



ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ
HELLENIC REPUBLIC



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Accreditation Report **for the Postgraduate Study Programme of:**

Special Education and Training

Department: Primary Education
Institution: University of Ioannina
Date: 23 September 2023



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 Postgraduate Study Programme of **Special Education and Training** 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 postgraduate study programme of **Special Education and Training** 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. Professor Panayiotis Angelides (Chair)**
University of Nicosia, Nicosia, Cyprus
- 2. Assoc Prof. Georgia (Gina) Ioannitou-Valavanidou**
Le Mans Université, Le Mans, France
- 3. Professor Christos Panagiotopoulos**
University of Nicosia, Nicosia, Cyprus
- 4. Mr Konstantinos Boumpourekas, PhD Candidate**
Department of Department of Primary Education, University of Western Macedonia,
Florina, Greece

II. Review Procedure and Documentation

In preparation for the visit of the Postgraduate Study Program of Special Education and Training of the Institution University of Ioannina (UII), the members of the External Evaluation and Accreditation Panel (EEAP) could examine a wide variety of documents provided in advance by HAHE, including the School's Proposal for Accreditation of the Postgraduate Program, the Guide of Studies, the description of courses, the HAHE Guidelines and other relevant information about the Program (statistical data, quality indicators, student questionnaires, strategic goals, etc.). The EEAP also consulted the Website of the Department.

The visit was online. The visit took place on Monday 18/09 to Wednesday 21/09/2023. It was preceded by a private meeting of the EEAP on Monday, (via Zoom), and was followed by further private meetings of the EEAP on the following days to finalize the report. During the visit the EEAP had the following meetings:

Monday 18 September 2023

a) 15:00 - 16:00 Private meeting with the EEAP members only. Discussion on the accreditation proposals; allocation of tasks; list of issues for the on-line meetings.

b) 16:00 - 17:00 Meeting with the Director of the PSP, the Head of the Department, MODIP, Steering Committees/ OMEA members.

- **EEAP**

- **Vice Rector/President of MODIP**

Prof. Panagiota Kanti

- **MODIP members**

Prof. Anastasios Tsinas

Prof. Anastasios Emvalotis

- **MODIP staff**

Mrs Persefoni Griva

Mrs Paraskevi Alexoudi

PSP Special Education and Training

-Head of the Department of Primary Education Prof. Spyridon-Georgios Soulis

-Director of Postgraduate Program Special Education and Training

Prof. Spyridon-Georgios Soulis

-**OMEA members:**

- Assoc. Prof. Dimitris Mavridis
- Prof. Konstantinos Kotsis
- Prof. Anastasios Emvalotis

- Prof. Maria Pournari

During this meeting the Director of the PSP presented a short overview of the postgraduate programme (history, academic profile), the current status, the strengths and possible areas of concern. Then the EEAP discussed the degree of compliance of the programme to the Standards for Quality Accreditation and reviewed of student assignments, thesis, exam papers & examination material.

c) 17:00 – 17:30 On-line tour: classrooms, lecture halls, libraries laboratories, and other facilities related to the PSP. Discussion about the facilities presented in the video produced for this purpose.

The EEAP evaluated the facilities and learning resources to ascertain that the learning materials, equipment and facilities are adequate for a successful provision of the PSP.

d) 17:30-18:00 Debrief Meeting EEAP members. Reflect on impressions of the first day; prepare for the second day of the on-line review.

Tuesday, 19 September 2023

a) 15:00 - 15:45 Meeting with the teaching staff of the PSP.

EEAP & Teaching staff members:

- Prof. Anastasios Mikropoulos
- Prof. Suzanna Nikolaou
- Associate Prof. Eleni Morfidi
- Assistant Prof. Maria Liakopoulou
- Prof. Spyridon-Georgios Soulis

During the meeting the EEAP discussed professional development opportunities, mobility, competence and adequacy of the teaching staff to ensure learning outcomes, workload, evaluation by students; link between teaching and research; teaching staff's involvement in applied research, projects and research activities directly related to the programme; possible areas of weakness.

b) 16:00 - 16:45 Meeting with PSP students

Students:

- Ms. Aggeliki Ntani (2nd year of studies)
- Ms. Ioanna Mylona (2nd year of studies)
- Ms. Garyfalia Papasotiri (2nd year of studies)
- Ms. Victoria Dalla (2nd year of studies)
- Mr. Harris Tsagas, (2nd year of studies)
- Ms. Mariallena Dalla (2nd year of studies)

During the meeting the EEAP discussed with the students the students' satisfaction from their study experience and Department / Institution facilities; student input in quality assurance; priority issues concerning student life and welfare.

c) 17:30 - 18:15 Meeting with PSP graduates

Graduates:

- Ms. Glykeria Patsi, Teacher, Med, Public School
- Ms. Athina-Maria Labrou, Teacher, Med, Public School
- Ms. Theodora Panagiotidou, Teacher, Med, Public School
- Mr. Nikos Dourlias, Teacher, Med, Public School
- Ms. Ioanna Xatzigiannidou, Teacher, Med, Public School
- Ms. Theodosia Tzina, Kindergartens Teacher, Med, Private School
- Ms. Alexia Athanasopoulou, Teacher, Med, Private School
- Ms. Pinelopi Chousou, Teacher, Med, Private School

Discuss their experience of their postgraduate studies and their career path.

d) 18:30-19:15 Meeting with employers, social partners who discussed with EEAP members various forms and opportunities of collaboration with the PSP, relations of the PSP with external stakeholders from the private and the public sector.

Employers/social partners:

- Mr. Dimitris Papageorgiou, Mayor of Ioannina
- Mr. Dimitrios Ntoutsis, PhD, School Counsellor and Coordinator in Special Education, Ioannina
- Mr. Konstantinos Parganas, President of the Association of Teachers, and Kindergarten Teachers of Ioannina,
- Ms. Loula Verbi, MSc, Pediatrician, President of MERIMNA, Ioannina
- Ms. Maria Skandalis, National Confederation of Disabled People
- Ms. Eleftheria Tsiouri, MEd, School Director, Ioannina

d) 19:30- 20:00 Debrief Meeting EEAP members where discussed the outcomes of the virtual visit and prepare the oral report.

e) 20:00 - 20:30 Closure meeting with the Director of the PSP, the Head of the Program, MODIP, and PSP Steering Committee/ OMEA members. In this final meeting the EEAP provided a general view of some of the conclusions reached.

-EEAP

-Vice Rector/President of MODIP

Prof. Panagiota Kanti

-MODIP members

Prof. Anastasios Tsinas

Prof. Anastasios Emvalotis

-Director of Postgraduate Program Special Education and Training

Prof. Spyridon-Georgios Soulis

-Head of the Department of Primary Education

Prof. Spyridon-Georgios Soulis

- OMEA members:

- Assoc. Prof. Dimitris Mavridis
- Prof. Konstantinos Kotsis
- Prof. Anastasios Emvalotis
- Prof. Maria Pournari

-MODIP staff

Mrs Persefoni Griva

Mrs Paraskevi Alexoudi

During the meeting the EEAP discussed with the participants several points/findings which need further clarification. In addition, there was an informal presentation of the EEAP key findings. The EEAP members wanted to underline that all meetings were held in a very constructive atmosphere. Overall, the faculty and staff had prepared a rigorous visit program with presentations and discussions. A series of reports and other documents were provided to the EEAP during the visit at the request of the EEAP members. All members of the Program were ready and eager to answer the questions by the EEAP, and this facilitated the latter's task in the evaluation and accreditation process.

III. Postgraduate Study Programme Profile

The Postgraduate Study Program of Special Education and Training numbers 5 members of Teaching and Research Staff. All of them are DEP members.

The PSP of Special Education and Training was established in 2018 with a 2-year study program. The students of the 2-year Postgraduate program are required to complete, in order to receive the degree, 6 Compulsory courses taught by the Faculty Members (of which 2 compulsory courses are related to dissertation/thesis/practicum). More specifically to obtain the Master degree, 120 credit units (ECTS) are required, divided into 4 semesters. The curriculum is composed of 8 mandatory modules (10 ECTS each), the practicum during the 3rd and/or 4th semester (20 ECTS), and the dissertation/thesis during the 4th semester (20 ECTS). All courses are taught face-to-face.

Admission to the Program of Special Education and Training takes place according to the general procedures and regulations of the Greek Ministry of Education. All candidates must sit a written exam followed by an interview. 12 students are accepted to the programme every year. The accepted students should have a recognized undergraduate degree in a related subject to education. The students do not have to pay fees.

According to its mission statement, the PSP in Special Education and Training provides students with knowledge, competences, and skills, which relate to the educational field and to the subjects of humanities. The main goals of the program are:

- To cultivate and promote the scientific field of Special Education in the context of theory and application.
- To promote specialized research on disability and inclusion.
- To provide its graduates with the necessary skills that will ensure excellent training for their scientific, research and professional careers.
- To contribute to the improvement of the level and meet the increasing needs of Education regarding Special Education issues.
- To contribute to addressing and solving problems related to Special Education.

The PSP in Special Education and Training also familiarizes the students with their future professional field through Teaching Practice/ Practicum.

PART B: COMPLIANCE WITH THE PRINCIPLES

PRINCIPLE 1: QUALITY ASSURANCE POLICY AND QUALITY GOAL SETTING FOR THE POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES OF THE INSTITUTION AND THE ACADEMIC UNIT

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 THE POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES OF THE INSTITUTION AND THE ACADEMIC UNIT. THIS POLICY SHOULD BE PUBLISHED AND IMPLEMENTED BY ALL STAKEHOLDERS.

The quality assurance policy of the academic unit should be in line with the quality assurance policy of the Institution and must be formulated in the form of a public statement, which is implemented by all stakeholders. It focuses on the achievement of special goals related to the quality assurance of the study programmes offered by the academic unit.

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

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

- a) the suitability of the structure and organisation of postgraduate study programmes*
- b) the pursuit of learning outcomes and qualifications in accordance with the European and National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education - level 7*
- c) the promotion of the quality and effectiveness of teaching at the PSP*
- d) the appropriateness of the qualifications of the teaching staff for the PSP*
- e) the drafting, implementation, and review of specific annual quality goals for the improvement of the PSP*
- f) the level of demand for the graduates' qualifications in the labour market*
- g) the quality of support services, such as the administrative services, the libraries and the student welfare office for the PSP*
- h) the efficient utilisation of the financial resources of the PSP that may be drawn from tuition fees*
- i) the conduct of an annual review and audit of the quality assurance system of the PSP through the cooperation of the Internal Evaluation Group (IEG) with the Institution's Quality Assurance Unit (QAU)*

Documentation

- Quality Assurance Policy of the PSP
- Quality goal setting of the PSP

Study Programme Compliance

Findings

- a) The suitability of the structure and organisation of postgraduate study Programs*

The organization of the PSP in Special Education and Training is explained in comprehensive documents provided to the EEAP that illustrate how the structure and organization of the

postgraduate study program conforms with the internationally established scientific field of Special and Inclusive Education.

The Program's core mission is to specialise postgraduate students in Special and Inclusive Education, in order to provide them with a more complete training, so that they can recognise and understand the particular characteristics of people with disabilities and/or special educational needs, to design, implement and evaluate appropriate educational interventions, as well as to be able to make use of the existing expertise in the field of Special Education and Education. In general, the ultimate goal is to provide specialized knowledge and develop appropriate skills for postgraduate students regarding Special Education, education, support and inclusion of people with disabilities/special educational needs in the school environment and in the wider society.

The Program "Special Education and Training" started in 2019 in order to provide innovative pedagogy and practice, cutting edge international research and a socially responsible educational agenda. The objectives of the Program are:

- To Identify and understand the particular characteristics and particularities of each form of disability and/or special educational needs.
- To approach scientifically and holistically the person with disabilities / special educational needs and offer substantial support at the micro level of the classroom and the macro level of their life.
- To design appropriate intervention programs responding effectively to the range of diversity and needs of students.
- To evaluate educational interventions, propose and integrate modern research data in the field of Special Education.

b) the pursuit of learning outcomes and qualifications in accordance with the European and National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education - level 7

The University of Ioannina follows the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) which is based on the principle of transparency in learning, and on specific teaching and assessment processes (ECTS Guide). One of the key features of the ECTS system is the mapping of the level of knowledge, skills and competences that are acquired by the student upon completion of the educational process and verified after evaluation (Annex A of ADIP). This is achieved by writing learning outcomes which are attributed to individual Thematic Units and to the Program of Study as a whole (Outline Form Course). The writing of learning outcomes is measurable and state what the students are expected to do when they complete successfully a Thematic Unit or the entire Curriculum. The University of Ioannina follows the Bloom & Krathwohl (1956) classification to create the learning outcomes, as grouped into the following categories: knowledge, understanding, implementation, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation (Annex B).

c) the promotion of the quality and effectiveness of teaching at the PSP

The University of Ioannina supports the learning and teaching process. The Department of Primary Education is a pedagogical department with expertise in teaching and learning.

To promote the quality and effectiveness of teaching the department of Primary education pays particular attention to: (1) monitoring and upgrading the quality, (2) widening the awareness regarding the PSP, (3) strengthening the Academic Development of the DEP members and (4) promoting the PSP interface with external organizations. The University assesses the quality of the educational process at the end of each semester through questionnaires. Surveys are anonymous and allow students to provide appropriate feedback.

d) the appropriateness of the qualifications of the teaching staff for the PSP

The teaching staff for the PSP consists of highly qualified professionals with expertise in various fields related to Special and Inclusive Education. This expertise ensures that students receive a well-rounded education that addresses the complex challenges of Special and Inclusive Education.

The faculty members possess strong competence in Special Education, which is crucial for teaching in diverse educational settings. This competence enables them to effectively address the teaching and learning needs of all students.

Several faculty members are actively engaged in research related to special and inclusive education. This research orientation ensures that the teaching staff remain up to date with the latest developments in the field and can impart cutting-edge knowledge to students.

Several faculty members also have practical teaching experience in special and inclusive classrooms. This first-hand experience allows them to share real-world insights and best practices with their students.

e) The drafting, implementation, and review of specific annual quality goals for the improvement of the PSP

The implementation and review of specific annual quality goals for the improvement of the PSP include the continuous monitoring and evaluation of the critical components in order to ensure it remains on the forefront of social/cultural change and demands of society. The operational structure of the program includes learning outcomes that are research-based and data-driven and subsume the European and National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education. The specific annual quality goals include a focus on effective faculty development, and research and teaching calculated to result in well-prepared postgraduates ready to assume a variety of professional roles not limited to teaching.

The Strategic Objectives for each axis of activity (1. Education, 2. Research, 3. Connection with society, 4. Internationalization, 5. University environment and 6. Quality Assurance) of the

program, are accompanied by more specific actions measured by metrics. Some of the objectives of the PSP, as described in document A3 are:

- Increase the participation of students in the evaluation procedure
- Strengthen the presence of the PSP in Internet
- Consolidate communications with Alumni

The EEAP observed that (1) the drafting, implementation, and review of specific annual quality goals are clearly outlined and include critical objectives and desired outcomes and (2) that the support of the members of the PSP assures: (a) the efficacy of the structure and organization, (b) the continual review of learning outcomes vis a vis desired competencies that conform with the European and National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education, (c) the continual review and improvement of the quality and effectiveness of course delivery and instruction, and (d) appropriate faculty qualifications.

f) the level of demand for the graduates' qualifications in the labour market

The Program is designed to cater to the needs of teachers and graduates who aspire to enhance their skills and knowledge in Special and Inclusive Education. The Program addresses primary and secondary education levels as well as tertiary graduates interested in teaching students considered having special needs, and it encompasses teachers working in special education. The primary objectives of this Program are to provide students with knowledge, competences, and skills, which relate to the special educational field. The Program is practical and experiential, offering a 500-hour practicum in a variety of educational structures in Special Education.

The Program consists of 8 modules (plus practicum, plus thesis), with each module contributing to the development of special educators' skills and knowledge in various aspects of special education teaching, including the various forms of special educational needs. These modules span across four semesters and cover diverse topics such as sociological approaches of disability, philosophical approaches of disability, Pedagogy of Inclusion, Learning Difficulties, Differentiation of teaching in Special Education, applied positive psychology on special education and research methodology in special education. The Program culminates in a practicum and a master's dissertation.

Furthermore, the Program's recognition of the importance of inclusive education aligns with the growing awareness of the benefits of diversity in educational settings. By incorporating these elements into the curriculum, the Program equips educators to create inclusive responsive learning environments.

The acceptance of graduates or diploma holders from related disciplines with B2 certification in English, along with the option for additional foreign language proficiency, ensures that the Program attracts a diverse pool of students who can contribute to the Program's international character. Moreover, the Program's adherence to international language proficiency

standards enhances its credibility and ensures that students have the necessary language skills to engage effectively in an English-medium program.

g) The Quality of Support Services for the PSP

The Program has taken substantial measures to provide essential support services to its PSP students. These services encompass administrative support, access to libraries, and a student welfare office. Additionally, the wide array of support services, including scholarship and internship offices, underscores the institution's commitment to comprehensive student development.

h) the conduct of an annual review and audit of the quality assurance system of the PSP through the cooperation of the Internal Evaluation Group (IEG) with the Institution's Quality Assurance Unit (QAU)

The internal evaluation procedures carried out at the level of the Department and Study Programs are the responsibility of the Internal Quality Assurance System (IQAS) of the University and the Quality Assurance Unit (MODIP)

MODIP obtains information to determine the level of quality of all aspects of the educational process. The main goal of this process is to contribute to the continuous quality upgrade of the services provided by the University.

All members of academic personnel receive a grade of evaluation by students using an anonymous questionnaire.

On the website of Programme detailed information on the evaluation actions is available.

The assessment takes place in electronic form via the internet and then the data is fed into an algorithm to calculate the average level per target module.

Analysis

The Program is based on a global view of the educator as being performance connected to societal demands, having competence in subject matter specialization, and developing critical thinking and creativity. The students as “life-long learners” have successfully completed a practicum and have experience in teaching in classrooms with children seen as having special educational needs.

The PSP offers a variety of Modules for the theoretical training of students concerning both the theory of special education as well as the practical application of all modern methods of educational planning, teaching and research. A special emphasis is given to interdisciplinarity - combining the fields of special and inclusive education, pedagogy, teaching, educational policy, psychology, research methodology and human rights.

The qualifications of the teaching staff for the Program are highly appropriate for the program's objectives and target audience. The Program's diverse expertise, inclusive competence, research engagement, and practical experience align with the program's focus on preparing teachers and graduates to work effectively in inclusive educational settings.

The Program appears to be well-structured and comprehensive, offering a holistic approach to special education for children considered as having special educational needs. Its design aligns with the current needs and challenges in the field of special education, particularly in contexts marked by diversity and inclusion. The Program's focus on inclusive education is noteworthy, as it empowers educators to not only teach children with disabilities but also promote social justice, equality, and inclusion within their teaching practices. The inclusion of modules covering topics like sociological approaches to disability and Pedagogies of inclusion demonstrates a commitment to addressing the broader social issues that affect learners in these contexts. Additionally, the emphasis on practical experiences, such as visits to educational institutions and project work, ensures that graduates are well-prepared to apply their knowledge and skills in real-world settings.

Conclusion

The Program presented the EEAP with documents that clearly and comprehensively elaborate the suitability of the structure and organisation of the PSP. The materials presented to the EEAP also verified the ostensibly sound form and function of the PSP. The curriculum design provides critical elements for competent special educators.

The approach adopted by the teaching staff enriches the program's curriculum and ensures that students receive a holistic education that combines theoretical knowledge with practical insights on special and inclusive education. Overall, the teaching staff's qualifications contribute significantly to the program's effectiveness in training educators who can make a positive impact on the lives of children with disabilities.

The quality goals presented by the personnel for the improvement of the PSP are consistent with the best practices in education and concomitant research agendas that are connected to cutting edge scientific inquiry in the higher education sphere in Europe.

The Program stands as a comprehensive program that equips educators with the knowledge, skills, and perspectives needed to teach children with disabilities in diverse contexts. Its commitment to inclusive education makes it a valuable contribution to the field of special education. Furthermore, its emphasis on practical experiences and engagement with real-world contexts prepares graduates to be effective and compassionate educators in today's globalized world. This Program's recognition of the importance of inclusion is particularly commendable, as it reflects an understanding of the diversity of modern society. Overall, this Program is a significant step towards addressing the educational needs of children with disabilities and promoting inclusive education as a tool for empowerment and social change.

The Program provides comprehensive support services to PSP students. The emphasis on electronic resources in the library system aligns with contemporary educational needs, ensuring that students have immediate access to vital academic information. These findings reflect positively on the Program's efforts to create an environment conducive to effective learning and student success. The University of Ioannina has demonstrated a strong commitment to providing robust support services to its PSP students. The comprehensive suite

of support services enriches the overall student experience. However, continuous efforts to enhance awareness and accessibility of these services among students could further improve the support system.

Panel Judgement

Principle 1: Quality assurance policy and quality goal setting for the postgraduate study programmes of the institution and the academic unit	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	X
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

- The EEAP recommends that fees be added to the programme, and if there are fees then the number of admitted students can be increased in order to create sections with a substantial number of students.
- All syllabi must be updated with up-to-date bibliographic references and more detailed content of each course.

PRINCIPLE 2: DESIGN AND APPROVAL OF POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD DEVELOP THEIR POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES FOLLOWING A DEFINED WRITTEN PROCESS WHICH WILL INVOLVE THE PARTICIPANTS, INFORMATION SOURCES AND THE APPROVAL COMMITTEES FOR THE POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES. THE OBJECTIVES, THE EXPECTED LEARNING OUTCOMES AND THE EMPLOYMENT PROSPECTS ARE SET OUT IN THE PROGRAMME DESIGN. DURING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES, THE DEGREE OF ACHIEVEMENT OF THE LEARNING OUTCOMES SHOULD BE ASSESSED. THE ABOVE DETAILS, AS WELL AS INFORMATION ON THE PROGRAMME'S STRUCTURE ARE PUBLISHED IN THE STUDENT GUIDE.

The academic units develop their postgraduate study programmes following a well-defined procedure. The academic profile and orientation of the programme, the research character, the scientific objectives, the specific subject areas, and specialisations are described at this stage.

The structure, content and organisation of courses and teaching methods should be oriented towards deepening knowledge and acquiring the corresponding skills to apply the said knowledge (e.g. course on research methodology, participation in research projects, thesis with a research component).

The expected learning outcomes must be determined based on the European and National Qualifications Framework (EQF, NQF), and the Dublin Descriptors for level 7. During the implementation of the programme, the degree of achievement of the expected learning outcomes and the feedback of the learning process must be assessed with the appropriate tools. For each learning outcome that is designed and made public, it is necessary that its evaluation criteria are also designed and made public.

In addition, the design of PSP must consider:

- *the Institutional strategy*
- *the active involvement of students*
- *the experience of external stakeholders from the labour market*
- *the anticipated student workload according to the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) for level 7*
- *the option of providing work experience to students*
- *the linking of teaching and research*
- *the relevant regulatory framework and the official procedure for the approval of the PSP by the Institution*

The procedure of approval or revision of the programmes provides for the verification of compliance with the basic requirements of the Standards by the Institution's Quality Assurance Unit (QAU).

Documentation

- *Senate decision for the establishment of the PSP*
- *PSP curriculum structure: courses, course categories, ECTS awarded, expected learning outcomes according to the EQF, internship, mobility opportunities*
- *Labour market data regarding the employment of graduates, international experience in a relevant scientific field*
- *PSP Student Guide*
- *Course and thesis outlines*
- *Teaching staff (name list including of areas of specialisation, its relation to the courses taught, employment relationship, and teaching assignment in hours as well as other teaching commitments in hours)*

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The EEAP found that the University of Ioannina PSP in Special Education and Training is following a well-defined procedure. The features outlined in the Study Guide (2022-2023) of the Program include the description and objectives of the organization of the program - including the educational, scientific, and professional focus of it. The Program is in Greek, was founded in 2018, is based on the current concepts and findings of the scientific fields and, more specifically, as they are designated by the international categorization in education, by UNESCO ISCED-2011 for level 7, and ISCED-2013 0114 for Teacher Training with subject specialization.

The Study Guide outlines in detail a clear path for student progression which includes the delivery and assessment methods of the curriculum, as well as its alignment with the European Course Credits System (ECTS). To obtain the Master degree, 120 credit units (ECTS) are required, divided into 4 semesters. The progression in the modules from the first through the last semester is clearly outlined, with a focus on Special and Inclusive Education. The curriculum is composed of 4 mandatory courses (10 ECTS each), four elective courses (10 ECTS each), the practicum during the 4th semester (20 ECTS), and the dissertation/thesis during the 4th semester (20 ECTS), all taught face-to-face. The formative component of the assessment is evaluated with the appropriate tools and comprises of a series of assignments with which students engage, namely various Evaluation Activities and Short Essays. The summative assessment of the module is a Final Essay or a final exam. To prepare students for their thesis, a module of Research Methodology is provided during the 3rd semester.

The linkage between teaching and research is achieved by integrating recent research findings into the modules taught by the faculty members, and by engaging the students through assignments, within the framework of the subjects taught, as well as the thesis.

Several stakeholders and social partners are collaborating with the program, such as the Municipality of Ioannina, the coordinator of Special Education in Ioannina, the Teachers' Association, the National Confederation of Disabled people, and others. During our meeting with several of the stakeholders, they informed the EEAP that they offer regular informal feedback to their colleagues and provide information on opportunities for field experiences.

The direction of the Program of Studies is undertaken by the Director who is a DEP member. He calls at regular intervals the instructors to discuss issues and make decisions or suggestions to the Department of Primary Education. The official procedure for the approval of the PSP in Special Education and Training is approved by the Department of Primary Education and it is published on the website of the University.

II. Analysis

The PSP finds that the subject field of study is appropriate and that it conforms with universally accepted standards for Special Education.

There is a procedure in place for periodic revisions of the Program curriculum. As a result, the teaching staff in the Program have recently updated the content of the courses, in order to

better correspond to the new challenges in our diverse society. They are all committed to the continuous improvement of teaching. The EEAP assesses the curriculum as one that provides the required skills for the specialization of the students in their field.

III. Conclusions

The EEAP concludes that the subject PSP amply considers both the needs of the students and the realities of the labour market and, more specifically, the special education (in public and private schools, tutorial schools, and special educational structures). The practicum is mandatory, and it is well attended by all students.

This PSP has a structure that needs to be improved. The elective courses have to be significantly reduced.

Panel Judgement

Principle 2: Design and approval of postgraduate study programmes	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	X
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

The EEAP recommends that elective courses be significantly reduced so that there is real choice by students and to create sections with a significant number of students so that there is interaction during teaching.

PRINCIPLE 3: STUDENT-CENTRED LEARNING, TEACHING, AND ASSESSMENT

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD ENSURE THAT POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES PROVIDE THE NECESSARY CONDITIONS TO ENCOURAGE STUDENTS TO TAKE AN ACTIVE ROLE IN THE LEARNING PROCESS. THE ASSESSMENT METHODS SHOULD REFLECT THIS APPROACH.

Student-centred learning and teaching plays an important role in enhancing students' motivation, their self-evaluation, and their active participation 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 by adopting 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*
- *strengthens 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 the students' complaints*
- *provides counselling and guidance for the preparation of the thesis*

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.*
- *Assessment is consistent, fairly applied to all students and conducted in accordance with the stated procedures.*
- *A formal procedure for student appeals is in place.*
- *The function of the academic advisor runs smoothly.*

Documentation

- *Sample of a fully completed questionnaire for the evaluation of the PSP by the students*
- *Regulations for dealing with students' complaints and appeals*
- *Regulation for the function of academic advisor*
- *Reference to the teaching modes and assessment methods*

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The postgraduate Program "Special Education and Training" give the possibility to the students to fill out an evaluation questionnaire. The questionnaires answered are forwarded to the

MODIP for processing. The results of the analysis of responses are sent to the Head of the Department, who in cooperation with the director of the PSP, sends them to the teaching staff. Students seem to be familiar with the electronic method of completing these questionnaires. The percentage of participation for evaluation of study program is not satisfactory.

Courses evidence a variety of enriching learning/teaching methods that promote engagement and active learning. Students are encouraged to develop individual skills. In several of their classes they are asked to work with classmates in small groups and complete a project and, when completed, they are to present their work and results. That helps them develop several “soft” skills which they will help them throughout their careers: communication, teamwork, leadership, public speaking, to name a few.

The Department provides an Academic Advisor for each postgraduate student in order to advise him during his/her studies. It also provides counselling and guidance for the preparation of the thesis by a well-defined procedure: first establishing the topic, then identify a three-member faculty committee, and ensure the student’s submission of the research proposal. Students have regular communication with the coordinator of their thesis. The Thesis also provides the possibility for publications by the student, thus enhancing the student's progress.

It also appears that the students are consulting with their advisors and approach their faculty member for questions related to their studies. There are appropriate procedures for dealing with the students’ complaints. Based on the “Regulation for the Management of Complaints and Appeals,” in case the issues that concern the student exceed the advisor’s competence, the matter is transferred to the Director and the Coordinating committee of the program.

II. Analysis of judgement

All entering students are assigned an academic advisor and are made aware of an existing formal process for student appeals and complaints, along with general useful information about the university, buildings, facilities, and the local area.

When asked about the quality of instruction and the commitment of the teaching staff to their learning, the interviewed students’ responses were invariably very positive. There appears to be good rapport between the student body and the teaching staff which underlines the mutual respect that characterizes their relationship.

III. Conclusions

Interviewing colleagues and students of the program allowed us to witness that the program has improved and changed over the years. The students are aware of the attendance and assessment criteria for each class. Student assessment is carried out in accordance with the program’s regulations, which are consistently and fairly applied to all students. Grade components and assessment methods are published in advance and are available in the courses’ syllabi.

There is clear evidence that student-centred learning, teaching, and assessment is a priority of the director and of the teaching staff of the department. The teaching staff deploy a variety of

modes of delivery of the material (through lectures, lab sessions, small group projects, and electronically) that offers students the flexibility to choose the learning path that works best for each of them.

The student participation in the evaluation procedure is low and therefore the students' opinions cannot be taken into consideration for the continuous improvement of the Program's quality.

Panel Judgement

Principle 3: Student-centred learning, teaching, and assessment	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

- The EEAP suggest that the department encourages student evaluations on a semester base and increases the number of evaluated courses. The department should update freshmen students on the evaluation procedure at the welcome event and systematically inform them throughout their studies, mentioning that the students' evaluations are a major part of the quality monitoring procedure.
- The EEAP also suggest that a more systematic utilization of results of the evaluation should be taken into consideration for further improvement of the PSP.

PRINCIPLE 4: STUDENT ADMISSION, PROGRESSION, RECOGNITION OF POSTGRADUATE STUDIES, AND CERTIFICATION.

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

All the issues from the beginning to the end of studies should be governed by the internal regulations of the academic units. Indicatively:

- *the student admission procedures and the required supporting documents*
- *student rights and obligations, and monitoring of student progression*
- *internship issues, if applicable, and granting of scholarships*
- *the procedures and terms for the drafting of assignments and the thesis*
- *the procedure of award and recognition of degrees, the duration of studies, the conditions for progression and for the assurance of the progress of students in their studies*
- *the terms and conditions for enhancing student mobility*

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

Documentation

- *Internal regulation for the operation of the Postgraduate Study Programme*
- *Research Ethics Regulation*
- *Regulation of studies, internship, mobility, and student assignments*
- *Degree certificate template*

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The Postgraduate Program of Special Education and Training (PPSET) is a degree that leads to the acquisition of a title strongly linked to the market and provides almost immediate employability to the educational system of the country. Despite the high numbers of applicants (approx. 250 each year) the PPSET accepts around 12-14 students. Entrance exams have a rather high degree of difficulty however this warrants the level of student enter in this particular postgraduate degree.

The Program explained to the Panel of reviewers that this small number of students allow the existence of academic advisors throughout their studies. According to “Α11. Κανονισμός Λειτουργίας Θεσμού Ακαδημαϊκού Συμβούλου Σπουδών” entrance to the degree and completion of studies become smoother as any difficulty may encounter during their postgraduate studies they know where to seek help. Additionally, the Program provides to its graduate students a complete Study Guide on an annual basis. Students are offered the opportunity to participate in a practicum/traineeship program (πρακτική άσκηση). The Program has established a wide network of collaboration with a variety of external institutions and social partners.

The study program includes the completion of an MA thesis. Before the topic and the three-member faculty committee are established, student must submit a research proposal.

The Program has in place some mobility agreements to promote the mobility of students and faculty members. However, it seems that the low number of mobility in terms of student exchange it is a result of the immediate employability of its graduates who tend to prefer working stability than getting the experience of another country although they expressed their wish to be part of such a program.

II. Analysis of Judgement

This particular program has a reputation in the area of Epirus and its periphery, and it offers to its students a degree that leads to a secure place in the market. It has a well-established process for students to register and matriculate through the study program. The practicum is well attended and organized for all students. Moreover, the role of academic advisor throughout the two-year studies provides the opportunity to its students the chance to discuss potential problems and difficulties that have arisen during its implementation with their academic supervisor. The thesis is part of the curriculum giving the students the opportunity to develop their research interests and skills.

III. Conclusions

All procedures concerning students' admission, progression, recognition, and certification are based on the institutional study regulations. All steps across the degree are well explained to its students. Students are well prepared to work in a demanding field such as Special Education and Training. Teaching staff and student's relationships are good based on the data collected during the accreditation meetings.

Panel Judgement

Principle 4: Student admission, progression, recognition of postgraduate studies and certification	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

- Overall, the panel is satisfied with all the material and the mechanisms supporting its students during their studies. What it is recommended by the panel is an increase in the number of students as to provide the opportunity for more interaction especially within elective courses. Elective courses should be reduced to eight (8) across the degree (10 in three semesters) and the panel noted the running of some of them with a very small number of students which is not beneficial for either the student or the faculty.
- Additionally, the panel encourages students and faculty to use more the mobility programs.

PRINCIPLE 5: TEACHING STAFF OF POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD ASSURE THEMSELVES OF THE LEVEL OF KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS OF THEIR TEACHING STAFF, AND APPLY FAIR AND TRANSPARENT PROCESSES FOR THEIR RECRUITMENT, TRAINING AND FURTHER DEVELOPMENT.

The Institution should attend to the adequacy of the teaching staff of the academic unit teaching at the PSP, the appropriate staff-student ratio, the appropriate staff categories, the appropriate subject areas, the fair and objective recruitment process, the high research performance, the training- development, the staff development policy (including participation in mobility schemes, conferences, and educational leaves-as mandated by law).

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

Documentation

- *Procedures and criteria for teaching staff recruitment*
- *Employment regulations or contracts, and obligations of the teaching staff*
- *Policy for staff support and development*
- *Individual performance of the teaching staff in scientific-research and teaching work, based on internationally recognised systems of scientific evaluation (e.g. Google Scholar, Scopus, etc.)*
- *List of teaching staff including subject areas, employment relationship, Institution of origin, Department of origin*

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

As far as the procedures of employment, opening of positions and assurance of faculty promotion the panel has no comments as these procedures are governed centrally by the Ministry of Education and the Administration of the University in relation with the Department. Staff did express their wish for personal development (i.e. conferences, publication, further training) however the lack of funding does not make it possible.

Teaching faculty has all the skills and knowledge to teach in such a demanding degree and the link with external partners give more strength to the degree. Elective courses are taught from adjunct faculty from other departments. This is a good practice and strengthens an interdisciplinary philosophy of this particular degree.

Despite the panel expressed a worry over the small number of students however this situation has created a good atmosphere along faculty and students. This is reflected on a good record of publications students (A.16) and faculty have established over the past few years.

II. Analysis

The panel of experts analysed all documents submitted prior to the accreditation visit, including the updated documents and presentations during the visit and took into consideration the discussions with staff about the processes of staff recruitment, workload, and the supporting system in place for the advancement of the scientific work of the academic staff. It also took into consideration discussion with students, graduates, employers, and other stakeholders regarding the link between teaching and research. The UoI provides staff with a supportive environment that promotes the advancement of their scientific work. It applies fair and transparent processes for the recruitment of development of the teaching staff.

III. Conclusions

The panel of experts having discussed, read and exchanged information with the staff expresses the need for the introduction of fees into this particular degree in order to allow further advancement of staff in the scientific community. In particular, the panel recommends all faculty to use the mobility programs to some point as to develop an extended network of partners, to participate in conferences and publish in journal that require service fee.

Overall the panel is satisfied with the level of teaching staff in the PPSET.

Panel Judgement

Principle 5: Teaching staff of postgraduate study programmes	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

None.

PRINICPLE 6: LEARNING RESOURCES AND STUDENT SUPPORT

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

Institutions and their academic units must have sufficient resources and means, on a planned and long-term basis, to support learning and academic activity in general, so as to offer PSP students the best possible level of studies. The above means include facilities such as the necessary general and more specialised libraries and possibilities for access to electronic databases, study rooms, educational and scientific equipment, IT and communication services, support and counselling services.

When allocating the available resources, the needs of all students must be taken into consideration (e.g. whether they are full-time or part-time students, employed students, students with disabilities), in addition to 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 proves -on the one hand- the quantity and quality of the available facilities and services, and -on the other hand- that students are aware of all available services.

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

Documentation

- Detailed description of the infrastructure and services made available by the Institution to the academic unit for the PSP, to support learning and academic activity (human resources, infrastructure, services, etc.) and the corresponding firm commitment of the Institution to financially cover these infrastructure-services from state or other resources
- Administrative support staff of the PSP (job descriptions, qualifications and responsibilities)
- Informative / promotional material given to students with reference to the available services
- Tuition utilisation plan (if applicable)

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

Provision of Facilities for the Teaching and Learning Environment

The basic infrastructures that host the program's research and educational activities respond functionally to the needs of postgraduate students. More specifically the program has a total of ten statutory laboratories, a seminar hall and two large auditoriums, which are fully equipped. Additionally, the program grants free access to the Central Library (<http://www.lib.uoi.gr>) of the University of Ioannina and to a wide range of electronic and printed resources. Students and alumni have reported easy accessibility to the digital library, databases, and IT infrastructure.

Range of Support Services

The Program offers support services designed to the different needs of its students. These services include IT Services and Administrative services and other supporting services, which are provided by the Program or by the University of Ioannina. Each service addresses specific aspects of student requirements, including student accommodation, boarding, healthcare and psychological support, career and academic guidance with the aid of an Academic advisor and collaboration with relevant departments like DASTA or other university's activities about cultural groups and events. Both students and alumni reported that they were thoroughly informed about these services, when they have joined in their programs.

Awareness and Accessibility of Services

Academic staff, students, and alumni agree that the services are generally user-friendly and easily accessible. Administrative staff not only provide extensive guidance but also assist with technical issues through email or telephone. Furthermore, the University of Ioannina offers to all postgraduate students' free access to the internet via WIFI (SSID: UoI). This network is always open and accessible to postgraduate students of this Program at every point of the Department of Primary Education of the University of Ioannina. It's worth mentioning that academics constantly and actively assist students in using these services.

Administrative Staff for Support Services

Administrative staff is the main pillar of the administrative support for the students, dealing with bureaucratic, operational or organizational issues of the Program. Furthermore, it's worth noting that the Program's administrative branches provide through (students web<https://classweb.uoi.gr/>) easy accessibility to a variety of services in order to assist its students' academic needs. Administrative staff is also responsible for the coordination of the academic staff, for the maintenance of records, for providing administrative assistance and for the implementation of the decisions by the Board.

The ERASMUS+ Office

The ERASMUS+ Office provides the opportunity to foreign students to participate in the Program as postgraduate students. Furthermore, educational material and curriculum is also available in English.

Educational Platforms and Videoconferencing

The Program fully utilizes the Asynchronous Platform for Distance Learning of the University of Ioannina (<http://ecourse.uoi.gr/>) in order to achieve the collaboration among students and faculty. Furthermore, through this platform academics provide postgraduate students with additional educational material, assign tasks, design and implement assessment activities. Moreover, in this platform students have the ability to interact and communicate with each other. Additionally, students and alumni have described as effortless the experience of using these services.

II. Analysis of Judgement

EEAP members have examined carefully these findings and accentuated Program's commitment on providing crucial supporting services to its students. The wide range of support services indicates the Program's dedication to its student further evolution and development. Furthermore, the focus on the optimization and enhancement of the available electronic and printed resources lines up with current and future educational needs, simplifying and grant access to fundamental material and knowledge significant for academic evolution.

III. Conclusions

In closing, the Program displays a solid and robust determination and commitment to providing its students with a wide range of services, managed by committed and well-organized administrative departments and staff. Moreover, Program has made creditable steps and efforts in order to support its students and with an honest commitment for further improvement, it can improve the quality of its supporting services, despite its lack of government funding.

Panel Judgement

Principle 6: Learning resources and student support	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

The EEAP suggests that a tuition utilization plan would offer transparency in financial matters related to student support.

PRINCIPLE 7: INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

INSTITUTIONS BEAR FULL RESPONSIBILITY FOR COLLECTING, ANALYSING AND USING INFORMATION, AIMED AT THE EFFICIENT MANAGEMENT OF POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES 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.

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

The information collected 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 programmes*
- *availability of learning resources and student support*

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

Documentation

- *Report from the National Information System for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (NISQA) at the level of the Institution, the department, and the PSP*
- *Operation of an information management system for the collection of administrative data for the implementation of the PSP (Students' Record)*
- *Other tools and procedures designed to collect data on the academic and administrative functions of the academic unit and the PSP*

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

Data Collection Procedures

The Program has laid the foundations of solidly built procedures for the systematic collection of data regarding various aspects of its academic unit. These procedures incorporate information about the teaching methods and skills, the content, the difficulty and the usefulness of the available courses, the students' satisfaction with their program, on whether and how new technologies were used, the availability of electronic and printed resources, the students' further progression, employability, the career development of graduates. Moreover, the academic staff is obliged to upload data related to their research projects at least once annually for further processing and evaluation by MODIP. The collection of data occurs at different and multiple levels within the Program to ensure a more extensive coverage.

Information Systems and Collection Methods

The Program employs a combination of an information system, which is used for the collection, process and data management (<https://classweb.uoi.gr/>) and one single method to collect data by evaluation questionnaires. The Program employs a data-driven approach to gather accurate and up-to-date information.

Student Satisfaction Surveys

Regular student satisfaction surveys by evaluation questionnaires are an essential element of the Program's data collection efforts. These questionnaires provide valuable aspects of students' experiences, concerns, and suggestions for improvement. These surveys are conducted anonymously, fifteen days before the end of the semester in order to capture the valid feelings and expectations of the students' academic experience. Furthermore, the data are presented and are easily accessible to both the academic staff and the students.

II. Analysis of Judgement

The Program displays a solid commitment to employ the data, which are collected from personal and anonymous questionnaires efficiently. The collected data are regularly analysed in order to identify the main tendencies, the fields of improvement and areas of evolution and growth. The findings are communicated to relevant departments and stakeholders in order to ensure pellucidity and liability. Moreover, data are mainly used for the improvement of the teaching methods and skills, support services, IT facilities, efficiency and accessibility of electronic and printed resources highlighting a wide range of aspects of the academic unit. The analysis of these data assists in the identification of insufficiencies or areas where improvements are required. The Program utilizes graphs and charts to make the collected data accessible both to the teaching staff and the students.

III. Conclusions

In conclusion, the Program has laid the foundations of solid procedures for the systematic collection of data including a variety of fields and aspects of the academic unit like teaching methods and skills, the content, the difficulty and the usefulness of the available courses,

employability and career development of graduates. The Program employs a combination of information systems for the collection, process and data management by evaluation questionnaires and collaboration with relevant departments to protect the efficiency of data collection. Additionally, the data are presented in a comprehensive and informative way. Moreover, personal questionnaires of the students are giving significant feedback in order to abduct crucial outcomes for the experience and expectations of students about the Program. In closing, the Program displays a robust commitment to a data-driven model and with constant improvement in data collection procedures grant to the Program's goal on providing a great educational experience to its students.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

None.

PRINCIPLE 8: PUBLIC INFORMATION CONCERNING THE POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD PUBLISH INFORMATION ABOUT THEIR TEACHING AND ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES RELATED TO THE POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES IN A DIRECT AND READILY ACCESSIBLE WAY. THE RELEVANT INFORMATION SHOULD BE UP-TO-DATE, OBJECTIVE AND CLEAR.

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

Therefore, Institutions and their academic units must provide information about their activities, including the PSP they offer, the intended learning outcomes, the degrees awarded, the teaching, learning and assessment procedures applied, the pass rates, and the learning opportunities available to their students. Information is also provided on the employment perspectives of PSP graduates.

Documentation

- *Dedicated segment on the website of the department for the promotion of the PSP*
- *Bilingual version of the PSP website with complete, clear and objective information*
- *Provision for website maintenance and updating*

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

Availability of Key Information

The key information about the academic unit and the Postgraduate Program (PSP) is indeed available online. This includes details about the program's structure, mode of attendance, assessment criteria, the degree awarded, and the CVs of teaching staff. Information are provided both in Greek and English.

Dedicated Website Segment

There is a dedicated section on the Program's website that serves the purpose of promoting the Postgraduate Program (PSP). This segment is designed to provide comprehensive information to prospective students and other interested parties.

Availability of Course Outlines

All course outlines for the PSP are accessible online IN Greek and English. These outlines offer a detailed overview of the program's curriculum, including course descriptions, learning objectives, and assessment methods. They are a valuable resource for both current and prospective students.

Policy for Quality Assurance

The Program's Policy for Quality Assurance is accessible online via the PSP website. This policy outlines the strategies and measures in place to ensure the program's quality and effectiveness. MODIP is the quality assurance unit within the Program. It was founded as part of the continuous evaluation of the educational and research activities, as well as the functioning and performance of the institution. Its purpose is to guarantee and enhance the quality of these aspects, in alignment with global standards and the principles outlined by the Authority for Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Higher Education (ADIP). The role of

MODIP extends to providing advice to the university's administration and coordinating efforts to establish policies and procedures that promote Quality Assurance and efficient Evaluation, all in accordance with the existing institutional framework.

Clarity and Accessibility of Information

The information published on the PSP website is generally up-to-date, clear, and easily accessible. This accessibility is crucial for prospective students who rely on accurate and current information to make informed decisions about their academic pursuits.

II. Analysis

The presence of a dedicated website segment for promoting the PSP demonstrates a commitment to transparency and communication. This is essential for attracting potential students and providing them with a comprehensive understanding of the program's offerings.

The availability of course outlines online is a positive aspect, as it assists students in understanding the program's structure and content. These outlines serve as a valuable resource for both students and educators, ensuring transparency in the learning process.

The accessibility of the academic unit's Policy for Quality Assurance on the PSP website underscores a commitment to maintaining high educational standards. This transparency helps build trust among students and stakeholders, demonstrating a dedication to program quality.

III. Conclusions

In conclusion, the Program responsible for the Postgraduate Program (PSP) has made commendable efforts to make key information readily available online. The presence of a dedicated website segment for program promotion, complete course outlines, and accessible policies for quality assurance is indicative of a commitment to transparency and accountability.

Overall, the Program's efforts in providing clear, comprehensive, and accessible online information contribute positively to the program's reputation and appeal to prospective students.

Panel Judgement

Principle 8: Public information concerning the postgraduate study programmes	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

None.

PRINCIPLE 9: ON-GOING MONITORING AND PERIODIC INTERNAL EVALUATION OF POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES

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

The regular monitoring, review, and revision of postgraduate study programmes aim at maintaining the level of educational provision and creating a supportive and effective learning environment for students.

The above comprise the evaluation of:

- a) the content of the programme in the light of the latest research in the given discipline, thus ensuring that the PSP is up to date*
 - b) the changing needs of society*
 - c) the students' workload, progression and completion of the postgraduate studies*
 - d) the effectiveness of the procedures for the assessment of students*
 - e) the students' expectations, needs and satisfaction in relation to the programme*
 - f) the learning environment, support services, and their fitness for purpose for the PSP in question*
- Postgraduate study 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.*

Documentation

- *Procedure for the re-evaluation, redefinition and updating of the PSP curriculum*
- *Procedure for mitigating weaknesses and upgrading the structure of the PSP and the learning process*
- *Feedback processes concerning the strategy and quality goal setting of the PSP and relevant decision-making processes (students, external stakeholders)*
- *Results of the annual internal evaluation of the PSP by the Quality Assurance Unit (QAU), and the relevant minutes*

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The PSP of Special Education examines, revises, and updates the syllabus of courses based on the evaluation of students and the observations of the standing committee of its director. Special account is also taken in the development of modern scientific findings on disability, and special education. The internal evaluation of courses and teaching staff is implemented in accordance with the Objectives of the PSP and the Internal System of Quality Assurance of the University of Ioannina.

II. Analysis of judgement

The internal review of the Department indicates that there is an effort to revisit the program and modernize it to reflect current scientific trends while adjusting it to address the realistic abilities of the program, the issues of the background levels of the students, and changing societal needs.

Students have indicated that there is familial relationship between them, and the faculty and they feel comfortable discussing course aspects and problems with them directly. Several students and some faculty indicated that this approach may be desirable and more effective. However, in instances where study program changes are needed, a more structured and data-driven approach may be more efficient.

There is a need for systematic and continuous review of the study program to ensure that the Department respond to the challenges at hand and identifies actionable paths to ensure that it develops its identity.

The Department should consider the development of a survey of its graduates to obtain a program evaluation and identify potential areas of improvement. This would provide an opportunity to students to reflect on their knowledge gained and identify potential areas of changes.

III. Conclusions

All improvements to the program are decided by the Assembly of the Department where the question is suggested by the director of the PSP, who presents in detail the results of the Internal Evaluation and the proposals of both the Coordinating Committee and the teaching staff.

Panel Judgement

Principle 9: On-going monitoring and periodic internal evaluation of postgraduate study programmes	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

- The EEAP recommends a systematic effort to hire new faculty and add fees. There is a need for systematic and continuous review of the study program to ensure that the Department respond to the challenges at hand and identifies actionable paths to ensure that it develops its identity.
- It is recommended that the department develop a survey to measure how to improve the program and establish an Advisory Board to help the program improvement.

PRINCIPLE 10: REGULAR EXTERNAL EVALUATION OF POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES

THE POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES SHOULD REGULARLY UNDERGO EVALUATION BY PANELS 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 PSP accreditation process which is realised as an external evaluation procedure, and implemented by panels of independent experts. HAHE grants accreditation of programmes, based on the Reports delivered by the panels of external experts, with a specific term of validity, following to which, revision is required. The quality accreditation of the PSP acts as a means for the determination of the degree of compliance of the programme to the Standards, and as a catalyst for improvement, while opening new perspectives towards the international standing of the awarded degrees. Both academic units and Institutions must consistently consider the conclusions and the recommendations submitted by the panels of experts for the continuous improvement of the programme.

Documentation

- *Progress report of the PSP in question, on the results from the utilisation of possible recommendations included in the External Evaluation Report of the Institution, and in the IQAS Accreditation Report, with relation to the postgraduate study programmes*

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

This is the first external evaluation that is conducted for the Program. As such there are no prior recommendations to be followed. The Program has a process for reviewing the findings and recommendations of such external evaluations. The OMEA after analysing the recommendations of the external evaluation report, will propose actions to implement the recommendations and improvement of the PSP Special Education, in order to discuss and approve them by the competent bodies of the Department. Then the above (the recommendations and the corresponding actions) will be incorporated into the annual action plan of the Department.

II. Analysis

The EEAP reviewed all available documents and the website of the Program and conducted online interviews with the Head of the Program and the teaching staff. The EEAP found that the Program has undertaken a multidimensional activity in developing a new curriculum. The Program has also provided information to the EEAP about its activities, including the postgraduate program, the intended learning outcomes, the degree awarded, the teaching, learning and assessment procedures used and the learning opportunities available to their students.

III. Conclusions

This is the first external evaluation of the Program, so there is no track record of prior recommendations. The discussions with the faculty indicated that they understand and value

the importance of such external reviews, are receptive to recommendations to improve their Program and showed an attitude of addressing such suggestions.

Panel Judgement

Principle 10: Regular external evaluation of postgraduate study programmes	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

None.

PART C: CONCLUSIONS

I. Features of Good Practice

- Selection of students
- Research orientation of the programme
- Practicum (positive for students' practice but also for the society)
- Students find work immediately after graduation

II. Areas of Weakness

- Internationalisation of the programme.
- Structure of the programme

III. Recommendations for Follow-up Actions

- Fees to be added to the programme.
- Number of admitted students can be increased.
- All syllabi must be updated with up-to-date bibliographic references and more detailed content of each course.
- Structure of the programme to be improved
- Elective courses to be significantly reduced

IV. Summary & Overall Assessment

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

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

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

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

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

The members of the External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel

Name and Surname

Signature

1. **Professor Panayiotis Angelides (Chair)**
University of Nicosia, Nicosia, Cyprus
2. **Assoc Prof. Georgia (Gina) Ioannitou-Valavanidou**
Le Mans Université, Le Mans, France
3. **Professor Christos Panagiotopoulos**
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4. **Mr Konstantinos Boumpourekas, PhD Candidate**
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