



ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ
HELLENIC REPUBLIC



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Accreditation Report

for the Postgraduate Study Programme of:

Business Administration – MBA

Department: Business Administration
Institution: International Hellenic University
Date: 4 October 2023



Επιχειρησιακό Πρόγραμμα
Ανάπτυξη Ανθρώπινου Δυναμικού,
Εκπαίδευση και Διά Βίου Μάθηση



Report of the Panel appointed by the HAHE to undertake the review of the Postgraduate Study Programme of **Business Administration - MBA** 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 postgraduate study programme of **Business Administration - MBA** of the **International Hellenic University** comprised the following four (4) members, drawn from the HAHE Register, in accordance with Laws 4009/2011 & 4653/2020:

1. Prof. Nicholas S. Vonortas (Chair)

The George Washington University, Washington, USA

2. Prof. Evangelos Dedousis

The American University of Dubai, Dubai, United Arab Emirates

3. Assoc. Prof. Jannis Angelis

KTH Royal Institute of Technology, Stockholm, Sweden

4. Mr. Aristides Papathomas

Department of Business Administration, University of Western Macedonia, Greece

II. Review Procedure and Documentation

The Hellenic Authority for Higher Education (HAHE) has provided the members of the External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel (EEAP) a variety of documents that were prepared by HAHE itself as well as by the University whose programme was under review. The HAHE documents included, inter alia, Quality indicators, the standards and guidelines, the mapping grid assessment guide, and the Report template.

Moreover, the University has provided, inter alia, the MODIP (Quality assurance unit) and OMEA (Internal evaluation unit) strategic plan, proposal for academic accreditation of the post-graduate programme, the quality policy, the targets planned, the study guide, the courses' outlines, the exams, and internal operation policies, as well as the academic faculty involved and in general all the procedures in place, that ensure the smooth operation of the programme under review. The University has also provided the EEAP members the presentation related to the establishment of the programme under review, the faculty involved, the available resources, a SWOT analysis, as well as services offered to the students.

The review of the programme has taken place remotely on Monday the 18th and Tuesday the 19th of September 2023, during which the EEAP has virtually met with the Head of the Department of Business Administration, the OMEA representatives, the Director of the post-graduate Programme, teaching staff and students' representatives, employers', and social partners' representatives.

The interaction with the above-mentioned groups, has enabled the EEAP members to form a first-hand understanding of the structure of the programme, of the vision and mission of the department and the university, as well as the planned development of the university, department, and programme under review.

III. Postgraduate Study Programme Profile

The postgraduate programme in business management has been in operation since 2010. That is to say, the programme was put in place when the International Hellenic University (IHU) was still a group of three independent “TEI” (institutes of vocational education) – TEI of Central Macedonia, TEI of Eastern Macedonia and Thrace, and TEI of Thessaloniki. The creation of the new university in the latter half of the previous decade merged the three TEI resulting in a not yet fully integrated organization, currently comprising thirty-three Departments and nine Schools spread around different cities of the provinces of Macedonia and Thrace including Thessaloniki, Kavala, Serres, Drama, Katerini, Kilkis, and Didymoteicho. That is to say, the reorganization of the University is an ongoing process that pits, on the one hand, the long-term strategic objective of the TEI to place institutes around all parts of the country in order to educate and prepare local populations for the demands of the modern labour market and, on the other, the logic of economies of scale and scope in merging disparate departments with relatively small populations of faculty members and students into larger academic units with a critical mass (depth and spread) of teaching and research as well as programmes of international visibility and attraction. The choice is not easy as both sides of the isle have good arguments.

This report refers to the Masters of Business Administration based in Serres. This MBA (a fee-charging programme) is offered by the Department of Business Management and Organization which is co-located in Serres with the Department of Economics of IHU. Noteworthy, this is not the only MBA programme of the university. As such, in some sense the programme is positioning itself in competition both with others of the same university located in different regional cities and similar programmes of other higher education institutions. The postgraduate programme in question reached its maximum number of student registrations back in 2012, stabilized during the next three years, and has experienced a more or less downward roller-coaster trend since the creation of the new university (IHU). The lowest number of student registrations was recorded in 2022. Reacting to this trend, last year the Department took the important decision to move the programme to a fully online model starting this Fall (2023). This year, at least, it appears that the Department has arrested the downward trend. [The programme was taught onsite during 2010-2021 and mixed mode (65% onsite, 35% online) during 2021-2023.] Our Panel considered the proposal for accrediting the new fully online programme.

The MBA programme can be attended as full-time or part-time. Full-time study spans three semesters and correspond to 90 ECTS. Students follow courses during the first two semesters – five compulsory courses in the first semester and 2 compulsory and three electives in the second. The third semester is dedicated to the production of the Masters thesis. Each semester corresponds to 30 ECTS. Part-time study extends to five semesters and also correspond to 90 ECTS. The maximum possible extension of full-time study is six semesters and of part-time study is ten semesters. Students can choose one of three specializations: business information

systems (changing to digital business), cost accounting and auditing, and general MBA.

The Department has fifteen faculty members (μέλη ΔΕΠ) and three other faculty (μέλη ΕΕΔΙΠ/ΕΤΕΠ). While these faculty members have additional obligations with undergraduate programmes, the faculty/student ratio for the MBA is considered satisfactory.

The facilities of the Department are modern and well equipped for on-site and hybrid teaching. The buildings include staff offices, classrooms, auditoriums, computer labs, and a library. These were utilized effectively until last year. Starting with the new academic year, however, the physical facilities will be less important for the students as the MBA programme will be delivered fully online.

The EEAP recognizes that certain aspects of the accreditation (such as effective delivery of a fully online programme) cannot be explored fully due to the lack of data given the fact that this is a new programme being introduced in the Fall 2023.

PART B: COMPLIANCE WITH THE PRINCIPLES

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

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

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

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

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

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

Documentation

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

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The programme of postgraduate studies at the Department of Business Management and Organization appears very cognizant of the need for ongoing review of the quality of its offerings and, thus, of the MBA programme in question. There is a clear quality statement for teaching and research right at the top of document A2 and a good description of the quality policy implementation therein

(in general) and in the accreditation proposal (document A1, more specifically). The quality process reportedly looks at:

- The structure and organization of the programme of studies;
- The achievement of learning objectives;
- The promotion of the quality and teaching objectives;
- The capabilities of the teaching staff
- The setting and achievement of annual targets for the improvement of the postgraduate programme
- The suitability of the graduates' learned skills with those demanded in the market
- The quality of supporting services
- The appropriate use of resources
- The alignment of the annual internal evaluation with the targets of OMEA and MODIP;
- The preparation and alignment of the postgraduate programme strategy with the objectives of the Department and OMEA
- Ways of communicating the quality policy with stakeholders.

As stressed later in Principle 9, there is an ongoing monitoring each year for all courses and teaching methods. The questionnaire that the EEAP members have seen is appropriate with suitable questions. The evaluation is conducted online with an effort for 100% response rate. The observed results for the academic year 2021-2022 were pretty good.

II. Analysis

The assessment of existing conditions and resources are evaluated in a systematic and ongoing manner. The current and former students interviewed by the EEAP stated that they were asked for input into the quality assurance system, indicating inclusion of those stakeholders. Course evaluations from current students had a high participation rate, ensured by course faculty actively encouraging their feedback. This should improve the reliability of decisions based on the data and strengthen the quality assurance process.

III. Conclusions

The EEAP found the programme to be in compliance with Principle 1.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

Keep up the good work.

PRINCIPLE 2: DESIGN AND APPROVAL OF POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES

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

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

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

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

In addition, the design of PSP must consider:

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

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

Documentation

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

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

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The 90 ECTS MBA programme, lasting one and a half years of full-time study to complete or 3 years if taken on a part-time basis, was re-established in 2019 to address needs of educational specialization mainly in areas of Northern Greece. The programme aims at preparing suitably qualified candidates with adequate work experience to expand their academic background, build an outward looking orientation, acquire an entrepreneurial mindset based on innovation, thus improving their employment prospects in private companies and public organizations within the context of a globalized marketplace. The University Senate, the Department's Assembly, the Steering Committee, and the Director of the programme, each with clearly specified roles, are responsible for the organization and operation of the programme.

The programme is assessed on a yearly basis. The criteria used in assessing the programme include relevance to the workplace in the light of innovation and new developments in the disciplines taught, development of skills and abilities necessary for career advancement of graduates, quality of literature used and adequacy of library services, quality of teaching and the e-class platform, satisfaction with administrative services, and feedback from and communication with faculty. Every four years there is a survey among graduates to assess the relevance of the programme in relation to the knowledge imparted and usefulness to one's career progression.

In addition to imparting necessary knowledge to students and apply it towards understanding and solving issues in the workplace, the learning outcomes of the programme include the development of analytical skills and critical thinking as well the development of leadership abilities, interpersonal skills, teamwork abilities, the ability to learn from experience and apply such newly acquired knowledge, and the appreciation of life learning and continuous personal development. The learning outcomes are based on National and European framework of qualifications (EQF, NQF) for level 7. The learning outcomes are assessed periodically by MODIP and by means of student questionnaires.

The course syllabi include detailed information on course contents, lecture outlines, teaching/learning methods, expected learning outcomes and skills, student evaluation, assessment items, required and recommended bibliography and other relevant material. The study guide and the document about course outlines cover all areas that students may seek information about during their studies and are comparable, and even more detailed, to similar documents found in graduate programmes elsewhere.

II. Analysis

All course outlines follow the standard practice of stating learning outcomes referring to the knowledge that students are expected to have gained upon completing a certain course. It is commendable that, in addition to the acquisition of knowledge, learning outcomes also refer to skills and abilities, that is “soft” skills such as adaptability to changes, time management, respect for diversity and multiculturalism, appreciation for continuous learning, ethical behaviour, teamwork ability and the like that are becoming increasingly important in the modern workplace. It may, however, be noted that many of the learning outcomes stated do not allow for easily measurement and quantification so that conclusions may not be drawn whether such outcomes were met or not and to what extent. Furthermore, learning outcomes are confused with the description of the course contents in several course outlines, or they are not succinctly stated, or they are not tightly mapped to the overall learning outcomes of the programme. A further note refers to the bibliography that is, while the bibliography is, for the most part, current, there are courses that include recommended bibliography dating back 15 years or even more.

III. Conclusions

The aim of the programme is to educate and prepare highly qualified graduates who can manage effectively private companies and public organizations or venture into entrepreneurial activities. The programme is solidly designed and has received a satisfactory assessment by the internal assessment unit with many positive remarks. One point that needs the careful attention of the department is the small number of applicants and the even smaller number of registered students given that the annual intake can be up to 40 students.

Attention should be paid to learning outcomes, both those related to acquired knowledge and those related to the acquisition of skills and abilities, so that they are closely mapped to the learning outcomes of the programme, can be measured, allow for the evaluation of the teaching/learning process and help guide modification/changes if necessary.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

- Update the programme design to fit the fully online programme delivery.
- Map course learning outcomes tightly to the learning outcomes of the programme.
- Measure learning outcomes with the view to continuous improvement of the learning/teaching process.
- Update course bibliographic references as needed.

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

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

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

The student-centred learning and teaching process

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

In addition

- *The academic staff are familiar with the existing examination system and methods and are supported in developing their own skills in this field.*
- *The assessment criteria and methods are published in advance. The assessment allows students to demonstrate the extent to which the intended learning outcomes have been achieved. Students are given feedback, which, if necessary is linked to advice on the learning process.*
- *Student assessment is conducted by more than one examiner, where possible.*
- *Assessment is consistent, fairly applied to all students and conducted in accordance with the stated procedures.*
- *A formal procedure for student appeals is in place.*
- *The function of the academic advisor runs smoothly.*

Documentation

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

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

On-line lecture delivery is the main teaching method supplemented by laboratory exercises. Satisfaction with infrastructure has received a high mark in student surveys.

In most courses student assessment typically combines final exams, essays, and

small projects. The assessment criteria are clearly stated in course syllabi and made available to students prior to the beginning of the semester. However, in a small number of courses information on student assessment is vague with no indication of weight for individual assignments while in other courses assessment is heavily based on results of final exams that include MCQ's. In some courses students are given the option of choosing between two different types of assessment.

The programme is housed in a rather small department that serves a relatively small number of students. This allows for close and frequent interaction between students and faculty. Students and graduates mentioned that faculty are receptive to their requests and opinion as for example, when students are allowed to have a choice in assessment items or when they ask for more in-depth discussion of a certain lecture topic. Some students and graduates also mentioned that close interaction with faculty helped them expand their intellectual horizons, develop new interests and skills.

Courses in the programme are evaluated by means of an anonymous student satisfaction survey, made up of quantified answers and qualitative comments, on course contents, assessment items, the faculty and facilities. The score for answers to questions evaluating faculty is about 4.5/5.

The programme director serves as academic advisor to all students helping them choose the area of specialization and navigate through the programme.

There is a clearly stated formal procedure in place, with several steps to be followed, when a student wishes to lodge an appeal. If, after successive steps have been followed, the results of the appeal are not satisfactory to the student he/she can approach the student advocate. Students were not aware of any specific case of appeal during the discussion with the EEAP; however, they feel encouraged to know that such a mechanism exists.

It may be noted that students and graduates expressed satisfaction with the approachability, mentoring and close professional interaction with faculty; positive comments were also made by students and graduates regarding the timely response of administrative staff to their queries.

II. Analysis

The student-centred learning approach is evident in all aspects of the programme. There is close interaction between faculty and students and the latter are encouraged to express themselves and are often given the option of choosing between different types of assessment. Faculty showed a strong will and commitment to support students even outside regular office hours. This is very much appreciated by students as most of them have full-time jobs. The assessment items and criteria, learning outcomes and other information is clearly stated in course syllabi. The presence of the academic advisor, the role of which is undertaken by the programme director, suggests strong concern about students. A further indication of the student-centred orientation of the programme is the

conduct of student satisfaction surveys that are carried out in all courses though the small number of registered students and the likelihood that not all of them take part in evaluations makes it difficult to draw useful conclusions regarding the validity of the surveys.

III. Conclusions

The programme is delivered in an environment that promotes mutual respect between students and faculty and places students at the very centre of the learning process.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

- Use assignments that enhance critical thinking and analytical skills such as case studies, projects, and the like. It is not appropriate to have MCQs in the exams of an MBA programme.
- Consider ways to impress upon students the anonymity and integrity of student satisfaction surveys. The number of students is very small hence everyone's participation in the satisfaction surveys counts.

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

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

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

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

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

Documentation

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

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The department accepts approx. 30 graduates some of which, have also professional experience, although not a strict prerequisite. The selection criteria are published in the internal regulation for the Operation of the Postgraduate Study Programme, as well as the site, and they are split in two phases, a CV- activities and a personal interview. A team of three staff members makes the final selection based on predefined criteria. The number of applicants for the course had dropped over the past few years, but currently it seems on the way back to a steep recovery.

Students are offered introductory sessions on the programme at the beginning of each semester. The progress of the students is monitored by two IT systems, the “electronic administration system” and the “electronic education system”. The former is used for registering the course’ subjects and following up on the progress of the students, while the latter supports training materials with content. It also observes presence and activity of the students with auditable trails. Interviewed students and graduates were well aware of the relevant processes. Teachers keep records of participation as well as performance. At the end of each semester, performance is evaluated and discussed. All these, as well as the rest of rights and obligations of the students, are all included in the Internal Operations Regulation as well as Regulation for Complaint Handling. The procedures and terms for the drafting of assignments and the thesis are also defined from the Regulation for dissertation, Student Mobility and Assignments. A Research Ethics Regulation is also available. Part of the course is also a dissertation that covers the last (third) semester, compulsory for both full time and part time students.

The programme's degree certificate has a Supplement model developed as per the European Commission, Council of Europe and UNESCO/CEPES. The degree is awarding 90 Credit Units following the principles of the European Credit Transfer Systems. The programme has fees, which may be waived under scholarship, as defined by Ministry of Education.

The 2023-24 course is intended to be 100% online, delivered remotely. There is no set up for work practice/practical training.

II. Analysis

The process for admission monitoring and supporting students throughout their academic life is apparently rigorous and well-structured with the different stages distinguishable and well communicated. Care has been given to details such as offering the students' complaints form over the internet. The blend of admission criteria ensures that a predominately business course, such as an MBA, admits students from different paths of life and as such, despite the local, peripheral character of the university, it ensures a good diversity and, as demonstrated, acceptance from local society.

There was no evidence of faculty or students taking proper advantage of ERASMUS mobility, a point that would increase departments' visibility. This is unlikely to change as the programme moves to online delivery. Assuming appropriate implementation, the processes and procedures behind progress monitoring during the regular course, as well as the dissertation stage, is proper and fitting. It is also positively notable that following market feedback, one of the elective directions will be transformed in 2023-24, to accommodate demand on digital related subjects. It may be noted that students and graduates expressed satisfaction with the approach of the faculty and the overall interaction with the faculty members, commenting on responsiveness and support they received throughout their studies.

III. Conclusions

The overall approach of the student admission, progression, recognition of postgraduate studies and certification procedures of the MBA programme are fully compliant with requirements of Principle 4.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

- Provide the necessary conditions that would allow for more students taking advantage of ERASMUS and other mobility programmes.
- Update Programme references, lectures, case studies and overall course content to reflect the new environment of 100% online.

PRINCIPLE 5: TEACHING STAFF OF POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES

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

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

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

Documentation

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

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

A total of 18 lecturers teach in the PSP, 13 of whom are faculty members of the Department (with the number of students varying from 20 to 35 people per year). It is essential that the external faculty members have appropriate skills for MBA teaching online. The selection criteria of the teachers at the PSP are the scientific competence and the relevance of their specialty, experience and teaching and research work with the academic subjects, as they have been shaped by the curriculum. The Assembly of the Department assigns teaching to teachers who meet the conditions and needs of the PSP. The PSP can assign a teaching project to an external partner when it deems it necessary. A list with academic personnel qualifications, skills and experience was presented, including publications and academic research. A separate list was provided regarding the employment relationship of the staff, Institution of origin and department of origin.

The quality of the PSP's output is measured by 5 strategic targets, which are translated into KPIs. There are policies for teaching staff development, that include the promotion and dissemination of PSP activities, such as scientific conferences and other scientific events, although evident may suggest that actual take up is

rather limited. The educational work and the effectiveness of the teaching staff is checked with a specific evaluation process that has been formulated by the MODIP of the Foundation, in accordance with the instructions and guidelines of the HAHE.

The evaluation process of the teachers by the students is implemented in the 8th to the 10th week of classes and is carried out electronically through a purpose made e- address. As presented, participation in such questionnaires is very high. As part of their obligations, the members of the PSP include in their courses modules related to their own research, they have as educational material research results and papers that have been published in international journals and conferences, they assign works that have a scientific content as learning activities in the PSP courses, supervise the preparation of the "Thesis" in which students study in depth and research a scientific topic. In addition, they invite speakers, who are usually scientists from other institutions or entrepreneurs, who transfer their knowledge and experiences to the students.

As per feedback given to the EEAP by interview participants, there is clear evidence of relevance of the courses to the local social and business bodies, with some graduate respondents mentioning that they were using course material in their everyday business life.

II. Analysis

There is extensive documentation of the way of evaluating the students' performance, the types of evaluation and the weight of each educational activity in the final grade. The overall adequacy of the teaching personnel is followed via student ratio, the appropriate staff categories, the appropriate subject areas, the fair and objective recruitment process, the high research performance, the training-development, the staff development policy. For a prestigious programme such as an MBA, it is necessary that the teaching staff remains on the forefront not only of research but also of business developments. The current practise of inviting experienced and skilled academics from different faculties is strengthening considerably the outcome.

III. Conclusions

The institution is fully compliant with regulatory requirements when it comes to selecting, performance measuring, supporting as well as measuring the teaching staff of the PSP. The processes in place are adequate in ensuring the department has well trained staff and all procedures are governed by transparency and fair treatment.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

Further enhance the current Information technology Direction with digital marketing, digital transformation, and social media subjects (and subsequently, relevant enhanced calibre of teachings staff), a request that came strong both from graduates of the department and the market.

PRINICPLE 6: LEARNING RESOURCES AND STUDENT SUPPORT

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

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

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

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

Documentation

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

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The learning resources and support services available to the students are provided from the department or indirectly by the university. They basically consist of three categories: Physical infrastructure facilities, academic and administrative services and social and other advisory services. The programme shares the use of the library on the main campus, despite the programme courses largely being online. The library provides access to various databases, as well as electronic access to publications, books, and academic journals. These facilities seem to fit the needs of the programme. The students interviewed by the EEAP indicated that they are content with the support and accessibility they have. Class skills and its associated technologies and practices were developed during the COVID-19 closure and will be extensively in use for the online delivery of the programme modules. For instance, faculty has been preparing for online delivery, with quizzes, exam formats etc. Smaller student number makes the programme delivery more flexible than

would be for bigger programmes.

Moving to fully online delivery will place additional challenges to the programme delivery (course adaptation, group work, etc).

II. Analysis

The EEAP found the measures in place to ensure sufficient learning resources and availability of student support. The online programme delivery places strong requirements on the existing online capability for both students and university in terms of technical and human operations. Students have access online journals. There is an expectation that students will have their own computer (desktop or laptop). Students with limited financial background could be severely disadvantaged in their studies. The online delivery was developed during covid, so delivering the programme successfully is expected to be manageable, but care must be taken to ensure ongoing upkeep and refinement of the online delivery to ensure student active participation. The developed experience in online delivery of programmes should be beneficial to both student learning and faculty development and application of expertise in class. Programme courses are mainly taught by individual staff. Given that there is some overlap in staff expertise, faculty may share courses for improved redundancies (important even in the post- covid) and greater sharing of expertise in the subject field and practically for teaching redundancy in class, so that student do not unnecessarily suffer from cancelled or modified courses.

An MBA programme should develop leadership, team building, and team coordination skills which, in addition to online, would require person-to-person interaction. A 100% online delivery would not suffice. Such interaction would also promote student networking, to carry over in their business life.

III. Conclusions

Overall, the existing processes in place are sufficient to develop and employ the staff in teaching and research. They have the skills and time to provide student support. Resources needed by the staff to deliver quality teaching are in place. Linkage between staff research and teaching can be enhanced by broadening the proportion of research active staff. Physical lecture rooms and facilities are readily available, manageable by the smaller size of the student body.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

- Ensure a coherent strategy with respect to online and blended learning. This should be linked with a more consistent approach to the development of online material, and development of policies for plagiarism.
- Introduce minimum two intervals during the course of study within which participants have direct face-to-face interaction to develop the interpersonal skills expected from an MBA programme.

PRINCIPLE 7: INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

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

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

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

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

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

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

Documentation

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

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

Information on student admissions, population profiles, academic progressions, success rates and student course evaluations are collected periodically and systematically. The used information management system has several components, such as Electronic Registrar System (student register-grade sheet), the E-Learning platform, MODIP's information system, Special Research Funds Account programme management platform. There is also the use of the Turnitin platform for checking assignments for possible plagiarism and copying and make similarity reports accessible to the teaching instructors. The staff also use the teaching management system (e-class) to upload material for their courses as well as to communicate with the students for other academic matters through email or on-line access. Career paths of graduated students are followed. The Department has access to individual course statistics to improve on teaching quality and for course improvements as needed. Technical resources were developed during the COVID-19 pandemic, and now are fit for purpose in terms of student access to materials, communicating with faculty, and tracking student results and progression in the programme. Changes made to the programme course delivery in terms of

introduced online classes, quizzes and teamwork assignments are managed by the information system.

II. Analysis

The information management system collects and allows for reliable assessment of data on student and programme activities and results. Key indicators are tracked. The existing support services function well, and students are aware of when and where to find them. The e-learning system has its own page for postgraduate studies. This may benefit from further programme specific development, to ensure that student relationship with the department is retained post studies. For the programme type (executive), this may be of particular importance to develop the stakeholder relationship with the programme and department further. Information is available on the website for future students interested in the programme. Faculty, students, and stakeholders alike remarked to the EEAP that there is a need for greater social media skills and knowledge in the programme. The information system should take such possible developments into consideration.

III. Conclusions

The information management in use provides the data needed for successfully managing the programme and its students. The information management systems in place allow for the programme management to collect and analyse relevant and reliable data on programme activities and student progressions. Key indicators are collected and made available as required. The students are also well informed and know how to use the e-learning system successfully.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

- The available learning resources need to be monitored to ensure they are appropriate for online course delivery, considering the greater use of in-class assignment and assessments.
- Develop a systematic mechanism for the collection of data regarding employment and careers.

PRINCIPLE 8: PUBLIC INFORMATION CONCERNING THE POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES

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

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

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

Documentation

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

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

Considerable effort has been expended towards designing the Department's website and in particular the website of the MBA. The website of the Department and that of the MBA contain a lot of useful information regarding the objectives and structure of the programme, admission criteria, and employment opportunities for graduates of the programme. Also, there is detailed information about faculty members including research activities, specialization, and CVs. The course outlines and the document detailing the internal rules and procedures are available online. The information available that refers to student life and activities and physical and electronic infrastructure is extensive covering all possible areas that a candidate or student may be looking for. All the above information is in the Greek language, clearly stated and up-to-date though a little bit of navigating is needed to reach it.

It may be also noted that social networks are used to promote the Department (1.2 K followers on Facebook and 235 on Instagram).

The information about the Department provided in English is comparable to that in the Greek language; the MBA does not have its own website in English or other foreign language.

II. Analysis

While the information available in Greek is up-to-date, sufficient, and relevant and can help provide answers to a host of queries potential candidates usually have the Department should consider additional ways to "market" the MBA programme in order to attract more candidates and increase enrolment. This is because nowadays many institutions have well developed websites that provide more or less the same information; thus, although well-developed and informative the website of the Department is not that different to websites of others and not enough to market the Programme. Further, a website in English (or, perhaps, in a

Slavic language) for the MBA is necessary to increase the visibility of the programme.

Care should be taken to remove all older content from the site. Navigation is not always easy.

III. Conclusions

Both the Department and the MBA programme have well-developed, up-to-date and informative websites. Nevertheless, there are issues remaining with older content still found online.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

- Make the information available to the public on the programme website more suitable to the nature of the programme (MBA specifics) in order to better support the marketing of the programme and to give students an accurate picture of the programme.
- Ensure that all information on the programme is available in English.

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

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

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

The above comprise the evaluation of:

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

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

Documentation

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

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

There is an ongoing monitoring each year for all courses and teaching methods. There is a procedure in place for self-assessment of the study programme at the department, with internal monitoring and reviewing. The analysis is based on data gathered on course evaluations, teaching methods used, student perceptions and progress, and the existing physical and digital infrastructure. The latter is of particular importance since the programme courses are online to a significant extent.

II. Analysis

The assessment of existing conditions and resources are evaluated in a systematic and ongoing manner. The current and former students interviewed by the EEAP stated that they were asked for input into the quality assurance system, indicating inclusion of those stakeholders. Course evaluations from current students had a high participation rate, ensured by course faculty actively encouraging their

feedback. This should improve the reliability of decisions based on the data and strengthen the quality assurance process.

III. Conclusions

The programme is found to be in compliance with Principle 9, with the ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the study programme to be in place and in use to good effect.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

- Make the information available to the public on the programme website more suitable to the nature of the programme (MBA specifics) in order to better support the marketing of the programme and to give students an accurate picture of the programme.
- Ensure that all information on the programme is available in English.

PRINCIPLE 10: REGULAR EXTERNAL EVALUATION OF POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES

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

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

Documentation

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

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The PSP is in its 12th year of operation, and, although it does regularly prepare the annual internal evaluation reports, it has not yet undergone an external evaluation process. The department under which the PSP operates, had undergone an external evaluation process for the old PSP, which was then operated within the framework of T.E.I. The process took place from 31/1/2011 to 5/2/2011. The limited findings and recommendations were referring to the undergraduate programme of that period. Despite that, the department has prepared for the eventuality with a set of steps on how the External Evaluation Report should be communicated, studied, discussed and implemented.

II. Analysis

As stated, the last External Evaluation Report was not course-specific, and it was over 10 years ago. As such, any Progress Report of the PSP in question on the results from the utilisation of possible recommendations is not applicable. The EEAP observed that the faculty have been preparing for that valuation for quite some time now and they are set up to work on the conclusions and the recommendations submitted by the panels of experts for the continuous improvement of the programme.

III. Conclusions

Due to the long-time gap since the last Evaluation and the generic nature of that evaluation, no determination of the degree of compliance of the programme to the Standards can be extracted. It is rather evident though that great effort has been

taken in the preparation for the current Evaluation by the PSP support committee.

The EEAP acknowledges that the lack of recent external evaluation is not due to the negligence of the Department.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

- Make the information available to the public on the programme website more suitable to the nature of the programme (MBA specifics) in order to better support the marketing of the programme and to give students an accurate picture of the programme.
- Ensure that all information on the programme is available in English.

PART C: CONCLUSIONS

I. Features of Good Practice

- The Department has designed an efficient and effective quality assurance system. All anticipated quality procedures are in place and function well.
- Close interaction between faculty and students.
- The programme has three areas of specialisation, which supports greater customisation.
- The programme aims at a wide range of soft and hard skills development.

II. Areas of Weakness

- Small student class numbers practically limit in-house electives in the programme.
- Dropping enrolments.
- Faculty mobility.

III. Recommendations for Follow-up Actions

- Create an Advisory Board with the social partners – such as former students, local business partners, academics – to ensure programme relevance and further support student learning and career opportunities.
- Ensure that the course material and the delivery are appropriately transformed to facilitate the needs of a fully online programme.
- Introduce face-to-face components into the programme.
- Consider options of economies of scale and scope and avoidance of overlapping with other similar programmes of the University.

IV. Summary & Overall Assessment

The Principles where full compliance has been achieved are:

1, 3, 4, 5, 7, 9, and 10.

The Principles where substantial compliance has been achieved are:

2, 6, and 8.

The Principles where partial compliance has been achieved are:

None.

The Principles where failure of compliance was identified are:

None.

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

The members of the External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel

Name and Surname

Signature

1. Prof. Nicholas S. Vonortas (Chair)

The George Washington University, Washington, USA

2. Prof. Evangelos Dedousis

The American University of Dubai, Dubai, United Arab Emirates

3. Assoc. Prof. Jannis Angelis

KTH Royal Institute of Technology, Stockholm, Sweden

4. Mr. Aristides Papathomas

Department of Business Administration, University of Western Macedonia, Greece