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HELLENIC REPUBLIC
HQA
HELLENIC QUALITY ASSURANCE
AND ACCREDITATION AGENCY

Accreditation Report
for the Undergraduate Study Programme of:
Home Economics and Ecology
Institution: Harokopio University
Date: 23-3-2019

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



Report of the Panel appointed by the HQA to undertake the review of the Undergraduate Study Programme of **Home Economics and Ecology** of the **Harokopio University** for the purposes of granting accreditation

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PART A: BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT OF THE REVIEW

I. The Accreditation Panel

The Accreditation Panel (AP) responsible for the Accreditation Review of the Undergraduate Study Programme of the Higher Education Institution named: **Home Economics and Ecology** comprised the following five (5) members, drawn from the HQA Register, in accordance with the Law 4009/2011:

- 1. Prof Thomas Panagopoulos (Chair)**
Universidade do Algarve, Portugal
- 2. Prof (em.) George Philippou**
University of Nicosia, Cyprus
- 3. Prof Ioannis Violaris**
City Unity College Nicosia, Cyprus
- 4. Prof Vasilis Zervos**
International Space University (ISU), France
- 5. Dr Panos Konandreas**
Trade Policy Plus, Switzerland

II. Review Procedure and Documentation

The site visit commenced on Monday 18.3.2019 at 2 pm.

The AP was welcomed by the Rector of the Harokopio University, the Deputy Rector and the Head of the Home Economics and Ecology Department who briefly talked about the history of the University and its main mission and vision. Subsequently, the AP met with the IEG/OMEA (Internal Evaluation Group) and QAU/MODIP (Quality Assurance Unit) representatives who elaborated on the Quality Assurance Criteria and procedures.

The first day of the visit included two more meetings: the first with a group of alumni – who recounted their experience as students and how the Programme has helped them in their careers followed by another with employers and social partners – who spoke about their experience with interns from the Department at their organizations.

The site visit resumed on Tuesday 19.3.2019 at 10 am.

The AP met with teaching staff, who spoke about their involvement in the quality assurance procedures, the evaluation and implementation of the Programme, and their involvement and endeavors focusing on research, teaching and administration.

The AP then met with students from all 4 years of study – who recounted their perceptions in selecting the University for their studies, as well as their experiences as students and the support they receive from the academic and administrative staff.

The site visit was concluded with a visit to all major facilities: classrooms and auditorium, laboratories, the library, computer center, Secretariat, welfare office, counseling center, Erasmus office and refectory facilities.

During the above meetings the Department provided the AP with information and documents related to the Quality Assurance procedures, the regulations followed in the functioning of the Department, the Undergraduate Study Programme and its structure, and its relationship to the University at large.

III. Study Programme Profile

The Harokopio as an institution dates back to the beginning of the 20th century. It was established in 1915 as the School for the Education of Home Economics and it operated as the Harokopios Higher Education School from 1929 to 1990. In 1990 it became the Harokopio University (HU) and its building infrastructure was completely renovated in 1993-94. The Department of Home Economics was established in 1993 as the first department of HU. It was renamed to Department of Home Economics and Ecology in 1999 and belongs, together with the Department of Geography, to the School of Environment, Geography and Applied Economics of HU. It is the only Department in Greece dealing with the subject of home economics and is also unique in combining home economics and ecology, including the pedagogical dimensions of these fields of study.

The scope of Home Economics and Ecology covers a wide range of scientific areas dealing with optimal sustainable living of individuals, families and human communities and how the capabilities, choices and priorities of individuals and families impact on wider living environments. As a consequence, the academic remit of Home Economics and Ecology is interdisciplinary, spanning a broad range of scientific domains, and offering also unique scientific and research advantages for a deeper understanding of issues facing families and societies today. In turn, this leads to the development of more holistic approaches guided by the overall objective of improving the quality of daily life, through the intervention and transformation of political, social, cultural, ecological, economic, educational and technological systems, in a local level and beyond.

In line with the scope and broad academic remit of the Department, the objective of its Undergraduate Study Programme (the Programme) is also multidimensional and includes: a) promoting scientific knowledge and research on subjects related to the domestic economy, the organization and operation of the family, as well as the management of the natural and cultural environment; b) educating students in all areas of economic activity so that they can make use of social, natural and cultural resources, contributing to economic growth and promoting quality of life. The concept of quality of life in this context covers the whole spectrum of living conditions and activities of family members (income, financial management, consumer behavior, professional activity, household, nutrition, environment, interpersonal and social relationships) and their interactions, which help to ensure their physical and mental health and wellbeing; and c) providing students with psycho-pedagogical training for the acquisition of teaching and pedagogical competence, which renders the graduates of the Department able to teach courses related to the subject areas of the Department, in public or private schools of secondary education.

The Programme of the Department requires students to complete forty-four (44) units, of which thirty-five (35) are compulsory and nine (9) are optional. In total, the number of teaching hours

of the Programme amounts to 1716 (44 courses × 3 hours of teaching/week × 13 weeks). In addition, the Programme includes a compulsory Internship/Practical Exercise requirement and an optional Final Year Paper. The alternative to a Final Year Paper is for students to complete two additional units, one in the winter and one in the spring semester of the final year of studies.

With a successful completion of the Programme students are awarded their Bachelor degree which automatically also bestows them professional rights to: a) registration with the Economic Chamber and b) certification of pedagogical and didactic competence. The awarded degree also strengthens the effort to broaden the professional rights of students in other professional fields, such as Tourism or Social Entrepreneurship and Culture, through the establishment of cooperation agreements with corresponding professional, developmental and institutional agents.

The perspectives of employment for the graduates of the Department, apart from the field of education (Teachers of Home Economics and similar school subjects - PE80) are in: commercial enterprises, cultural centers, local government administration, tourism enterprises, transport companies, consultancy offices, banks, cooperatives unions (mainly in the agricultural sector), associations and chambers, non-profit organizations, etc.

Finally, the Programme prepares students who wish to continue their studies at postgraduate level in Economics, Education and Culture, Sustainable Development, Social and Solidarity Economy, Public Health and Nutrition, Creativity and Innovation, Special Education, Gender Studies, etc.

PART B: COMPLIANCE WITH THE PRINCIPLES

Principle 1: Academic Unit Policy for Quality Assurance

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 ALL INSTITUTION'S AREAS OF ACTIVITY, AND PARTICULARLY AT THE FULFILMENT OF QUALITY REQUIREMENTS OF UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMMES. THIS POLICY SHOULD BE PUBLISHED AND IMPLEMENTED BY ALL STAKEHOLDERS.

The quality assurance policy of the academic unit is in line with the Institutional policy on quality, and is included in a published statement that is implemented by all stakeholders. It focuses on the achievement of special objectives related to the quality assurance of study programmes offered by the academic unit.

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 programme, its purpose and field of study; it will realise the programme's strategic goals and it will determine the means and ways for attaining them; it will implement the appropriate quality procedures, aiming at the programme's continuous improvement.

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

- a) the suitability of the structure and organization of the curriculum;*
- b) the pursuit of learning outcomes and qualifications in accordance with the European and the National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education;*
- c) the promotion of the quality and effectiveness of teaching;*
- d) the appropriateness of the qualifications of the teaching staff;*
- e) the enhancement of the quality and quantity of the research output among faculty members of the academic unit;*
- f) ways for linking teaching and research;*
- g) the level of demand for qualifications acquired by graduates, in the labour market;*
- h) the quality of support services such as the administrative services, the Library, and the student welfare office;*
- i) the conduct of an annual review and an internal audit of the quality assurance system of the undergraduate programme(s) offered, as well as the collaboration of the Internal Evaluation Group (IEG) with the Institution's Quality Assurance Unit (QAU);*

Study Programme compliance

The Department has established a well-defined Quality Assurance (QA) policy that is appropriate for the Department's mission and activities, and whose purpose and goals are communicated clearly to students, faculty, staff and stakeholders.

The QA policy is based on straightforward and transparent processes for reviewing Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and objectives so that they can be improved continuously. Commitment to continuous improvement and meeting applicable requirements are part of the

QA policy of the HU and all its Departments. The Department has thus ensured the suitability of the structure and organization of the curriculum which, following the 2014 evaluation carried out under the auspices of ADIP (Quality Assurance Authority), has been substantially restructured to be more in line with similar programmes offered in other European Universities.

The pursuit of learning outcomes is in accordance with the European and National Qualifications framework, enabling a smoother mobility of both faculty and students in the context of the Erasmus programme, as well as in the context of other research activities.

The promotion of the quality and effectiveness of teaching is of outmost importance and is communicated to all staff involved. It is achieved through the use of the most advanced methods available, such as the e-class, which seems to be well appreciated by students who cannot regularly attend classes.

The teaching staff qualifications are ensured by the application of the procedures provided by the law. The AP, in the context of this review and site visit, has determined that most faculty members not only hold the typical qualifications but also in many cases surpass them. In this connection, the AP also noted with satisfaction the sizable volume of research output produced by the Department despite its relative small size.

Teaching is well linked to research, as many research projects are carried out as field work, often in cooperation with stakeholders where students carry out their internship, and subsequently the research results are presented in class and in regularly organized seminars.

The AP, in its meeting with representatives of stakeholders and graduates, has additionally determined that the qualifications of the graduates are largely in line with what the labour market demands.

Moreover, the AP has verified that the administration services, library, student welfare and counseling units, seem to be offering their services in a very professional and satisfactory manner. Notwithstanding the overall financial crisis affecting also HU funding, more resources would be welcomed in these areas.

The IEG/OMEA in collaboration with QAU/MODIP in their regular and annual meetings they review and internally audit the quality assurance system and proceed with improvements as necessary. In this regard all faculty members as well as representatives of the students are involved.

Panel judgement

Principle 1: Institution policy for Quality Assurance	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

The AP feels that, where appropriate, key performance indicator targets may be set at higher levels in successive years, aiming at constant improvement.

Principle 2: Design and Approval of Programmes

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD DEVELOP THEIR UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMMES FOLLOWING A DEFINED WRITTEN PROCESS WHICH WILL INVOLVE THE PARTICIPANTS, INFORMATION SOURCES AND THE APPROVAL COMMITTEES FOR THE PROGRAMME. THE OBJECTIVES, THE EXPECTED LEARNING OUTCOMES, THE INTENDED PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS AND THE WAYS TO ACHIEVE THEM ARE SET OUT IN THE PROGRAMME DESIGN. THE ABOVE DETAILS AS WELL AS INFORMATION ON THE PROGRAMME'S STRUCTURE ARE PUBLISHED IN THE STUDENT GUIDE.

Academic units develop their programmes following a well-defined procedure. The academic profile and orientation of the programme, the objectives, the subject areas, the structure and organisation, the expected learning outcomes and the intended professional qualifications according to the National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education are described at this stage. The approval or revision process for programmes includes a check of compliance with the basic requirements described in the Standards, on behalf of the Institution's Quality Assurance Unit (QAU).

Furthermore, the programme design should take into consideration the following:

- *the Institutional strategy*
- *the active participation of students*
- *the experience of external stakeholders from the labour market*
- *the smooth progression of students throughout the stages of the programme*
- *the anticipated student workload according to the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System*
- *the option to provide work experience to the students*
- *the linking of teaching and research*
- *the relevant regulatory framework and the official procedure for the approval of the programme by the Institution.*

Study Programme compliance

The AP has determined that the design of the Programme of the Department takes into consideration institutional strategy, which in the case of the HU is still, and rightly so, influenced greatly by the Founder's vision.

In addition, the students, through their representatives, are actively participating in the Programme design based on their annual evaluation of lecturers and courses.

The AP has noted that external stakeholders cooperating with the Department, mostly in offering internship positions, are well versed on gnostic areas of the Department and their missions are generally in line with those of the Department. Therefore their opinion, especially as regards the needs of the labour market, could be taken more into consideration for future Programme improvements.

The AP has met with students from all 4 years of studies who ascertained that their progression throughout all stages of the Programme is indeed much smoother than they initially expected.

The anticipated workload is in line with the ECTS system; each semester provides for 30 ECTS credits and the credits are justified by the learning outcomes.

Work experience is not just an option, but also a requirement of the Programme; its current duration is two months. The AP's opinion, but the Department's as well, is that the possibility of expanding the internship to more than two months should be considered.

Teaching is well linked with research but this can be further enhanced, for instance by further involving students in questionnaires' collection, surveys and field studies.

The regulatory framework, as set out in the legal framework and the directives of HQA/ADIP, is providing ample possibility for applying the internal official procedures for redesigning the Programme when needed, by adding/subtracting/restructuring courses; most importantly, this framework gives academic freedom to lecturers to bring into the Programme their own particular experiences and knowledge.

The possibility of including in the Programme courses from other departments (even among those needed under the optional category) was seen as a challenge by the Department.

Panel judgement

Principle 2: Design and Approval of Programmes	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	X
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

External stakeholders/employers could be informally included in redesigns of the Programme.

The Department should consider adding in Programme design courses of other departments as optional.

Students could be more systematically involved.

Principle 3: Student- centred Learning, Teaching and Assessment

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD ENSURE THAT THE UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMMES ARE DELIVERED IN A WAY THAT ENCOURAGES STUDENTS TO TAKE AN ACTIVE ROLE IN CREATING THE LEARNING PROCESS. THE ASSESSMENT METHODS SHOULD REFLECT THIS APPROACH.

Student-centred learning and teaching plays an important role in stimulating students' motivation, self-reflection and engagement 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, enabling flexible learning paths;*
- *considers and uses different modes of delivery, where appropriate;*
- *flexibly uses a variety of pedagogical methods;*
- *regularly evaluates and adjusts the modes of delivery and pedagogical methods aiming at improvement*
- *regularly evaluates the quality and effectiveness of teaching, as documented especially through student surveys;*
- *reinforces the student's sense of autonomy, while ensuring adequate guidance and support from the teaching staff;*
- *promotes mutual respect in the student - teacher relationship;*
- *applies appropriate procedures for dealing with students' complaints.*

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;*
- *the regulations for assessment take into account mitigating circumstances*
- *assessment is consistent, fairly applied to all students and carried out in accordance with the stated procedures;*
- *a formal procedure for student appeals is in place.*

Study Programme compliance

The student-centered approach and teaching process respects and responds to the diversity of students and their needs, enabling flexible learning paths; this complies with the Programme's structure and the Internal Evaluation Report.

The modes of delivery are regularly evaluated and adjusted every semester in response to students' evaluation surveys. The whole process encourages students' autonomy with the guidance and support of staff. For instance, in relating teaching and research, students are encouraged to develop assignments that can weigh for 50% to the final grade, for courses taken as early as their first year of studies.

The prevailing culture of mutual respect between professors and students is corroborated by the students' President remark: "the contact with lecturers never ends".

Students' complains are addressed to their Lecturers and if needed examined by the Department Head and the Students' Ombudsman, if required. The AP has verified that students are fully familiar with the existing examination system as well as the reexamination system.

The student assessment criteria are published in the Department's website and in related hard-copy documentation and allows students to assess the extent to which specific course goals have been attained. Student assessment is conducted by only one examiner, which is the norm in Greek Universities.

The regulations for student assessment take into account special circumstances such as students with dyslexia where they allow oral examinations instead of written.

The regulations also provide a formal appeal procedure in case a student feels his/her grade does not meet with his/her expectations. Yet, the AP was informed that very few cases need to follow an Appeal procedure and if that takes place it is usually resolved by the Lecturers.

The Programme complies substantially with the principle of student-centered teaching and assessment. This is, among other sources, confirmed by the Department's key indicators for 2017 meeting specific targets and goals – for instance the degree of students' satisfaction from the teaching methodology (4.03/5); the degree of knowledge of the courses content (94%); the mode of assessment (92%).

Panel judgement

Principle 3: Student- centred Learning, Teaching and Assessment	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

Student attendance needs to be improved perhaps by establishing a minimum attendance requirement. Neither the students' representatives, nor the faculty could offer a satisfactory explanation for the low attendance percentage, other than that some students are employed or reside far from Athens.

Principle 4: Student Admission, Progression, Recognition and Certification

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

Institutions and academic units need to put in place both processes and tools to collect, manage and act on information regarding student progression.

Procedures concerning the award and recognition of higher education degrees, the duration of studies, rules ensuring students progression, terms and conditions for student mobility should be based on the institutional study regulations. Appropriate recognition procedures rely on institutional practice for recognition of credits among various European academic departments and Institutions, in line with the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention.

Graduation represents the culmination of the students' study period. Students need to receive documentation explaining the qualification gained, including achieved learning outcomes and the context, level, content and status of the studies that were pursued and successfully completed (Diploma Supplement).

Study Programme compliance

The Internal Rules of the Programme regulate all the procedures related to the admission, progression of studies and awarding the degree. These rules have been approved by the 92nd /5-7-2018 Assembly of the Department. Specifics of the application of the processes and tools contained in the Internal Rules of the Programme are elaborated below.

In the first week of the beginning of the academic year, the President of the Department welcomes and informs incoming students about the character of Home Economics and Ecology, its structure, philosophy and the specific learning objectives of the curriculum, content and course orientation, while demonstrating how alumni skills are related to labour market requirements. He/she also informs students about the Final Year Paper, Internship, Mobility, awarded Degree, Professional Networking Office, Counseling Center, etc. Besides the President, orientation on the facilities takes place by dedicated administrative personnel (library, etc.). The students interviewed recalled with great enthusiasm and fondness their first impressions of the way they were received at the Department. While for many of them not a first choice, the welcoming environment they encountered became the determining factor in staying to pursue their studies at the Department.

The Department pays due attention to the smooth transition of students in the various stages of their studies. This is achieved through: a logical sequence of course/cognitive area, moving from the general course background to more focused and specialized content; completion of specific minimum number of coursework as a prerequisite for undertaking a Final Year Paper; and using academic criteria in prioritizing student choices of stakeholders for Internships, including number of courses still pending completion and average grade up to the 3rd year of study.

At individual course level, IEG/OMEA draws on the Secretariat's information system on the percentage of students successfully completing the course, the average score attained, the corresponding statistics from previous years and other relevant information which allows a quantitative assessment of student progress. Similar data is collected systematically on Internships, Final Year Paper and the Mobility of Students. These data form also part of the Department's internal evaluation, carried out on an annual basis. IEG/OMEA keeps a record of current and past years' statistics, which, together with the data from the students' assessment (questionnaire responses at the end of each course), is used to identify the positive and negative elements of the Programme and is an indicative benchmark for OMEA recommendations on the quality of the curriculum. Indicatively, more than 90% of the students graduate at n+2 years.

The Department fully implements the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) across the whole curriculum of the Programme. The total load per year is 60 ECTS units and the Department's website contains a detailed guide for the description of courses of the UPS.

The Department has accepted and co-signed the basic principles and conditions of the European Student Mobility Program for study and internship as well as the mobility of faculty members and administrative staff for training and teaching as outlined in the Erasmus Policy Statement. The flow of information on mobility options and related developments is carried out both through the electronic platform of the Department (e-class) where a special module on the Mobility programme is maintained, as well as orientation meetings and events organized by the Department at the beginning of each academic semester. Student monitoring and support takes place in individual weekly meetings with the professors responsible for mobility planning.

The terms and conditions for the selection of the students participating in the mobility programme have been approved by the General Assembly of the Department with a view to ensuring the quality of the programme. The current assessment criteria include the student's average grade (50%), foreign language (basic level) (25%), attendance of conferences, etc. (20%) and their motivation letter (5%). Students receive full ECTS credit of the successfully completed courses.

A Final Year Paper on subjects that are part of the Department's cognitive subjects is optional for students but it is credited against the requirements for completing their degree. The Final Year Paper constitutes an independent scientific and systematic approach and analysis of a subject chosen by the student in consultation with the supervising professor. Emphasis is placed on exploiting the knowledge and skills acquired during the coursework, applying a methodological approach to the review of literature and gaining critical judgment in the analysis of an issue. The Final Year Paper is submitted and graded at the earliest in the eighth semester by a three-member examination committee (appointed by the Assembly of the Department), a member of which is the supervising professor. The Programme regulations describe the process of elaboration of the Final Year Paper, related quality standards, plagiarism issues and ethical rules.

The students of the Department undertake compulsory practical training in the 7th and 8th semesters of their studies, which is incorporated into the curriculum. It aims at the substantial acquisition of professional experience in the labour market in disciplines related to the Department's Programme. Prior to the start of the Internship, seminars are being carried out to

prepare the students for their implementation. At present Internships have a duration of two months.

The practical utility of internships in preparing students for the labour market is well appreciated by the graduate students interviewed in gaining job-specific or broader skills. Most of them considered their internship experience as a major factor in helping them enter the labour market in fields of their choice. While the results of internships are considered satisfactory so far, the Department considers that by designing and distributing new, more comprehensive questionnaires to stakeholders and students, as well as by further enhancing the students with preparatory seminars, the picture would be greatly improved. Lengthening the duration of internships beyond two months is an improvement and although longer periods are presently possible in mutual agreement with the relevant stakeholder (without any financial implications), institutionalization of this practice may not be possible under the overall regulations to which the Department must comply with.

The Diploma Supplement is attached to the diploma awarded by the Department. It is issued automatically and without any financial burden in Greek and English to all graduates from 2017 onwards, while for previous years it is issued at the request of the students.

Panel judgement

Principle 4: Student Admission, Progression, Recognition and Certification	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

The current criteria for the assessment for Erasmus participation should consider placing more weight on the student motivation letter and less on language which is a sine qua non requirement.

The Department should further explore possible ways of extending the duration of internships beyond the current two months.

Principle 5: Teaching Staff

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD ASSURE THEMSELVES OF THE QUALIFICATIONS AND COMPETENCE OF THE TEACHING STAFF. THEY SHOULD APPLY FAIR AND TRANSPARENT PROCESSES FOR THE RECRUITMENT AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE TEACHING STAFF.

The Institutions and their academic units have a major responsibility as to the standard of their teaching staff providing them with a supportive environment that promotes the advancement of their scientific work. In particular, the academic unit should:

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

Study Programme compliance

The Department follows an interdisciplinary strategy and approach in education. In earlier reviews, the Department was identified as fragmented in terms of the strategic focal areas. Since then, a new strategic area of teaching and research has been developed towards sustainable innovative entrepreneurship with specialization on family start-ups (including inputs from students/ stakeholders). A strong presence and link with the marketplace is evidenced and several MoUs with industry/institutions are encouraging and supportive for student and faculty development. The small size of the Department allows for a high level of familiarity and limited transaction costs in coordination, but on the flip side, there are challenges with maintaining a wide scope of disciplinary focus and single-point failure challenges. The Department has narrowed down the mandatory courses and increased electives to enhance flexibility both for the students and also to alleviate above challenges.

Sabbaticals are always approved. Erasmus+ has been quite active for faculty. Erasmus+ on nutrition and special needs organized visits and student on-site experiences UK/Portugal/Greece (Margarita special education private education institution in Athens). There is a bureau for information and support of research calls/opportunities (example on IT and sustainable development). Course Nutrition and Environment and others follow an interdisciplinary approach supporting joint cross-discipline research in later stages, also Horizon 2020 example of sustainable fisheries logistic chains involve more than one members of faculty (including IT). Conference organization and attendance is encouraged and supported owing to close links with marketplace. All in all there are 22 research programs run by 16 faculty members, although it would appear that the impact of research output is relatively low.

The Department is a member of the International Federation of Home Economics. The majority of faculty offers courses in other Universities, in a process that involves transparency in permission by the Department and with consideration of internal needs.

The Department encourages the employment of newly obtained PhDs as Visiting Lecturers (hired to give up to 3 courses a year).

The Department aims to link student learning and research activities: faculty-supporting teaching through own research and also some thematic commonalities with Final Year Paper. Also, faculty research being used as case studies during courses.

Panel judgement

Principle 5: Teaching Staff	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

The AP recommends that the Department expands in Erasmus Mundus projects and other outside-the-EU countries.

The faculty should aim in achieving an improved impact distribution from on-going research activities.

Principle 6: Learning Resources and Student Support

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

Institutions and their academic units must have sufficient funding and means to support learning and academic activity in general, so that they can offer to students the best possible level of studies. The above means could include facilities such as libraries, study rooms, educational and scientific equipment, information and communications services, support or 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 or international students, students with disabilities) and 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 ensures that all resources are appropriate, adequate, and accessible, and that students are informed about the services available to them.

In delivering support services the role of support and administrative staff is crucial and therefore they need to be qualified and have opportunities to develop their competences.

Study Programme compliance

HU's small size with direct contact between students and faculty habitually works to solve most problems encountered. Student special council is involved in curriculum matters through interventions and representation at Department institutional level. Administrative staff and faculty follow a community-oriented philosophy, compatible with the thematic focus of the University. HU heritage and position in a very attractive park area at the heart of Athens complements the overall congenial environment of the University.

There is a wide spectrum of administrative services available to the students and faculty while single-point failure risks are mitigated by rotating staff and overlaps in certain cases. For critical operations like library, counseling and others there is more than one expert personnel. Non-permanent personnel are present and supportive in various roles.

HU's refectory is about 15' walk away, of excellent quality in a clean, modern environment, as are classrooms and common areas; there is a widespread sense of care in the facilities that are functional and tidy. This creates an attractive environment that facilitates learning.

Significant outside funding from research programs and activities compliments the regular funding sources of the Department. A strong competitive advantage was identified by students in the HU's facilities and learning environment. The Municipality supports HU activities including sports, but there is limited involvement at the student level. Theater and other activities are taking place with adequate support.

Student counselor has in some occasions supported students and communicated with the secretariat on their behalf. In case of 3 fails in the same course, the practice is for a counselor to be approached (if not before that).

Erasmus+ procedure has improved with new faculty in charge and this has resulted in higher demand on students.

A cost-conscious approach to dormitories is applied (no own dormitories, but there is an allocation by other Universities); quality of food is good, with high variety. Other university students prefer to utilize HU facilities. No-smoking policy is notably enforced amongst students.

Apparently, students are not utilizing effectively information exchange through emails (feedback surveys etc) and opt to visit the secretariat when there are problems. On the other hand, it appears than student experience with e-class is positive and useful for those based in countryside, further away.

Overall Library, IT, internship, counseling and academic advising services are of excellent standard.

Stakeholders have developed strong links (over ten years in several cases) with alumni increasingly involved in internships and soft-skills development. The Programme includes many fieldtrips, sometimes supported financially by stakeholders.

Access for special-needs students is well considered and available, notably due to the thematic expertise of the Department/University.

Committee on ethical assessment of research in social sciences exists at the University level; supporting various research actions and initiatives. University is supportive in general.

In recent years, the usual 80 student class rosters are close to the limits of room availability/capacity-numbers set by the Ministry. IT courses are constrained by a maximum number of 30 desktops in class, hence 3 classes in rotation are necessary for the workload to be met. The Department reached the limit for laboratory and field experimental area.

Students wishing to go for Erasmus+ are challenged by current financial crisis; as a result students apply, but do not always follow-up. Students seemed rather unimpressed by earlier processes in the Department, but the last couple of years have seen vast improvements, reflected in rising numbers interested.

Students perceive a high level of familiarity and binding with the Department and University. They develop in-practice respect and relevant soft-skills that are appreciated by stakeholders and internship mentors beyond student academic knowledge and skills.

Panel judgement

Principle 6: Learning Resources and Student Support	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

Formalize a sports activity with other Universities and/or the Municipality.

While there seems to be a rather strong community environment, more outreach and involvement with the wider national academic network may be identified as a strategic objective.

The Department should further explore possible ways of expanding laboratory and field experimental space.

Principle 7: Information Management

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

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 as well as to the academic community.

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

The information gathered 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 programme(s)*
- *availability of learning resources and student support*
- *career paths of graduates*

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

Study Programme compliance

The QAU of Harokopio has established and operates an information system for collecting and managing the data required for the implementation of the Internal Quality Assurance System within the framework of the Integrated National Information Quality System. The University Internal Quality Assurance System was accredited in November of 2018.

The QAU measures and monitors the performance through key performance indicators. The regularly collected data cover all relevant areas (course structure and organization, student population profile, number of ERASMUS students, student progression, percentage of graduate students in regular time success and drop-out rates, student satisfaction, teaching, research & innovation, infrastructure, provision of services to students, etc.). These statistics are presented in an informative way. For many indicators there is data since 1996, much before the obligation from HQA. For many key performance indicators the IEG present graphs and analyze trends. The measuring and monitoring are conducted on a basis of indices provided by the HQA and other indices prepared by the IEG and related to the quality of teaching. The IEG maintains an adequate amount of data to perform its analysis and evaluation. Students and staff are informed about the results of information analysis.

Student feedback questionnaire surveys are collected digitally twice per year, after an email invitation by the Department. The data access is protected centrally. The response data are systematically analyzed at the end of the scholar year by the QAU of HU and IEG of the Department. However, the response rate of students to questionnaires has been low (15%), which decreases the reliability of the data.

Panel judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

The response rate of the student feedback surveys should be increased to improve the reliability of the data.

Principle 8: Public Information

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD PUBLISH INFORMATION ABOUT THEIR TEACHING AND ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES WHICH IS CLEAR, ACCURATE, OBJECTIVE, UP-TO-DATE AND READILY ACCESSIBLE.

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

Therefore, institutions and their academic units provide information about their activities, including the programmes they offer, the intended learning outcomes, the qualifications awarded, the teaching, learning and assessment procedures used, the pass rates and the learning opportunities available to their students, as well as graduate employment information.

Study Programme compliance

The Department publishes information about its educational and academic activities, useful for current and future students as well as for graduates, other stakeholders and the public. The Department has established criteria for the type of information disclosed, the groups/stakeholders to whom it is addressed and the means or channels of communication used to make the information available.

The main tool used to make information related to the Department publicly available is under the umbrella of the website of the HU. Under the heading THE DEPARTMENT OF HOME ECONOMICS AND ECOLOGY, the website provides clear and well accessible information, inter alia, on the History of Home Economics and Ecology, Mission and Objectives of the Department, Field of Studies, Quality Assurance Policy, Professional Perspectives, European Mobility Programmes, Research Activity, etc. Some information is distributed to students at the beginning of the academic year in paper form, with the prospect of all information being provided electronically in order to reduce the environmental footprint of the Department's activities.

The UNDERGRADUATE STUDIES section of the website contains information, inter alia on the Curriculum, Study Guide, Course Outline Guide and Internship programme. Further down under the COURSE OUTLINE GUIDE there is extensive information for each course offered in the 8 semesters of studies, which contains brief information on the gnostic content of the course, details of the learning outcomes and skills that would be gained, teaching method, course organization and student assessment method, related bibliography and the URL address where the professor's presentation material may be accessed. All the courses offered are fully covered along these lines. Important information about the objectives, content, teaching methods and evaluation method for offered courses is also provided through the Open e-Class platform of the University.

Information requiring an update, such as the Study Guide, is renewed every year. Also, important up to date information on Calls for Proposals, Educational Excursions/Visits, Workshops and Conferences, as well as current professional activities of staff are posted under the NEWS section.

The systematic recording of the Department's overall work and its objective evaluation is seen as a modern tool for monitoring the course of the Department. The content of the information that is published on the Department's website is controlled by OMEA and the Undergraduate Studies Committee in cooperation with the President and the Committee of the website. Much of the information is collected, processed and made public in the framework of the annual internal evaluation report of the Department. The website committee of the Department is responsible for the renewal of the information published on the website.

Recognized areas for improving public information by the Department include: Research projects of the Department or attended conferences by the faculty members; strengthening information on Graduates of the Department (absorption, evolution, etc.).

Panel judgement

Principle 8: Public Information	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	X
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

There is need for strengthening the visibility of the Department in relevant fora to attract better quality of students entering higher education. From interviews with students it was evident that most of them had very limited knowledge and appreciation of the Department (and Harokopio in general) as an option in their admission preferences, although their acceptance at the Department turned out to be highly rewarding.

Inform about the research projects of the Department especially on issues that the department enjoys a unique position.

Organize open days for schools of the region and set a target for a number of strategically planned professional orientation visits to interested high schools, in collaboration with school teachers.

Principle 9: On-going Monitoring and Periodic Internal Review of Programmes

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

Regular monitoring, review and revision of study programmes aim to maintain the level of educational provision and to create a supportive and effective learning environment for students.

The above comprise the evaluation of:

- *the content of the programme in the light of the latest research in the given discipline, thus ensuring that the programme is up to date;*
- *the changing needs of society*
- *the students' workload, progression and completion;*
- *the effectiveness of the procedures for the assessment of students*
- *the students' expectations, needs and satisfaction in relation to the programme;*
- *the learning environment, support services and their fitness for purpose for the programme*

Programmes are reviewed and revised regularly involving students and other stakeholders. The information collected is analysed and the programme is adapted to ensure that it is up-to-date. Revised programme specifications are published.

Study Programme compliance

The results from the internal and external reviews are diligently considered and implemented as part of the continuous improvement process.

The Programme is reviewed every year involving students' representatives, taking into consideration student satisfaction surveys, the opinion of stakeholders related to internships and the changing needs of the society. There is a committee of study Programme revision that collaborate with IEG and reports to the Department General Assembly. At the end of the scholar year possible improvements are discussed at the Department as well as restructuring of study Programme, teaching methods, or other issues.

The content of the Programme is up to date and covers students' expectations and needs. The students' workload is adequate and the procedures for the assessment of students' progression and completion are satisfactory.

The learning environment is excellent and motivating. The support services are adequate to the needs of the Programme and fit to the purpose of all courses. Communication with all concerned parties is proper.

The course "Economic Theory II" should introduce to the concept of "circular economy" versus "linear economy" and the following course of "Economic and Ecologic Management of urban areas" should go deeper to the theory of regenerative economy and restorative sustainability presenting for example the case of "The Living Building Challenge".

Panel judgement

Principle 9: On-going Monitoring and Periodic Internal Review of Programmes	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

Introduce to the concept of "circular economy".

Principle 10: Regular External Evaluation of Undergraduate Programmes

PROGRAMMES SHOULD REGULARLY UNDERGO EVALUATION BY COMMITTEES OF EXTERNAL EXPERTS SET BY HQA, AIMING AT ACCREDITATION. THE TERM OF VALIDITY OF THE ACCREDITATION IS DETERMINED BY HQA.

HQA is responsible for administrating the programme accreditation process which is realized as an external evaluation procedure, and implemented by a committee of independent experts. HQA grants accreditation of programmes, with a specific term of validity, following to which revision is required. The accreditation of the quality of the programmes acts as a means of verification of the compliance of the programme with the template's requirements, and as a catalyst for improvement, while opening new perspectives towards the international standing of the awarded degrees.

Both academic units and institutions participate in the regular external quality assurance process, while respecting the requirements of the legislative framework in which they operate.

The quality assurance, in this case the accreditation, is an on-going process that does not end with the external feedback, or report or its follow-up process within the Institution. Therefore, Institutions and their academic units ensure that the progress made since the last external quality assurance activity is taken into consideration when preparing for the next one.

Study Programme compliance

The Department had undergone an external evaluation in June 2014. This is the first time that the Programme is evaluated by an external AP.

All staff members are well aware of the importance of the IQAS external review, its role, and its contribution towards improving the overall quality of the Programme. For example, student feedback about extending the period of internships is positive. The stakeholders of the Programme were actively engaged during the accreditation procedure and they continue their engagement with follow-up actions and new initiatives in the field of internship provision and event organization. There is a well-organized process of feedback from stakeholders after every internship.

The Department IEG has drafted and submitted a follow-up report in direct response to the last evaluation by the HQA. The report mentions that the Department has addressed all of the 9 recommendations for improvement. The Department has already fulfilled a good part of them successfully (80%) and progress on the remaining was reported in detail. The Certificate of Pedagogical Adequacy of the graduates of other Departments and the external evaluation of internships were not possible under the current legislation and National regulations.

Panel judgement

Principle 10: Regular External Evaluation of Undergraduate Programmes	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	

Non-compliant	
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Panel Recommendations

PART C: CONCLUSIONS

I. Features of Good Practice

Enhanced student-centered approach facilitated also by the Department's specialization, enabling more personal contact and constructive communication.

Curriculum well responding to academic developments and changing needs of the society.

Good and continuous relationships with key stakeholders and alumni.

Civic culture and behavior are developed within a community spirit and mutual respect, continuing the long established tradition of the Institution.

The Department enjoys a highly congenial environment nurtured by the campus location in a very attractive park area at the heart of Athens and by the Harokopio heritage.

II. Areas of Weakness

Low target setting in some key performance indicators.

No possibility for inclusion in the design of Programme of courses from other departments.

Participation of students in surveys and Programme evaluation is low.

Low internationalization of students and relatively low impact of outreach activities.

III. Recommendations for Follow-up Actions

Set higher targets in key performance indicators aiming at the Programme's continuous improvement.

Consider adding in Programme design some optional courses of other departments.

Student participations in surveys should increase substantially.

Increase Erasmus and Mundus programmes.

Increase impact of research and outreach activities.

Organize open-days for high schools students and exploit the attractiveness of the multidisciplinary of the Programme.

IV. Summary & Overall Assessment

The Principles where full compliance has been achieved are: **1,3,4,5,6,9,10**

The Principles where substantial compliance has been achieved are: **2,7,8**

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 Accreditation Panel
for the UGP Home Economics and Ecology
of the Harokopio University of Athens**

Name and Surname

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