



**ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ**  
HELLENIC REPUBLIC



**Εθνική Αρχή  
Ανώτατης Εκπαίδευσης**  
Hellenic Authority  
for Higher Education

Αριστειδίου 1 & Ευριπίδου 2 • 10559 Αθήνα | 1 Aristidou str. & 2 Euripidou str. • 10559 Athens, Greece  
T. +30 210 9220 944 • F. +30 210 9220 143 • E. [secretariat@ethaee.gr](mailto:secretariat@ethaee.gr) • [www.ethaee.gr](http://www.ethaee.gr)

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

**Politics in the era of the Internet**

**Department: Communication and Mass Media**  
**Institution: National and Kapodistrian University of  
Athens**

**Date: 24 November 2023**

Report of the Panel appointed by the HAHE to undertake the review of the Postgraduate Study Programme of **Politics in the era of the Internet** of the **National and Kapodistrian University of Athens** for the purposes of granting accreditation

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Part A: Background and Context of the Review</b> .....	<b>5</b>
I. The External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel .....	5
II. Review Procedure and Documentation.....	6
III. Postgraduate Study Programme Profile .....	8
<b>Part B: Compliance with the Principles</b> .....	<b>9</b>
<b>PRINCIPLE 1: QUALITY ASSURANCE POLICY AND QUALITY GOAL SETTING FOR THE POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES OF THE INSTITUTION AND THE ACADEMIC UNIT</b> .....	<b>9</b>
<b>PRINCIPLE 2: DESIGN AND APPROVAL OF POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES</b> .....	<b>12</b>
<b>PRINCIPLE 3: STUDENT-CENTRED LEARNING, TEACHING, AND ASSESSMENT</b> .....	<b>15</b>
<b>PRINCIPLE 4: STUDENT ADMISSION, PROGRESSION, RECOGNITION OF POSTGRADUATE STUDIES, AND CERTIFICATION</b> .....	<b>19</b>
<b>PRINCIPLE 5: TEACHING STAFF OF POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES</b> .....	<b>22</b>
<b>PRINCIPLE 6: LEARNING RESOURCES AND STUDENT SUPPORT</b> .....	<b>25</b>
<b>PRINCIPLE 7: INFORMATION MANAGEMENT</b> .....	<b>28</b>
<b>PRINCIPLE 8: PUBLIC INFORMATION CONCERNING THE POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES</b> .....	<b>31</b>
<b>PRINCIPLE 9: ON-GOING MONITORING AND PERIODIC INTERNAL EVALUATION OF POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES</b> .....	<b>33</b>
<b>PRINCIPLE 10: REGULAR EXTERNAL EVALUATION OF POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES</b> .....	<b>36</b>
<b>Part C: Conclusions</b> .....	<b>37</b>
I. Features of Good Practice .....	37
II. Areas of Weakness .....	38
III. Recommendations for Follow-up Actions .....	38
IV. Summary & Overall Assessment.....	39

## **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 **Politics in the era of the Internet** of the **National and Kapodistrian University of Athens** comprised the following five (5) members, drawn from the HAHE Register, in accordance with Laws 4009/2011 & 4653/2020:

- 1. JOSEPH JOSEPH (Chair)**  
University of Cyprus (Πανεπιστήμιο Κύπρου)
  
- 2. HATZIMIHAİL NIKITAS**  
University of Cyprus
  
- 3. LEKAKI EVA**  
University of Piraeus
  
- 4. PAPAETHYMIΟΥ SOPHIE**  
Sciences Po Lyon
  
- 5. TSAROUHAS DIMITRIS**  
Georgetown University

## II. Review Procedure and Documentation

In reviewing the Postgraduate Study Programme of Politics in the Era of the Internet of the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, the objectives of the Panel, as described in the Guidelines for the Members of the EEAP, are, among others:

- to establish whether the data provided from the various resources is consistent among one another and reflect the actual situation
- identify strengths and areas of weakness
- engage in a constructive dialogue with the Institution, leading to reflection and continuous enhancement of the study Programme.

Following a well-prepared schedule provided by HAHE, the Panel held several separate interactive virtual (by electronic means, Webex and Zoom platforms) meetings and visits for two days as follows:

On Monday, 06/11/2023, the following virtual meetings took place:

- with the Director of the Programme, the Head of the Department, MODIP members and staff, and Steering Committees/OMEA members
- on-line tour of classrooms, lecture halls, libraries, laboratories and other facilities related to the Programme. The on-line tour was followed by a discussion about the facilities in which teaching and administrative staff participated.

On Wednesday, 08/11/2023, the following virtual meetings took place:

- with teaching staff of the Programme
- with current students of the Programme
- with graduates who have successfully completed the Programme
- with employers and social partners of the private and the public sector
- meeting with the Director of the Programme, the Head of the Department, members and staff of MODIP, and members of Steering Committees/OMEA members.

During the above virtual meetings, the Panel had the opportunity to meet, talk, and interact with all the participants at all meetings. All the participants were encouraged to express their views and they did so. It is worth pointing out that the students were especially encouraged to talk freely about their overall learning experience. They welcomed the opportunity to talk to the Panel and to voice their views. The discussions were very constructive and fruitful and were conducted in a cooperative manner and attitude. All the meetings included presentations, discussions, and question and answer sessions. During the last meeting, some clarifications were provided, and the Panel made an informal presentation of some initial key findings.

The internal evaluation report and other extensive material were made available to the Panel electronically in advance through HAHE. More information and material were made available during the meetings. The Department worked diligently in preparing the internal evaluation

report and other relevant materials, as well as in organizing and hosting the virtual meetings. It is the feeling of the Panel that the Department has performed an excellent job throughout the internal evaluation process and the objectives of the process have been fully met. The efficiency and eagerness of the Department to answer questions and provide additional information and clarifications during the meetings are worth noting. The Panel wishes to express its thanks and appreciation to the Department and the University administration for their co-operation and professionalism.

This Accreditation Report is based on information collected and views expressed during the virtual meetings as well as on information contained in the internal evaluation report and other documents submitted before and during the virtual meetings.

### **III. Postgraduate Study Programme Profile**

This is a one-year intensive interdisciplinary M.Sc. Programme taught primarily in Greek with one course taught in English. It is one of five postgraduate programmes currently offered by the Department of Communication and Media Studies which is one of the newest Departments of the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens. The Department began operating during the 1990-91 academic year, while the University of Athens is the largest and oldest University of the country, established in 1837. The Programme offers courses which are consistent with its interdisciplinary character and the Department's overall objectives. Basically, it aims to provide a thorough and multi-disciplinary understanding of politics (in a broad sense) in the context of the radical political, organizational, social, economic and cultural changes brought about by new technologies in the area of media and communication in a globalized world. Students have the opportunity to focus on their special interests and write an original thesis making use of the knowledge and research skills acquired in the courses. Graduates are expected to acquire critical and analytical skills and become competitive professionals in the field of media and communication. The Programme maintains an international character by facilitating cross-border academic and scientific cooperation with similar programmes in other countries. A maximum of sixteen students are admitted each year. There are tuition fees, which currently are €650 per semester. For the completion of the Programme 90 ECTS are required, which are equally distributed in three semesters (30 for each semester). During the Winter and Spring semesters students are required to take a total of six courses (three per semester). One of them is elective, offered during the Spring semester. Each course counts for 10 ECTS. During the Summer semester students are required to write and submit a thesis which counts for 30 ECTS. The Programme is supported by the academic staff of the Department as well as academics from other Departments and other Universities from Greece and abroad. All teaching staff are Ph.D. holders who are active scholars and researchers in their fields.

## 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**

##### **I. Findings**

The document outlines the Programme's Quality Assurance Policy for the Programme, which is largely in alignment with the Quality Policy adopted by the University. Concrete quality objectives are set for the Programme's improvement, on an annual basis, and the document available on the website focuses in particular on five goals pertaining to a. student completion rates b. a student-centred

approach to learning by use of flexible instruction modes, c. enhancing the quality assurance policy framework, d. activating the Student Counsellor institution and e. reinforcing student participation in the Programme's internal evaluation process. An annual review and audit are conducted in cooperation with the institution's Quality Assurance Unit (QAU).

## **II. Analysis**

The policy sets out to reinforce the existing framework and strengthen it over time. Although five strategic goals are articulated on the website and are publicly available, the Panel received documentation of a more extensive set of goals, numbering nineteen (19) in total. The extent to which the five goals mentioned on the website are a summary, or more immediate goals of the Programme, was unclear. The key performance indicators (KPIs) set out by the Department are numerous, thirty-five (35) in total, and the time horizon for implementation is relatively narrow, comprising one year. More importantly, the first five KPIs are in full alignment with the goals discussed on the Programme's website, but the rest appear detached from the rest, and are drafted with reference to wider Department- and University-wide objectives. One of the advantages of the policy pursued is that it allows for a flexible readjustment through annual re-evaluations, the usefulness of which needs to be emphasized. According to the Department and the MODIP representative, the discrepancy between the Department's goals and the KPIs, as well as the one-year timeframe for implementation, results from the need to comply with formal HAHE requirements.

## **III. Conclusions**

The Quality Assurance Policy for the Programme does not align as well as it could with institutional goals, because it is less selective than otherwise warranted. The number of KPIs set are not particularly realistic, in the sense that their quantity and narrow window of implementation hinders their effectiveness. On the other hand, a number of them are relatively straightforward and their implementation does not necessitate the use of programme-only resources, since their realization is also



possible by use of University-wide resources which are currently available. The policy allows for annual updates and a flexible adjustment of objectives.

### Panel Judgement

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

### Panel Recommendations

- Policy Goals: the Programme should ensure that the goals set out in its publicly available Quality Assurance Policy document are specific, measurable and in line with University

objectives.

- Key Performance Indicators: Set goals that are more realistic by a) reducing their number and b) aligning them solely with the key goals of the Programme.

## **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 Programme has been developed in a manner that took into account the Unit's core strengths, the research interests of its staff, and evidence of strong demand among prospective students and employers. Documentation demonstrates the existence of a well-defined procedure used for designing the Programme. The academic profile, orientation of the Programme, research character, scientific objectives, specific subject areas, and specialisations are duly described in the Programme documents, including the expected learning outcomes, which have been determined on the basis on the European and National Qualifications Framework (EQF, NQF), and the Dublin Descriptors for level 7.

The expected learning outcomes can be measured via a number of tools which are in place, taking into account feedback provided as to the learning process. The Programme contributes to the acquisition of skills relevant to pursuing careers in research, journalism, politics and the non-profit sector. Engagement with -- including feedback from -- external stakeholders has also been demonstrated.

### **II. Analysis**

The Programme addresses a critical, interdisciplinary area, bringing together media studies, politics and the internet. Students, for the most part, follow a core curriculum of mostly required courses (5 with an option to select between two courses as the 6th), which address all areas covered by the Programme's teaching staff.

The procedure for designing and revising the Programme is well-defined, and the academic profile and orientation of the Programme are clearly outlined in the Programme documentation. The expected learning outcomes are determined based on the EQF, NQF, and the Dublin Descriptors for level 7. The Programme's goals appear to be met by the measurable objectives introduced in the various modules. The design of the Programme corresponds to the basic research interests and educational orientation of the faculty and the undergraduate programme. However, in our meetings there was frequent mention of instances of overlapping between postgraduate courses. Moreover, the meetings and material have shown a strong emphasis, within the course of the Programme, on gender studies and popular studies, which often does not relate to the Programme's stated objectives and course descriptions.

The Programme has benefited from student feedback including student evaluations, as well as from consultation with external stakeholders. The addition of a course on quantitative methods, following feedback to that effect, is commendable. The new course is offered as an alternative to what would appear to be a core course "Public Opinion and Democracy", at the end of the year. However, such consultations are not yet institutionalised and regularised in a manner that produces tangible and recordable results.

### III. Conclusions

The Programme is fully compliant with this Principle.

#### Panel Judgement

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

#### Panel Recommendations

- Continue to develop clear, measurable criteria to ensure that reliable tools to measure the extent to which the Programme is attaining its goals are in place.
- Continue to develop measurable criteria and standards for the production of empirical evidence that can measure the goals of deepening knowledge and acquiring the corresponding skills.
- Institutionalise and regularise consultation with alumni and external stakeholders, especially in the media sector, in a manner that produces tangible and recordable results.
- Build on existing and develop further good practices for optimising feedback.

- Revise course descriptions and curriculum to avoid overlapping between courses and ensure that course content is fully aligned with course titles.

**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**

Overall, the Programme complies with this Principle by its dedication to providing a student-centred educational experience. Actively harnessing student feedback, the Programme continuously adapts to ensure a tailored and enriching educational experience. The student-faculty relationship thrives on strong support, with faculty members consistently available to provide guidance. This commitment is further solidified through well-structured systems for academic advising and student

appeals, supported by detailed documentation, reinforcing the Programme's dedication to putting students at the forefront of their educational journey.

## **II. Analysis**

This Programme is a prototype master's degree that provides a completely different specialization compared to other master's degrees in the subject and therefore does not meet competition in the field of tertiary education in Greece. There is the possibility for distance education, in cases it's needed following the respective legislation. Despite the lack of flexibility in terms of part-time options, the Programme is committed to inclusivity. More precisely, there is concern by the NKUA to include people with disabilities in the learning process, by maintaining a dedicated electronic platform that provides students with a comprehensive repository of educational materials, including notes, presentations, exercises, and recorded lectures.

In the first semester, students take three courses, followed by another three in the second semester. with one elective chosen from two options. During the second semester, students have the flexibility to choose one elective from a pool of two options. The Programme incorporated this elective choice based on student feedback, particularly their expressed interest in more research methodology, as reflected in course evaluations. However, there is a discernible imbalance in the distribution of courses between the two semesters. To rectify this, the Programme could either structure the first semester with four core courses or offer two core courses and two elective options, allowing students to select their third course based on their preferences, like the second semester. In both scenarios, it is crucial to ensure that the course 'Public Opinion and Democracy,' recently designated as an elective, maintains its status as a core component of the Programme. Notably, the Programme collaborates with the Horizon EU 'Participate' Doctoral Network, offering the research methodology course in English to host PhD candidates. This collaboration will enrich the educational experience by facilitating interaction with incoming PhD candidates from diverse backgrounds, promoting a culturally varied classroom dynamic.

Pedagogical methods employed by the teaching staff prioritize active student participation, steering away from passive knowledge consumption, integrating theory with real-world contexts. Techniques like discussion, question-and-answer sessions, group collaboration, presentations, simulations, and critical commenting on peers' assignments foster the development of critical thinking.

The Programme actively informs and encourages students to participate in workshops, seminars, symposia, and conferences outside the curriculum. Both current students and graduates stated that they also received exceptional guidance and counselling from their supervisors during the thesis preparation process and highlighted that the interactions between them and faculty members were highly effective, with professors highly inspiring their students and readily accessible to provide support. The small student body of 16 individuals ensures personalized



attention and allows for the customization of courses based on individual needs and interests. The personalized approach extends to assessment criteria, communicated transparently to students in advance through the Study Guide and Course Outline documents. Additionally, guest lectures by international speakers, conducted in English, broaden students' perspectives, enhancing the overall learning experience.

The Programme adheres to a comprehensive set of regulations, covering aspects such as Academic Advisor roles and the Complaints Mechanism. All regulations are easily accessible on the Programme's website, fostering transparency.

Continuous course evaluation by students is a cornerstone of the Programme's effectiveness, providing valuable feedback for ongoing improvements. The feedback mechanism is not only actively utilized but also influences the study Programme, allowing students to actively shape their learning experience. It is notable that the Programme has managed to increase participation in all courses' evaluation processes, involving all of its students compared to past years, and would be nice to share the good practices they are following with other programmes that are struggling with low participation rates. Efforts are underway to increase participation rates from graduates, demonstrating a commitment to ongoing improvement of the Programme's quality.

### III. Conclusions

In summary, the Programme strongly aligns with the principle of student-centred education. It excels in maintaining functional student-faculty relationships and emphasizing student feedback. However, there is room for improvement, which will be addressed in the forthcoming recommendations.

#### Panel Judgement

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

### **Panel Recommendations**

- Explore the potential for a part-time option to accommodate working students, beginning with surveys to gauge demand.
- Provide an English version of the Study Guide.
- Actively encourage greater student involvement in extracurricular academic activities.
- Implement strategies to boost alumni's participation in feedback processes.
- Update the Course Outline to incorporate the new elective.
- Increasing students' exposure to SPSS could be highly beneficial. Consider extending its integration across both semesters to ensure students acquire a robust and enduring knowledge of statistical analysis.
- Addition of a seminar centred on political communication case studies and crisis management based on alumni suggestions.
- Adjust the curriculum for improved coherence and balance, considering both student feedback and preserving the importance of key courses.

## **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 Programme ensures transparent communication of selection procedures, study regulations, and mobility opportunities through its website, Study Guide, and Regulation of Studies. While formal internships are not included, students can pursue international experiences after the first semester. The Regulation of Studies outlines rights, obligations, and a three-semester duration, allowing up to three absences per course. Financially, fees are 650 euros per semester, with a fee waiver for eligible students, and successful completion results in a bilingual diploma.

### **II. Analysis**

The selection procedures for prospective students are meticulously communicated through multiple channels, including the Programme's website, the comprehensive Study Guide, and the Regulation of Studies. This ensures that all stakeholders have transparent access to the essential information needed for enrolment. Although the curriculum does not formally incorporate internships, students are encouraged to pursue international experiences through study mobility. This can be achieved after completing the first semester and enrolling in courses totalling up to 30 ECTS, potentially facilitated by initiatives such as the Erasmus+ Programme. While study mobilities have not been implemented yet, it

remains a prominent goal for the Programme's future development.

The Regulation of Studies document serves as a pivotal resource, delineating students' rights and responsibilities. It also provides crucial details on the Programme's three-semester duration, permissible absences (up to 3 times per course), course schedules, examination processes, and grading methods. These particulars are reiterated in the Study Guide, offering a comprehensive overview. Moreover, the Study Guide furnishes in-depth information on assignment and thesis drafting procedures and terms.

Financial considerations are transparently addressed, with a set fee of 650 euros per academic semester. Should students require additional semesters to fulfil their academic requirements, they are subject to the standard fee of 650 euros per extra semester, exclusive of any prescribed suspension time. A fee waiver is available for those meeting socioeconomic criteria as defined by prevailing legislation. However, the number of exempted students does not surpass 30% of the total admitted to the postgraduate Programme each academic year.

Upon successful completion of the Programme, entailing the attainment of 90 ECTS, students are awarded a diploma issued in both Greek and English. The validation of this achievement is confirmed through the degree award template provided to the Panel. A meticulous procedure for awarding degrees is articulated in the Study Guide and complementary documents, ensuring transparency and adherence to standards.

### **III. Conclusions**

The Programme encourages and ensures that students complete it on time. The Study Guide provides detailed information about the Programme, including the duration of studies, admission procedures, thesis guidelines, student support services, rights and obligations of students, tuition fees, scholarships, and opportunities for international mobility. Overall, the Programme demonstrates a commitment to providing clear guidelines, support, and resources to monitor students' progression. It also ensures compliance with quality requirements for the thesis and offers comprehensive information for students.

## Panel Judgement

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

## Panel Recommendations

- Clarify the fee structure in the announcement of applications for admission to the Programme, specifying that students are required to pay fees for all three semesters.
- Ensure consistency with the information available on the Programme's website.
- Actively promote outgoing student mobility opportunities through initiatives like Erasmus+, emphasizing both mobility for studies and traineeships. Provide detailed information on the application process, eligibility criteria, and potential benefits to encourage student participation in these valuable experiences.

**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**

The Department of Communication and Media Studies, in which the Programme is offered, recognizing the importance of teaching and research, follows a clear, transparent, and fair process for the recruitment of qualified staff. Their expertise, international background, high qualifications, and enthusiasm enhance the quality of classroom teaching and research output. All of them are Ph.D. holders, active researchers, productive scholars, and dedicated teachers. Visiting professors from other countries and institutions, as well as guest speakers, deliver lectures and participate in teaching and other academic activities of the Programme and the Department. New technologies are widely used in the classroom and in communicating with students. The staff-student ratio is very good.

#### **II. Analysis**

The teaching staff follow innovative and widely used pedagogical practices and instructional methods that meet international standards. There is enthusiasm and skills in utilizing new technologies, both in the classroom and in interaction among faculty and students. The Panel had the opportunity to interact with students and has the impression that they think very highly of their teachers. Current students as well as graduates talked with respect, gratitude and admiration about their professors, the Departmental and Programme culture, and the learning environment. They confirmed that their teachers are committed, accessible,

understanding, and ready to provide support and guidance. Overall, the teaching, encouragement and advising provided by faculty members are evident and highly appreciated by the students.

### III. Conclusions

The Department and the University provide encouragement and adequate opportunities for the professional development of the faculty supporting the Programme, although there is room for improvement. All teaching staff should be commended for their firm commitment, concentrated effort, and enthusiasm in maintaining high-quality teaching and research despite the obstacles and difficulties created by limited resources and other external factors for which the Department and the University cannot be blamed. It is pointed out that there is a collaborative climate in the Department and the Programme built on, and reflecting, mutual respect and collegial spirit, not only among faculty members, but also between students and teaching staff.

#### Panel Judgement

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

#### Panel Recommendations

- The excellent collegial atmosphere in the Department and the Programme, and accessibility of faculty by the students should be maintained and further enhanced, as it is instrumental in sharing experiences and getting feedback.
- Faculty members could intensify their efforts and enhance their high-quality research output, especially by publishing in international peer-reviewed journals and publishing houses.
- The Department and the University could seek ways and means to provide further support to faculty members to enhance research and intensify their efforts for attracting external funding, especially through international and European projects. This is in line with the broader need and duty of the State to address the general systemic problem of an inadequately funded public university system.

#### **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**

The Programme is run by 5 faculty (teaching and research) members, 2 administrative staff and 3 external collaborators with teaching appointments.

The Programme's Accreditation proposal suggests that there is sufficient infrastructure and financing to cover all academic needs. Information about all services is available on the Programme's website. The Programme wishes to improve infrastructure, especially regarding labs' equipment and the number of teaching rooms. It is located at the premises of the Department in downtown Athens; it uses one fully equipped (wi-fi, IT) classroom, the Laboratory of Social Research (equipped with 18 computer terminals), and the School of Economics and Political Sciences Library. The latter contains approximately 53.000 volumes, and 552 Greek and foreign reviews, either printed or online. There is a 50-seat capacity reading room and an IT room. Users have access to loan services. The Library is accessible to students with disabilities. Access to digital libraries and databases is ensured through e-class, an electronic account, V.P.N., Webex and

Unitron are among the services provided to students. Inter-library loans are also ensured. Teaching and research staff have access to a special platform to upload information about their activities. Students receive a student ID and a Pass for public transportation.

It is clear from the Accreditation Proposal and the discussions with the students that the Programme, the Unit and the Institution provide all kinds of support services. There is a career counselling office and a professional orientation service, as well as a Centre for Psychic Health and Psycho-social support, and a Student's Advocate (Sinigoros tou Foititi). There is a Cultural Student Association. Sports are practiced at the premises of the Institution. Special attention is paid to students with disabilities, who are advised and supported to attend classes and take the exams under optimal conditions.

The Programme has provided a detailed description of the infrastructure services which are made available by the Institution to the Unit for the PSP, to support learning and academic activity (human resources, infrastructure, services, etc.). The Institution is meant to cover the cost of the infrastructure services from State resources. However, student fees (including registration fees) and private donations are the Programme's only income, 30% of the fees are wired to the Institution.

Scholarships, rewarding academic merit or based on social criteria, are offered to up to 30% of the students. Thanks to a donation by Professor Michael Stathopoulos, the Department awards two merit scholarships per academic year covering student tuition fees.

## **II. Analysis**

No virtual library visit took place, and adequate information was not provided about the Library opening hours. Relying on the submitted Accreditation Proposal, the Panel confirms the library's wealth in books (including books dating from the beginning of the 20th c.) and journals, as well as its adequate equipment in computers and other student facilities, with special consideration for those with disabilities.

The Programme's accreditation Proposal does not contain information regarding the extent to which physical access to all teaching and reading spaces is available to disabled students.

No information was provided about the students' use of the various advisory services.

Discussions with the students during the meeting revealed their enthusiasm with the regular function of all services and with the commitment and professionalism of both the Academic and Administrative staff.

## **III. Conclusions**

There appears that all services function properly so as to satisfy the students' needs. The Library opening hours should be extended during the week and Saturdays. The Panel understands that the extension of the opening hours requires additional library and security staff, it therefore urges the Ministry to make of the Library opening hours a priority and provide adequate funds.

Tuition fees, used for covering the Programme's needs and the salaries of visiting professors and external advisors, are insufficient but should not be further

increased. The Programme needs generous financing in order to attract more students and to offer more scholarships on social criteria, so that no student has to work while studying.

### Panel Judgement

<b>Principle 6: Learning resources and student support</b>	
Fully compliant	<b>X</b>
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

### Panel Recommendations

- Extension of the Library opening hours during the working week and on Saturdays.
- Further development of academic activities through the creation of Summer Schools, open to new candidates having a broader spectrum of interests. Distance learning through short term workshops on topics of contemporary interest is also recommended. This requires additional assistance for the academic and administrative staff.
- Organisation of special career events for students, in which representatives of the public sector, the professions and distinguished alumni are regularly attending, during term time.
- The Panel calls for additional state funding for scholarships.

## **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**

The information system of the Programme is supported by UniTron, the centralized IT system of the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens. The system manages all data relating to the student's academic status and performance, course scheduling and registration, and necessary logistical services for the delivery of the study Programme, such as classroom scheduling, electronic syllabi, grade recording, exam scheduling, and course evaluations. Subsequently, data regarding the detailed student profile, completion and dropout rates is disaggregated and fed into the National Information System for Quality Assurance in Higher Education on a yearly basis. The annual report of HAHE is immediately accessible through the Programme's website. Moreover, the Programme engages in systematic data gathering through the available student questionnaire and seeks to facilitate student participation in the Programme's annual internal evaluation.

## II. Analysis

A large amount of data is aggregated by the Programme and its use could assist the process of improving teaching performance, research output and the timely graduation of students. The Committee obtained detailed and fairly granular data information as to the overall performance of the Programme over the last five years. Although such data has become fairly standardized in recent years across the University of Athens and its various Departments, the Programme has undertaken an extra, and very welcome, effort to provide detailed information on a whole range of aspects of the Programme, ranging from student enrolment rates to the comparative score of student evaluations. The available evidence also points to the fact that the Programme has undergone reforms in recent years based on feedback obtained through data analysis, as well as the wealth of information that it has invested in. This constitutes a commendable good practice. One area in which more progress is warranted relates to the Programme's alumni: more detailed information as to the profile and involvement of alumni with current Programme activities would further strengthen Programme content and its overall profile.

## III. Conclusions

The Programme is fully compliant with the Principle's expectations in terms of data collection and performance monitoring. It makes appropriate use of University wide data information systems, but also ensures that internal data management mechanisms are put to productive use.

### Panel Judgement

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

### Panel Recommendations

Set up an alumni survey and conduct such a study in regular intervals (suggestion: every three years) to collect data tailored towards improving data flow and its application.

## **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**

The Programme provides full opportunity to all interested parties to be informed about the Programme itself, the course of study and activities relevant to the Programme.

#### **II. Analysis**

The Programme contains a dedicated part of the department's web site (<https://politicsandtheinternet.media.uoa.gr>). The PSP's home page is in Greek only, which is understandable given that this is a Greek-language Programme but could be easily remedied with the design of a simpler, English-language version. The Programme's website follows the Unit's web style and often links to the Unit. It does include all requisite and important information. It is moreover easy to use and appears to be up-to-date and regularly updated.

The user will find all information about the Programme itself, including the courses offered in each term and each course's instructor; an overview of each member of the Programme's teaching staff and links to their individual departmental pages with sufficient information and contact data. Other useful information to prospective and ongoing students is listed in an orderly manner. In fact, the first section on the Programme lists sub-sections on Quality assurance policy and statements; the regulations on studies, on research ethics, on the academic advisor, on complaints management; finally, on the results of the Programme's internal evaluation and information on tuition. The Programme also links to the Unit's Facebook and Twitter account.

#### **III. Conclusions**

The publication of all requisite and useful information is immediate, complete and regularly updated. It enables prospective students to learn about the Programme

and make an informed decision, ongoing students to quickly look up vital information throughout the duration of the Programme.

### Panel Judgement

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

### Panel Recommendations

- The Unit should consider an English version of the Programme's home page (presumably a simplified version).
- Since this is a politics and internet Programme, a stronger official presence in social media might make sense for its objectives and hands-on training.

- Separating announcements pertinent to the Programme itself from events that might be of interest to a broader community might also be helpful.



## **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 Programme complies with the requirements as to its annual self-assessment process, handled at Unit level, and the provision of all relevant information to the QAU/MODIP for the Institution's own report to the Authority. The MODIP report confirms that the outcomes of the self-assessment are properly recorded and submitted to it. It also confirms that the findings of the self-assessment of the PSP have been shared within the academic unit.

The teaching staff consists of five (5) faculty members and three (3) external advisors. The infrastructure and the teaching and administrative services are adequate, thanks to the staff's devotion and professionalism.

In its latest annual evaluation MODIP has examined all relevant data, considered the Programme's achievements, especially the revision and updating of the curriculum, the quality of the teaching and administrative staff and the students' dissertations

completion in due time. It has observed the weak points, mainly the insufficient laboratory infrastructure and library functioning. It determined the required preventive and corrective actions and reflected on the Programme's initiatives for further and continuous improvement.

## **II. Analysis**

The PSP fully meets the requirements of for this Principle as to on-going monitoring and periodic internal evaluation. All procedures take place in due time, following the Institution's rules and according to the HAHE model. Self- assessment takes place twice a year. The results are submitted to MODIP, which examines all relevant data, from course Syllabi to student questionnaires and to the Programme's self-assessment and aims. MODIP's annual examination is included in a report which is transmitted to the Institution's authorities. Special attention is paid to the teaching Programme as well as to the participation of all concerned persons in the procedures. Synergy between the Unit and the Institution is obvious in both MODIP's report's conclusions and the achievements of the Programme.

However, the Panel cannot but disagree with MODIP's suggestion regarding students' evaluation: although a very important element for the improvement of the Programme's quality, evaluation should not be considered as a prerequisite for participation in the graduation ceremony.

## **III. Conclusions**

All procedures comply with the rules and principles of the Internal System of Quality Insurance of the Institution.

The MODIP report is comprehensive, objective, and sharp. It adequately describes the Programme's strong points, and also sheds light on the weak points, such as insufficient infrastructure.

According to MODIP's report, the self-assessment leads to action plans that are communicated to interested parties. The Panel is not fully satisfied regarding the implementation of the action plans.

**Panel Judgement**

**Principle 9: On-going monitoring and periodic internal evaluation of postgraduate study programmes**

Fully compliant	<b>X</b>
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

**Panel Recommendations**

- The Programme should communicate all reports to stakeholders.
- Additional State funding to remedy the insufficiency of infrastructure is necessary.

**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 Programme has not been externally evaluated before. During the current external review, all stakeholders were actively engaged. The Programme, the Department and the University worked diligently in preparing materials, presentations, as well as in organizing and hosting the virtual meetings with the Panel. All the meetings included presentations, discussions, and question and answer sessions. The Panel had the opportunity to meet, talk, and interact with all the participants at all meetings. The discussions were very constructive and fruitful and were conducted in a cooperative manner and attitude. The efficiency and eagerness of the Department and the staff supporting the Programme to answer questions and provide additional information and clarifications during the meetings are worth noting.

**II. Analysis**

Based on the materials submitted and the information gathered during the online presentations and discussions, it appears that all members of staff (teaching and administrative), as well as students, alumni and other stakeholders are aware of the importance of external review, its usefulness, and the contribution it can make in improving the Programme. Throughout the current external evaluation process, it was convincingly demonstrated that the Department and the Programme are committed to the letter, spirit and process of quality assurance and external review. There is already in place a step-by-step action plan for utilizing the findings and recommendations of the external evaluation. As they pointed out during the

meetings, it will help them become better by enabling them to identify any problematic areas and find suitable solutions.

### III. Conclusions

It is the impression of the Panel that the Programme, the Department and the University are committed to external evaluation as a key component of a quality assurance system. They worked diligently to facilitate the current review and meet its objectives. Overall, their positive approach toward quality assurance and external review is expected to have a positive impact on the Programme and contribute to its continuous improvement. However, more tangible results and a more meaningful assessment regarding this Principle will be possible when a second external evaluation is carried out.

#### Panel Judgement

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

**Panel Recommendations**

Maintain and further enhance the existing positive attitude toward the external review process, its findings and recommendations.

## **PART C: CONCLUSIONS**

### **I. Features of Good Practice**

- Positive attitude toward the internal and external review process.
- Student-centred pedagogical approach to teaching and learning.
- Excellent collegial atmosphere in the Programme and the Department.
- High quality of faculty.
- Transparency, meritocracy, impartiality, and accountability.
- Accessibility of faculty by the students which is instrumental in sharing experiences and getting feedback.
- Departmental strategy encouraging and ensuring that students complete the Programme on time.
- International cooperation and teaching a course in English.

### **II. Areas of Weakness**

- There is some overlapping among some courses and emphasis on gender issues which does not relate to course title and content description.
- Limited sources to improve infrastructure and support research; a weakness which is in line with the broader need and duty of the State to address the general systemic problem of an inadequately funded public university system.

### **III. Recommendations for Follow-up Actions**

- Consider conducting regular surveys for collecting views and feedback from alumni that could play a role in updating and improving the Programme.
- Consider institutionalizing contacts and consultation with external stake holders and alumni and benefiting from their feedback and input.
- Explore options for further improving, modernizing, and updating the website.
- Intensify efforts to attract external funding, especially through international and European projects.
- Consider ways of boosting participation rates for the course evaluation to gather a more comprehensive understanding of students' views on course and teaching quality.
- Ensure updating informational material like the annual study guide.
- Faculty members should possibly intensify their efforts to enhance their high-quality research output, especially by publishing in international peer-reviewed journals and publishing houses.
- Consider adjusting the curriculum and some course descriptions for improved coherence and balance and reducing overlapping.

#### IV. Summary & Overall Assessment

The Principles where full compliance has been achieved are:

**2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10.**

The Principles where substantial compliance has been achieved are:

**1.**

The Principles where partial compliance has been achieved are:

**None.**

The Principles where failure of compliance was identified are:

**None.**

Overall Judgement	
Fully compliant	<b>X</b>
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	



## The members of the External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel

Name and Surname

Signature

1. **JOSEPH JOSEPH (Chair)**  
University of Cyprus (Πανεπιστήμιο Κύπρου)
  
2. **HATZIMIHAİL**  
**NIKİTAS** University  
of Cyprus
  
3. **LEKAKI EVA**  
University of  
Piraeus
  
4. **PAPAEFTHYMIΟΥ SOPHIE**  
Sciences Po Lyon
  
5. **TSAROUHAS**  
**DIMITRIS**  
Georgetown  
University