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HELLENIC REPUBLIC

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# Accreditation Report
# for the Internal Quality Assurance System (IQAS)

Institution : Harokopio University of Athens

Date: 23/02/2025

Με τη συγχρηματοδότηση της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης
ΕΣΠΑ 2021-2027
Πρόγραμμα
Ανθρώπινο Δυναμικό και Κοινωνική Συνοχή

Report of the Panel appointed by the HAHE to undertake the review of the **Internal Quality Assurance System** (IQAS) of the Harokopio University of Athens 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 **Internal Quality Assurance System** (IQAS) of the Harokopio University of Athens comprised the following five (5) members, drawn from the HAHE Register, in accordance with Laws 4009/2011 & 4653/2020:

**1.** Veves Aristidis (Chair)
*(Title, Name, Surname)*
Harvard Medical School
*(Institution of origin)*

**2.** ECONOMIDES SPYROS
*(Title, Name, Surname)*
California State University, East Bay
*(Institution of origin)*

**3.** Michiotis Ioannis
*(Title, Name, Surname)*
CEN (European Committee for Standardization)
*(Institution of origin)*

**4.** PAPAGEORGIOU TASSOS
*(Title, Name, Surname)*
Turku Centre for Biotechnology, University of Turku and Åbo Akademi University
*(Institution of origin)*

**5.** Χαδούλης Ρίζος Θεόδωρος
*(Title, Name, Surname)*
Aristotle University of Thessaloniki
*(Institution of origin)*

## II. Review Procedure and Documentation

*Please refer briefly to the Panel preparation for the IQAS review, as well as to the documentation provided and considered by the Panel. State the dates and of the site visit and describe the visit schedule and the meetings held. Feel free to mention any additional information regarding the procedure, as appropriate.*

Preparatory actions

In preparation for the week-long evaluation, the committee undertook a series of preparatory actions to ensure a structured and efficient process.

(i) A collaborative online document was created based on a template provided by HAHE to facilitate real-time contributions, document sharing, and coordination among members.

(ii) As part of the preparation, it was agreed that principles would be assigned to each member in advance, with some members expressing their preferences.

(iii) The original 2018 accreditation report was requested to support a thorough review. For a more comprehensive assessment, it was suggested that the 2016 external evaluation report be combined with the 2018 progress report.

(iv) A key part of the preparation was a meeting that took place on Sunday, February 16, at 8 PM, where committee members gathered to discuss outstanding issues and finalize the organizational aspects of the evaluation process.

These preparatory efforts ensured that all members were well-informed, aligned, and equipped with the necessary materials to conduct a thorough and effective assessment during evaluation week.

Day 1

Meeting with the Rector and the Vice-Rectors

On Monday, 17 February, from 09:30 to 10:15, the evaluation committee met with the Rector and the Vice-Rectors for a discussion. The discussion was led by the institution's leadership, including Professor Georgios Dedousis, Rector, who provided insights into the university's evolution and strategic direction. Professor Sofianopoulou Chryssa, Vice Rector of Academic Affairs, Internationalization, and Quality Assurance, outlined the university's academic structure, international collaborations, and quality assurance initiatives. Professor George Dimitrakopoulos, Vice Rector of Research and Innovation, presented the institution's research achievements, funding landscape, and ongoing innovation efforts. Professor Konstantina Koutrouba, Vice Rector of Administrative Affairs, Student Welfare, and Lifelong Learning, elaborated on student support services, lifelong learning initiatives, and administrative improvements. Finally, Associate Professor George Boskou, Vice Rector of Finance and Infrastructure Management, provided an overview of the university's financial health, infrastructure projects, and sustainability strategies.

The discussion provided a comprehensive overview of the university's structure, key focus areas, and ongoing efforts to enhance its academic and research impact. The university comprises three schools and four departments, emphasizing sustainable development, nutrition science, and informatics. It continuously revises study programs and has introduced English-taught programs to attract international students. Ranked fourth nationwide in research, it has a €25 million research budget but seeks to improve technology transfer. It actively participates in international collaborations and has a strategic outreach plan. Student support services are well-developed, though course evaluation participation remains low. Administrative digitalization is advancing despite staffing shortages. Infrastructure investments include new facilities and energy efficiency upgrades, but maintenance funding is limited. Key priorities include strengthening internationalization, industry partnerships, digital transformation, and administrative efficiency. While the university shows strong progress in research and teaching, challenges remain in recruitment, infrastructure, and engagement.

Meeting with the

On Monday, February 17, from 11:30 AM to 12:30 PM, the evaluation committee met with the Vice-Rector, MODIP members, and the MODIP Manager (10:30 – 11:30), focusing on the institution's quality culture, quality assurance policies, and the structure and operation of the Internal Quality Assurance System (IQAS). The meeting also covered topics related to quality management and the self-assessment process, providing insights into how the university ensures and maintains high academic and operational standards.

Meeting with the members of the Internal Evaluation Groups (IEG/OMEA)

Following this, from 11:30 to 12:30, EEAP met with the MODIP Manager and staff to delve into MODIP's internal procedures, staff training, responsibilities, and cooperation mechanisms. The discussion highlighted challenges encountered and the results achieved, offering a clearer picture of how MODIP operates in practice.

Meeting with the members of the Internal Evaluation Groups (IEG/OMEA)

Later, from 12:45 to 13:30, EEAP met with members of the Internal Evaluation Groups (IEG/OMEA) to gain insights into the self-assessment process. Participants included Tsanakas Konstantinos, Assistant Professor in the Department of Geography; Iraklis Varlamis, Associate Professor in the Department of Informatics and Telematics; Chiou Antonia, Associate Professor in the Department of Nutrition and Dietetics; and Ioannis Kostakis, Assistant Professor in the Department of Economics and Sustainable Development. The discussion also explored the collaboration between IEGs/OMEA and MODIP, ensuring that evaluation processes are well-aligned and effectively contribute to the institution's overall quality assurance efforts.

Throughout the meeting, participants highlighted that the self-assessment process relies on a mix of quantitative and qualitative data, drawing on student surveys, faculty feedback, alumni input, and infrastructural assessments. They stressed the importance of adhering to established quality manuals and process diagrams to maintain consistency and objectivity in evaluations. The process is designed to inform targeted improvements: negative evaluations prompt guided meetings between faculty and department leadership to address specific issues, while positive feedback is used to reinforce effective practices. This feedback loop has already led to practical changes, such as curriculum adjustments and enhancements in teaching methodologies.

Key facilities inspection

From 15:30 to 16:30, a tour of the institution took place, including visits to key facilities such as classrooms, lecture halls, libraries, and laboratories. The primary objective was to evaluate the facilities and equipment to ensure the institution maintains the necessary resources for its smooth and efficient operation. Additionally, the working and learning environment was assessed to determine whether it adequately supports faculty and students. Specific attention was given to the MODIP facilities, including workspaces and offices, to assess their adequacy in supporting the unit's quality assurance functions.

1st Day Debrief Meeting

At the end of the first day, an EEAP members-only debrief meeting was held to reflect on the impressions gathered from the various meetings and facility evaluations. The discussion focused on reviewing the key takeaways from the day's engagements, assessing the effectiveness of the institution's quality assurance processes, and identifying any areas that may require further clarification or improvement. Additionally, the team prepared for the next day's agenda, ensuring a structured and comprehensive approach to the remaining aspects of the visit.

Day 2

On Tuesday, February 18, the second day of the on-site evaluation, EEAP conducted a series of meetings with key stakeholders of the institution to gain a comprehensive understanding of its academic environment, administrative processes, quality assurance framework, and external collaborations. The discussions involved students, postgraduate researchers, administrative staff, alumni, and external partners, each providing valuable insights into different aspects of university life, from learning experiences and career opportunities to institutional governance and stakeholder engagement. Throughout the day, EEAP also held internal review sessions to reflect on findings, clarify outstanding issues with the Quality Assurance Unit (MODIP), and ultimately present a preliminary summary of observations to the institution's leadership. The meetings provided a holistic perspective on the institution's strengths, challenges, and areas for improvement, setting the stage for the final reporting and recommendations.

Meeting with undergraduate students

On Tuesday, 18 February, from 10:00 to 10:45, EEAP met with students from various years of study to gather insights on their overall satisfaction with their academic experience and campus facilities. The discussion focused on student involvement in quality assurance processes, allowing them to share feedback on their education and institutional support services. Additionally, students highlighted priority issues concerning student life and welfare, providing valuable perspectives on areas that may require improvement to enhance their university experience.

Meeting with postgraduate students

From 11:00 to 11:45, EEAP met with postgraduate students (MSc, PhD) and postdoctoral researchers to discuss their perspectives on the learning process, academic progression, and assessment methods. The discussion also addressed their involvement in quality assurance, allowing them to share insights on the strengths and challenges of their programs. Additionally, postgraduate students highlighted key concerns related to grants, mobility opportunities, research support, and career prospects, emphasizing the need for enhanced institutional support in these areas.

Meeting with Heads of Administrative Units

From 12:00 to 12:45, EEAP met with the Heads of administrative units to discuss the impact of institutional documents, such as the strategic plan and quality assurance manual, on the functioning of their respective units. The discussion also focused on challenges and special issues that emerged from the internal evaluation process, providing insights into how administrative units contribute to and are affected by the university's quality assurance framework.

Meeting with alumni and graduates of all three study cycles

From 13:30 to 14:15, EEAP met with alumni and graduates from all three study cycles to discuss their academic experiences at the institution and how their studies influenced their career paths. The conversation provided valuable insights into the effectiveness of the programs in preparing graduates for the job market and allowed alumni to share feedback on areas where the institution could improve to better support future students in their academic and professional journeys.

Meeting with external stakeholders

From 15:45 to 16:30, EEAP met with external stakeholders, including representatives from industry, social partners, and local authorities, to discuss the institution's relationships with the private and public sectors. The conversation focused on collaborations, partnerships, and the university's role in addressing societal and economic needs. Stakeholders provided insights into how the institution contributes to regional development, workforce preparation, and innovation while also identifying areas where stronger cooperation could enhance mutual benefits and improve the university's impact on the broader community.

Debrief meeting

From 16:45 to 17:30, EEAP members held a debrief meeting to discuss the outcomes of the site visit and consolidate their findings. This session focused on reviewing key observations, identifying strengths and areas for improvement, and ensuring a clear and structured summary of the evaluation. Additionally, preparations were made for the oral report, which would present the main conclusions and recommendations from the visit.

Meeting with the Quality Assurance Unit (QAU/MODIP)

From 17:30 to 18:15, EEAP met with the Quality Assurance Unit (QAU/MODIP), including the Vice-Rector, MODIP members, and MODIP staff, to discuss key findings and points that required further clarification. This meeting provided an opportunity to address outstanding questions, ensure a deeper understanding of the institution's quality assurance processes, and refine insights gathered throughout the evaluation.

Closure meeting with the Rector and the Vice-Rector (MODIP)

From 18:15 to 18:45, EEAP held a closure meeting with the Rector and the Vice-Rector (MODIP) to provide an informal presentation of key findings from the evaluation process. This meeting served as a preliminary summary of the observations, highlighting strengths, areas for improvement, and key takeaways from the discussions held throughout the visit. It also allowed for an initial exchange of thoughts before the formal reporting process.

Report Drafting

From Wednesday, February 19, to Saturday, February 22, 2025, the EEAP members devoted their time to drafting and finalizing the IQAS Accreditation Report in Athens. The drafting process occurred in a conference room with structured sessions scheduled from 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM and 2:00 PM to 6:00 PM, allowing for a thorough review of the findings from the evaluation week. Each day included a lunch break from 1:00 PM to 2:00 PM, ensuring sustained focus and member collaboration.

The completion and submission of the IQAS Accreditation Report to the HAHE on Saturday, February 22, marked the culmination of the evaluation process. This dedicated drafting period ensured the report was comprehensive, well-structured, and reflective of the insights gathered throughout the institutional evaluation.

## III. Institution Profile

*Please provide a brief overview of the Institution, with reference to the following: history, academic remit, student population, campus, orientation challenges or any other key background information.*

Harokopio University of Athens (HUA) was established in 1990 as the successor of the Harokopio Higher School of Home Economics (Χαροκόπειος Ανωτάτη Σχολή). The University has expanded since then and, in its current form, has three Schools: a) School of Environment, Geography and Applied Economics, b) School of Digital Technology, and c) School of Health Science and Education. Furthermore, it has four Departments, a) Economics and Sustainable Development b) Geography, c)
School of Digital Technology Informatics and Telematics and d) School of Health Science and Education Nutrition and Dietetics.

HUA provides undergraduate, Master, and Doctoral degrees. Its current student population includes 3.298 undergraduates, 431 Master and 229 Doctoral students. In addition, the University accepts each year Erasmus students from other European Universities.

This is a rather small University, and the Faculty consists of 33 full Professors, 21 Associate Professors, 20 Assistant Professors, and one Lecturer. It is also expected that eight more Assistant Professors will be hired soon.

The infrastructure of the University is very satisfactory. At the main Campus, it consists of the old building that has been adequately restored and a new building that house labs and other facilities. There is one more building outside the Campus at Tavros while one more building is under construction and is expected to be ready in the near future.

Student services include the Student Service Center, Strident Advisory Office, and the Office for Erasmus students, Students have access to the HUA library and through e-access to the library services that are provided nationally to all Universities

HUA was ranked fourth in the most recent HAHE evaluation of Greek Universities, an indication of its excellent quality regarding both teaching and research activities. It consistently achieves outstanding funding results and a major part of this comes from international highly competitive sources, such as EU Horizon programs.

HUA has a satisfactory outward reaching, which includes a collaboration with local Kallithea and neighbouring city authorities. Some activities, because of this collaboration, include the engagement with local high schools and visits of their students to the University, resulting in choosing HUA as their first choice for university studies. Other activities include national and international conferences, open days, and workshops.

## PART B: COMPLIANCE WITH THE PRINCIPLES

### Principle 1: STRATEGY, QUALITY POLICY AND TARGET SETTING OF THE INSTITUTION

**INSTITUTIONS SHOULD DEVELOP A FOUR-YEAR STRATEGY, WITHIN WHICH THE QUALITY ASSURANCE STRATEGY IS INCLUDED. THE QUALITY ASSURANCE STRATEGY IS SPECIFIED THROUGH THE QUALITY ASSURANCE POLICY, WHICH SETS OUT THE PRINCIPLES OF THE OPERATION OF THE IQAS AND AIMS AT THE CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT OF THE SYSTEM. THE QUALITY ASSURANCE POLICY IS SPECIFIED THROUGH THE ANNUAL QUALITY TARGET SETTING WHICH EXTENDS TO ALL ASPECTS AND DIMENSIONS OF THE INSTITUTION'S OPERATION AND ACTIVITIES.**

*The Institution's strategy provides the general guidelines for the actions to be implemented within the specific forthcoming period. The strategic goals for quality assurance constitute one of the main pillars of the Institution's strategy. These goals are set out and specified following to analysis of relevant parameters and quality indicators. The quality assurance strategy includes the quality assurance policy as a specific document.*
*The quality assurance policy is the guiding document which sets the operating principles of the Internal Quality Assurance System (IQAS), the principles for the continuous improvement of the Institution, as well as the Institution's obligation for public accountability. It supports the development of a quality culture, according to which, all internal stakeholders assume responsibility for quality and engage in quality assurance. This policy has a formal status and is publicly available.*

*The quality assurance policy is implemented through:*

- *the commitment for compliance with the laws and regulations that govern the Institution;*
- *the establishment, review, redesign, and redefinition of quality assurance objectives, that are fully in line with the institutional strategy*

*This policy mainly supports:*

- *the organization of the internal quality assurance system;*
- *the Institution's leadership, departments and other organizational units, individual staff members and students to take on their responsibilities in quality assurance;*
- *the integrity of academic principles and ethics, guarding against discriminations, and encouragement of external stakeholders to be involved in quality assurance;*
- *the continuous improvement of learning and teaching, research and innovation;*
- *the quality assurance of the programmes and their alignment with the relevant HAHE Standards;*
- *the effective organisation of services and the development and maintenance of infrastructure;*
- *the allocation and effective management of the necessary resources for the operation of the Institution;*
- *the development and rational allocation of human resources*

*The way in which this policy is designed, approved, implemented, monitored, and revised constitutes one of the processes of the internal quality assurance system.*
*For the implementation of the quality assurance policy, an annual quality target-setting (using the SMART methodology) and a specific action plan for the achievement of the targets are drafted. The quality targeting includes all annual goals required for addressing weaknesses and improving the parameters of the Institution's teaching, research, and administrative work, according to the*

*strategic guidelines set as part of the Institution's strategy.*

**Documentation/Annexes**

E1.1 Strategic planning of the Institution (including the quality assurance strategy)

E1.2 Quality assurance policy of the Institution in liaison with the strategy

E1.3 Quality Targeting of the Institution (SMART), as implementation of the strategy and policy

## Institution compliance

*Please comment on the compliance with the Principle. Specifically: Please describe the findings related to the Principle, analyse, and conclude your judgement. Findings, analysis of judgement and conclusions should be developed below in three distinct parts.*

### I. Findings

Harokopio University of Athens (HUA) completed 30 years of operation in 2020, maintaining and developing the "vision of education" of the national benefactor Panagis Harokopos, aiming to modernize the development and inclusion of less privileged social groups in the Greek State. Inspired by the innovative approach of its founder, HUA, in its current form, has developed modern interdisciplinary fields that aim at sustainable development, ensuring continuous improvement in the quality of human life. The strategic development plan of HUA, which was initially drawn up for the period 2016–2020, was updated in 2019. In 2021, a new strategic development plan was devised for 2021–2024, accompanied by a relevant target-setting table. The Quality Policy and the quality target for the year 2023–2024/2024 of HUA were approved at meeting No. 475/06-12-2023 of the Senate.

HUA has three Schools covering cutting-edge disciplines in line with the European Union's future policy on green transition and sustainable development (School of Environment, Geography and Applied Economics), digital technology and skills (School of Digital Technologies), and health promotion (School of Health Sciences and Education).

HUA has implemented a suitable Quality Assurance (QA) framework that explicitly outlines evaluation procedures and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). The assessment process occurs annually, and ongoing enhancement is ensured by a comprehensive committee comprising representatives from all departments. A continuous data analysis procedure is conducted to enhance learning, teaching, research, and innovation activities.

The QAU's tasks are well-defined, and its staff members are highly skilled. The Institution responded positively to the previous accreditation conducted in 2018, outlining various approaches to further enhance the QA process. EEAP observed a significant effort to comply with the suggested previous recommendations.

A comprehensive web page dedicated to QA provides faculty members, students, and the general public with access to all pertinent information. This platform allows users to find essential documentation and directly engage with the QAU by submitting inquiries or seeking clarification on any specific page.

The roles of students, faculty, and administrative personnel in quality assurance (QA) processes are well-defined. A specific meeting with stakeholders highlighted HUA's proactive stance in addressing real-world issues. QA obligations are fully integrated at every level of the institution, aligning seamlessly with the Quality Manual.

HUA clearly outlines a logical distribution of its workforce to ensure ongoing compliance. Improvement efforts are developed and maintained.

## II. Analysis

HUA’s quality policy is evaluated through IQAS processes that are being developed, implemented, and revised at regular intervals in order to adapt and keep pace with the quality criteria and regulatory framework defined by the European Higher Education Area and the principles and guidelines of the Hellenic Authority for Higher Education (HAHE). As part of the IQAS evaluation, the academic community is critically involved, and the administration is committed to continuous quality improvement. The IQAS of HUA received full compliance certification from HAHE during a previous accreditation in 2018.

The evaluation results are made public by all appropriate means to the public, students, stakeholders, and interested parties. The EEAP saw a strong commitment by the faculty and administration to participate in the evaluation and to contribute to continuous improvement.

Stakeholders were aware of some HUA initiatives and established protocols to improve the transition from academic to professional environments in terms of the QA processes. However, their involvement is not clearly defined.

Academic principles and ethics are followed, guarding against any form of discrimination. Moreover, there is a strong commitment to compliance with the laws and regulations that govern the Institution, as well as compliance with HAHE standards. The Institution’s leadership, departments, other organizational and administrative units, individual staff members, and students are committed to taking on their responsibilities in quality assurance. There is an effective organisation of services and the development and maintenance of infrastructure. The recent acquisition of a new land property will help in improving the services and the infrastructure.

## III. Conclusions

There is an established QA policy for continuous improvement of the IQAS. Operational and activity targets are set annually for monitoring and improving the quality of the system.

**Panel Judgement**

*Please tick one of the following:*

| Principle 1: STRATEGY, QUALITY POLICY AND TARGET SETTING OF THE INSTITUTION | |
|---|---|
| Compliance | X |
| Partial compliance | |
| Non-compliance | |

**Panel Recommendations**

*Please provide your recommendations regarding issues that need to be addressed, as appropriate.*

Stronger involvement of stakeholders in the development of QA processes, learning, teaching, and innovation.

## Principle 2: PROGRAMMING AND ALLOCATION OF RESOURCES

**INSTITUTIONS SHOULD ENSURE ADEQUATE FUNDING, HUMAN RESOURCES, INFRASTRUCTURE, SERVICES AND SYSTEMS FOR TEACHING, RESEARCH, AND INNOVATION, AS WELL AS FOR THE WHOLE RANGE OF THEIR ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES, FOR THE PURPOSE OF FULFILLING THEIR MISSION AND STRATEGIC GOALS. THE ABOVE RESOURCES ARE PLANNED OVER A FOUR-YEAR HORIZON, ARE LINKED WITH THE STRATEGY AND ARE ALLOCATED IN A RATIONAL MANNER, IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PERTINENT PROCEDURES. THEIR MANAGEMENT AND MONITORING IS IMPLEMENTED BY MEANS OF INFORMATION SYSTEMS.**

Funding

The institution ensures adequate funding to cover not only the overhead and operational costs (regular budget and public investment budget) but also costs related to research, innovation, and development by exploiting external sources of financing. The financial planning and the operation of an effective financial management system constitute necessary tools for the full exploitation of the resources.

The annual public funding of the Institution follow the procedures set out in article 16 of Law 4653/2020 and the relevant ministerial decisions.

The annual budgets for the past five years, the absorption and the main categories of expenditure as well as the amount and sources of the external funding are key elements for the assessment of the principle.

Infrastructure

Based on the requirements and needs arising during its operation, the Institution has determined ways to define, allocate and maintain all the necessary resources to ensure its smooth and proper functioning, i.e. teaching, research and auxiliary facilities, equipment and software, support facilities (cleaning, transportation, communication) etc. The scope of the IQAS should include a suitable managing and monitoring system to safeguard the infrastructure. Compliance with the internal regulations is also necessary.

Working environment

The institution ensures -as far as possible- that the working environment has a positive effect on the performance of all members of the academic community (students and staff). Factors that are taken into consideration towards the creation of such a favourable environment are, among others, the sanitary facilities, the lighting/heating/ventilation system, the cleanliness and the overall appearance of the premises, etc. The scope of the IQAS should include an appropriate managing and monitoring system to promote a favourable working environment and to ensure compliance with the existing provisions.

Human resources

The Institution and the academic units bear the responsibility for the allocation and development of the human resources. The rational allocation of human resources is based on a system of criteria, in line with the mission and the strategic options of the Institution.

The subject areas, as well as the competences and tasks of the staff members are defined by the corresponding job descriptions that are established within the operation scope of each academic or administrative unit. These posts are filled following the requirements set by the law, on the basis of fair and published processes. The continuous training and evaluation of the staff is considered necessary for the enhancement of the performance, which is recorded and monitored as provided in the context of the IQAS.

The Institution should acknowledge and provide the necessary resources for the implementation of the IQAS, its enhancement and the provision of services that assist the satisfaction of the quality assurance requirements. Moreover, the Institution provides the necessary resources for the organization and staffing of the QAU, with a clear allocation of competences and tasks to its staff members.

**Documentation/Annexes**

E2.1 Annual planning and allocation of funding from all available sources for the next 4 years, or Programme Agreement of the Institution, if applicable

E2.2 Internal rules for the allocation and distribution of the financial and human resources to the academic units and the central services of the Institution

E2.3 Internal evaluation by the QAU of the resources, according to the relevant NISQA indicators and the performance indicators of the Institution

E2.4 Overview of the information systems for the management and monitoring of the financial and human resources of the Institution

## Institution compliance

*Please comment on the compliance with the Principle. Specifically: Please describe the findings related to the Principle, analyse, and conclude your judgement. Findings, analysis of judgement and conclusions should be developed below in three distinct parts.*

### I. Findings

Harokopio University was established in 1990 and it operates as a Public Law Legal Entity. The overall campus spans across two locations (the cities of Kallithea and Tavros - Moschato), which are in the Prefecture of Attica .
Harokopio has substantial real estate and legacy assets (based on the endowment of Panagis Harokopos); proceeds from those assets are mainly used for student scholarships, awards, and improving research, innovation, and promotion of the University through social media and conferences. The most recent Programme of Studies comprises 4 Undergraduate Programs of Study, each housed in a separate Department. The educational programs are supported and complemented by 23 Laboratories, 1 Library Building complex of the Student Directorate,187 active funded projects, and research infrastructures Harokopio also has one Center of Excellence. The most recent census shows that Harokopio University has 71 Faculty members, 124 Research, Teaching, and Technical staff members, 68 Administrative staff members (permanent and

contract), undergraduate students, Graduate Students, and PhD candidates.

## II. Analysis

HUA facilities have improved over the years, despite the continuous lack of adequate funding from the Government and the reduction in personnel (faculty, administrative staff, and support personnel). Lack of sufficient Government funding impacts modernization. Difficulties in securing proceeds from the Harokopio ‘real estate property’ add to the funding challenge.
The EEAP panel recognizes the efforts made by the University to allocate research-oriented funding (from ELKE) towards infrastructure improvement, faculty wages, and student support through scholarships. However, although ELKE is a healthy entity handling on an annual basis behind 25 million euros of research funds, it is not independent, which limits its flexibility and ability for long-term planning, adversely impacting resource utilization. Non-educational facilities are limited and mostly understaffed (the exception being the nutrition and dietetics department and the IT and telematics department).
The administrative staff is very professional, overworked, and underpaid. Discussions and interviews held with MODIP, OMEA, the Rector, and the Vice Rector have revealed their commitment to improving resources despite the challenges and ‘systemic issues’, which Harokopio tries to solve on their own without support from the State. Although, the most important issue that all participants pointed out is the underfunding from the Government, all parties in Harokopio have managed to create top scholarship programs in all disciplines. The working environment is friendly and collegial, encouraging interactions and collaboration.

## III. Conclusions

All stakeholders have pointed to the need for: a) additional permanent staff (faculty and especially administrators) to maintain the provided high-level education; and b) substantial funding increase to improve resources. The EEAP panel observes that unless there is substantial investment from the State, the University risks not being fully compliant in future accreditations. It was communicated to the EEAP panel that funding required to run operations (e.g., for improving infrastructure and additional hiring) from the State is insufficient.

**Panel judgement**

*Please tick one of the following (per subsection):*

| Principle 2: PROGRAMMING AND ALLOCATION OF RESOURCES | |
|---|---|
| 2.1 Funding | |
| Compliance | X |
| Partial compliance | |
| Non-compliance | |
| 2.2 Infrastructure | |
| Compliance | X |
| Partial compliance | |
| Non-compliance | |
| 2.3 Working Environment | |
| Compliance | X |
| Partial compliance | |
| Non-compliance | |
| 2.4 Human Resources | |
| Compliance | |
| Partial compliance | X |
| Non-compliance | |

*Please tick one of the following:*

| Principle 2: PROGRAMMING AND ALLOCATION OF RESOURCES (overall) | |
|---|---|
| Compliance | X |
| Partial compliance | |
| Non-compliance | |

**Panel Recommendations**

*Please provide your recommendations regarding issues that need to be addressed, as appropriate.*

The current administrative staff is limited, and additional personnel should be hired to adequately support all university functions.
Broaden external stakeholder engagement.

## Principle 3: STRUCTURE, ORGANISATION AND OPERATION OF THE IQAS

**THE IQAS INCLUDES ALL NECESSARY PROCESSES AND PROCEDURES FOR THE COMPLIANCE OF ALL THE INSTITUTION'S ACADEMIC STRUCTURES, ACTIVITIES AND ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES WITH THE QUALITY STANDARDS. THE QAU IS THE COMPETENT UNIT FOR THE ORGANISATION AND OPERATION OF THE IQAS AND HAS THE REQUIRED FUNCTIONAL INDEPENDENCE AND OPERATIONAL CAPACITY FOR THE EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE IQAS, AS WELL AS FOR ITS COMPLIANCE WITH THE PRESENT STANDARDS.**

The key goal of the internal quality assurance system (IQAS) is the development, effective operation and continuous improvement of the whole range of the Institution's activities, and particularly, of teaching, research, innovation, governance and relevant services, according to the international practices - especially those of the European Higher Education Area - and the HAHE principles and guidelines described in these Standards.

Structure and organization
In each Institution, the Quality Assurance Unit (QAU) holds the responsibility for the administration and management of the IQAS. The QAU is set up according to the existing legislative framework and is responsible for:

- the development of specialised policy, strategy and relevant processes towards the continuous improvement of the quality of the Institution's work and provisions;
- the organisation, operation and continuous improvement of the Institutions' internal quality assurance system;
- the coordination and support of the evaluation process of the Institution's academic units and other services, and
- the support of the external evaluation and accreditation process of the Institution's programmes and internal quality assurance system in the context of the HAHE principles and guidelines.

The Institution's IQAS and its implementation processes are determined by the decisions of the competent bodies, as provided by the law, and are published in the Government's Gazette, as well as on the Institution's website. The above are reviewed every five years, at the latest.
To achieve the above goals, the QAU collaborates with the HAHE, develops and maintains a management information system to store the quality data, which are periodically submitted to the HAHE, according to the latter's instructions. The QAU is responsible for the systematic monitoring of the evaluation process and for the publication of evaluation-related procedures and their results on the Institution's website.
The QAU structure has been approved by the Institutions' competent bodies, as provided by the law, while all competences accruing from this structure are clearly defined.
The QAU is staffed by a sufficient number of permanent personnel, so as that the operational needs of the IQAS are completely met. The administrative officer of the QAU

has comprehensive updating and knowledge about the implementation of its operations and activities.

Operation

The institution takes action for the design, establishment, implementation, audit and maintenance of the Internal Quality Assurance System (IQAS), taking into account the requirements of the Standards, while making any necessary amendments to ensure fitness to achieve its aims.

The above actions include:

- the provision of all necessary processes and procedures for the successful operation of the IQAS, as well as the participation of all parties involved, across the Institution. The Institution’s areas of activity can constitute the IQAS processes, e.g. teaching, research and innovation, governance, services etc. An IQAS process is an area of activity including data input, data processing and outputs. A procedure defines the way an action is implemented and includes a course of stages or steps, e.g. the curriculum design procedure;
- the determination of how the IQAS procedures/ processes are audited, measured and assessed, and how they interact;
- provision of all necessary resources to enable the IQAS implementation.

Documents

The IQAS documentation includes, among other things, a series of key documents demonstrating its structure and organisation, and the Quality Manual, which describes how the requirements of the Standards are met.

The Annexes of the Quality Manual include:

- the Quality Policy and the Quality Assurance Objectives;
- the necessary written Procedures, along with the entailed forms;
- the necessary Guides, External Documents (e.g. pertinent legislation), as well as any other supporting data;
- the standing organisational structure of the QAU, with a detailed description of the competences, the required qualifications and the goals for each post. The organisational chart is structured in a manner that ensures that the IQAS organisational requirements are fully and properly met.

**Documentation**

E3.1 Government Gazette for the approval, structure, and operation of the IQAS and the QAU

E3.2 Updated IQAS Quality Manual (including the QAU organisational structure- job descriptions, tasks, skills)

E3.3 QAU Internal Regulation

**Institution compliance**

*Please comment on the compliance with the Principle. Specifically: Please describe the findings related to the Principle, analyse, and conclude your judgement. Findings, analysis of judgement and conclusions should be developed below in three distinct parts.*

**I. Findings**

QAU is responsible for the operation of IQAS and is composed of the Quality Assurance Committee and the Quality Assurance Department. MODIP uses the appropriate digital system for the collection and analysis of the required quality data. In addition, it developed a digital platform that allows the automatic collection of data regarding indices of university performance, such as citation reports related to the research performed in the University. Part of this data is transmitted daily to HAHE.

MODIP consists of members of the faculty, administrative staff, and external staff that are contracted for this purpose. Its function is supervised by the Vice-rector of Academic Affairs.

EEAP had a very detailed and productive discussion with MODIP and had the opportunity to gain a satisfactory impression of its work, the challenges it faces, and its plan to manage current problems and plan its future activities. The discussion included the problems related to the rather low participation of students in the evaluation process of current educational activities and the MODIP's plans to engage the students and increase their participation.

EEAP also discussed with MODIP their role in the evaluation of postgraduate education, with particular emphasis on the quantity and quality of existing and new Master and Doctoral programs. It also discussed the need for not strictly adhering to the HAHE established quality criteria but the need to introduce new/additional criteria that focus more on the evaluation of the quality of the performed work

**II. Analysis**

As the university is expanding, best seen from the planned educational activities and increased research funding that has been secured for the following years, there is an urgent need for additional administrative staff. This can be achieved either through the securing of additional funds from the State or the increase of the rate of indirect cost of the various research programs.

During the discussion, it was not clear how MODIP perceives its role, especially for postgraduate studies. More specifically, it was not clear whether it perceived its role as mainly supportive or whether it could have a more authoritative or even deciding role in the performance of existing programs or the establishment of new programs. There was also no clear understanding regarding the degree of autonomy MODIP should have from the University governing authorities so it can successfully complete its function.

## III. Conclusions

EEAP realizes that the quality criteria are defined by HAHE. However, its opinion is that the criteria that are based on the quantity of the work, such as the number of published papers as a major criterion for the career advancement of the faculty members and the ranking of the University is not sufficient. More specifically, it can lead to the publication of numerous but low-quality papers with no significant contribution to the existing knowledge.

The employed criteria are mainly based on the quantity, rather the quantity, of the work. This policy is not in agreement with the policies that are employed by well-established foreign institutions. For example, the quality of a small number of papers, five or a maximum of ten, and the secured funding from completive and respected sources, e.g., EU Horizon, the developed patents, and startup companies, should be included in the main criteria.

It is realized that MODIP may not be able to achieve a fully autonomous executive function, but, nonetheless, there is lack of evidence that it has achieved the appropriate autonomy to fulfill its role adequately.  For example, its recommendation regarding the needed changes in the existing programs or the establishment of new programs should be the main factor for the decision making of the University authorities.

**Panel judgement**

*Please tick one of the following:*

| **Principle 3: STRUCTURE, ORGANISATION AND OPERATION OF THE IQAS** | |
|---|---|
| Compliance | |
| Partial compliance | **X** |
| Non-compliance | |

**Panel Recommendations**

*Please provide your recommendations regarding issues that need to be addressed, as appropriate.*

The criteria for the career advancement of the faculty members and the performance of the various Schools should be based more on the quality rather than the quantity of the performed work.

MODIP should assume a more assertive and autonomous function.

MODIP should take the initiative, and in conjunction with HAHE, to establish additional quality criteria, which are in agreement with similar criteria that are employed by well-established foreign institutions.

## Principle 4: SELF-ASSESSMENT

**THE INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM CONDUCTS INTERNAL EVALUATION OF THE WHOLE RANGE OF ACADEMIC AND ADMINISTRATIVE ACTIVITIES OF THE INSTITUTION, AS WELL AS ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE SYSTEM, TO IDENTIFY ANY OVERSIGHTS, DEFICIENCIES OR DISCREPANCIES. CORRECTIVE ACTIONS AND IMPROVEMENTS ARE PROPOSED TOWARDS THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE QUALITY AND STRATEGIC GOALS. DURING THE SELF-ASSESSMENT, THE EFFECTIVE INTERNAL COMMUNICATION WITH THE INTERNAL AS WELL AS THE EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS IS ENSURED.**

*The QAU conducts, on an annual basis, a self-assessment of the IQAS, following the written procedure provided for each area of activity, which is implemented by a certain academic or administrative unit, as appropriate. The procedure determines the timing, the participants, the data under consideration, and the expected outcomes. The self-assessment aims at a final estimation of the suitability of the IQAS in force, as well as at basing decisions concerning the necessary remedial or precautionary actions for improvement.*
*The data considered in the context of the self-assessment of a programme may, for example, include:*

- *students performance;*
- *feedback from students / teaching staff;*
- *assessment of learning outcomes;*
- *graduation rates;*
- *feedback from the evaluation of the facilities/ learning environment;*
- *report of any remedial or precautionary actions undertaken;*
- *suggestions for improvement.*

*The outcomes of the self-assessment are recorded in internal reports drawn by the QAU. The reports identify any areas of deviation or non-compliance with the Standards and are communicated to the interested parties (if appropriate). The Institution's resolutions concerning any modification, compliance, or enhancement of the IQAS operation are made in the context of the annual IQAS review and might include actions related to:*

- *the upgrade of the IQAS and the pertinent processes;*
- *the upgrade of the services offered to the students;*
- *the reallocation of resources;*
- *the introduction of new quality goals, etc.*

*The outcomes of the self-assessment are recorded and, along with the source data, are archived as quality files.*

*A special procedure is followed for the compliance check of newly launched programmes (of all three cycles), or programmes that are to be revised shortly, prior to the institutional approval of the programmes.*

**Documentation**

E4.1 Minutes and other documents and relevant correspondence regarding the annual internal evaluation of the IQAS by the QAU

E4.2 Results of the last annual internal evaluation of the IQAS by the QAU, and the relevant minutes and documentation

E4.3 Correspondence and other actions (workshops, meetings) for collecting feedback from the external stakeholders

## Institution compliance

*Please comment on the compliance with the Principle. Specifically: Please describe the findings related to the Principle, analyse, and conclude your judgement. Findings, analysis of judgement and conclusions should be developed below in three distinct parts.*

### I. Findings

The Principle of Internal Evaluation in effect monitors, examines, and ensures that the issues and requirements of the instructional, research, and administrative sectors comply with the IQAS expectations of quality as prescribed by HAHE and as outlined and discussed in the institutional Quality Manual which serves as the guide of all processes (διεργασίες) and procedures (διαδικασίες) that must be followed. The flow of tasks, the documentation of data gathered, the results, and follow-up adjustments and corrective actions, if needed, are recorded and presented in the Annual Internal Evaluation Report.
Several documents (files) have been submitted by the institution indicating the material gathered, processed, analyzed and documented to justify the effort expended by the Quality Assurance Units of the institution to accomplish the process. Document E1.new ΠΡΟΤ ΠΙΣΤΟΠ ΕΣΔΠ (Proposal for Accreditation), is a verbal description of all tasks performed, personnel involvement, information

sources used, and resulting follow-up actions included in the Internal Evaluation for the academic years of 2018-2019/2019 to 2020-2021/2021 which was completed in the second semester of 2022 and submitted along with many documents of supplemental supporting information as well as additional work that was done in 2023 to expand upon this Principle 4 of self-improvement. This IQAS Internal Evaluation process was presented in an Internal Evaluation Report that was submitted.

## II. Analysis

The combination of the following documents provided useful information for the EEAP to assess the performance and implementation of the institution's IQAS Annual Internal Evaluation Process. They collectively include qualitative and quantitative information relative to the performance and compliance of all Processes and Procedures of the institutional activities and areas (instructional, research, administrative), as well as services and facilities, as suggested and described in the Quality Manual and mandated by HAHE.
- Ε4.2 ΠΡΑΚΤΙΚΟ ΑΝΑΣΚΟΠΗΣΗΣ ΕΣΔΠ (Minutes of the IQAS Review issued 11/22/2023, MODIP Review Committee). This document provides a rather comprehensive account of the IQAS performance comprised of a collection of tables with qualitative and quantitative data. It specifies institutional goal attainment values combined with performance indicators as prescribed in the Quality Manual for the evaluation of each one of the six principles (excluding the Internal Evaluation Principle 4) of the accreditation report template of the IQAS.

- The Internal Evaluation Report of the academic period 2018-2019/2019 to 2020-2021/2021
This report is quite extensive and discusses the evaluation of each Principle of the Accreditation Report Template following the processes, procedures and providing associated quantitative performance indicators as suggested in the Quality Manual. Discusses Identified adjustments, improvements and upgrades uncovered during the implementation of the processes and procedures as well as ways to take care of them are also listed.
- Document E1.3_new ΣΤΟΧΟΘΕΣΙΑ ΠΟΙΟΤΗΤΟΣ (Quality Goals Attainment),
- Document E3.3_new ΕΣΩΤ ΚΑΝΟΝ ΜΟΔΙΠ (MODIP Internal Regulation)
This is a detailed account of the institutional framework of operation of MODIP discussing duties, responsibilities, subcommittees, data gathering, and other operational aspects.
- Document E4.1-new ΠΡΑΚΤΙΚΑ ΕΣΩΤ ΑΞΙΟΛ (Minutes of Internal Evaluation)
A collection of the minutes of each meeting of MODIP discussing in detail the tasks performed for the evaluation of IQAS issues and the actions taken accordingly. It includes a series of tables, in which the information gathered was classified and later used for the creation of the Internal Evaluation Report.
- Document E4.3 ΑΝΑΤΡΟΦΟΔΟΤΗΣΗ (Feedback)

Examples of interactive activities between the institution and selected external private and public entities to document the effort to obtain feedback and suggestions with the purpose to supplement, enhance and expand programs of study and other activities of the institution, as they relate to the IQAS Accreditation Report Template Principles.

- Document E5.1-new ΕΚΘΕΣΗ ΟΠΕΣΠ (IQAS Report)

This is an extensive accumulation of statistical information on all three departments and associated undergraduate programs as well as for each postgraduate program that tracks all quality indicator values for each category of activity annually (in this case the academic year 2021-2022) as demanded by ETHAAE.

## III. Conclusions

The IQAS Self-Evaluation process as described in the submitted documents mentioned above and as reflected in the Internal Evaluation Report seems to be comprehensive, accurate and sufficient, following the processes and procedures suggested by the Quality manual. The documentation provided in a combination of qualitative and quantitative form is appropriate and informative. The objectives of the Self Evaluation and the resulting follow-up actions were met in a satisfactory manner. A thorough tracking of all quality indicators has been done and listed, demonstrating compliance with this HAHE requirement.

**Panel judgement**

*Please tick one of the following:*

| **Principle 4: SELF-ASSESSMENT** | |
|---|---|
| Compliance | **X** |
| Partial compliance | |
| Non-compliance | |

**Panel Recommendations**

*Please provide your recommendations regarding issues that need to be addressed, as appropriate.*

Streamline and consolidate the presentation of results in the documents listed below through the development of a standard Internal Evaluation template which will address the Principles of the HAHE Accreditation / re-Accreditation template following the Quality Manual processes and procedures, as they may be relevant.
E1.3_new ΣΤΟΧΟΘΕΣΙΑ ΠΟΙΟΤΗΤΑΣ
E4.1_new ΠΡΑΚΤΙΚΑ ΕΣΩΤ ΑΞΙΟΛ
E4.2 ΠΡΑΚΤΙΚΑ ΑΝΑΣΚ ΕΣΔΠ
E2.3 ΕΚΘ ΑΞΙΟΛ ΠΟΡΟΙ
This template could be reused for future evaluations by merely updating the annual data gathered, thus facilitating the preparation of producing the Internal Evaluation Report which will provide the comprehensive picture of the self-assessment efforts.

## Principle 5: COLLECTION OF QUALITY DATA: MEASURING, ANALYSIS, AND IMPROVEMENT

**INSTITUTIONS ARE FULLY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE COLLECTION, ANALYSIS AND USE OF INFORMATION IN AN INTEGRATED, FUNCTIONAL AND READILY ACCESSIBLE MANNER, THROUGH INFORMATION SYSTEMS, AIMING AT THE EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT OF THE QUALITY DATA RELATED TO TEACHING, RESEARCH AND OTHER ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES, AS WELL AS THOSE RELATED TO THEIR ADMINISTRATIVE OPERATION.**

*The QAU should establish and operate an information system to manage the data required for the implementation of the Internal Quality Assurance System.*

*The QAU measures and monitors the performance of the various activities of the Institution, through appropriate procedures established in the context of the IQAS structure and assesses their level of effectiveness. The measuring and monitoring is conducted on a basis of indicators and data provided by the HAHE in the pertinent guidelines and forms, which are part of the National Information System for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (NISQA). These measurements may concern: the size of the student body, the size of the teaching and administrative staff, the infrastructure, the structural components of the curricula, students' performance, research activity performance, financial data, feedback on student and faculty satisfaction surveys, data related to the teaching and research activity services, infrastructure, etc.*

*The QAU makes use of the figures and presents the results for consideration using statistical analysis. Outcomes are displayed through histograms and charts. This sort of information is used by the Institution for decision making, at all levels, pursuing improvement, as well as for setting, monitoring, assessing and reviewing the Institution's strategic and operational goals.*

*Institutions are under an obligation to provide or transfer data (through the QAU) to the HAHE, for the purposes of quality assurance, and monitoring of their strategy and funding.*

**Documentation**

E5.1 Reports from the National Information System for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (NISQA) and accompanying assessment report by the QAU

E5.2 Description of the functions of the QAU information system

E5.3 Sample of fully completed questionnaire of satisfaction surveys addressed to the teaching and the administrative staff

E5.4 QAU report on the utilisation of the data collected from the QAU information system (internal evaluation, quality targeting, etc.)

## Institution compliance

*Please comment on the compliance with the Principle. Specifically: Please describe the findings related to the Principle, analyse, and conclude your judgement. Findings, analysis of judgement and conclusions should be developed below in three distinct parts.*

### I. Findings

The data regularly collected covers student body, teaching methods, teaching and administrative staff, innovation, infrastructure, and finance through specific questionnaires such as the Teaching Evaluation Questionnaire, Program Evaluation Questionnaire, and Infrastructure/Services Evaluation Questionnaire. The QAU utilizes an integrated information system to comprehensively track and manage quality assurance data. The institution has developed a proprietary subsystem named 'Scopus CiteSights' to monitor research performance by collecting and analyzing statistical data on publications, citations, and cross-references at both individual researcher and institutional levels. Additionally, the system facilitates the continuous monitoring of strategic goals by aligning performance metrics with predefined institutional targets. Data is transferred daily to HAHE through the Harvest Data mechanism, ensuring real-time updates on critical quality indicators. Furthermore, Qflow Data enables the structured transmission of all relevant quality assurance metrics to HAHE at predefined intervals, ensuring compliance with national reporting requirements and fostering data-driven decision-making.
The Institution continuously monitors data adequacy and accuracy through systematic reporting and structured feedback loops, ensuring the reliability of data used for quality assurance.
Student and staff satisfaction surveys are systematically conducted to gather feedback on various aspects of academic and administrative services. However, student engagement in these surveys remains relatively low, suggesting the need for improved communication strategies, potential incentives, and optimized survey design to encourage broader participation and ensure more comprehensive and representative feedback. through dedicated questionnaires,

providing insights into teaching effectiveness, collaboration, and support services.
Information from satisfaction surveys is systematically analyzed and disseminated to relevant decision-makers, including department heads, deans, and Quality Assurance Units (QAU) for further processing. Individual evaluation reports are also sent directly to faculty members regarding the courses they have undertaken, ensuring transparency and targeted feedback. The insights derived from these surveys contribute to the assessment of teaching effectiveness and student learning experience, supporting the continuous improvement of study programs and the potential revision of curricula to align with evolving educational standards and institutional goals.
Key data from surveys and reports are incorporated into the Institution's strategic planning and operational goal-setting processes.
The QAU assessment report thoroughly evaluates the validity, reliability, and completeness of the Institution's data, ensuring compliance with national quality assurance standards.

## II. Analysis

The Institution has established a structured and efficient system for collecting and analyzing quality assurance data, ensuring alignment with national quality assurance standards. The Quality Assurance Unit (QAU) leverages an integrated information system that enables comprehensive tracking of key performance indicators related to teaching, research, and administrative functions. The systematic collection and transfer of data to the HAHE through mechanisms like Harvest Data and Qflow Data ensure real-time monitoring and compliance with national reporting requirements.
One notable challenge is the relatively low student engagement in satisfaction surveys. Despite the structured administration of surveys on teaching effectiveness, administrative services, and infrastructure, response rates remain below the desired levels. This limits the comprehensiveness and representativeness of the feedback collected. To address this issue, the Institution may consider implementing enhanced communication strategies to raise awareness of the importance of participation. Additionally, incentives for students, improved survey accessibility, and optimized questionnaire design could be explored to encourage broader engagement.
The Institution effectively utilizes the insights gained from satisfaction surveys and other quality assurance data to inform decision-making at various levels. The structured dissemination of evaluation reports to department heads, deans, and faculty members enhances transparency and facilitates targeted improvements. Furthermore, the integration of survey findings into strategic planning and curriculum revision ensures that educational programs remain aligned with evolving institutional goals and academic standards. The QAU also conducts rigorous assessments of data validity and reliability, reinforcing the robustness of

the quality assurance framework.
Overall, while the Institution demonstrates a strong commitment to data-driven decision-making and quality assurance, enhancing student participation in surveys would further improve the depth and applicability of the collected insights.

## III. Conclusions

The Institution demonstrates full compliance with Principle 5 by systematically collecting, analyzing, and utilizing quality assurance data through a well-integrated information system. The QAU effectively monitors key performance indicators related to teaching, research, and administrative operations, ensuring continuous improvement. Data accuracy and reliability are maintained through structured reporting mechanisms, and findings are used to support strategic decision-making at all levels. Additionally, the regular submission of quality metrics to HAHE further confirms adherence to national quality assurance requirements. Overall, the Institution’s approach to data management aligns with best practices, ensuring a robust and transparent quality assurance framework.

**Panel judgement**

*Please tick one of the following:*

| **Principle 5: COLLECTION OF QUALITY DATA: MEASURING, ANALYSIS, AND IMPROVEMENT** | |
|---|---|
| Compliance | **X** |
| Partial compliance | |
| Non-compliance | |

**Panel Recommendations**

*Please provide your recommendations regarding issues that need to be addressed, as appropriate.*

While the Institution demonstrates full compliance with Principle 5, the following recommendations can further enhance data collection, analysis, and utilization:

1) Adopt new approaches to Increase Student Engagement in Surveys. These approaches may include some of the following:

a. A/B Testing for Survey Distribution: Conduct an A/B test comparing different survey distribution methods (e.g., email vs. in-class QR codes, mandatory vs. optional survey completion) to determine the most effective approach for increasing student participation.

b. Incentivization Strategy: Implement and test reward-based incentives, such as prize draws, academic recognition, or bonus points, to assess their impact on student response rates.

c. Optimized Survey Timing: Experiment with different timing strategies (e.g., distributing surveys at mid-course vs. end-of-course) to identify the period that yields the highest engagement.

2) Enhance Data Collection and Integration

a. Automated Data Validation: Introduce automated quality checks within the QAU information system to detect inconsistencies or missing data, ensuring higher accuracy and reliability.

3) Strengthen Strategic Use of Data

a. Custom Dashboards for Faculty and Administrators: Develop interactive, role-specific data dashboards to provide real-time insights into institutional performance and facilitate informed decision-making.

By implementing these recommendations, the Institution can further strengthen its quality assurance framework, ensuring ongoing improvements in data-driven decision-making and institutional performance.

## Principle 6: PUBLIC INFORMATION

**INSTITUTIONS SHOULD PUBLISH INFORMATION ABOUT THEIR TEACHING AND ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES IN A DIRECT AND ACCESSIBLE MANNER. ALL PERTINENT INFORMATION THAT APPEARS IN THE INSTITUTION'S WEBSITE SHOULD BE UP-TO-DATE, CLEAR AND OBJECTIVE.**

*The QAU publishes data related to IQAS structure, organisation and operation. Furthermore, the QAU publishes data pertinent to the institutional quality policy and objectives, as well as information and data relevant to the Institution's internal and external evaluation. In the context of the self-assessment process, the QAU verifies that adequate information regarding the teaching activities and, particularly, the programmes' profile and the overall institutional activity is publicly available. QAU makes recommendations for improvement, where appropriate.*

*The public information available via the internet should appear in Greek and in English, the webpages should have uniform architecture, structure and content across all academic units of the Institution, so that the users can easily identify the information of their interest.*

**Documentation**

E6.1 Results of the assessment of the functionality and the content, as well as of the maintenance and update of the Institution's webpage

E6.2 List of the links included in the Institution's and QAU webpage, and of the special personalized internet applications

### Institution compliance

*Please comment on the compliance with the Principle. Specifically: Please describe the findings related to the Principle, analyse, and conclude your judgement. Findings, analysis of judgement and conclusions should be developed below in three distinct parts.*

**I. Findings**

The structure, organisation and operation of the IQAS are published online by QAU. To better control the online information and to identify new actions for quality improvement in the framework of internal evaluation, the Quality Assurance Committee (QAC), as part of the QAU, at its 4th/28.09.2023 meeting, devised a checklist of the websites of the Institution, the QAU, and the Departments. During a subsequent meeting (no. 6/16.11.2023), the QAC evaluated the central website of the Institution and QAU using the above-mentioned checklist. The findings were considered when designing the current version of the university's new website.

**II. Analysis**

HUA's Mission Statement and Quality Assurance Policy of the HUA are available online. Information regarding the academic activities and teaching of the institution is available on the website. The curricula and study guides of all undergraduate and postgraduate programmes of study are publicly available.

Key information regarding each programme of study (i.e., mode of attendance, criteria for assessment, course outlines, degree awarded, fees, is included. The website offers links to the Internal and External Evaluation Reports of the Institution and the Departments. There is a Greek and English version of the website. Most information is up to date. A link to an open e-class learning system is provided. Information about HUA researchers is provided, including contact details, CV, education, research interests, and publications. Activities and achievements are provided on the top page of the university to help increase its visibility in the society and educational community.

**III. Conclusions**

The public information available via the internet is adequate and is given in both Greek and English. However, some uniformity, content, and link issues should be addressed.

**Panel judgement**

*Please tick one of the following:*

| **Principle 6: PUBLIC INFORMATION** | |
|---|---|
| Compliance | **X** |
| Partial compliance | |
| Non-compliance | |

**Panel Recommendations**

*Please provide your recommendations regarding issues that need to be addressed, as appropriate.*

Establish regular checks and updates on the website.
Create uniform web pages for all departments to follow the same style and layout.
Improve the dissemination of public information through various channels such as alumni, stakeholders, local authorities, and school visits.

## Principle 7: EXTERNAL EVALUATION AND ACCREDITATION OF THE IQAS

**INSTITUTIONS SHOULD BE PERIODICALLY EVALUATED BY COMMITTEES OF EXTERNAL EXPERTS SET BY THE HAHE, FOR THE PURPOSE OF ACCREDITATION OF THEIR INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEMS (IQAS). THE PERIODICITY OF THEIR EXTERNAL EVALUATION IS DETERMINED BY THE HAHE.**

External quality assurance, in the case in point external evaluation aiming at accreditation, may act as a means of verification of the effectiveness of the Institution's internal quality assurance, and as a catalyst for improvement, while opening new perspectives. Additionally, it can provide information with a view to public acknowledgement of the positive course of the Institution's activities.

The Higher Education Institutions engage in periodic external quality assurance which is conducted taking into consideration any special requirements set by the legislation governing the operation of the Institutions and their academic units.

Quality assurance, in this case 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 ensure that the progress made since the last external quality assurance activity is taken into consideration when preparing for the next one.

**Documentation**

E7.1 Five-year Progress Report, on the response to the recommendations included in the most recent IQAS Accreditation Report

### Institution compliance

*Please comment on the compliance with the Principle. Specifically: Please describe the findings related to the Principle, analyse, and conclude your judgement. Findings, analysis of judgement and conclusions should be developed below in three distinct parts.*

**I. Findings**

An IQAS External Evaluation process was conducted at the institution in April 2016, and an IQAS External Evaluation Report was submitted. The basic findings and recommendations relating to the administration, faculty, students, and staff in this report were studied and discussed by the external panel that reviewed the IQAS of the institution for accreditation in 2018. This panel determined that the basic findings and recommendations of the 2016 IQAS External evaluation were fully addressed, and viable solutions were implemented, resulting in a fully compliant judgment.
The IQAS Accreditation Panel of 2018 made its additional suggestions and recommendations, and the Quality Assurance teams of the institution have responded to those in the submitted Document E7.1 Έκθεση Προόδου (Progress Report).

**II. Analysis**

The EEAP examined the responses to the recommendations of the 2018 IAQS Accreditation Panel Report included in the E7.1 Έκθεση Προόδου (Progress Report) document which were:

· The implementation of the scheduled replacement of the “fixed” furniture in the classrooms.

· The adjustment of the defined goals in the general overall university structure to reflect the disciplinary differences and traditions of the distinct, and diverse departments.

· Create at least one permanent staff position in support of MODIP.

· Provide the necessary resources for the institution to continue complying with the requirements.

· Increase and strengthen public information dissemination through public media, advertising, and well-structured websites.

· Expand the programs and continue the high-quality educational Experience.

· Equate the rewards and benefits between permanent and temporary employees with similar duties and responsibilities.

· Deviate from the central processes of financial administration of research grants and contracts to promote quality research and innovation.

Document E7.1 ΕΚΘΕΣΗ ΠΡΟΟΔΟΥ (Progress Report) in combination with document E1._new ΠΡΟΤ ΠΙΣΤΟΠ ΕΣΔΠ (Proposal for Accreditation of IQAS) addressed all these recommendations by providing a verbal description and justification for the approach taken to achieve compliance, followed by a table of actions taken and a table of achieved results and follow up actions for each one. The tabular format for the "actions taken" table for each recommendation is:

GOALS - ACTIONS - RESPONSIBILITIES - COMPLETION DEADLINES- RESOURCES REQUIRED

The tabular format for the "achieved results and actions taken" for each recommendation is:

ACTIONS TAKEN – ACHIEVED RESULTS – PERCENT OF GOAL ATTAINMENT

It is not indicated anywhere if and how the recommendations of the 2016 IQAS External Evaluation Report were addressed. Finally, the EEAP did not see any evidence that any of the stakeholders of the institution engaged in the IQAS accreditation review or the entailed follow-up actions, but on the other hand, there is no need to because the issue is exclusively the assurance that the institution needs to demonstrate a satisfactory response to the recommendations.

## III. Conclusions

EEAP was satisfied with the way that the recommendations of the IQAS Accreditation Report of 2018 were handled and responded to via a combination of verbal and quantitative information.

**Panel judgement**

*Please tick one of the following:*

| **Principle 7: EXTERNAL EVALUATION AND ACCREDITATION OF THE IQAS** | |
|---|---|
| Compliance | **X** |
| Partial compliance | |
| Non-compliance | |

**Panel Recommendations**

*Please provide your recommendations regarding issues that need to be addressed, as appropriate.*

None.

# PART C: CONCLUSIONS

## I. Features of Good Practice

*Please state aspects of good practice identified, regarding the IQAS.*

HUA is a well-organized institution that successfully fulfills its mission. Main strengths include:

1. The quality of the faculty is very good, and a considerable portion of them can be characterized as high performers according to widely used criteria that include research funding, citations, H index, etc.
2. The facilities are in very good condition and are currently expanding with new buildings outside the main campus. EEAP was impressed by the condition of the buildings, the lack of graffiti, and other unofficial wall posters that are commonly seen in other Greek Universities.
3. Research funding and activities are outstanding and very high per capita of the existing faculty.
4. There is an excellent academic and working environment. Students, faculty and administrative staff expressed high satisfaction and emphasized the family atmosphere that is present in the University. The general feeling was that this environment helps everybody to feel that their role is appreciated and gives them a sense of belonging.
5. Overall, the School of Health Science and Education Nutrition and Dietetics can be characterized at the international level, while the remaining three schools are very competitive at the national level.
6. Clean facilities and a pleasant campus environment
7. The variety of interdisciplinary specialties associated with the Department of Geography curriculum promote its value and applicability
8. Congenial academic environment among students and faculty

## II. Areas of Weakness

*Please state weak areas identified, regarding the IQAS.*

1. The number of students is rather high, especially the postgraduate ones. In addition, the number of master programs is high for the size of HUA.
2. The currently available administrative staff is small for the volume of its work and there is an urgent need for additional administrative staff.
3. Procedures related to the hiring of new faculty are very bureaucratic and require excessive time, sometimes years to be accomplished.
4. MODIP has limited autonomy, and its role is mainly limited to providing administrative support
5. Weak and non-institutionalized alumni association.
6. Weak and non-institutionalized Advisory Board of External Stakeholders

## III. Recommendations for Follow-up Actions

*Please make any specific recommendations for development.*

1. HUA should consider making major revisions to its postgraduate education programs. It is realized that the current plan is compatible with the programs of most, if not all, of other Greek Universities. However, there is a consensus that the lack of high standards in postgraduate education is one of the major problems of Greek education that needs immediate attention. HUA has the opportunity to be the leader in this effort, given its extremely satisfactory research and other funding, its small size, and the high quality of its programs, especially at the School of Health Science and Education Nutrition and Dietetics.
2. It is recommended that the number of doctoral students be drastically reduced and the doctoral studies be designed according to the principles employed by internationally renowned institutions. The new programs should combine both didactic courses and research.
3. In addition, the number of master's programs should be reduced, and emphasis should be given to establishing competitive programs taught in the English language.
4. MODIP should have a more autonomous and executive role in developing postgraduate studies.
5. The indirect cost for the research

programs should be adjusted, whenever possible, to provide adequate administrative support for the research activities.

6. HAHE and the Greek state should collaborate with HUA to develop a more flexible system for the hiring of new faculty.
7. The evaluation of the faculty performance should be adjusted so it is mainly focused on the quality, rather than the quantity, of their output.
8. Devise ways to encourage stronger, active student involvement in the institutional Quality Assurance
9. Increase participation and delivery of lectures and seminars by visiting external professionals in the different curriculum disciplines
10. Expand the course deliveries in English, driving toward an English language program
11. Seek postgraduate students in the Department of Informatics having different backgrounds such as to create a variety of niches that will increase its popularity and competitiveness
12. Increase the promotion and exposure of the institution and the interdisciplinary nature of the Geography department in particular.
13. HUA should strengthen its interaction with external stakeholders.

## IV. Summary & Overall Assessment

The Principles where compliance has been achieved are:

1,2,4,5,6,7

The Principles where partial compliance has been achieved are:

3

The Principles where failure of compliance was identified are:

None

| **Overall Judgement** | |
|---|---|
| Compliance | **X** |
| Partial compliance | |
| Non-compliance | |

## The members of the External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel

| Name and Surname | Signature |
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