce and serve clients with physiotherapy needs.
- Additionally, the creation of classrooms whereby students can spend their hours between classes (computer labs, labs that are open certain hours for students can practice) is of great importance.

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

Information provided in the documentation for the panel's review and obtained during meetings with student representatives, academic staff and stakeholders is summarized as follows:

- The end date for students to complete their curricula from the previous physiotherapy programme under the ATEI status is expected to be completed by 2022.
- During the academic year 2022-23, only undergraduate students admitted into the newly formed Department of Physiotherapy at IHU will be enrolled in the new curriculum.

- Students admitted and enrolled in the old physiotherapy programme who have not completed their course work, will be able to attend the new programme through the course correspondences between the two physiotherapy programmes. This will allow for more efficient transitioning and use of resources without the need for additional funding.

As previously noted, the new physiotherapy programme is four-years and students earn a total of 240 ECTS.

II. Analysis

The new programme consists of new coursework that focuses on the development of research and science (Cognitive Therapy, Pet Physiotherapy, etc) and new discoveries in the field of rehabilitation, and the differentiated needs of the society. The internship was reduced from 6 months (former ATEI programme) to 4 months. This allows students to complete the thesis requirement in the eighth semester.

III. Conclusions

The department has provided a good description and comparison of the coursework and requirements of the old physiotherapy program (ATEI) in contrast to the curriculum of the new programme in physiotherapy at IHU. A clear plan to transition students previously enrolled in the old curriculum to the new is well-outlined and logical.

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 Ministry of Education should provide former graduate students in the physiotherapy departments from the Technological Education Institutes (TEI) the opportunity to re-enter the university to equalize their diplomas with the degrees currently offered by the university departments of physiotherapy. The objectives for this recommendation are as

follows: 1) both educational programmes (e.g. TEI and university) employed almost the same four-year curriculum leading to 240 ECTS and with no differences in compulsory courses, competencies and learning outcomes, that involves the same utilisation of academic staff and infrastructures; 2) the new law introduced an inequity between old and new physiotherapy graduates, thus creating two separate sets of professionals (Technical Education-TE, and University Education-UE) without any substantial differences in students' qualifications.

- Prior to the new law, both TEIs and universities were at Level 6 of EQF and graduates of TEI are recognized in all EU countries as graduates of physiotherapy at the university level. Thus, the direct equalisation of both the degrees (TE and UE) is necessary and appropriate. In each case, if no direct equalisation of the two degrees is offered, it is obligatory that some equalisation measures be put in place similar to the procedures for the transition from former undergraduate programs (UGP) to new ones (e.g. courses combined with academic (masters and doctoral) and professional experiences.

PART C: CONCLUSIONS

I. Features of Good Practice

The Department of Physiotherapy's curriculum aligns well with other physiotherapy departments in Greece and within the EU. Basic infrastructure to educate and clinically train undergraduate students in theory and clinical practice in physiotherapy exists. Coursework is student-centered and includes lectures, faculty accessibility and availability, hands-on individual and team-learning experiences, and increased student-teacher interactions. The breadth and depth of the new physiotherapy curriculum is logical and appropriate to educate and train a new generation of physiotherapists to successfully enter the workforce in Greece and abroad. Some SMART technologies, such as the Moodle platform and a variety of electronic books and search engines available through the library, are utilised to enhance teaching and students' life-long learning. The physiotherapy programme at IHU has several mechanisms to assess its mission, goals, objectives, and annual benchmarks for the continual assessment and improvement of the department. Students' transition through the curriculum is logical. The new curriculum requires a thesis during the fourth year of study. The thesis requirement offers students the opportunity to engage in empirical research and has the potential to prepare students to pursue postgraduate studies. Faculty, staff, and off-campus stakeholders are talented and dedicated to educating and training students in physiotherapy.

II. Areas of Weakness

The need to increase the number of the physiotherapists in the country and the creation of the new physiotherapy programme is based on alumni opinions and not objective or published workforce data. Although the infrastructure, laboratories, and SMART resources are minimal, they can be better utilised to educate and train students in the programme. Course syllabi should include specific knowledge and skills students' need to acquire to complete the coursework and practicum experiences. A wider range of educational and clinical experiences to evaluate students' performance and the transfer of theory to clinical practice will contribute to students' life-long learning. Clinical practicum experiences are available to students, yet greater communication and organisation with off-campus supervisors and stakeholders are warranted. Of significant concern is the completion of the mandatory thesis in the fourth year of the undergraduate programme. Students were not well-informed about basic services and policies on campus, including procedures and processes for filing complaints, seeking special education services and accommodations, etc. Mandatory advising of students is lacking. Only a small subset of faculty present their research at peer-reviewed scientific conferences, publish research in referred journals, and have been awarded external and internal grants. The lack of engagement in active research and the production of scholarly products hinders the department's ability to link research to teaching and evidence-based clinical practices. There

is minimal support for continuing education opportunities for faculty. A well-organised system is lacking for collecting and sharing of outcome data collected by MODIP and other ad-hoc and institutional committees for continual improvement of the department. The current student to faculty ratio is not adequate to educate and advise 130 undergraduate students annually. Doctoral student teaching and research assistants require formal training in teaching pedagogies to effectively support the department in mentoring and advising undergraduate students.

III. Recommendations for Follow-up Actions

- It is imperative that the department's website be updated and launched before the start of the academic semester.
- Student advising should be required in the first semester of the first academic year and annually thereafter to ensure students are aware of the sequencing and completion of academic and clinical coursework, on-campus services and offices, etc.
- There is a significant need to increase the number of full-time faculty to effectively educate, supervise and graduate a student body of 130 annually.
- Greater faculty engagement in empirical research leading to scholarly publications, scientific conference presentations and grant awards is strongly recommended. Greater mobility of faculty through the Socrates and ERASMUS programmes may foster inter-institutional research opportunities and collaborations.
- Course syllabi should include not only course objectives, but a greater variety of opportunities to demonstrate mastery of theoretical and clinical competencies. The final grade should be based on a weighting of a variety of assessments and skills and not one grade.
- Student-centered learning experiences can be enhanced by providing students greater access to laboratories, computer labs, and study rooms.

IV. Summary & Overall Assessment

The Principles where full compliance has been achieved are: **3, 8, and 12.**

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

The Principles where partial compliance has been achieved are: **5, 6, and 11.**

The Principles where failure of compliance was identified are: **None.**

Overall Judgement	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	X
Non-compliant	

The members of the External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel

Name and Surname

Signature

1. **Dr. Mary Andrianopoulos (Chair)**, Professor, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, Massachusetts, United States of America
2. **Dr. Vassilios Vardaxis**, Professor, Des Moines University, Des Moines, Iowa, United States of America
3. **Dr. Stefanos Volianitis**, Associate Professor, Qatar University, Doha, Qatar
4. **Mr. Eleftherios Bournousouzis**, Panhellenic Association of Physiotherapists, Athens, Greece
5. **Ms. Ilektra Tsoulfidi**, Student of Nursing, Hellenic Mediterranean University, Heraklion, Greece