



ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ
HELLENIC REPUBLIC



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Accreditation Report

for the Undergraduate Study Programme of:

Primary Education

Institution: University of Ioannina

Date: 17 April 2021



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



Report of the Panel appointed by the HAHE to undertake the review of the Undergraduate Study Programme of **Primary Education** of the **University of Ioannina** 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 **Primary Education** of the **University of Ioannina** comprised the following four (4) members, drawn from the HAHE Register, in accordance with Laws 4009/2011 & 4653/2020:

- 1. Prof. Leonidas Kyriakides (Chair)**
University of Cyprus, Nicosia, Cyprus

- 2. Prof. Mary Ioannidou-Koutselini**
University of Cyprus, Nicosia, Cyprus

- 3. Prof. Emeritus Athanasios Gagatsis**
University of Cyprus, Nicosia, Cyprus

- 4. Prof. Mary Kalantzis**
University of Illinois, Illinois, USA

II. Review Procedure and Documentation

Due to travel restrictions and lockdowns, the accreditation of the Primary Education Programme at the University of Ioannina was conducted fully in a remote mode, using the Zoom teleconferencing tool. The Hellenic Authority for Higher Education (HAHE) provided the External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel (EEAP) members with a packet of materials ahead of the review process that included: a) the Department's Accreditation Proposal, b) a Quality Assurance Policy Document, c) Quality Assurance Goals, and d) Quality Data, as well as a wealth of supportive material and appendices. The Department further provided the EEAP the accreditation file and appendices for easy access, as well as additional supportive material including videos, sample of student work and information about the laboratories of the department. The Panel was also provided with HAHE's accreditation guidelines and was invited to attend an orientation session before the accreditation visit.

The EEAP met as a group before the accreditation teleconferences to plan ahead, coordinate division of work and process to be followed. We also discussed issues that emerged from the preliminary review of the material received at that point.

The virtual accreditation visit extended over two days, starting on April 12th, 2021. We first met with Prof. Stavros Nikolopoulos, Vice Rector of Academic Affairs and Head of MODIP, and Prof. Spyridon-Georgios Soulis, Head of the Department. We then met with OMEA and MODIP representatives, as well as with teaching staff members. Following these meetings, the EEAP had a debriefing session. On the second day of our visit (April 13th, 2021), we met with current students at different points in their degrees, administrative and teaching staff members, employers/social partners, and graduates. This second day was concluded by debriefing meetings with OMEA and MODIP representatives, and the Head of the Department. For the evaluation of facilities and material infrastructure we were provided with an online tour containing short videos from select sites. From the very beginning, the Department welcomed us with warmth, collegiality and openness and were all eager to answer our questions and address our concerns. Their presentations were informative, emphasizing the University's commitment to quality improvement in teaching, research and community outreach. Most faculty members attended our meetings, indicative of their interest in this process.

From our interactions and conversations with representatives of the department, its leadership, faculty members and administrative staff, current students and alumni as well as community partners we were made aware that the Department takes its commitment to quality assurance seriously and is working towards continuous improvement and compliance with the HAHE quality standards.

In closing, the EEAP would like to note the challenges of conducting an accreditation virtually. Despite the exemplary organization of the virtual visit by our hosts, we feel that an on-site visit would have given us a much better sense of the work that is taking place, would have done justice to the Department's achievements, and would have

given the EEAP more informal opportunities to delve deeper and explore different aspects of the issues associated with the accreditation process.

III. Study Programme Profile

The Department of Education was founded in 1982 and accepted its first students in 1984. The Department offers a Bachelor's Degree in Education for primary school teachers as well as postgraduate and doctorate programmes. The BA programme in Education lasts four years and the average time for graduation is 4.1 years. This figure testifies to the active participation of the enrolled students and their regular attendance in the courses.

It was reported that the programme is regularly evaluated via student surveys with results that indicate students' satisfaction. Positive attitudes towards the programme and the teaching staff were confirmed during the Panel's meetings with undergraduate and graduate students. The students who participated in the accreditation process spoke favourably about the support that they received from teaching staff, mentors, and advisors. They also described a collaborative climate during teaching and learning that they believed promoted mutual respect of students' diversity and the fulfilment of their individual needs. The documentation reviewed, presented evidence that appropriate and regular assessment and feedback were provided to all students.

The department's documents stated that the main purpose of the undergraduate programme is the promotion of theoretical and research knowledge and its connection with practice. This in order that its graduates have a high level of skills that enable them to respond successfully to both their complex pedagogical, teaching and research role, as well as to contribute to the future scientific and professional developments in the field of education.

The department also states that it aims to promote theoretical and practical knowledge within a flexible learning environment supported by the new technologies, and that it connects theoretical and practical experience of knowledge. The practicum begins in the 4th semester. During the 8th semester, students are placed in classroom for two weeks. It was reported that this extended field experience provided rich and diverse experiences to students - its duration appropriately divided across semesters.

It was reported that students are supported by the asynchronous distance learning platform (e-class), through which the students can be informed about the content of the courses, as well as to follow the announcements and developments of the courses. All relevant information for students is provided on the website of the University.

The Curriculum structure of undergraduate studies follows the ECTS system. The studies are structured in 8 semesters with workload of approximately 30 ECTS per semester. The courses consist of: a) 28 compulsory courses, b) 70 free elective courses and c) a foreign language course. A significant number of courses (n=12) offered from other departments of the University are also considered as optional courses.

Students have the option of completing an undergraduate thesis (ptyhiaki), which is equivalent to 2 courses. They receive their degree after the completion of 26

compulsory courses, foreign language courses and a number of elective courses from a pool of 6-10 free elective courses offered per semester (out of the 70 available in the programme). The offering of the elective courses mainly depends on the staff availability and the assurance of the smooth progression of students throughout the stages of the programme.

The relevant information provided by the members of MODIP and OMEA, the interviews and meetings with staff, students, graduates, and stakeholders, along with the published documentation, confirm required compliance and verify that the development, content, and the allocated ECTS are appropriate for the fulfilment of the programme's aims and the expected learning outcomes.

The Department is staffed with 19 faculty members, 7 special teaching staff (EEP), 10 EDIP members, 2 ETEP and 3 employees for secretarial and administrative support. The information provided stated that the staff operates 12 laboratories, one in Art, one in Music and ten in the following fields: Psychology and Counselling; Geography and Environmental Education; Greek Language and Language Teaching; Social Sciences and Education; Greek immigration and Intercultural Education; Educational Applications of Virtual Reality; Research on Mathematics' Teaching; Teaching and School Pedagogy; Physics' Education and Teaching; Special Needs Education. We would suggest that a more unified and constructive collaboration among the laboratories could contribute to increases of externally funded research and publications as well as to students' deeper understanding of the coherence of theoretical and practical knowledge in research. Moreover, such synergies, among objectives and activities, should be reflected in students' undergraduate and master thesis as well as their doctorate work.

The Foreign Languages Laboratory offers non-compulsory programmes of the English, French and German languages and Compulsory courses in the 4th semester equivalent to 4 ECTS.

The Department, on the basis of the virtual tour, can be deemed to have good infrastructure composed of offices, classrooms, seminar rooms, amphitheatres, library, and laboratories.

Finally, from the testimony provided by community members, the Department and the programme's staff and students are in regular and very constructive collaboration with the Regional Authorities, the Metropolis, and a wide range of social, cultural, and educational institutions. It was reported that the department had a strong desire not only to connect with the local and regional community, but also to contribute to activities that promoted social, educational, and cultural activities. In the Department's reported actions indicate an orientation towards extroversion through several activities undertaken by staff members with stakeholders. As a consequence, the Department of Education of Ioannina is evidently an educational, cultural, and social centre of development for the whole city.

PART B: COMPLIANCE WITH THE PRINCIPLES

Principle 1: Academic Unit Policy for Quality Assurance

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD APPLY A QUALITY ASSURANCE POLICY AS PART OF THEIR STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT. THIS POLICY SHOULD EXPAND AND BE AIMED (WITH THE COLLABORATION OF EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS) AT ALL INSTITUTION'S AREAS OF ACTIVITY, AND PARTICULARLY AT THE FULFILMENT OF QUALITY REQUIREMENTS OF UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMMES. THIS POLICY SHOULD BE PUBLISHED AND IMPLEMENTED BY ALL STAKEHOLDERS.

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

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

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

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

Study Programme Compliance

The quality policy of the Primary Education programme of the Department of Primary Education of the University of Ioannina is in line with that of the University's. The programme's quality assurance procedures are monitored by the University's Quality Assurance Unit as evidenced during the Panel's meeting with the Vice-rector of the University. The Quality Assurance Policy aims to support the academic content and scientific orientation of the programme in accordance with international academic standards and the current legislation. Therefore, there is a policy for improving

education, research and innovation, human resources, the structure of the organization, extroversion and mobility and promotion-recognition.

The documents provided indicated that the development of the programme follows a well-defined procedure that corresponds to the policy for quality assurance established by the University and the Department. The establishment of a number of laboratories facilitates the synergy of teaching and research.

The academic profile and orientation of the programme, the aims and objectives, subject areas, structure, and organization, expected learning outcomes, and intended professional qualifications align with the National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education and the guidelines of the European Qualifications Framework (EQF). The revisions outlined in the documents and discussed with the review Panel, comply with the basic requirements described in the Standards, of the Institution's Quality Assurance Unit (MODIP) and the Departmental Quality Assurance Committee (OMEA). These take into account the institutional strategy of MODIP, the available staff.

The Quality Assurance Policy of the Department of Primary Education is posted on the department's website and it is published through the Study Guide of the Department, in lectures, workshops and informative events. In this way, it is made accessible to the public.

The EEAP found that the quality assurance policy of the Department of Primary Education (OMEA), was satisfactory and well-focused on teaching, research, publications, social and educational activities, and also on the recommendations of the 2013 evaluation report.

In particular, it is noted that valuable feedback is being obtained on a continual basis from the programme studies committee-OMEA, the department meetings, the analysis of student evaluation reports, as well as the engagement of various stakeholders from the local school system.

The undergraduate programme has about 2000 students. Taking into consideration also the number of students in the postgraduate and doctoral programmes, it is obvious that the ratio of enrolled students per academic staff is very high. Although EDIP members adequately support the programme, the shortage of academic staff is noticeable.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

None.

Principle 2: Design and Approval of Programmes

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

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

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

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

Study Programme Compliance

The undergraduate programme of the Department of Primary Education at the University of Ioannina is part of one of the earliest Departments of Education in the nation (established in 1982). The participating administrators and faculty involved in this external evaluation process expressed a unanimous opinion that they aimed to be the preeminent provider of teacher education in Greece. To that end, they expressed that their criteria for excellence involved producing graduates steeped in the values of research, humanism, and philosophy, who were not only effective teachers in classrooms but also thoughtful, deeply knowledgeable and compassionate people in the wider society. This is a laudable orientation with sincere intentions. One student testified that the programme 'opened doors for me and gave us wings,' and another that their 'minds were, 'much opened – first as pedagogist and then as teachers.'

Clearly, from what we gleaned, there is not only a strong desire but the capacity and opportunity for the Department to lift its profile, locally and internationally, with some appropriate refocusing of efforts and offerings, the re-organization of resources and stronger internal and external collaborations.

The documentation provided indicates that the Department has well defined procedures for the design and delivery of its wide range of offerings: 28 compulsory courses and 70 electives. Its objectives and processes, as well as its subjects, practicums and types of assessment, align with the National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education and are clearly articulated in Student Study Guides. There also appears to be a system for regular reviews that includes student participation and other stakeholders.

All categories of participants that were interviewed via the Zoom sessions reported that, in one form or another, the Programme/Department had heeded the 2013 external evaluation of the programme and had implemented, under at times difficult conditions, most of the recommendations. Currently the UG programme serves 250 students with 11 fulltime faculty. They have: augmented their core faculty (19) with the recruitment (10) EDIP instructors to support their extensive programme; improved significantly the relationship between academics and students during lecture periods; more explicitly linked theories to their practical implications; extended the practicum to two weeks as well as providing more explicit practice experiences within their training programme; and offered mentoring in a more systematic way as students progressed through their studies. It was also reported that the collaboration with local schools was improved in order to ensure that their students could be placed in the local area. Much was made of the measures to increase research experiences for students. It was commented that the new colleagues, including from the EDIP programme, brought new energy to the UG programme.

All above claims were echoed and affirmed in the responses of the participants in the Zoom presentations/interviews – in particular students and community members. It is noteworthy that among the students interviewed, there were a number who declared they were parents and workers as well as students and expressed the opinion that the new online opportunities that the COVID-19 pandemic precipitously introduced, proved very helpful as they juggled their many responsibilities. Overall, there was general enthusiasm and satisfaction expressed by the students who were selected to participate, about their learning experiences, the choices they had to determine their learning trajectory and the easy access to support and advice from faculty and staff. In fact, the Department was described by a number of respondents as being like ‘a family’.

Given that the employment opportunities for graduates as teachers in local schools continues to be challenging, and that many students end up working in various other areas, it might be worthwhile considering introducing a degree/programme that prepares graduates in broader educational skills, knowledge, and sensibilities. For example, leadership, instructional design that harnesses the affordances of the digital, the management and transformation of people seeking to enhance their capabilities in the ‘learning society’ e.g., cooperatives, training enterprises and NGOs. This could take the form of a multiple set of entry and exit points, from a certificate to a doctorate, that recognizes that the multiple subdisciplines that are part of ‘education’

degree offer an excellent preparation for workers in other vocational areas, beyond teaching in schools.

It is also recommended that the Department reflects on the experiences gained through the COVID-19 pandemic and their effects on modes of teaching and learning in order to discuss what was learned about how one can effectively engage and evaluate learners via digital tools. Any such reflective exercise should consider what could be used to transform and manage their existing programme offerings and their delivery going forward into the future in order to meet students changing needs and ways of being in the world - that is, to develop pathways that allow for hybrid offerings to meet the various and changing learner needs and to be tech-savvy in all domains of life.

It is noted that a number of graduate student's dissertation topics deal with virtual environments and the affordances of the digital for teaching and learning (over 20 doctoral students in specialist laboratories). This can emerge as a signature programme area for the Department and university with broad impact locally and internationally in recruiting students and increasing publications. Also, this may be a source for the generation of new income – in student fees and grants.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

The Department's Strategic Plan needs to be more concrete and explain how to reach its professed goals.

Principle 3: Student-centred Learning, Teaching and Assessment

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

Student-centred learning and teaching plays an important role in stimulating students' motivation, self-reflection and engagement in the learning process. The above entail continuous consideration of the programme's delivery and the assessment of the related outcomes.

The student-centred learning and teaching process

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

In addition:

- *the academic staff are familiar with the existing examination system and methods and are supported in developing their own skills in this field;*
- *the assessment criteria and methods are published in advance;*
- *the assessment allows students to demonstrate the extent to which the intended learning outcomes have been achieved. Students are given feedback, which, if necessary is linked to advice on the learning process;*
- *student assessment is conducted by more than one examiner, where possible;*
- *the regulations for assessment take into account mitigating circumstances;*
- *assessment is consistent, fairly applied to all students and carried out in accordance with the stated procedures;*
- *a formal procedure for student appeals is in place.*

Study Programme Compliance

The faculty interviewed through the zoom sessions expressed very clear senses of direction. They declared themselves committed to a student-centred pedagogical approach that focused on rigor, research skills and preparing learners to understand how the student learnt and behaved in a range of educational contexts – from traditional classrooms to refugee/immigrant camps.

The chair of the internal evaluation process presented clear evidence of the significant changes made to the UG programme, improving learner experience even during the

COVID-19 pandemic – as is evidenced by the fact that 160 out of 170 students continued to turn up for classes. It was reported that Moodle and E-course was used in the transition to online delivery and that professional development was provided on demand to all instructors. This was particularly the case for EDIP instructors who it was reported are independently responsible for the courses they teach. All these instructors had strong CVs with doctorates and teaching experience, however, it was reported that they also had the benefit of oversight from lead academics to guide them as needed, as well as formal evaluations every three years.

It was reported that the UG programme underwent regular internal evaluations for its quality. The process is documented, and it includes feedback from students via surveys. This feedback goes to a committee of review that discusses the findings and it then influences the annual May review of courses. It was explained, however, that the breadth of this process was constrained by the capacity of faculty delivering the programme, as well as by limited funds for innovation or equipment. It was claimed that resources are needed for the continued professional development of EDIP instructors. It was reported that a committee had been established to review student evaluation and its relationship to course purposes.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

- Lecture theatres are not conducive for student-centred teaching and learning. The Department needs to reflect on how they can make their available spaces more flexible.
- The department would benefit by ongoing reflection on what they mean by student-centred teaching and learning and exchange ideas and ways of using this approach to enhance student experiences.
- The staff/student ratio needs to be reduced in order to achieve claimed pedagogical goals.

Principle 4: Student Admission, Progression, Recognition and Certification

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

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

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

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

Study Programme Compliance

The Undergraduate Study Programme of Primary Education is governed by clear regulations related to student admission, duration of studies, student progression, and student mobility. First of all, admission to Higher Education Institutions in Greece, is granted on the basis of scores achieved on the National Entrance Examination. There are also alternative ways of admission such as examinations in specific categories for foreign and expatriate scholars, people with special needs, distinguished athletes, and transfer students. The Department of Primary Education grants a single degree that enables the holder to be appointed as an educator in primary schools or provide pedagogical services outside the school. The minimum number of semesters required to obtain the degree is eight (8).

The courses cover all the important aspects of modern trends in Education Sciences. In order to facilitate their students' progress, they provided with a Degree Plan, which they are expected to complete in a timely way. The department requires completion of 240 ECTS over a minimum of a 4-year study. The department applies the ECTS system across the curriculum, which allows easy transfer among European universities.

The students and graduates of the department expressed positive comments about the excellent climate of cooperation they experienced with the department's academic staff. They also were enthusiastic about their curriculum, particularly with regard to the wide range of courses offered and the graduate thesis.

It was reported that student mobility is encouraged via the ERASMUS project. A relatively large number of students take advantage of this opportunity between the 6th and the 8th semester of their studies. It was also pointed out that they have a lot of applicants who like to participate in the ERASMUS programme and the Department

has developed selection criteria and a specific evaluation procedure. It is also important to note that the Department has developed partnerships with 19 universities from 12 countries (i.e., Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Germany, France, Spain, Cyprus, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Rumania, Poland, and Slovenia).

The Department's undergraduate programme works very well and produces a relatively large body of excellent students. This fact is reflected by successful careers of the Alumni in a wide range of professions; for example, the acceptance of students to top graduate schools all over the world for PhD studies.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

The Department needs to establish a system to track graduate outcomes and destinations that can be used for planning and public purposes.

Principle 5: Teaching Staff

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

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

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

Study Programme Compliance

The Department comprises 19 DEP members, 7 special teaching staff (EEP) members, 10 EDIP members, and 2 ETEP. It should be noted that the number of faculty members in the Department has been significantly decreased during the last years due to retirement and non-replacement of faculty members. It is however, encouraging that a new position for a DEP member has been allocated to the Department. The EEAP, however, strongly believes that the university should offer more DEP positions to the Department in order to improve its effectiveness further and become one of the best departments of education in Greece.

The EEAP notes that the faculty members bring diverse expertise and research interests to the Programme and its curriculum. All faculty members have a significant number of publications in international scientific journals and participate in national and international conferences where they have the chance to present their research work. They also have very good relations with one another and have established collaborations amongst themselves. One category of teaching staff who has seen a significant increase in the Department is the one of the Special Teaching Staff (EDIP). EDIP members reported very positive experiences with senior faculty, both in terms of support and the department's climate. The faculty also reported a fair division of labour in terms of service to the Department. Although the EDIP received support from DEP members, the EEAP has found that the Department does not have a systematic and formal mentoring process. It would be beneficial to start working on a specific mentoring system due to the increasing number of EDIP members who will

benefit from such, especially since most of them plan to apply for a DEP position in different universities.

The Department has a disciplined and transparent approach for recruitment and promotion. It was reported that faculty members are recruited and promoted based on meritocratic methods of evaluation. The composition of the electorate, it was claimed, is carried out with special care, so that the members have formal and substantive academic relevance with the subject matter of the announced position.

Lastly, faculty reported that they were on board with innovative teaching approaches and the use of technology. This was evidenced in their preparedness and efficacy in moving to a remote and online environment due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

It would be beneficial for the Department to develop mentoring and monitoring mechanisms of the EDIP members.

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

The Ioannina Library and Information Centre, one of the largest in Greece, was an outstanding resource for all students. It was also reported that the student body receives a steady stream of newsletters, updates and announcements about requirements, and opportunities to participate in seminars and conferences.

It was reported that students from the undergraduate programme of Primary Education at the University of Ioannina avail themselves of the University's exchange agreement with universities in mainland Europe through the Erasmus+ programmes of the European Commission. Foreign students, in turn, are encouraged to spend a semester or a year studying in Ioannina – the UG programme evaluated currently has four international students.

The EEAP was only able to see the building of the Pedagogical Department of Primary Education of the University of Ioannina, virtually via a number of videos that had been produced. Reports on its website state that it has 4 floors and the distribution of spaces per floor is as follows:

- **Ground Floor:** Classrooms, Auditorium Floor

- **1st floor:** Laboratories, Secretariats (classrooms, Teaching, Master), Classroom, Auditorium 1st
- **2nd floor:** Workshops, Conference Room, Seminar Room, Classroom, Staff Offices
- **3rd floor:** laboratories, Personnel Offices
- **4th floor:** Personnel Offices

Among the images we observed in the videos and presentations were very large lecture halls, with long rows of parallel seating which indicate that the traditional lecture format remains core to the teaching and the delivery of courses. Some other more informal spaces were also included in the videos, but it was not apparent how, or the degree to which, they were utilized for smaller classes, project, and group work. All appeared well maintained.

The documentation provided and the testimony of the students who participated in the Zoom sessions indicate that students are well supported by their instructors and have access to both University and departmental resources to fulfil their necessary educational needs. There are only three people who serve in the secretariat - with limited hours posted for students – Tuesday and Thursday from 11.00 to 13.00. One needs a new computer. It seems from what was reported however, that they are available beyond the listed hours.

The funding/budgetary support documented seems to have remained flat. It was reported that more funds are required if the programme is to be able to transform itself into a more truly student-focused and technically orientated entity. There is a clear need to invest in new technology and the training of all faculty to become more tech-savvy and capable of collaborating and others across the University to design appropriate tools to engage learners in a digital or hybrid environment. There is also a need to develop a better system to connect with alumni and help in job placement which appears to be lacking at present. The Department's website is clearly in need of updating and expanding the information that is posted. This needs to become a vehicle not just for students accessing information but also to act as its profile in the world, showcasing the Department's uniqueness and achievements and showcasing testimonies from its graduates.

The documentation provided verifies that all faculty and staff are appropriately qualified for their roles as academics and as support instructors. In fact, it was reported that the Department has been able to attract excellent highly qualified people by the EDIP programme to enable them to deliver the programmes more effectively and to support students learning with their practicum experiences. It was also reported that training was provided to adjunct staff and that regular seminars were conducted that included training opportunities across a range of practical and theoretical issues.

The intellectual output of the Department seems to be aligned with the significant number of laboratories that appeared to have meaningful outputs given the limitations of the resources available and the size of associated members of each lab. Given a large number of interests/themes involved in these Labs, it does not appear however, that the Department has a signature orientation to its profile or a significant mass of expertise in any area. Hence, given its lofty aspiration to be 'arista,' it might want to consider a way of integrating these laboratories around a number of 'peak' areas that showcases what they want to be known for. As they stand, the Labs are too wide-ranging and too lean to grow meaningfully or make the powerful impacts possible. They appear mostly to be linked to individual academics' interests that attract doctoral students and funded and unfunded projects based on those interests.

1. Laboratory of Educational Psychology, Counselling and Research
2. Laboratory of Geographical and Environmental Education
3. Language, Language Teaching and Culture Laboratory
4. Laboratory of Social Sciences and Education
5. Laboratory of Studies of Hellenes Abroad and Intercultural Education
6. Laboratory of Virtual Reality Applications in Education
7. Research Laboratory in the Teaching of Mathematics
8. Laboratory of Teaching and School Pedagogy
9. Physics Education and Teaching Laboratory
10. Laboratory of Special Education and Training
11. Fine Arts Workshop
12. Music Workshop
13. Foreign Language Laboratory

The Labs are certainly an area that requires rethinking. Perhaps this could be done through a scenario planning exercise that evaluates what themes or topics would make the most impact in the world, that could distinguish Ioannina from similar departments in other universities and explore the interface of the intellectual and research interests in a way that optimizes the use of resources.

The general issue of sufficient resources and capacity to be able to match ideas and aspirations within constrained realities, continues to be a challenge for departments of education in Higher Education. This is exacerbated by their relative status in the university, the national context with many political changes, and more recently, the effects of the pandemic. The Department appears to be adequately resourced for its traditional way of operating. However, given the calibre of the administrators and

faculty, the Department could also think more strategically about their future. With the injection of new investments in new technology for staff, administrators, instructors, and researchers the Department could address the new demands that have arisen as a result of the rapid transition to online learning during the pandemic. This would also help address the need to meet the specific needs of students of different backgrounds, particularly those who are older and, in the workforce, rather than coming to the Department directly out of high school.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

- The Department, in collaboration with the University, should seek to review the alignment of its budgetary allocation with the number of students it is expected to accept annually, particularly given its professed pedagogical and research goals and aspirations.
- The Department should create stronger synergies among its many laboratories, perhaps collapsing some in order to establish its desired signature expertise.

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

The Department of Primary Education of the University of Ioannina's aims involve providing students with theoretical knowledge, research and critical thinking skills, and practical training in Primary education in accordance with the European and the National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education. The EEAP has determined that the Department has established a multidimensional procedure about its information management based on several indicators of student response to the requirements of the Graduate Programme. There is an electronic page (<https://classweb.uoi.gr/>) for the management of data for students, teachers and courses offered. It contains general information such as structure and organization of the programme, courses statistics, description of course syllabi, data on average duration of study (4.1 years) and the number of graduates from each academic year. Through this, teachers have access to the grades of courses offered in the current academic year, as well as to courses from previous years. The students, respectively, can be informed of the courses they have been registered, as well as their scores in the courses that have been examined.

It was reported that internal evaluations take place regularly and students are asked to provide feedback on their courses and teaching staff. Specifically, information is collected and examined on a variety of quality indicators, including the following: follow-up of the course; workload in relation to the study; ways to use new technologies; teaching ability and teacher consistency. Further, this information is directly shared with the information system of MODIP and HAHE. From 2018 onwards, the evaluation of teachers and courses is carried out electronically through the information system of MODIP.

The students gave feedback to the EEAP indicating that they value and rate the DPE information management highly. They also feel the courses prepare them well for the job force and provide a good connection between practice and research. They expressed satisfaction with the variety of the topics offered.

The Alumni who participated in the review, expressed a strong connection with the DPE and felt welcomed to participate in educational opportunities (e.g., symposia, conferences, seminars, PhD programmes). This was regarded by all interviewed as important since it increased the bond among students, as well as faculty and graduates with the potential for future collaborations, teaching opportunities and availability of practical experiences. It was reported that the Department conducted a survey tracking the work paths of their graduates. The objective of this survey was to develop the necessary attributes for graduates to meet the modern requirements for their role as teachers in terms of knowledge, attitudes and values that will enable them to exercise their role as professionals. This enables the students to work in places and structures beyond primary schools (e.g., in the fields of Special Education, Counselling, Adult Education, Administration in Education, Intercultural Education) but also as researchers in Education Sciences. However, they do not seem to be collecting data on student employability and the career path of graduates. This would be helpful data regarding the Department's ability to position its graduates, and foster future connections and collaborations.

Overall, the EEAP believe that the frequency of satisfaction surveys and the decisions being made following the analysis of these data is sufficient.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

- The Department of Primary Education must consider establishing methods for gathering information related to job placements and academic careers of the Department's graduates.
- Basic statistics and strategic plan need to be in English.

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

It is obvious that the University of Ioannina and the Department of Primary Education of the University of Ioannina have put in place a comprehensive public information system as we deduced through interviews with the Chair of the Department, members of MODIP, OMEA, faculty, secretarial staff, and students. The EEAP examined materials provided that exhibited evidence of critical information sharing with students, faculty members, external partners, and the community at large. Department's website (<https://ptde.uoi.gr>) in Greek language is user friendly and it contains information about its facilities, staff, undergraduate and graduate programmes and guides, announcements, events, policy of quality assurance, and internal assessment reports. News about awards, as well as the activities of members of the academic community (conferences, workshops, announcements, distinctions, trainings) are also posted on the Department's website. Information of interest to the general public such as events, speeches, workshops, events that connect the Department with society is posted on the website of the Department and published in the local press. A Network of Teachers called "Educational and modern challenges" was created on the initiative of the Department. Students and teachers from a variety of Universities and also representatives of the Teaching Federation of Greece, participate in online meetings, events, lectures and scientific discussions.

However, the English language version of the website is poor in information contained. This should be addressed since it will improve the international visibility of the Department. In particular, EEAP observed that some faculty members do not have a personal website in English. EEAP feels that the Department should require all faculty members to complete the already existing basic CV template containing education, employment, scientific interests, and a short list of related publications. In addition, EEAP suggests optionally this webpage to contain links to a more detailed personal webpage.

Panel judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

- The English language version of the website of the Department must be improved. Including basic statistics and key performance indicators in English.
- It could be useful to improve the e-publishing activity of the Department by the creation of an e-Newsletter.

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

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

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

The above comprise the evaluation of:

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

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

Study Programme Compliance

The Department of Primary Education of the University of Ioannina based on the Quality Policy and the Internal Quality Assurance System (IQAS) of the University of Ioannina, gives particular importance to the internal evaluation of courses. These activities were in place for the internal evaluations and from 2018 have continued electronically, as was evident during the interviews with the faculty and internal evaluation committee (MODIP and OMEA) members. It was reported that annual internal reports are prepared and shared with the Department of Primary Education's general assembly of faculty members. They meet regularly to discuss and address issues concerning the effective delivery of instruction for maximum learning benefits of the students. As is the case with other universities, there is an economic crisis as well as a discordance between the number of faculty (19 professors and 10 EDIP), and the number of students. In addition, there are 12 research and practice laboratories that have been reviewed with the purpose of maintaining their vitality and connection to the practical experiences of students in core subjects. The EEAP members verified through their review of documents and interviews that the Department has in place mechanisms to review essential aspects of programme delivery regularly. This practice ensures the highest quality supportive, and effective learning environment for students.

One example that has emerged as an improvement on the existing Curriculum is introducing new courses such as STEM Education, Adult Education, Digital Literacy. The offering of these courses which corresponds to the current findings of the Sciences of Education was highly appreciated by the students and is reflected in the relatively big number of students who choose to attend them as optional courses.

Faculty members, including those associated with Research laboratories, have continuing collaborations with external global university partners, and providing teaching practice opportunities with a range of local and global agencies. Faculty members are invited by MODIP at regular intervals to complete data relating to their research. It is important to notice the rich “clinical experiences” that the students were offered through the Department’s work with the ERASMUS internships and local scholarship/internship programmes. The students gave feedback to the EEAP indicating that they value and rate the information management processes highly. They are very satisfied by the variety of the teaching topics and they feel the courses prepare them well for the job and provide a good connection between practice and research.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

The Department may want to solicit formative feedback from recent alumni who can engage in the examination of the curriculum and offer recommendations.

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

In order to investigate the programme's compliance with the QA principles and the principles established by HAHE, the EEAP reviewed all the available documents and the website of the Department and conducted extensive online interviews with the Vice-Rector, the Chair of the Department, members of MODIP, the members of OMEA, the programme's faculty, secretarial staff, students, graduates and external stakeholders. The Chair of the Department, the heads of the Laboratories and the other staff explained their vision and were willing to share with the EEAP all the documents and information that could make their work visible.

The EEAP verifies that the Department has carefully and respectfully responded to the findings and recommendations in the External Evaluation Report of 2013, concerning the programme's review, the use of new technologies, the links between teaching and research, the enhancement of research and publications as well as the digitization of the Department's communication with students through regular and in time announcements through the website.

The value of the external review process to the functioning of both the Department and the undergraduate programme is evident in the careful, epistemologically sound, and systemic programme review and the changes initiated by MODIP and OMEA which were implemented by the Department.

Another area of the Department's dynamic response to the recommendations of the external evaluation is evidenced by the digitized communication and the use of the e-class platform. Small group teaching and research in the laboratories along with the

elective undergraduate thesis (ptyhiaki) are also some of the enhanced approaches for linking teaching with research.

Additionally, increasing the field experience-practical work programme is the main change that contributed to students' enhancement of skills, self-confidence and satisfaction as has been apparent during the meetings of EEAP with students and graduates.

It is worth noting that students and graduates expressed their respect and satisfaction with the pedagogical approach employed by the staff within and outside the classrooms and the personal guidance they receive. Also, students favourably commented on the supporting and responsive attitude of the staff which they claim has been provided without limits of time and work.

Although the EEAP ascertains the extroversion and responsiveness of the Department, the academic staff shortage for which the Department and the University are not responsible, along with the increase of EDIP, slows down the academic activities beyond teaching and mentoring. Important changes that open *new perspectives towards the international standing of the awarded degrees* have been implemented but they cannot be completed without increase of the academic staff which should be elected and promoted according to the international staff standards.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

- The Department could investigate what it would take for its programmes to be ranked and visible in a range of ranking systems internal and external.
- The Department could consider participating in a scenario building exercise to imagine its possible trajectory and what each scenario would need to meet stated goals and aspirations.

PART C: CONCLUSIONS

I. Features of Good Practice

- The Department provided adequate and prompt responses to the recommendations provided in the external valuation conducted in 2013.
- Faculty in the department have created shared values and established a climate of collaboration, collegiality, and mutual support.
- Strong community partnerships with formal and informal organizations and with the city of Ioannina.
- There is a high degree of satisfaction, support, and enthusiasm for the Department among students, graduates, and external stakeholders, which serves as a testament to the Department's reputation and effectiveness.

II. Areas of Weakness

- The staff/student ratio needs to be reduced in order to achieve claimed pedagogical goals.

III. Recommendations for Follow-up Actions

- The high student/faculty ratio should be discussed between the Department and the University (MODIP)
- Provide more substantive content to the English version of the Department's website.
- Implement a systematic way of collecting data from students, alumni, external partners, and policymakers, so that changes in the programme of study can be well justified.
- It could be useful to improve the e-publishing activity of the Department by the creation of an e-Newsletter.
- The Department of Primary Education must consider establishing methods for gathering information related to job placements and academic careers of the Department's graduates.
- It would be beneficial for the Department to develop mentoring mechanisms of the EDIP members.
- The Department needs to reflect on the role played by the many, disparate Laboratories and how they might be recalibrated to establish the Departments' signature expertise.

IV. Summary & Overall Assessment

The Principles where full compliance has been achieved are: **1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10**

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

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. Leonidas Kyriakides (Chair)**
University of Cyprus, Nicosia, Cyprus
- 2. Prof. Mary Ioannidou-Koutselini**
University of Cyprus, Nicosia, Cyprus
- 3. Prof. Emeritus Athanasios Gagatsis**
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- 4. Prof. Mary Kalantzis**
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