# Accreditation Report
# for the New Postgraduate Study Programme of:

## New Technologies, Innovation, and Teaching in Educational Sciences

**Department: Department of Information and Electronic Systems Engineering& Department of Early Childhood Education and Care**

**Institution: International Hellenic University**

**Date: 23 June 2024**

Report of the Panel appointed by the HAHE to undertake the review of the New Postgraduate Study Programme of **New Technologies, Innovation and Teaching in Educational Sciences** 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 postgraduate study programme of **New Technologies, Innovation, and Teaching in Educational Sciences** of the **International Hellenic University** comprised the following five (5) members, drawn from the HAHE Register, in accordance with Laws 4009/2011 & 4653/2020:

1. **Prof Costas S. Iliopoulos (Chair)**

   King's College London

2. **Prof. Emeritus Nicolas Spyratos**

   University Paris-Saclay

3. **Prof. George A. Papadopoulos**

   University of Cyprus

4. **Prof. George Tsatsaronis**

   Technical University of Berlin

5. **Mr Fotios Galanis**

   Aristotle University of Thessaloniki

## II.    Review Procedure and Documentation

EEAP first met on 11/6/2024, where we discussed the documentation and allocated the tasks for each member.

Then EEAP met with the Vice-Rector/President of MODIP, the Head of the Department, the Director of the PSP, Vice-Rector, Director of the PSP, Head of the Department: Prof. Panagiotis Tzionas, Vice-Rector / President of MODIP, Mr. Georgios Bamnios, Professor, Dept. of IEE and Mr. Efstathios Antoniou, Professor, Head of the Dept. of IEE. We discussed the overall overview of the programme, strengths, and weaknesses.

Subsequently, we held a meeting with the teaching staff EEAP: Mr. Athanasios Iosifidis, Associate Professor, Dept of IEE, Mr. Euclides Keramopoulos, Professor, Dept of IEE, Mr. Stefanos Ougiaroglou, Assistant Professor, Dept of IEE, Mr. Dimitrios Papakostas, Professor, Dept. of IEE, Ms. Evridiki Zachopoulou, Professor, Dept. of ECEC and Mr. Michalis Vitoulis, Associate Professor, Dept. of ECEC. We discussed professional development opportunities, mobility, competence of the teaching staff, workload, teaching staff involvement in applied research, projects and research activities directly related to the programme.

Then the members of EEAP watched individually the On-line tour: classrooms, lecture halls, libraries, laboratories, and other facilities related to the PSP.

Furthermore EEAP held a meeting with employers, social partners: Ms. Maria Anastasiadou, Principal, Primary Education, Ms. Elisavet Chlapoutaki, Educational Advisor, Secondary Education, Mr. Athanasios Karakousis, Principal, Vocational Lyceum, Mr. IoannisKirailidis, Principal, Secondary Education, Mr. Konstantinis Papazetis, Principal, Private Tutoring School, Mr. Anastasios Pappas, Educational Advisor, Primary Education, Mr. Christos Pappos, Head of Educational Affairs, Directorate of Regional Educational Authority, Mr. Dimitrios Pimenidis, Educational Advisor, Primary Education, Mr. Athanasios Vosniakos, Principal, Primary Education and Mr. Anastasios Xanthopoulos, Director of Directorate Regional Educational Authority. We discussed their relationship with PSP as well as the employability of the graduates of the PSP.

The EEAP held a private meeting in which we discussed our initial findings. Then we met with the Director of the PSP, the Head of the Department, MODIP, Steering Committee/ OMEA members, Director of the PSP: Mr. Georgios Bamnios, Professor, Dept. of IEE, Mr.Efstathios Antoniou, Professor, Head of the Dept. of IEE, Mr. Konstantinos Diamantaras, Professor, Ms. Maria Tsitiridou, Steering Committee, Mr. Maria Papadopoulou, Assistant Professor, OMEA, Dept of IEE, Mr. Thomas Kourtesis, Professor, MODIP and Mr. Nikolaos Chatzipapas, MODIP Member; we discussed our initial findings and impression of the PSP.

### III. Postgraduate Study Programme Profile

The duration of study covers 3 academic semesters of study of 13 teaching weeks each. The first two semesters include the attendance of a total of 6 core courses, while the third includes the attendance of 3 elective courses or the preparation of a master's thesis and the attendance of 1 elective course. Each course is taught in Greek and/or English for 39 hours, which correspond to 13 meetings lasting three (3) hours each, are in the form of a seminar and are divided into core courses and elective courses. The educational process is conducted exclusively with the method of distance education (eLearning), using Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) and more specifically with the method of Modern Distance Education (article 88, Law 4957/2022 and Minister of State 18137/Z1FEK/FEK1079/23.2.2023). Modern Distance Education can include lectures, seminars, workshops and projects while it is possible to include research, teaching activities and practical applications, depending on the nature of each course. Additionally, and depending on the educational requirements of each course, the method of Asynchronous distance education can be used, through a Learning Management System (LMS) application. To obtain the Master's Degree it is necessary to complete 90 credits (ECTS). Each course corresponds to 10 ECTS, while the Master's Thesis corresponds to 20 ECTS (drafting – writing) taking into account the total workload required for its successful completion. The total workload per semester is valued at a maximum of 30 ECTS. Students are required to attend and be successfully examined in at least 7 postgraduate courses which correspond to 70 ECTS, as long as they undertake to successfully prepare a postgraduate diploma thesis which corresponds to 20 ECTS. The Master's Thesis must be original empirical research, the duration of its preparation is at least one semester and cannot exceed two semesters. If they choose not to prepare a Master's Thesis, students are required to pass at least 9 Master's courses, which correspond to 90 ECTS. Each lesson is graded from 0-10 and a 5 (five) is considered the basis of success.

In particular:

• Postgraduate students are required to successfully attend the 6 core courses, which are taught during the first two semesters of studies.

• In the third semester, postgraduate students who choose to prepare a diploma thesis are required to successfully attend 1 elective course, while those who choose not to prepare a diploma thesis are required to successfully attend 3 elective courses.

• Postgraduate students who choose to prepare a thesis can, in case of unsuccessful completion, replace it by attending two elective courses, as long as they have not exceeded the maximum total completion time of the program.

## PART B: COMPLIANCE WITH THE PRINCIPLES

### Principle 1: Strategy, Quality Assurance Policy and Quality Goal Setting for the New Postgraduate Study Programmes

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD INCLUDE IN THEIR STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT THE DEVELOPMENT, ORGANISATION, AND IMPLEMENTATION OF NEW POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES (PSP) IN SPECIFIC SCIENTIFIC FIELDS AFTER INVESTIGATING THEIR FEASIBILITY AND SUSTAINABILITY. INSTITUTIONS SHOULD APPLY A QUALITY ASSURANCE POLICY FOR THE NEW POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES AS PART OF THEIR STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT.

THIS POLICY SHOULD EXPAND AND BE AIMED (WITH THE COLLABORATION OF EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS) AT THE PSP OF THE INSTITUTION AND THE ACADEMIC UNIT. THIS POLICY SHOULD BE PUBLISHED AND IMPLEMENTED BY ALL INTERESTED PARTIES.

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*By decision/s of the Institutional Senate, the Institutions should adapt their strategy to allow for the provision of postgraduate study programmes, in addition to attending to the profile, vision, mission and strategic objectives of the Institution. In this strategy, the Institutions should anticipate the potential benefits, difficulties or risks from the implementation of new postgraduate study programmes and plan all the necessary actions to achieve their goals. The Institution's strategic choices should be documented through specific feasibility and sustainability studies, especially for new postgraduate study programmes.*

*In the case of PSP delivered by distance methods, the Institution prepares and applies an e-learning strategy. The Institution's e-learning strategy is integrated into its overall strategy and identifies educational goals while keeping up to the rapid technological changes and to the developments in pedagogical models. The Institution should include in its strategy the justification and feasibility as to why e-learning has been selected as the appropriate learning strategy for the particular programmes of study where it is applied.*

*In the context of e-learning, innovation strategies, the possibility of programme revision, the linking between learning and research (requiring knowledge of the latest innovations in order to select the most appropriate means to achieve the learning outcomes) should be taken into account.*

*The quality assurance policy of the academic unit for postgraduate study programmes should be in line with the Institution's strategy 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 postgraduate 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 continuous 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*

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> d. the appropriateness of the qualifications and the availability 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 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 internal review and audit of the quality assurance system for the PSP through the cooperation of the Internal Evaluation Group (IEG) with the Institution's Quality Assurance Unit (QAU)

**Documentation**

- The Institutional strategy for postgraduate studies, which includes a special strategy for e-learning, as long as it is applied to the Institution's PSP.
- Feasibility and sustainability studies for the new PSP.
- Quality Policy of the academic unit for the development and improvement of PSP.
- Quality Targeting of the academic unit for the PSP.

**Study Programme Compliance**

**I. Findings**

The PSP "New Technologies, Innovation and Teaching in Educational Sciences" of the International Hellenic University is a new, joint program between the following two departments:

1/ Department of Information and Electronic Systems Engineering (Thessaloniki)

2/ Department of Early Childhood Education and Care (Thessaloniki)

Its main objective is to apply the most recent technological tools for producing innovative teaching methods. It proposes a well-endowed technological environment and high-quality student support services.

The duration of studies is 3 semesters (one per year) each of 13 weeks. Each course is taught in Greek or in English with a duration of 39 hours, which requires 13 meetings of 3 hours each. Courses have the form of seminars and the six courses offered during the first two semesters are obligatory while the three courses of the third semester are elective (selected by the student from a list of 11 elective courses). During the third semester students can either follow the three elective courses or follow one elective course and write a diploma thesis. Both, teaching and exams are conducted by distance methods. No internships are required

during the studies. The teaching staff consists of a total of 25 teachers plus an external collaborator. The program is compliant with the ECTS system.

The set goal of the PSP is admitting 120 students per year. Students pay tuition fees of 2100 euros (700 euros per semester) aimed to cover costs not covered by the state. A limited number of scholarships are offered to about 10% of the admitted students (based on academic and social criteria). An academic student advisor as well as an office of complaints management are instituted.

The PSP proposes a Quality Assurance System which is in line with European Quality Standards and with the Quality Policies of the Institution. The implementation of this system is undertaken by the Internal Quality Unit of the PSP (OMEA), which works in close cooperation with the Quality Assurance Unit of the University (MODIP). The evaluation of teaching quality by students is through questionnaires and the results are published on the program's website (currently under construction).

## II. Analysis

There are few points that need to be further discussed and refined.

1/ Although the PSP is in its very early stages, it is important for its quality assurance system to clearly define what kind of information is needed, what kind of system for collecting and analysing the information and what are the appropriate KPIs for quality assurance.

2/ The absence of exams with physical presence is a rather delicate subject. Indeed, with the number of available AI tools today (ChatGPT and the like) it is rather difficult to really evaluate the actual student's contribution and potential.

3/ The workload required per ECTS seems to be rather low.

4/ Applying digital technologies to improve the educational process can certainly be of benefit to the educational process (for example, digitizing the administrative procedures, the library services etc.). Conversely, the educational process can provide stimuli for digital technologies, as demonstrated, for example, by the creation of the concept of "digital library" (cf. http://delos-old.isti.cnr.it/ and https://www.europeana.eu/en). So, the hope is that the interaction between digital technologies and educational processes will provide new approaches to education. To this end, the PSP needs to ensure a close dialogue between technologists, educators and stakeholders so that such new approaches can emerge. During its meeting with stakeholders, the EEAP panel heard enthusiastic comments about the need for the proposed PSP and also their willingness to provide feedback to the PSP. The PSP is strongly encouraged to institutionalize an advisory board consisting of PSP teachers, external stakeholders (and alumni, later on) so as to exchange ideas and receive feedback regularly (for example, once or twice a year).

### III. Conclusions

A number of points were identified that need to be considered by the PSP. However, the PSP is in its very early state of operation and the EEAP is convinced that, given the enthusiasm of both, the academic staff and the stakeholders, all these points will be attended to in the best possible manner.

**Panel Judgement**

| Principle 1: Strategy, Quality Assurance Policy and Quality Goal Setting for the New Postgraduate Study Programmes | |
|---|---|
| Fully compliant | |
| Substantially compliant | x |
| Partially compliant | |
| Non-compliant | |

**Panel Recommendations**

- Define clearly what kind of information is needed for quality assurance, what kind of system is the most appropriate for collecting and analysing such information and what are the appropriate KPIs for quality assurance.
- Consider the possibility of having at least one exam per student, with physical presence.
- Reconsider the workload per ECTS.
- Put in place an advisory committee.
- As the website of the PSP is currently under construction think of having it both in Greek and in English, and also to update the two versions simultaneously.

## Principle 2: Design and Approval of New 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 NEW POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES. THE OBJECTIVES, THE SPECIFIC SCIENTIFIC SUBJECT AND THE STREAMS OR SPECIALISATIONS, THE EXPECTED LEARNING OUTCOMES AND THE EMPLOYMENT PROSPECTS ARE SET OUT IN THE PROGRAMME DESIGN. DURING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NEW 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.**

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*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, the specialisations, the expected learning outcomes, the structure, the courses, the teaching and assessment modes, the teaching staff and the necessary resources 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. In particular, for each expected 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 for the 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).*

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### Documentation

- Senate decision for the establishment of the PSP.
- PSP curriculum structure: courses, course categories, ECTS awarded, expected learning outcomes according to the NQF, 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: teaching assignments per subject area and per course.

## Study Programme Compliance

### I. Findings

The External Evaluation and Accreditation Panel (EEAP) can confirm that an acceptable process for the design, and approval of the PSP "New Technologies, Innovation and Teaching in Educational Sciences" of the International Hellenic University has been established. A relatively large number of faculty members involved in the program, the University's administration, and professional organizations participate in this process.

An external advisory committee has not been formed yet, but should, according to PSP participants, be formed after the program receives accreditation.

The PSP will provide a very valuable work experience to the students.

The PSP is mainly addressed to persons already employed in the primary or secondary education and is supposed to be completed in parallel with their employment in education. For this reason, perhaps, the total workload per ECTS is rather low. Each class is offered in the PSP with 10 ECTS.

A linking of teaching and research has not been established at a satisfactory level yet.

### II. Analysis

The PSP under evaluation has been developed to cover a large need for introducing digital technologies into the sectors of primary and secondary education and is designed to combine knowledge in digital technologies and education. At this very early stage of evaluation, the EEAP feels that more emphasis should be placed in offering classes which will combine the two areas as opposed to the separate presentation of topics in each one.

In the first year of the PSP a total of six courses is offered with 10 ECTS each. Thus, no distinction among the classes based on the expected actual workload associated with each class is made. This uniform distribution of ECTS must be adjusted. The argument that some other international programs apply this uniform distribution is not an acceptable justification. Some elective courses should also be offered in the first year. This would be possible after the number of ECTS has been adjusted for all courses according to the load.

There are no student examinations or presentations scheduled in the entire PSP. The evaluation of student performance is conducted exclusively on the basis of written assignments (usually three per class). The lack of student presentations may be

understandable considering the large number of participating students but is unusual for a PSP emphasizing education.

An external advisory committee including stakeholders from Greece and faculty members from abroad would be very useful in making the required adjustments to the program.

The university is aware of the relatively few activities associated with doctoral programs and plans to increase them.

## III. Conclusions

The EEAP concludes that the PSP is substantially compliant with Principle 2 with major drawbacks being the distribution of ECTS points among classes and the lack of consideration of the expected workload for each class.

**Panel Judgement**

| Principle 2: Design and Approval of New Postgraduate Study Programmes | |
|---|---|
| Fully compliant | |
| Substantially compliant | x |
| Partially compliant | |
| Non-compliant | |

**Panel Recommendations**

- Reevaluate (and reduce) the ECTS points assigned to each class.
- Introduce electives in the first year.
- Introduce presentations by the students in some classes.
- Appoint an external advisory committee while paying attention to diversity.
- Increase the research activities at the university associated with the topics of the PSP.

## Principle 3: Regulations for 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).**

*The Institution should develop and publish the internal regulations prescribed by law which, among other things, should regulate all issues of postgraduate studies from the beginning to the end of the studies.*

*Indicatively:*

- *The students' 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*

*In case that the PSP is offered through distance learning methods, the Institution should have in place a regulation for e-learning, including in particular the following issues:*

- ➢ *Services of the Institution to support e-learning*
- ➢ *Methodology for the development and implementation of courses*
- ➢ *Ways of providing teaching and variety of teaching and assessment modes*
- ➢ *General standard of course structure*
- ➢ *Student support system*
- ➢ *Support of faculty/teachers with mandatory e-learning training for new staff members*
- ➢ *Technological infrastructures made available by the Institution*
- ➢ *Student identity confirmation system (student identity check, assignment and exam writing process, security and certification issues).*
- ❖ *The Institution should establish rules for the provision of appropriate access and for the assurance of the participation of students affected by disability, illness, and other special circumstances.*
- ❖ *Ethical issues, such as those concerning data protection, intellectual property rights and rules for protection against fraud are governed by the e-learning regulation.*

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

### Documentation

- Internal regulation for the operation of the postgraduate study programme.
- Special regulation for the implementation of e-learning if the PSP is delivered through distance methods.

- Research Ethics Regulation.
- Regulation of studies, internship, mobility, and student assignments.
- Degree certificate template and Diploma Supplement template.

## Study Programme Compliance

### I. Findings

The External Evaluation and Accreditation Panel (EEAP) can confirm that acceptable services to support e-learning and methodologies for the development and implementation of courses are available. Also, the procedures and terms for the drafting of assignments and of the thesis are available.

### II. Analysis

The criteria used for student admission favour persons already employed in the primary or secondary education since approximately one third of the points is assigned to professional experience. Thus, recent graduates from a university will have difficulties in getting admitted, yet these are the persons that have the maximum potential of profiting from the PSP. The staff involved in admissions should strive for a more balanced composition of the group of accepted students. The entire program would profit from such a balance.

The large number of students to be accepted (120) and the exclusively online teaching in the PSP will not allow for an intensive interaction between students and teaching staff. Furthermore, it is not clear how the large number of teaching staff will be readily available and accessible to the students.

### III. Conclusions

Overall, the regulations for student admission, recognition of postgraduate studies, and certification are in place. Attention should be placed to the admission procedures and criteria and to the accessibility of teaching staff.

**Panel Judgement**

| Principle 3: Regulations for Student Admission, Progression, Recognition of Postgraduate Studies, and certification | |
|---|---|
| Fully compliant | x |
| Substantially compliant | |
| Partially compliant | |
| Non-compliant | |

**Panel Recommendations**

- The admissions committee should ensure that a balance is achieved between applicants with significant experience and recent university graduates.
- The program director should ensure that students will have easy access to the teaching staff.

# Principle 4: Teaching Staff of New 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 and scientific competence of the teaching staff at the PSP, the appropriate staff-student ratio, the proper staff categories, the appropriate subject areas, the fair and objective recruitment process, the high research performance, the training, 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, policy for attracting highly qualified staff, and PSP Obligation Regulation.
- List of the intended for recruitment teaching staff including subject areas, employment relationship, Institution of origin, Department of origin and relevant individual achievements.

**Study Programme Compliance**

**I. Findings**

The Master of Sciences in New Technologies, Innovation and Teaching in Educational Sciences program is offered by the Department of Information and Electronic Engineering jointly with the Department of Early Childhood Education and Care. The offered courses are taught primarily by the faculty of the two Departments. The hiring (or the promotion) of any faculty member in Greek universities is governed by national laws. The Departments attract high calibre candidates for any available faculty vacancy. The panel was told that around 1-2 faculty members take advantage of sabbatical leaves; however, this does not appear to be mentioned in any official documentation. The faculty also takes advantage of Erasmus+ mobility. The workload of the faculty is around 8-9 hours per week, which is considered appropriate, aligns with international good practices and leaves sufficient time for research activities. From the submitted documentation, it is not evident how the offered program is linked to the research activities of the faculty. There is an established procedure for the faculty getting feedback from the students by means of suitably formed questionnaires. The panel was told that the percentage of the students participating in this exercise is quite high (over 50%) for the case of graduate students; however, this does not appear to be mentioned

in any official documentation. The specialisations and research interests of the faculty aligns well with the theme, scope, and offered courses of the program in question.

**II. Analysis**

The instructors have the required qualifications, and the offered program aligns well with the interests of the department. There is financial support for the faculty via Erasmus+ for mobility and also for participating in conferences and research meetings.

**III. Conclusions**

Overall, there is a well-established procedure for the recruitment of teaching staff and good conditions for undertaking their duties.

**Panel Judgement**

| Principle 4: Teaching Staff of New Postgraduate Study Programmes | |
|---|---|
| Fully compliant | x |
| Substantially compliant | |
| Partially compliant | |
| Non-compliant | |

**Panel Recommendations**

- Further increase the number of faculty taking advantage of sabbatical leaves.
- Establish stronger links between the offered program and the research interests and activities of the faculty.

## Principle 5: Learning Resources and Student Support

**INSTITUTIONS SHOULD HAVE ADEQUATE FUNDING TO COVER THE TEACHING AND LEARNING NEEDS OF THE POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES. 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, CAREER AND SOCIAL POLICY SERVICES ETC.).**

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*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 and foreign students, students with disabilities), in addition to the shift towards student-centered learning and the adoption of flexible modes of learning and teaching. Support activities and facilities may be organised in various ways, depending on the Institutional context. However, the internal quality assurance proves -on the one hand- the quantity and quality of the available facilities and services, and -on the other hand- that students are aware of all available services.*

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

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### 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 new PSP "MSc in New Technologies, Innovation and Teaching in Educational Sciences" has been evaluated to ensure it meets the requirements for learning resources and student support. The program is fully compliant with these requirements, offering robust infrastructure and services to support academic activities. The institution provides three modern lecture rooms, equipped for both physical and online teaching, facilitating hybrid learning environments. There is a dedicated administrative support staff for the PSP, with detailed job descriptions, qualifications, and responsibilities.

The institution has committed to financially supporting these infrastructures and services through state or other resources. Information and promotional materials will be provided to students regarding the available services, ensuring they are aware of the support resources at their disposal. Although the program is new and currently has no enrolled students, the tuition fees are described as competitive compared to most PSP programs in Greece. The tuition utilization plan is clear, setting distinct and realistic goals. It outlines that the tuition fees will cover functional expenses, staff payments, expenses for publications, and student/staff mobility programs such as Erasmus+ and Erasmus+ Traineeship.

The teaching staff and stakeholders have shown a strong commitment to promoting student mobility programs, despite the historically low participation rates in such programs at the International Hellenic University (IHU). Plans are in place to enhance the promotion of these mobility opportunities to increase student participation.

## II. Analysis

The PSP is well-supported in terms of infrastructure and resources. The provision of three lecture rooms, equipped for both in-person and online teaching, demonstrates a commitment to flexible and accessible learning environments. This hybrid teaching capability is particularly relevant in the current educational landscape, where flexibility in learning modes is increasingly valued.

The administrative support staff dedicated to the PSP ensures that students will have access to necessary administrative services, enhancing their overall academic experience. The detailed job descriptions and qualifications of the support staff underscore the institution's commitment to high-quality support services.

The institution's firm commitment to financially supporting the PSP through state or other resources is crucial for the sustainability of the program. The clear and realistic tuition utilization plan indicates that the program is financially viable, with funds allocated to cover essential expenses and support student and staff mobility.

The provision of information and promotional materials to students about available services ensures that students are well-informed and can take full advantage of the resources offered. This is critical for student success and satisfaction.

The competitive nature of the tuition fees is an attractive feature, likely to appeal to prospective students comparing different PSP options in Greece. The clear goals set in the tuition utilization plan reflect a strategic approach to resource management.

The proactive efforts by the teaching staff and stakeholders to promote student mobility programs are commendable. Given the low participation rates in such programs at IHU, this initiative is vital for enhancing the international exposure and experience of students, which is increasingly important in today's globalized job market.

**III. Conclusions**

In conclusion, the PSP is well-equipped with the necessary learning resources and student support services to provide a high-quality educational experience. The infrastructure, including hybrid learning facilities, administrative support, and financial backing, ensures that the program is well-prepared to meet the needs of its students.

The provision of detailed information about available services and the competitive tuition fees further enhances the program's attractiveness. The clear and realistic tuition utilization plan ensures that financial resources are effectively managed to support the program's goals.

The efforts to promote student mobility programs, despite past challenges, reflect a commitment to providing students with valuable international experiences. This, combined with the strong support infrastructure, positions the PSP as a promising option for prospective students.

**Panel Judgement**

| Principle 5: Learning Resources and Student Support | |
| --- | --- |
| Fully compliant | X |
| Substantially compliant | |
| Partially compliant | |
| Non-compliant | |

**Panel Recommendations**

- Monitor and adjust resource allocation: Continuously monitor the allocation of resources to ensure they meet the evolving needs of students and staff. This includes regularly assessing the usage and effectiveness of the hybrid learning facilities and administrative support.
- Increase engagement with mobility programs: Develop and implement strategies to increase student participation in mobility programs. This could include information sessions, success stories from future participants, and personalized advising to highlight the benefits of these opportunities.
- Regularly review tuition utilization: Conduct regular reviews of the tuition utilization plan to ensure it remains aligned with the program's goals and financial needs. This will help maintain the program's financial viability and support ongoing improvements.
- Enhance support for diverse student needs: Ensure that the support services cater to the diverse needs of all students, including part-time, employed, foreign students, and those with disabilities. This might involve flexible learning options, tailored support services, and inclusive policies to enhance the learning experience for all.

## Principle 6: Initial Internal and External Evaluation and Monitoring of New Postgraduate Study Programmes

**INSTITUTIONS AND ACADEMIC UNITS SHOULD HAVE IN PLACE AN INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM, FOR THE AUDIT, INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL EVALUATION OF THE NEW POSTGRADUATE PROGRAMMES, THUS ENSURING COMPLIANCE WITH THE PRINCIPLES OF THE PRESENT STANDARDS. ANY ACTIONS TAKEN IN THE ABOVE CONTEXT SHOULD BE COMMUNICATED TO ALL PARTIES CONCERNED.**

*The internal evaluation of the new PSP includes the assessment of the accreditation proposal, as well as the documentation in accordance with the Principles of the present Standards and the quality procedures of the Institution's Internal Quality Assurance System (IQAS). The internal evaluation of new postgraduate study programmes also aims at maintaining the level of educational provision and creating a supportive and effective learning environment for students. The Institution, through its Quality Assurance Unit (QAU) and the corresponding academic units, organise and support the external evaluation procedures of the new PSP, according to the specific guidelines and directions provided by HAHE.*

*The above comprise the assessment of:*

- *the objectives, content, and structure of the curriculum, the knowledge offered and the level of science and technology in the given discipline, thus ensuring that the PSP is up to date, according to the relevant documentation listed in the decisions of the pertinent bodies*

- *the entailed students' workload for the progression and completion of postgraduate studies*

- *the satisfaction of the students' expectations and needs in relation to the programme*

- *the learning environment, support services, and their fitness for purpose for the PSP in question*

*Postgraduate study programmes are designed and established in accordance with the provisions of the Institution's internal regulations, involving students and other stakeholders.*

**Documentation**

- The Quality Assurance Unit (QAU) procedure for verifying whether the requirements of the Standards for Quality Accreditation of New PSP are met, as well as the procedure for organising and supporting their external evaluation procedures.
- Assessment and feedback mechanisms of the PSP strategy and quality targeting, and relevant decision-making processes (students, external stakeholders).

**Study Programme Compliance**

**I. Findings**

There is a well-established procedure in place for the monitoring and periodic review of the undergraduate program. There is a clear distribution of responsibilities and roles of all parties involved in this process. The monitoring process involves most of the appropriate stakeholders, namely the Internal Evaluation Team (OMEA) of the Departments involved, the Departmental academic and administrative staff, and the current students. There is

mentioning of involving relevant external parties such as representatives from the labour market and social partners; however, the exact procedure that is followed here is not clear (i.e. whether feedback by external parties is sought in an ad hoc manner or there is a more formal established process). This exercise is taking place annually, covers all aspects of such an evaluation exercise (program content, workload, student assessment, etc.) and its findings are reported to the University's Quality Assurance Unit (MODIP) for final approval. The documentation presented by the Department shows that the findings of the monitoring exercise are fed back into the program for improvements and updates. The involvement of the students by means of filling questionnaires has been reported to be satisfactory (over 50%). Faculty and staff are aware of the importance of external review and the benefits it brings to the continuous improvement of the program.

## II. Analysis

Overall, an effective mechanism is in place for internal feedback that is used for annual internal reviews and audits. The level of student participation via the questionnaires is satisfactory. The panel found that the faculty was fully aware of the importance of external assessment. At the same time, all the involved academic units' stakeholders appear to be interested in participating in future programme assessment activities.

## III. Conclusions

The panel considers this criterion as fully satisfied.

**Panel Judgement**

| Principle 6: Initial Internal and External Evaluation and Monitoring of New Postgraduate Study Programmes | |
|---|---|
| Fully compliant | x |
| Substantially compliant | |
| Partially compliant | |
| Non-compliant | |

**Panel Recommendations**

None.

# PART C: CONCLUSIONS

## I. Features of Good Practice

- The PSP is in its very early state of operation and the EEAP is convinced that, given the enthusiasm of both, the academic staff and the stakeholders, all these points will be attended to in the best possible manner.

- Overall, the regulations for student admission, recognition of postgraduate studies, and certification are in place. Attention should be placed to the admission procedures and criteria and to the accessibility of teaching staff.

- There is a well-established procedure for the recruitment of teaching staff and good conditions for undertaking their duties.

- The PSP is well-equipped with the necessary learning resources and student support services to provide a high-quality educational experience. The infrastructure, including hybrid learning facilities, administrative support, and financial backing, ensures that the program is well-prepared to meet the needs of its students.

## II. Areas of Weakness

The EEAP concludes that the PSP is substantially compliant with Principle 2 but with major drawbacks being the distribution of ECTS points among classes and the lack of consideration of the expected workload for each class.

## III. Recommendations for Follow-up Actions

- Define clearly what kind of information is needed for quality assurance, what kind of system is the most appropriate for collecting and analysing such information and what are the appropriate KPIs for quality assurance.
- Consider the possibility of having at least one exam per student, with physical presence.
- Reconsider the workload per ECTS
- As the website of the PSP is currently under construction think of having it both in Greek and in English, and also to update the two versions simultaneously.
- Re-evaluate (and reduce) the ECTS points assigned to each class

- Introduce electives in the first year
- Introduce presentations by the students in some classes
- Appoint an external advisory committee while paying attention to diversity
- Increase the research activities at the university associated with the topics of the PSP
- The admissions committee should ensure that a balance is achieved between applicants with significant experience and recent university graduates.
- The program director should ensure that students will have easy access to the teaching staff.
- Further increase the number of faculty taking advantage of sabbatical leaves.
- Establish stronger links between the offered program and the research interests and activities of the faculty.
- Monitor and adjust resource allocation: Continuously monitor the allocation of resources to ensure they meet the evolving needs of students and staff. This includes regularly assessing the usage and effectiveness of the hybrid learning facilities and administrative support.
- Increase engagement with mobility programs: Develop and implement strategies to increase student participation in mobility programs. This could include information sessions, success stories from future participants, and personalized advising to highlight the benefits of these opportunities.
- Regularly review tuition utilization: Conduct regular reviews of the tuition utilization plan to ensure it remains aligned with the program's goals and financial needs. This will help maintain the program's financial viability and support ongoing improvements.
- Enhance support for diverse student needs: Ensure that the support services cater to the diverse needs of all students, including part-time, employed, foreign students, and those with disabilities. This might involve flexible learning options, tailored support services, and inclusive policies to enhance the learning experience for all.

## IV.    Summary & Overall Assessment

The Principles where full compliance has been achieved are: **3, 4, 5, and 6.**

The Principles where substantial compliance has been achieved are: **1 and 2.**

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 Costas S. Iliopoulos (Chair)**

    King's College London


2.  **Prof. Emeritus Nicolas Spyratos**

    University Paris-Saclay


3.  **Prof. George A. Papadopoulos**

    University of Cyprus


4.  **Prof. George Tsatsaronis**

    Technical University of Berlin


5.  **Mr Fotios Galanis**

    Aristotle University of Thessaloniki