



ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ
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Accreditation Report for the Undergraduate Study Programme of:

Tourism Studies

Institution: University of Piraeus

Date: 16 June 2024



Με τη συγχρηματοδότηση
της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης



Πρόγραμμα
Ανθρώπινο Δυναμικό και
Κοινωνική Συνοχή



Report of the Panel appointed by the HAHE to undertake the review of the Undergraduate Study Programme of **Tourism Studies** of the **University of Piraeus** 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 Undergraduate Study Programme of **Tourism Studies** of the **University of Piraeus** comprised the following five (5) members, drawn from the HAHE Register, in accordance with Laws 4009/2011 & 4653/2020:

- 1. Prof. Andreas Efstathiades (Chair)**
European University Cyprus, Nicosia, Cyprus

- 2. Assoc. Prof. Jannis Angelis**
KTH Royal Institute of Technology, Stockholm, Sweden

- 3. Assoc. Prof. Evangelia Marinakou**
Bournemouth University, Bournemouth, United Kingdom

- 4. Prof. Constantine Passaris**
University of New Brunswick, Saint John, New Brunswick, Canada

- 5. Mr Emmanouil Kouratzinos, student of Business Administration**
International Hellenic University, Serres, Greece

II. Review Procedure and Documentation

The panel was put together by HAHE which consisted of the individuals named at the front of this report of which they are the authors. The visit was held remotely on the 11th, 12th and 13th of June 2024. In preparation for this meeting, EEAP considered all the relevant documentation that is required for the accreditation which is forwarded the members of the EEAP. Additional information requested by EEAP has been provided.

Prior to the visit the EEAP read all the provided material. The EEAP met on the evening of the 11th of June to allocate tasks and identify areas that are needed to pay further attention in. Overall, the information provided, and preparedness of the team was sufficient to conduct a thorough review of the course progress and to provide a fair view on the degree to which it meets the accreditation requirements.

The visit took place remotely over three days during which we met with representatives from the following groups as follows:

- On the 1st day (11th of June) we met with the:
 - o Vice rector / president of MODIP and the Vice - head of the department
 - o OMEA and MODIP members and staff
- On the 2nd day (12th of June) we met with the following groups:
 - o The teaching staff members
 - o The students
- On the 3rd day (13th of June) we met with the following groups:
 - o The programme graduates
 - o The employers and Social Partners
 - o OMEA and MODIP members and staff

The closure meeting was taken place on the 3rd day, with the Vice-Rector / President of (MODIP), The Vice-Head of the Department, and OMEA and MODIP members.

We were also provided with a video of the main facilities.

Overall, the EEAP were greeted warmly, and found the University team to be knowledgeable, enthusiastic and well prepared.

III. Study Programme Profile

The USP in Tourism Studies of the University of Piraeus aims to provide knowledge and develop skills on a multitude of subjects in the Tourism industry, based on identified labour market needs. It provides training in modern issues of tourism business management such as tourism marketing, Human Resources Management, total quality management, finance, accounting, information systems, law, tourism geography, promotion of tourist destinations, leadership, technology management, strategic Management but also specialization in issues such as special forms of tourism (such as wine tourism, educational tourism, etc.), European tourism policy, etc. The UGP is taught in the Greek language and leads to the award of the Undergraduate degree in Tourism Studies.

The curriculum is of 240 ECTS load offered over 8 semesters. To obtain the Bachelors degree in Tourism studies student must attend and complete successfully the requirements forty-eight (48) courses, out of which forty (40) are Compulsory and eight (8) are Electives. One of the elective courses with 4 ECTS load is a small research project.

In addition, the UGP provides the opportunity of direct connection with the labour market and practical application of the knowledge that the Study Programme treats, as students can undertake an Internship in tourism companies, instead of 2 elective courses (8 ECTS).

The course curriculum is designed to meet the needs of the industry and is offered in a full time as well in a part time basis.

Teaching staff includes 7 faculty members from the Department, reinforced with 13 faculty members from other departments of the university, and 11 collaborative teaching Staff, EDIP and ETEP members etc. All teaching staff at PMS are active researchers and use their international teaching and research experience in teaching university courses.

Upon successful completion of the Program, the graduates develop both comprehensive and specialized knowledge on the core concepts, the best practices and the most recent trends in Tourism Management; The employment prospects of the graduates are characterized as good. Graduates are prepared to work as managers and department managers in the tourism industry, as researchers, consultants and analysts in local, national or international tourism enterprises, as well as experts in investment companies and consulting companies specializing in the tourism industry.

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 organisation 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

I. Findings

The quality assurance policy of the undergraduate programme in Tourism studies of the University of Piraeus is compatible with the quality assurance policy of the University and focuses on the continuous improvement of its quality and its educational, research and administrative work.

The purpose of the Quality Policy is to safeguard the smooth operation and the continuous improvement of the educational activities, according to contemporary international academic practices.

The monitoring and continuous improvement of the quality of the PMS is promoted through:

- The development of quality assurance procedures, to safeguard excellence in education activities and research.
- The recruitment of high-quality academic, research and administrative staff.
- Continuous mobilization and support of students towards deepening their knowledge in cutting-edge fields and in the acquisition of skills in modern scientific fields.
- The implementation and monitoring of the quality assurance procedures including the systematic monitoring of the performance indicators (KPIs).
- The systematic evaluation of teaching, research, and social interaction activities, as well as administration and support services.
- The systematic Internal evaluation of the quality assurance system.

The programme has set quality goals that are paired with KPIs, which are updated and communicated to all parties involved. The goals are characterized as SMART, and all parties involved are committed for the achievement of those goals.

The learning outcomes of the programme are appropriate for the level 6 according to the European and National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education.

II. Analysis

The quality assurance procedures are subject to periodic evaluation, which is carried out by the OMEA, in collaboration with MODIP of the University. The final decisions are made by the Department Council.

In fact, OMEA is responsible for monitoring and implementing the evaluation procedures of the department. For this purpose, it collaborates with the MODIP of the University. The OMEA presents the results of the above actions to the General Assembly of the Department and suggests ways of improvement, ensuring the effective implementation of the quality policy.

For continuous improvement, the programme benefits from feedback received from external stakeholders and employers. This feedback is characterized as ad – hoc and informal. During our meetings the EEAP has been informed that an Advisory Board has been recently established but is not in operation yet. The OMEA and the Department council takes the necessary steps to ensure the proper link and integration of the academic staff research activities in the curriculum. An additional source of feedback for monitoring and improving quality are the students' courses evaluations. Further on, the department has put in place the institution of complaints box, encouraging students to take advantage of it and help the department towards its quality improvement efforts.

The Quality Policy is published on the Department's website and social media and is forwarded to the all the stakeholders electronically and / or in print.

III. Conclusions

Based on the documentation provided, feedback from interviews of all the stakeholders, students, graduates, academic and administrative staff, employers and other social groups, the panel reached the conclusion that the programme has in place a quality assurance policy and related procedures.

Panel Judgement

Principle 1: Academic Unit Policy for Quality Assurance	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

R1.1 Consider formalizing the process of collecting information from external stakeholders. In this direction it should put in operation the already established Advisory Board.

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

Relevant documentation

B2. Departmental Quality Strategy

B8.1 List of findings of internal evaluation

B10.2.a Programme of studies 2021-22

B10.6 Research project handbook

B10.15 Programme of study and international experience 2021

B10.17.a FEK Approval of Internal Departmental Operations/Regulations

B10.17.b FEK changes to Approval of Internal Departmental Operations/Regulations

I. Findings

The committee discussed all relevant documentation and policies with staff, academic staff, students, alumni and the industry representatives who confirmed that the department complies with the policies and procedures. Although the department and the programme are recently

developed, they have in place all necessary academic quality practices to ensure that teaching, practicals, and research are complying with the requirements of a level 6 programme of study as per the National and European Qualifications Framework (EQF) for higher education.

Students enrol to a programme of study where they should attend 8 semesters of 30 credits each, leading to a Bachelor's degree of 240 ECTS. The programme has been designed after consideration of the needs of the hospitality and tourism industry, of employers' views in the industry, other examples from higher education institutions abroad, and the requirements of the Ministry of Education and of the University. It includes a variety of courses either theoretical, practical as well as research-related, with an industry placement course which is optional. Overall, the design complies with the requirements of EQF and is comparable to other similar programmes in other countries i.e. UK. The teaching faculty are enthusiastic about the programme and offer a number of activities outside of the classroom to enhance the student experience.

II. Analysis

The Tourism Management Undergraduate Programme in collaboration with the Quality Assurance group (MODIP) are actively involved in delivering a high-quality programme for the benefit of the students. The Institutional Strategy was considered when the programme was proposed. The team had got advice from the curriculum of the MBA in Tourism which was the first tourism-related programme to be offered at the University of Piraeus. The initial programme was delivered, when needs for staff were identified. In the beginning there were no full-time faculty members, however the team keeps growing. There are four years of study, each offering 2 semesters of 30 credits each. Students must complete all credits of study to be eligible for a degree. In order to ensure the programme of study meets the requirements of the market various stakeholders were advised. Currently, they have established an Advisory committee of representatives from the tourism industry to support the department, the programme, and students. They are also actively engaged in the delivery with guest lectures.

The mission, vision and purpose of the programme were clearly presented to the committee and are included in the respective documents. The committee noticed that the programme learning outcomes were too detailed and proposed that in the next round of review these could be rephrased to reflect the standards followed across higher education abroad. Moreover, the course learning outcomes do not reflect of study. They are not written in a way to reflect the EQF and the levels of study to demonstrate student progression in the programme.

The Quality Assurance Policy and structure were shared with the committee and all necessary processes, procedures and policies are according to the requirements of MODIP.

The faculty members of the committee are receiving and assessing feedback from the Departments external evaluation reports, the Departments annual evaluation reports, alumni opinions, scientific organizations, and employers in related food or beverage industries. All collected information is studied in order to update and improve the undergraduate programme according to the needs of the labour market and the scientific community.

The curriculum is designed in a way to support the smooth progression of students through the stages of the programme. There are courses that provide basic knowledge and expertise on principles of management and tourism management, and they are developed in a way to finally reach the final year where students study courses to demonstrate critical analysis skills. There is also the provision of an industry placement (internship) which is offered as an optional course in semester 7 or 8 with 4 ECTS. There is also a variety of courses that are offered as an optional to allow students to study those that are of their interest or are more linked to the sector they would like to be employed. There is also a course titled Research Report available as optional in semester 8 where students do fieldwork and collect primary data. The committee has shared good practice with the teaching team and suggested to include more details to support students i.e. structure of the project, length of the documents, plagiarism regulations, etc.

Students are engaged with the teaching and learning, and they participate at conferences organised in the department as well as research projects funded by bodies outside the University. The strategy of the programme is student-centred with teaching and learning techniques that provide support to students to achieve the LOs of the programme and each course. Such teaching methods and lab techniques have been developed according to the standards of domestic and foreign universities, taking into consideration the needs of the labour market. Student evaluations of faculty are conducted for both administrative and teaching staff.

III. Conclusions

The programme of study and the management of the programme are conducted with a well-defined and detailed procedure, with clear objectives, LOs that comply with the expectations of the National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

R2.1 Revise the programme and course learning outcomes to match the standards followed by other institutions and comply with the EQF

R2.2 Review the Industry Placement and the Research project courses and offer them as compulsory instead of optional

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

Relevant Documentation

- B4.2 Industry Placement Regulation
- B4.3 Mobility regulation
- B5. Module outlines AY 2021-22
- B7. Student Course and Module evaluation
- B8.1 List of findings of internal evaluation
- B8.6 Senate decision for the establishment of the Programme and its accreditation
- B10.2.a Programme of studies 2021-22
- B10.2.b Programme of studies (parti-time) AY 2021-22
- B10.4 Student handbook
- B10.5 Form for complaints

- B10.6 Research project handbook
- B10.12 Activities of engagement with the industry
- B10.13 Activities of engagement with the society
- B10.15 Programme of study and international experience 2021
- B10.17.a FEK Approval of Internal Departmental Operations/Regulations
- B10.17.b FEK changes to Approval of Internal Departmental Operations/Regulations

I. Findings

The BA in Tourism Studies was established by law 4452/15/02/2017 (as per B10.17.a). Academic functions are carried out, in accordance with the applicable provisions, provided by the statutory bodies. The function and mission of the department is to provide and transfer knowledge through teaching, research, seminars, labs, to create scientists with scientific knowledge in the field of tourism, tourism management, sustainability, human resources management, consumer behaviour in tourism as well as tourism development and planning. The purpose is to contribute through professional training and development of an educated person for the needs of the tourism industry. The teaching and learning are student-centred with methodologies discussed with faculty members, students, graduates and alumni.

II. Analysis

The Departments feasibility studies of the undergraduate studies programme were developed as directed according to the proposed writing standard Academic certification of New Study Programme in Operation HAHE (July 2021). The feasibility of the operation of the DTS sufficiently addresses the needs of the Economy both regional and National (employment, supply and demand and expected Academics and professional skills). The graduates of the Department can be employed in the private and/or public sector, in Greece and abroad. The curriculum of studies is appropriate and well accepted when compared with offer national and international study programme in the field of Tourism Management.

Discussions took place with current students, graduates, alumni and faculty members. They all confirmed that the teaching and learning is student-centred. Students were very satisfied with the teaching and learning of their programme and they expressed the view that they were very well prepared to work in the industry and/or undertake research and participate in research projects.

The teaching and learning are based on lectures, seminars, case study analyses, labs, role plays, exercises, educational visits at tourism organisations, guest lectures, webinars, projects, group work, logs and a research project. Guest lectures are provided by industry experts, representatives of tourism organisations such as the Hotel Managers Association, former alumni etc. For example, there are 4 career fairs where students come in touch with industry representatives and explore opportunities for an industry placement and/or part-time or graduate work.

Different modes of teaching and learning are in place to support students and their diverse needs enabling them to study and have a good student experience. Where appropriate different modes of delivery are available to support students with special needs. Where appropriate students are given additional time during an exam. Lecturers are very supportive as they have an open-door policy and allow students to visit them to ask questions, and/or visit their office during office hours to inquire about a topic they don't understand or any other support they may need.

On an annual basis the faculty members meet and discuss the progress of the programme in terms of teaching and learning. When they find it useful to students, they may revise some of the methods used, or may propose different ways of assessment.

The quality of the teaching and learning is evaluated in a detailed process. Firstly, students have access to a process for submitting a complaint either via the administration or online. Such complaints are addressed, and response is provided. Further, they evaluate the course at the end of the semester with a questionnaire. This survey is anonymous, with distinct evaluation of the course, its content, the learning, the delivery, the availability and satisfaction from staff, administration as well as of facilities and services provided. The course is evaluated towards the end of the semester (usually between week 8 and 10 of the semester, as per the Presentation of the department), whereas the evaluation of the programme and/or the department is done on an annual basis. The reports summarizing the results of the course evaluation are discussed at various academic quality assurance committees. There is also a process where students may discuss issues and challenges with their representatives who disseminate these to the course leader, the programme leader, the programme head of department or other departments and services depending on the issue.

Support is provided at all levels. Faculty members provide support for the courses, students' learning, assessment, or even their progress, their future careers and even their development of further skills. There is also the Academic Advisor who is usually a member of the teaching team who acts and provides pastoral, personal and academic support. Other support is available, for example for library use seminars and demonstrations are provided either face-to-face or online. Students are provided with support on the use of the library, the e-library, Turnitin etc. E-career is used to support students with employment and e-praktiki to help them with their industry placement. E-class is used as VLE. Information on the department, the programme and a way to communicate is provided through the platform. The academic calendar, exam schedules and other information are provided through the system. For each course there is a site, which includes information on the course, the assessment, teaching material and other announcements of the lecturer. There are links in the library, however the bibliography used in the course outlines are in many cases old versions. Microsoft teams and Webex are also used. Sis-portal is used as well to connect the students with staff. It includes information such as staff profiles, exam schedule, marks etc. An example was also shared with the committee.

The academic staff are provided training on teaching and learning and are familiar with the examination systems. The assessment varies in order to address all students' needs. There are final written exams, group work, presentations, role plays, practical work, exercises, reports, research projects among others. The summative assessment is usually done with exams. There is also formative assessment where students are provided with feedback on their performance.

Examples of assessment are provided in addition. The folder included exams, assignments, presentations, and a research project. The assessment criteria are included in the outline. There is an opportunity for students to resit if they have failed an element of a course or even improve their mark. There is also a detailed process of appeals which is well documented. For any complaints or appeals the process is in place and clearly shows how decisions and actions are fed back to students.

Assessment and marking are done by the course leader. The committee also noticed that the programme is weighted on final exams. For best practice, consider greater emphasis on methods for assessing student completions of course learning outcomes such as reports or even group presentations.

III. Conclusions

The EEAP noted that students were very satisfied with the teaching and learning strategy and methodology available at the programme.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

R3.1 Consider making the optional research project course mandatory.

R3.2 Consider modifying the weighting of the various forms of examination.

R3.3 Provide greater detail of the course description in the research project handbook.

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

I. Findings

There is an event to welcome the new students which provides all the necessary information about the department rules, the curriculum structure, the career opportunities, all the IT services such as e-class and support services provided. Student progression is monitored with e-gram (sis.portal.unipi) which provides all the grades, the courses that every student selected to attend, another service is e-class (e-learning system) a place where every course includes projects and research studies that OMEA can review to track students' progress. The department participates in mobility programs such as Erasmus+ from 2021 collaborating with 10 foreign universities inside and outside the European Union, the students that want to participate can find all the necessary information from the Erasmus+ office of the department and the professor in charge. ECTS is applied across the curriculum including the practical training and the research study. The programme includes an optional research course. Practical training is also optional with the academic unit providing a network with many businesses from the private sector which students can find from the e-praktiki portal (praktiki.unipi.gr).

II. Analysis

The department prioritizes helping new students feel "like home" and have a smooth transition from high school with a very well-organized support system, all the information needed can be easily found in IT services such as the official website, e-gram and e-class. The induction provides the core information a new student will need, and there are more information events in the following semesters. OMEA has a comprehensive system to monitor the progress of the students and evaluate the quality of the courses. The internal evaluation team can easily access the grades of every student, the projects that they have participated in and can discover

potential learning difficulties. The academic unit provides frequent updates about the Erasmus+ programme encouraging students' mobility. When asked by the EEAP panel students provided examples showing how the Erasmus+ office staff is helpful and ready to recommend to students the suitable country to attend courses or practical training. The department is in the process of concluding bilateral agreements within and outside Europe, while at the same time it is based on the agreements of the University of Piraeus for the International Mobility Programme within and outside Europe. The ECTS is applied in every course including the mobility programme, the practical training and the research study with a total of 48 courses and 240 ECTS. A Diploma Supplement is issued automatically for graduates in Greek and English with a description of the level, content and general framework of studies followed and completed which shows how the department has focused on having a complete well-organized system with automated functions.

III. Conclusions

The EEAP found that all processes, policy and practice are in accordance with the requirements for principle 4.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

None.

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

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The department staff consists of seven permanent faculty, twelve affiliated faculty, two technical staff and three adjunct lecturers. The department administration of three members supports the staff. The permanent faculty is relatively junior, with all being assistant professors. The department partly relies on senior faculty from other departments. In the discussion with EEAP the department staff showed awareness of the condition and stated that the aim is to primarily, but not exclusively, promote junior staff. The combined department Google Scholar citation score for 2024 was 150, with the staff all being research active. The department provides a suitable infrastructure and working environment to its members, and it cultivates an appropriate and positive academic atmosphere. The teaching staff is committed to the USP and actively seeks to improve the offered courses, for instance by introducing new courses. Engagement with the students is strong among all staff. The teaching assessment of the faculty is based on regular student evaluations, which are examined by MODIP, OMEA, and the department. The procedures for the election and promotion of teaching staff are based on current legislation but it has been significantly constrained due to external, primarily financial, conditions. At the end of each academic year, a coordinating committee makes recommendations for the teaching assignments based on course evaluations. Faculty members are eligible to participate in ERASMUS+ with institutions and organizations overseas and are encouraged to attend as long as replacement teachers are available and the USP courses are not negatively affected.

II. Analysis

The department's teaching staff is characterized by relatively junior permanent faculty and more senior external staff. Long term this would be better balanced if junior faculty are promoted to senior ranks or associated senior faculty are transferred to the department. The lack of own senior staff is acknowledged and there are plans to rectify this as soon as possible depending on external constraints. The first hurdle set by the university to ensure a stable and successful USP has already been achieved. The EEAP, through the discussions with teaching staff and students, is confident that there is a breadth of good practices in the teaching and learning of the students. That research informs the teaching in the USP is evident in three ways. First, electives in the USP enable the teaching staff to offer courses based on their specializations. Second, the current and graduated students interviewed by the EEAP highlighted research as a key element and characteristic of the USP. Third, students are encouraged to conduct original research as part of their coursework and present it at internal or external conferences. International mobility of the DEP members is supported, as long as the courses are taught by a replacing faculty member. This is arranged in an ad hoc and reciprocal manner by the staff itself. The research activity of the members of USP is even, but the research conducted could increase in quantity and quality in terms of internationally ranked journals. The systematic inclusion of USP students in ongoing staff research is exemplary.

III. Conclusions

The EEAP found that the teaching staff is knowledgeable and engaged with the USP. Staff is largely research active but could improve terms of outlets selected and quantity.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

R5.1 Have permanent senior faculty within the department, either through promotion or transfer of associated faculty.

R5.2 Improve the staff research output in terms of quality and quantity.

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

I. Findings

The academic unit has all the necessary facilities like classes fully equipped with audiovisual and sound equipment, library, reading room, laboratories and IT infrastructure with recently upgraded equipment to ensure a smooth teaching. The existing facilities are rationally distributed and the transport between the campuses is very easy. There is a comprehensive set of support services like student restaurant, dispensary, counselling centre and housing in student housing centres of other Universities across Athens. Students are informed about the support services by the administrative staff, electronic services and the academic advisor. University administration staff consists of three people, besides number is not sufficient the staff is very helpful, and students are very satisfied for the support services of the department.

II. Analysis

The department has adequate facilities both in number and equipment, the classroom audio-visual equipment is up to date with cameras, projectors, microphones, electric screens and speakers all compatible for fully hybrid lectures. After a question from the EEAP the students pointed out that the buildings are clean, well maintained with A/C working when needed which is monitored from a specialized team. The facilities are enough to ensure an appropriate teaching environment for the current number of students and the OMEA said that if there was more teaching and administrative staff the infrastructures could host more students. There is

also a library and a reading room with a workstation for people with disabilities equipped with specialized technology such as a Braille printer. The students are very satisfied from the support services of the department, there is student restaurant and housing in collaboration with other universities in the city. There is a priority to help the students with career counselling. There are events like career day and many cooperating companies are invited to inform the students for career opportunities in the tourism industry. Students told the EEAP panel that the department offers a counselling centre to help with any questions or guidance needed based on the study programme. It was very positive that the students are very well informed for the support services offered from informational events, the official website, social media even though the administration is understaffed.

III. Conclusions

The facilities are well equipped and of high quality considerably contributing to a good student experience.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

None.

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 analysing 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 analysing information and planning follow-up activities.

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The process of data collection for the USP follows the process set by OMEA following the objectives of the quality assurance policy under the directions of MODIP and those of HAHE Standards of Quality Assurance. Information on student admissions, population profiles, academic progressions, success rates and student course evaluations are collected periodically and systematically. The staff use the teaching management system (e-class) to communicate with the students in the courses, through email for direct communication, as well as meeting in person during office hours. The information gathered relates to course content and structure, teaching staff, student satisfaction and availability of learning resources and student support. Student satisfaction is monitored by questionnaires for each course and each semester. The responses collected as well as the student comments to the EEAP were very positive of the USP and the faculty. The subsequent analysis of student responses by the school's OMEA is used for the QA process. Each year the school prepares an annual report which it submits to the university MODIP.

II. Analysis

The information management system collects and allows for reliable assessment of data on student and programme activities and results. Key indicators are tracked. Information is available on the website for current and future students interested in the programme. The information is used to ensure that the USP courses and management function well by identifying areas of best practice and areas that need further improvement. Student performance is monitored from registration to graduation, focusing on student attainment, attendance, satisfaction, and drop-out rates. Student evaluation surveys provide key data and are conducted for all courses. These are conducted anonymously. Students interviewed by the EEAP emphasized their positive experience with access and communication with faculty and administration. The EEAP finds that the technical resources are fit for purpose in terms of student access to materials, communicating with faculty, and tracking student results and progression in the programme.

III. Conclusions

The EEAP finds that the implemented information management is comprehensive and appropriate for providing support to decisions around the USP design and delivery. Key indicators are collected and made available as required. The students are well-informed on how to use the e-learning system successfully.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

None.

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

I. Findings

The department has developed a comprehensive and accessible website for the USP. The department's internet site is available in the Greek and English language. It provides detailed information about the USP structure, course curriculum, faculty, student services, advisory board and quality assurance policies. The website is regularly updated to ensure the information is current, clear, and easily accessible to prospective and current students. Faculty contact details, research interests and course teachings are readily available and mostly up to date. There is also information on employment opportunities. The website has up-to-date information on the curriculum of USP courses, student regulations and student handbook. Note that the student regulations are only available in Greek. There are also schedules for courses and exams available. There is information on internships and incoming and outgoing ERASMUS+ as well as details on the contact persons. The department organizes webinars with industry and expert speakers. Public information and awareness of the USP and department events are also posted on Facebook, LinkedIn and Instagram for greater student and public reach. The USP has a strong presence on social platforms, such as Facebook and Instagram. These platforms are actively used to share updates, news, and information about the programme, upcoming events, and achievements.

II. Analysis

The department's website is well-designed and structured, making it easy for visitors to find information. The clear segmentation of information into different sections improves the user experience and supports navigation to relevant content. The website provides a thorough overview of the USP, including detailed descriptions of courses and assessment procedures, and a study guide, which are useful for current and prospective students on the USP. The Department's strong presence on social media platforms, such as Facebook, LinkedIn and Instagram, enhances its reach and engagement with students and the broader community. Maintenance of the department website and social media platforms is managed in a structured manner. In addition to ongoing updates by department administrators and staff, students in the digital marketing course have a case assignment to go through and identify and recommend improvements from a user perspective on the department's website and social media presence.

III. Conclusions

The department has developed a comprehensive and user-friendly website that provides essential information about its study programmes. The website's structure and content are well-organized, ensuring that information is easily accessible and up to date. The inclusion of detailed information about faculty members, courses, and student services supports transparency and aids prospective and current students. The active use of social media further helps in public information and engagement.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

R8.1 Provide the student regulations in English.

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

I. Findings

Even though the Department of Tourism Studies is the newest department of the ten academic departments at the University of Piraeus, it has relied on the overarching policies and procedures that are in place for the entire university. As such it has drawn on the established principles, process, and guidelines for the ongoing monitoring and periodic internal review of their programs. This external review was conducted in compliance with the process outlined in the Internal Evaluation Quality Assurance System that is congruent with the established objectives of OMEA for quality assurance and prescribed by MODIP and the HAHE Standards of Quality Assurance. The information and data gathered through this process includes course content and structure, teaching staff, student satisfaction, as well as dedicated learning resources and student support.

II. Analysis

The EEAP held virtual meetings with members of OMEA, MODIP, teaching staff, students, programme graduates, stakeholders, social partners, and employers. It also relied on the documentation prepared and submitted to the EEAP by the Department of Tourism Studies. The internal evaluation process included questionnaires for students and graduates to ensure the gathering of qualitative information and data for the purpose of substantiating the adequacy of the programme and of the services offered to students. All of this to ensure the continuous improvement, the efficacy of the academic unit's performance and the quality of the department's programme. The process for conducting the work of EEAP transpired in a cordial,

informed and constructive manner. There was a clear commitment by the Department to an internal annual programme review. The teaching staff emphasized that a student-centred approach is at the core of their academic mission. The EEAP has observed an emphasis on a student-centred pedagogical approach. This has been validated by EEAP’s meetings with current students and programme graduates who speak highly of the learning bonds that they have forged with their instructors who have given them invaluable assistance in regard to their courses, employment opportunities, career advice and research collaboration. It is worth noting that because of the newness of this Department, there have only been three waves of programme graduates so far and a limited number of programme reviews. The teaching staff informed the EEAP of their commitment to research and their appreciation of the link between research and teaching as well as the industry and society. The Advisory board to be activated will contribute to the enhancement of the programme. They underline the fact that their personal research contributes to the efficacy and quality of their teaching. The EEAP heard from stakeholders and social partners the names of several teaching staff who have made valuable contributions to research for the Greek tourist sector.

III. Conclusions

The EEAP was favourably impressed that the Department of Tourism Studies takes the feedback and suggestions for improvement that it receives seriously and has made a commitment to implement them for the purpose of enhancing the quality and efficacy of its programme and teaching mission. The EEAP concluded that the ongoing monitoring and feedback from the internal quality review is focused on the Department’s student-centred mission and improving the student learning journey. The EEAP believes that once the Department’s contemplated Advisory Committee is up and running it will add another useful layer for input into the annual internal evaluation process.

Panel Judgment

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

Panel Recommendations

None.

Principle 10: Regular External Evaluation of Undergraduate Programmes

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

HAHE is responsible for administrating the programme accreditation process which is realised as an external evaluation procedure, and implemented by a committee of independent experts. HAHE 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

I. Findings

The Department of Tourist Studies at the University of Piraeus was launched during the academic year 2017-18. It is the newest of the ten academic departments that are operating at the University of Piraeus. As such, the EEAP was mindful of our onerous responsibility in conducting the inaugural external evaluation for this academic unit. The Department of Tourist Studies at the University of Piraeus is foundational to the Greek economy and employment creation in Greece. Over one third of the Greek national income is attributed to the tourism sector. In addition, this sector bestows a significant contribution towards employment creation.

The EEAP is grateful for the warm welcome extended by the Department of Tourist Studies and the University of Piraeus towards their virtual visit and evaluation. Throughout our virtual visit a strong collaborative sentiment permeated and fostered productive conversations ensued. Indeed, our EEAP was favourably impressed by the positive and cordial engagement between our committee and the university and departmental administrative officers, members of the teaching staff, current students, alumni, and community stakeholders. Throughout the evaluation process a cordial, respectful, collaborative and productive atmosphere prevailed at each and every virtual meeting and conversation.

II. Analysis

The EEAP commends and applauds the overarching commitment to high educational standards and the student-centric academic and pedagogical priority that is implemented by the Department. The EEAP heard evidence that this is not merely an aspirational value but is implemented as a core pedagogical principle. Students confirmed that the Department's administration and the teaching staff have implemented this model for the purpose of

supporting the students' learning journey and providing ongoing mentoring for the programme graduates. The EEAP was favourably impressed by student commentary of the strong learning and mentoring bonds that have been established between current students and programme graduates and the Departmental cadre of teaching staff.

External quality assurance systems are in place according to the requirements for Principle 10. Besides the MODIP requirements the department has consulted external bodies to ensure compliance with requirements and expectations from graduates of tourism studies. The links with the industry are strong and have contributed positively to the design, the delivery and the quality of the programme.

III. Conclusions

The EEP has found that the external academic units and institutions participate in the regular external quality assurance process, while respecting the requirements of the legislative framework in which they operate.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

None.

PART C: CONCLUSIONS

I. Features of Good Practice

- Broadly used student-centred pedagogy
- Available Student pastoral, personal and academic support
- Facilities, academic services, and teaching and administrative staff readily available to students
- Academic quality assurance systems and policy are in place and function well
- Student employability prospects

II. Areas of Weakness

- Research project course is optional rather than mandatory
- Limited senior teaching faculty at the department
- Research output of the teaching staff is relatively limited given the faculty potential

III. Recommendations for Follow-up Actions

- Consider formalizing the process of collecting information from external stakeholders. In this direction it should put in operation the already established Advisory Board
- Revise the programme and course learning outcomes to match the standards followed by other institutions and comply with the EQF
- Review the Industry Placement and the Research project courses and offer them as compulsory instead of optional
- Consider making the optional research project course mandatory
- Consider modifying the weighting of the various forms of examination
- Provide greater detail of the course description in the research project handbook
- Have permanent senior faculty within the department, either through promotion or transfer of associated faculty
- Improve the staff research output in terms of quality and quantity
- Provide the student regulations in English

IV. Summary & Overall Assessment

The Principles where full compliance has been achieved are: **1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10.**

The Principles where substantial compliance has been achieved are: **5.**

The Principles where partial compliance has been achieved are: **None.**

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

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

The members of the External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel

Name and Surname

Signature

1. **Prof. Andreas Efstathiades, (Chair)**
European University Cyprus, Nicosia, Cyprus
2. **Assoc. Prof. Jannis Angelis,**
KTH Royal Institute of Technology, Stockholm, Sweden
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4. **Prof. Constantine Passaris,**
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5. **Mr Emmanouil Kouratzinos, student of Business Administration,**
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