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ΤΗΣ ΠΟΙΟΤΗΤΑΣ ΣΤΗΝ ΑΝΩΤΑΤΗ ΕΚΠΑΙΔΕΥΣΗ

HELLENIC REPUBLIC
H Q A
HELLENIC QUALITY ASSURANCE
AND ACCREDITATION AGENCY

EXTERNAL EVALUATION REPORT

UNIVERSITY OF THE PELOPONNESE

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Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση
Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινωνικό Ταμείο

Επιχειρησιακό Πρόγραμμα
Ανάπτυξη Ανθρώπινου Δυναμικού,
Εκπαίδευση και Διά Βίου Μάθηση

Με τη συγχρηματοδότηση της Ελλάδας και της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης



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1. EXTERNAL EVALUATION COMMITTEE

The Committee responsible for the External Evaluation of the University of the Peloponnese comprised the following five (5) expert evaluators drawn from the Registry kept by the HQA in accordance with Law 3374/2005 and the Law 4009/2011:

1. Prof. Loucas Petronicolos (Coordinator)
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2. Prof. Panagiotis Angelidis
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University of Nicosia, Nicosia, Cyprus
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3. Prof. Joseph Joseph
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Expert, Athens, Greece
(Institution of origin)

N.B. The length of text in each box is free. Questions included in each box are not exclusive nor should they always be answered separately; the Committee's reply to those questions is meant to provide a general outline of issues that need to be addressed.

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 The External Evaluation Procedure

- Dates and brief account of the site visit
- Whom did the Committee meet?
- List of Reports, documents, other data examined by the EEC
- Groups of teaching and administrative staff and students interviewed
- Facilities visited by the EEC

The External Evaluation Committee (EEC) visited the University of Peloponnese (UoP) on three consecutive days, from 11-13 April 2016, and worked on preparing its External Evaluation Report (Report hereinafter) through Saturday, 16 April 2016. The on-site visit included visits to the campuses of UoP in Tripolis and Corinth. UoP has additional campuses in Kalamata, Nafplion and Sparta, which the EEC did not visit. Nevertheless, officials, faculty, students and administrative staff from all campuses, Schools, Departments and Units attended the meetings and interacted with the EEC.

Specifically, the EEC had the opportunity to meet, visit and interact with the President and Members of the Administrative Council, the Rector, the Deputy Rectors, the Deans of all Schools (Faculties), the Heads of Departments, the Chair and Members of the Internal Quality Assurance Unit (MODIP), the Chairs and Members of the Internal Evaluation Groups (IEG) of the Departments. The EEC also had meetings with a good number of faculty members. The meetings included presentations, discussions, and question and answer sessions. In addition, the EEC also had the opportunity to meet and talk with undergraduate, graduate, postgraduate students, postdoctoral fellows, alumni, heads of administrative units, representatives of the administrative staff and external partners and stakeholders.

The UoP administration made available to the EEC an updated (January 2016) Self Evaluation Report (SER) of the Institution as well as departmental review reports and other material.

The SER was shared with the EEC electronically well in advance (March 2016) and consisted of five parts which included general information, data and statistics covering the following areas: Overview of the Institution; Internal Assurance System; Operation of the Central Administration; Information and statistics about Departments; and Structure, procedure, forms and guidelines for implementing the Internal Quality Assurance System. Additional material were made available to the EEC as attachments to the SER or were made available during the on-site visit.

The EEC, was impressed by the positive welcome and overall environment at UoP, the organization of the visit, and the dedication of the UoP community to the mission of the Institution and its commitment to excellence despite the current challenges and financial constrains that are facing Greek Universities. UoP (Central Administration, Faculties, Departments, MODIP and administrative services) did a diligent work in preparing the Self Evaluation Report and other materials. Their efficiency and eagerness to accommodate requests and provide information and feedback were remarkable. The EEC wishes to express its thanks and appreciation to UoP for the co-operation and professionalism shown by the officials, academic staff, students and the administration team.

The EEC Report is based on information shared during the on-site visit, discussions with UoP representatives, as well as information contained in the SER and other documents submitted during the visit.

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Please decide in respect to the specific evaluation area (&2.1):

	Tick
Worthy of merit	
Positive evaluation	X
Partially positive evaluation	
Negative evaluation	

Justify your rating:

2.2 The Self-Evaluation Procedure

Please comment on:

- Appropriateness of sources and documentation used
- Quality and completeness of evidence provided and reviewed
- The extent to which the objectives of the internal evaluation procedure have been met by the Institution
- Description and Analysis of the Self-Evaluation Procedure in the Institution
- Analysis of the positive elements and difficulties which arose during the self-evaluation procedure
- Whether the self-evaluation procedure was comprehensive and interactive

The EEC had the opportunity to study and evaluate the Self-Evaluation Report (SER) and other shared materials. The SER, consists of over 300 pages, plus additional documents including guides, instructions and sample forms.

The SER contained very useful information about the University and its performance. The sources of documentation used to prepare the SER were adequate and gave an overall complete and accurate description of the Institution. The documentation included extensive reports and statistics on faculty, academic programmes, research activities, students (entering, enrolled, active and graduating), and administrative personnel as well as on actions and activities by academic and administrative units and services. It also provided information on actions and activities in the areas of teaching, research and scholarly output, university engagement and outreach.

The self-evaluation procedure followed by the Institution was comprehensive, interactive, efficient and successful. To a great extent, the objectives of the self-evaluation procedure were met. While the information and data was generally adequate and updated, there was still some room for some updating in some areas. For example, faculty and student statistics do not go beyond 2013. Also, in some cases, in addition to averages or totals that were provided, it would be useful if the range of indicators was expanded to include maximum and minimum to get a better sense of the variability within and across Schools and Departments. It is also noted, that while the Institution provided well-defined strategic goals, implementation plans and timetables were not clear.

Some of the sources of difficulties for the performance of UoP, including self-evaluation, stem

from the ever-changing legislative framework concerning higher education in Greece and inadequate human and other resources. It is also noted that the rigid legal framework imposes limits and creates obstacles for a flexible functioning and efficient performance.

It is obvious that UoP has embraced the task of self-evaluation with a positive predisposition and enthusiasm. The EEC acknowledges that the self-evaluation process has become a tool for change and improvement in coping with challenges facing the Institution as a whole as well as its constituent units.

Please decide in respect to the specific evaluation area (&2.2):

	Tick
Worthy of merit	
Positive evaluation	X
Partially positive evaluation	
Negative evaluation	

Justify your rating:

3. PROFILE OF THE INSTITUTION UNDER EVALUATION

3.1 Institutional Governance, Leadership & Strategy

Please comment on:

3.1.1 Vision, mission and goals of the Institution

- What are the Institution's mission and goals
- Priorities set by goals
- How are the goals achieved
- Procedures established by the Institution to monitor the achievement of goals
- What is your assessment of the Institution's ability to improve

The mission, scope and priorities of UoP, are presented and elaborated in the SER. Its basic mission includes: teaching, research and service to the community. It aims at generating, disseminating and promoting scientific knowledge through teaching, research and the contribution to the cultural and economic development of the local community and wider society. In doing so, it strives to achieve excellence in research performance and scientific achievements, in accordance with international standards. As a teaching and research institution, it tries to combine elements and characteristics of a regional, national and European institution of higher learning, responding to the needs of the Greek society and in line with the objectives of the European Area of Higher Education (EAHE).

The strategic plan for UoP, which the Rector and his leadership team presented to the EEC and is incorporated in the SER includes, among others, the following objectives:

- Expansion and qualitative upgrading of all academic programmes at all levels.
- Development of new academic programmes utilizing distance learning techniques and practices.
- Strengthening interdisciplinary cooperation and synergies among Departments within the University and with other institutions in Greece and abroad.
- Internationalization of research and teaching.
- Closer cooperation with local and regional authorities.
- Effective administrative structures and practices.
- Strengthening links with alumni and external stakeholders.

In the course of the oral presentations and discussion with the EEC, the Schools and Departments elaborated on their vision, strategy and goals in conformity with their academic mission. Having a common vision and strategy facilitates the creation of positive synergies and result-oriented implementation.

Please decide in respect to the specific evaluation area (&3.1.1):

	Tick
Worthy of merit	
Positive evaluation	X
Partially positive evaluation	
Negative evaluation	

Justify your rating:

The EEC finds that the overall goals and priorities are well defined, ambitious and compatible with international practices. The Institution has the ability to improve and as a young and dynamic entity has a good potential to accelerate its pace of development and improvement. Overall, some implementation plans, however, to some extent are a work in progress. The EEC emphasizes the urgency to develop indicative time frames and ways to monitor progress and measurable outcomes.

3.1.2 Organizational Development Strategy

- Effectiveness of administrative officials
- Existence of effective operation regulations
- Specific goals and timetables
- Measures taken to reach goals

The administrative officials are enthusiastic and dedicated, but their effectiveness tends to be somewhat limited because of understaffed services and inadequate resources.

The role and functioning of the Administrative Council in developing an overall institutional strategy need to be clarified and further strengthened, although legislative uncertainty at this stage is not helpful on this matter.

The Rector and his team along with individual Faculties and Departments tend to be proactive, with leaderships that have a good sense of mission and commitment to serve the mission of UoP by contributing in shaping of policies, defining goals, setting priorities and looking for ways and means to achieve them. The EEC applauds this effort and encourages further intensification and more coordination.

Developing synergies among academic departments and administrative services, as part of an overall development strategy, can be helpful in creating ideas, joining forces, implementing plans and reaching goals. This may require some emphasis on flexible and innovative organizational structures utilizing modern information technology, techniques and practices.

The existence of effective operation regulations or guidelines and practices combining and linking goals, indicative timetables and achievements can make a difference.

In general terms, a development strategy will identify and clarify the major ambitions of UoP for purposes of coordination, guidance and pointing into the direction which the Institution will follow in the long run.

Please decide in respect to the specific evaluation area (&3.1.2):

	Tick
Worthy of merit	
Positive evaluation	X
Partially positive evaluation	
Negative evaluation	

Justify your rating:

3.1.3 Academic Development Strategy

- Response of the Institution to Faculties and Departments
- Goals and timetables
- Measures taken to reach goals

The EEC got the impression that academic development is a top priority at UoP. It is obvious that UoP is trying to be responsive to the needs of Faculties and Departments and also be in line with its characteristics as a teaching and research institution that combines the elements of a national, regional and European institution that strives for excellence.

For the formulation and further development of an academic development strategy, there have to be open channels of communication and a good climate for consultation and cooperation among academic and administrative units. Part of any academic strategy would also be the promotion of creative collaboration at all levels among academic leadership and faculty.

For such a strategy to be successful, the development of an institutional culture promoting motivation and excellence should be an element. For example, grants or prizes for the best teacher and other academic achievements can send strong messages.

UoP is a young and dynamic institution with a great potential. Its search for academic development and excellence can benefit greatly by international and national guidelines of quality assurance. Also “pressure” stemming from public expectations and accountability for improving teaching, research and service to the society, can be a creative incentive.

In particular, it might be a good idea to put more effort in place to set long-term goals and define an indicative timeframe for academic development in the light of, and in response, to the ongoing process of internal and external evaluation. This will help the Institution maintain its developmental orientation and accomplish sustainability and growth under the current circumstances of external uncertainty and internal economic limitations.

Please decide in respect to the specific evaluation area (&3.1.3):

	Tick
Worthy of merit	
Positive evaluation	X
Partially positive evaluation	
Negative evaluation	

Justify your rating:

3.1.4 Research Strategy

- Key points in research strategy
- Research strategy objectives and timetables for achieving them
- Laboratory research support network
- Research excellence network
- Existence of research assistance mechanisms (for preparing proposals, capitalising on patents and innovations, finding partners for research programmes, etc.)

UoP demonstrates a good rating in research output as well as national and some international recognition as a research institution, despite its short history and funding climate. Research activities are supported by an administrative team that manages research funding. The institution encourages interdisciplinary research collaboration within and among Departments, although there is still plenty of room for improvement in this respect.

The number of research faculty who actively participate in research programmes is adequate, but the EEC believes that the number can increase through intensified coordinated efforts which will also enhance research momentum and culture. Needless to say, the EEC was impressed by the efforts and determination of faculty to advance their research.

The University will benefit greatly by developing tools to encourage team formations and collaborations, for example by providing guidance and incentives through small grants to junior researchers, seminars and support on proposal preparation (especially for European programmes), collecting and disseminating information on funding opportunities etc.

There might be a gap in putting together the various components of an aggressive research strategy at the institutional level. Part of a research strategy will have to address the issue of flow of information on opportunities and coordination of efforts in the search for sources and ways for supporting research excellence.

More effort should be put especially in developing a proactive strategy to promote and facilitate the formation of new interdisciplinary research teams and strengthening existing ones in key areas of research.

For an efficient research strategy, further efforts are required to promote national and international research collaboration and activities, which nowadays are a primary element of any proactive research strategy. In this respect, central coordination and a global outlook can play a key role.

It is also important that the research strategy takes into account the broader mission of the University, including teaching, social responsibility and contribution to the society at large.

Please decide in respect to the specific evaluation area (&3.1.4):

	Tick
Worthy of merit	
Positive evaluation	X
Partially positive evaluation	
Negative evaluation	

Justify your rating:

3.1.5 Financial Strategy

- General financial strategy and management of national and international funds
- Regular budget management strategy
- Public investment management strategy
- Organisation and strategy of the Special Account for Research Funds (SARF)
- Organisation and strategy of the University Property Development and Management Company
- Existence of a Quality System for Financial Management (e.g. ISO), computerisation management and Budget monitoring (Regular Budget, Public Investments Programme, SARF Budget, etc.)

The University of Peloponnese, like all Greek universities, depends on State funding for operation. Because of recent severe cuts, due to the financial crisis, current UoP strategy has been geared toward filling in some of the critical gaps created by this cut. Therefore, emphasis is now placed on maintaining the critical functions of the Institution. This does not allow much room for a realistic long-term financial strategy, vital for university sustainability and growth.

However, UoP, at all levels, is being proactive in seeking multiple alternative sources, such as EU funds, to support research and much needed improvements to existing and new infrastructure. The EEC applauds this major effort. Under the circumstances, SARF funds (Special Account for Research Funds, ΕΛΚΕ Ειδικός Λογαριασμός Διαχείρισης Κονδυλίων Έρευνας) are becoming more important in supporting research, especially new faculty and new promising and innovative research projects.

The university needs to continue to develop and intensify its efforts for long-term alternative funding sources to meet its targets, e.g. through research or externally funded projects.

In the midst of an economic crisis across the country, legislation instability and a climate of uncertainty, financial strategic planning becomes difficult. Nevertheless, the ongoing evaluation process could be an opportunity for re-evaluating problems and prospects in a creative manner, and looking for alternative ways to sustain and support the operation and mission of the University.

Administration and academic staff need to coordinate their efforts in developing mechanisms and methodologies in looking for alternative sources and coping with current and future challenges. It might not be easy in a competitive world of globalized academia, but this seem to be the only promising prospect and alternative.

Please decide in respect to the specific evaluation area (&3.1.5):

	Tick
Worthy of merit	
Positive evaluation	X
Partially positive evaluation	
Negative evaluation	

Justify your rating:

3.1.6 Building and Grounds Infrastructure Strategy

- Strategy key points
- Objectives and timetables
- Measures taken to reach goals
- Deviations from model 1 campus/HEI

The issue of buildings sufficiency and of spaces is one of the main issues of the University and serious efforts to resolve it are apparent. Apart from the acquisition / construction of new building infrastructure, which is continuing, the institution is in direct and intense contact with the former School Building Organization, through the Ministry of Education, and cooperates with local government agencies (Periphery and Municipalities).

The EEC would like to suggest that the administration of the UoP develops concrete and achievable short- and long-term plans in order to address the building issues.

Please decide in respect to the specific evaluation area (&3.1.6):

	Tick
Worthy of merit	
Positive evaluation	
Partially positive evaluation	X
Negative evaluation	

Justify your rating:

There is a need for concrete and achievable short- and long-term plans on how to address the building issues.

3.1.7 Environmental Strategy

- Recycling strategy and measures taken to reach goals
- Hazardous waste management and measures taken to reach goals
- Urban waste management and measures taken to reach goals
- Green energy strategy and measures taken to reach goals

The EEC notes that the Institution has a partial environmental policy. More specifically, it has adopted sound policies on paper and electronic consumables recycling and has reduced paper use and waste. The EEC would like to suggest more efforts on recording the effectiveness of the existing strategy and on disseminating successful practices in other areas of waste management.

With regards to the management of hazardous waste, the representatives of the Nursing Department stated that the local hospital collects and disposes this material. This is a sound approach to waste management. However, the EEC cannot comment on the effectiveness of such arrangement given that no data and other documentation were provided.

The Institution is participating in the local recycling programme organized by the local municipality. It also uses energy efficient light bulbs electrical devices.

The EEC recommends that the Institution complete the geothermal power project and develop a more comprehensive strategy regarding energy efficiency and aims to measure key performance indicators showing progress. The EEC recommends that achievements related to energy efficiency measures are made public and celebrated accordingly.

Please decide in respect to the specific evaluation area (&3.1.7):

	Tick
Worthy of merit	
Positive evaluation	
Partially positive evaluation	X
Negative evaluation	

Justify your rating:

The Institution has a partial environmental policy and needs to develop a more comprehensive strategy regarding energy efficiency and aims and to measure key performance indicators showing progress.

3.1.8 Social Strategy

- Exploitation and dissemination of the Institution's Research Activities for the benefit of society and economy
- Promotion of interaction between the Institution and the Labour Market
- Sustained relationships with key local and regional bodies
- Contribution to the cultural development of society, the city and the region
- Reciprocal and long-lasting relationship with the alumni community

The Institution organizes several lectures and other events per year in all five cities and shares its knowledge with the community. Also, the UoP has established good relationships with the local labor market and business representatives. The social role of the University seems to be promoted by joint events, such as workshops of departments, alone or in cooperation with other departments,

sporting events. In this context, noteworthy is the role of the Department of Theater Studies, which organizes several art events.

Methods of promoting cooperation with market actors seem to have been effective, as demonstrated during the meeting with the stakeholders. The EEC proposed to further stimulate these good relationships by establishing new and improving existing channels of communication. With regards to the Institution’s social role, the EEC recommends more active involvement in events pertinent to issues such as drug and alcohol abuse, domestic violence, poverty, etc.

The sustained, strong and organized association with the alumni is necessary. Graduates are evolved into experts in their field of activity and are de facto useful in the development of an alumni Foundation. The EEC recommends the development of specific strategies for establishing long-lasting relationship with the alumni community.

<i>Please decide in respect to the specific evaluation area (&3.1.8):</i>	Tick
Worthy of merit	
Positive evaluation	X
Partially positive evaluation	
Negative evaluation	

Justify your rating:

3.1.9 Internationalization Strategy

- Integration of the international dimension in the curricula
- Integration of the international dimension in research
- Integration of the intercultural dimension within the campus
- Participation in international HEI networks
- Collaboration with HEIs in other countries (with a specific collaboration agreement) - measures taken to reach goals

English-language courses in some departments facilitate the mobility of students and staff in the Erasmus program. The EEC recommends the expansion of this practice to other departments and the overall increase of the number of courses offered in languages other than Greek. These measures will increase cooperation with foreign institutions and enable new partnerships.

There is evidence about the engagement of academic staff in research and collaboration with international organizations and HEI. Several of these activities have led to publications in international fora. On the other hand, the collection of data about these research activities and result publication is not always systematic and/or accurate across all departments/units. The EEC recommends that performance indicators and data are monitored and trends are well documented to inform policy and strategy in this area.

Due to the distances between the main campus and the satellite campuses of the UoP, the EEC visited only the facilities in Tripoli and Korinthos. Within these campuses, there was only limited evidence of an intercultural dimension. Also, there were no posted signs and directions in languages other than Greek.

There is a steady increase in the number of agreements for cooperation with international HEI and research centers such as CERN. The EEC recommends the plan and implementation of a strategy to

increase the number of participating students and academic staff in these international collaborative efforts.

The EEC finds that the Internationalization Strategy of the Institution needs further development.

Please decide in respect to the specific evaluation area (&3.1.9):

	Tick
Worthy of merit	
Positive evaluation	X
Partially positive evaluation	
Negative evaluation	

Justify your rating:

3.1.10 Student Welfare Strategy

- Student hostel operation and development strategy
- Student refectory development strategy
- Scholarships and prizes strategy
- Sports facilities operation and development strategy
- Cultural activities strategy
- Strategy for people with special needs

Currently, only a limited number of students are provided with housing and meal accommodations and this is acknowledged in the Internal Evaluation Report of the Institution. Also, the EEC members discussed with the student representatives several issues pertaining to these services. The students who receive room and board have made comments about the poor quality of these services. Others, who rent off-campus apartments, have reported that they are often overcharged by the landlords. Although the EEC did not have a first-hand experience from visiting facilities where the student receive food and housing services, the overall understanding from these discussions was that there are multiple issues, which vary from one campus to another.

Another relevant issue has to do with the transportation of Nursing Department students to hospitals for the clinical practices. Because there is no hospital in the vicinity of the campus, students incur a substantial expense for their transportation to the nearest tow with a hospital.

The Institution has limited number of scholarships and prizes. The EEC recommends that a strategy regarding an Awards system for excellence is developed and implemented.

The EEC did not visit any university sports facilities but was told that student needs are served through agreements with local athletic organizations.

There were many positive comments about the quality and the number of cultural activities sponsored by the Institution.

The EEC has received information regarding the Institution's strategy for individuals with special needs. In the context of current fund shortages, there are good faith efforts to accommodate the needs of students with disabilities.

<i>Please decide in respect to the specific evaluation area (&3.1.10):</i>	Tick
Worthy of merit	
Positive evaluation	
Partially positive evaluation	X
Negative evaluation	

Justify your rating:

The various issues about student accommodations and services should be addressed through long- and short-term planning.

3.2 Strategy for Study Programmes

3.2.1 Programmes of Undergraduate Studies (first cycle)

Please comment on:

- the main strengths and weaknesses of the Programmes
- the basic obligations of students, e.g. attendance of lectures, course requirements, etc.
- the way the Central Administration of the Institution deals with any remarks and recommendations that the external experts pointed out in the External Evaluation of Academic Units

The main strengths of the programmes are the following:

The character of the curriculum. All programmes are well organised and with a few exceptions the curriculum is relevant to the job market needs. In most programmes students can easily find a job after graduation.

In addition, the evaluation of the curricula leads to potential adaptation of course content or introduction of new courses to follow the evolution of the discipline and meet local national and international academic trends. There is evidence that different departments took into account the recommendations of the external evaluation committees in order to improve their programmes.

In some programmes there is practical training. The interface of students with the market place through the practical training (in some programmes) is an advantage for the University.

Some of the teaching staff are experienced in teaching. Judging from their CVs, many of these faculty members have teaching experience in other Universities as well. Moreover, some faculty use evidence from their research in their teaching. Findings from research are incorporated into teaching.

The main weaknesses of the programmes are the following:

Some of the departments are understaffed. Because of the government restriction in hiring new faculty some departments lost more than half of their faculty. As a result faculty are overloaded (some of them teach up to 15 hours per week). Furthermore, they supervise a number of final year projects and they also have administrative duties.

Because faculty are overloaded with teaching and administrative duties they have limited time for research.

Some faculty do not have pedagogical background and their teaching methods need improvement. They need PGCert in teacher training/education in accordance with European requirements.

Because the budget of the institution is reduced the equipment is not up to date in all departments.

From our discussions with students they do not seem to participate into decision making committees.

Student evaluations are not taken into account in all departments for further improvements of the courses. Compulsory and systematic use of student input is needed for improvement of the content and delivery of courses.

In addition, it seems that a great number of students do not graduate on time (fourth year). The average time to degree appears to be close to 6 years.

Students have to register and successfully complete the courses that define the programme curriculum. Students can register electronically.

In most programmes students have an obligatory dissertation where they can work on issues related to the local community. In certain programmes there is obligatory practical training. Practical training not only helps students to practice these skills and knowledge but it also give them access to the market and the industry.

It is important that there is obligatory attendance in laboratories. However, there is non-

obligatory attendance in theoretical classes.

Units that received external evaluations have taken steps to implement the recommendations of the external. Some of the programmes were revised based on the comments of the external committees. In addition, certain services were improved.

Overall performance is acceptable to the EEC. Added effort is needed to improve the areas listed in this section.

<i>Please decide in respect to the specific evaluation area (&3.2.1):</i>	Tick
Worthy of merit	
Positive evaluation	X
Partially positive evaluation	
Negative evaluation	

Justify your rating:

3.2.2 Programmes of Postgraduate Studies (second cycle)

Please comment on:

- the main strengths and weaknesses of the Programmes
- the basic obligations of students, e.g. attendance of lectures, course requirements, etc.
- the way the Central Administration of the Institution deals with any remarks and recommendations that the external experts pointed out in the External Evaluation of Academic Units

The University offers 23 Master programmes. In the near future another three Master programmes will be implemented.

The main strengths of the Master programmes are the following:

Some of the programmes are unique and no other University in Greece offer such programmes. The teaching staff in the Master programmes have experience in the area of their expertise and in some cases eminent professors are invited and teach certain courses.

Some of the faculty use findings from their research to enrich their teaching. Master students have the opportunity to get involved in research activities. Most of the departments are connected with international organisations so their students can liaise with such institutions.

There is strong social relevance of some programmes. For example, the topics of course projects or thesis are motivated by the immediate needs of the broader society and local community. The discussion with stakeholders reinforced this view.

Some Master programmes are taught in English. Teaching in English can help the University to attract international students and in this way to increase its income.

From our interviews and observations we noticed that some Master programmes use distance learning opportunities. In some cases they use blended teaching. Distance learning can facilitate the participation of working students and those who live far away from the University.

The main weaknesses of the programmes are the following:

As we have already mentioned there is a reduction of funding by the state, so the University has to operate with limited income. The efforts of the University to attract foreign students (and thus further income) are prevented by bureaucratic internal obstacles.

The University is understaffed. There is a limited number of research and teaching staff. As a result, faculty are overloaded with teaching and administrative duties, therefore they have limited time for research.

There is lack of processes of continuous staff performance monitoring and development. From our discussions with the faculty we realised that teaching staff have limited opportunities for staff development.

There is limited use of student input through course evaluations to improve course content and delivery.

The Master programmes require enrolled students to take courses and conduct research. Master courses are different than the undergraduate courses and typically have much higher work-load which is reflected by a higher ECTS per course. Attendance is mandatory for lectures and students show high interest and attended willingly. In addition, they have obligatory dissertation (Masters thesis).

The departments of the institution have taken into account the recommendations of the external experts and most of the programmes were revised according to these remarks. It was observed that most departments have reviewed their external evaluations and addressed the recommendations included in the reports. Most recommendations were addressed but some others are difficult to be implemented due to the reduction of the state funding.

Having Master programmes in English language is a good start to increase the funding of the University and a way to internationalise the Institution.

<i>Please decide in respect to the specific evaluation area (& 3.2.2):</i>	Tick
Worthy of merit	
Positive evaluation	X
Partially positive evaluation	
Negative evaluation	

Justify your rating:

3.2.3 Programmes of Doctoral Studies (third cycle)

Please comment on:

- the main strengths and weaknesses of the Programmes
- the basic obligations of students, e.g. attendance of lectures, course requirements, etc.
- the way the Central Administration of the Institution deals with any remarks and recommendations that the external experts pointed out in the External Evaluation of Academic Units

The main strengths of the Programmes are the following:

The University offers Doctoral programmes in nine different departments. Doctoral students are involved in teaching and research. Doctoral students are encouraged to present papers into conferences and publish in academic journals. Doctoral students work for their departments. According to the doctoral students they work for at least five hours per week.

The main weaknesses of the Programmes are the following:

The number of doctoral students is very large compared to the overall size of student population (480 doctoral out of a total of about 5000 students). There are no mandatory courses (especially for research methods) for doctoral students.

There are no systematic efforts to network doctoral students with colloquiums, seminars, discussions etc. The EEC recommends to the departments to organise monthly colloquiums for doctoral students.

Doctoral programmes are research based with no obligatory courses. Doctoral students have to work for their departments for at least 5 hours per week.

The doctoral programs of the University follow the line of the traditional continental European doctorates that consists of individual research conducted by the candidate in close collaboration and exchange with her/his supervisor. However, the EEC encourages the University to establish research seminars/colloquiums, a space of open exchange between the candidates, faculty of the University and scholars from other institutions in Greece and abroad.

<i>Please decide in respect to the specific evaluation area (& 3.2.3):</i>	Tick
Worthy of merit	
Positive evaluation	
Partially positive evaluation	X
Negative evaluation	

Justify your rating:

The number of doctoral students is large and there are not any mandatory courses in key areas of research methods.

There are no systematic efforts to network doctoral students with colloquiums, seminars, discussions etc.

3.3 Profile of the Institution under evaluation - Conclusions and recommendations

*Please complete the following sections regarding the overall **profile of the Institution under evaluation**:*

- *Underline specific positive points:*

The Institution has a dynamic administration with ambitious goals for the future even under the current difficult economic conditions.

The 23 post graduate Master Programmes carried out by the Schools (6 of them taught in English language) is a worth mentioning achievement.

Departments have exhibited satisfactory research activity funded by both national and EU projects in the last 5 years.

- *Underline specific negative points:*

Student attendance, time to graduation and other education related processes are areas that need attention. Furthermore, insufficient number of faculty and staff members in some departments is an issue that acts as barrier in development.

Given these areas of need, the large number of doctoral students raises concerns as to the quality of support and guidance provided to the candidates.

- *Make your suggestions for further development of the positive points:*

The Institution strengthens its ties with the local scientific community by organizing meetings and conferences and inviting local experts from other AEIs.

- *Make your suggestions on needed steps for improvement:*

The EEC suggests that the University should focus on specific and achievable goals that are likely to be realized in the near future.

Some departments should follow the good practices of those departments that have proved good progress in their research and internationalization efforts.

The Institution should seek ways of increasing its own funding.

4. INTERNAL SYSTEM OF QUALITY ASSURANCE

4.1 Quality Assurance (QA) Policy and Strategy

Please comment on:

- the Institution's policy and goals regarding QA and Improvement
- whether the Institution has developed a specific system of QA
- how the Institution's internal QA system has been organized
- how the students and staff of the Institution are protected from biased interventions and discriminations
- whether a detailed implementation guide has been put together, containing an analysis of the QA system's operating procedures
- the involvement of students in QA
- how the Institution evaluates the effectiveness of its QA system regarding the achievement of its goals

The institution has a policy and set of goals regarding QA and Improvement. The policy is outlined and the goals are listed in the Institutional Internal Evaluation Report (IIER). The policy procedures are posted on the www page of the Institution's Office of QA (OQA - MOΔIII).

The Institution's QA procedures follow the guidelines provided by the Quality Assurance and Accreditation Agency (HQA – AΔIII). More specifically, each academic unit is responsible through its Quality Assurance Committee (QAC - OMEA) for the compilation of data and submission of annual reports to OQA. For its part, OQA responds to these reports by providing feedback and suggestions for improvement. Currently, all units participate in the processes of the internal QA system.

The representatives of the OQA – MOΔIII provided the EEC with copies of the most recent academic unit reports, the OQA follow-ups on the reports, and the external evaluation reports on these units. It became evident from reviewing these documents that the Institution has in place an efficient system for recording and analyzing data relevant to quality indicators.

The EEC has met with numerous members of the teaching and administrative staff, current students, both pre- and post- graduates, and professionals who have graduated from the institution. The discussions with these individuals have revealed to the members of the EEC that the participating units had assessed their programme curricula in reference to international standards and practices. Also, that the QA system is organized so that all stakeholders are involved: students, employers offering student placements, teaching staff, heads of departments, heads of departmental secretariats and heads of central administration.

The overall assessment of the EEC is that the QA and Improvement system is fair and well communicated to students and staff. The role of students in the QA system includes participation of students' representatives in the OQA and assessment of the learning process in all courses.

Students and staff are protected from biased interventions and discriminations through their right to object to decisions of management, at departmental and institutional levels. Concerning student progress and satisfaction, the EEC finds that the Institution uses reliable means for the collection of data. It was also clear that the participating units had assessed their programme curricula in reference to international standards and practices.

The EEC recommends that more students become involved in the processes of QA. At the same time, the Institution's OQA (MOΔIII) needs to focus on alternative practices (in addition and beyond the existing collection of student opinion survey results). For example, several individual units have, on their own initiative, implemented good practices to improve the quality of their programmes and services to students. However, the Institution's OQA (MOΔIII) seems to be either unaware of it or unable to communicate and disseminate such practices to all units. The EEC recommends that the Institution's OQA (MOΔIII) become proactive in identifying the good practices already in use by individual units and organize events or activities to help the dissemination of such practices to all units. Also, embrace and spread a culture of excellence that

encourages creativity and the undertaking of initiatives.

Please decide in respect to the specific evaluation area (&4.1):

Worthy of merit	Tick
Positive evaluation	X
Partially positive evaluation	
Negative evaluation	

Justify your rating:

4.2 Design, approval, monitoring and evaluation of the study programmes and degrees awarded

Please comment on:

- whether the learning outcomes have been clearly formulated and whether they have been published
- whether the programmes are designed in such a way as to involve students and other stakeholders in the work
- how the achievement of learning outcomes is monitored
- whether there is a published Guide regarding the organization of programmes of study
- whether the ECTS system is taken into consideration and implemented
- whether there is a periodic evaluation of the programmes according to set procedures and criteria aimed at safeguarding their consistency and regular updating
- the student participation in the QA procedure of the study programmes
- whether the programmes include well-structured international mobility and -where appropriate- placement opportunities

During our visit, OQA members and other staff have provided the EEC members with all requested material as well as ample opportunities to interact with students and stakeholders from the local industry. From the latter it became evident that there are mechanisms established which allow these actors to provide feedback for the revision and update of the curricula. From the former it is clear that educational objectives have been formulated and published by each unit. Class syllabi include clear statements about learning outcome and units have implemented the ECTS system.

Students and other stakeholders are involved in the designing and evaluation of programs at various stages. For example, students and graduates assess the study programs through their participation of their representatives in QACs (OMEA), departmental assemblies, and the Faculty Senate. In addition, representatives of the local chamber of commerce and several local and district officials have provided ample examples of collaborative projects which revealed to us their close ties with the University. Therefore, the overall assessment of the EEC is that,

- Educational objectives have been formulated and published by each unit.
- Class syllabi include clear statements about learning outcome and units have implemented the ECTS system.
- There are mechanisms established which allow these actors to provide feedback for the revision and update of the curricula.

All departments/units have gone through formal internal and external evaluation processes. The units have produced reply documents for the recommendations made in the external evaluation report. However, the replies given and the way the answers are provided are at times superficial. There is a need to provide concrete, specific evidence and supporting documentation to illustrate beyond question what actions were taken and how, and this must be as detailed as possible, addressing each specific recommendation.

Based on the provided data and our interactions with students, teaching staff and other stakeholders, the EEC finds that international mobility (including placement) is integrated in the structure of the programmes. Examples that support this conclusion are the established collaboration with CERN and the Athens Observatory as well as the opportunities for international mobility which are advertised each year by the Erasmus Office. About Erasmus Office, the EEC finds that it has played a very active role in the promotion and achievement of high international mobility among students and faculty members.

Please decide in respect to the specific evaluation area (&4.2):

	Tick
Worthy of merit	
Positive evaluation	X
Partially positive evaluation	
Negative evaluation	

Justify your rating:

4.3 Teaching and learning - Assessment by students

Please comment on:

- whether multiple and coherent learning paths are provided according to the needs of students in the Institution's Departments / Faculties
- how proper guidance and support is offered to students by the Departments / Faculties' teaching staff
- whether students are informed clearly and in detail regarding the strategy of evaluation that is implemented for their programme of study, the exams or other methods of assessment they will be subjected to, what is expected of them and which criteria will be applied for the evaluation of their performance
- whether there is a formal procedure for addressing complaints and objections by students in the Departments / Faculties of the Institution

Do you wish to make any comment on a point not included above?

The economic crisis in Greece has impacted the Institution's access to both human and material resources thus limiting the implementation of possible new visions. Despite these circumstances, all academic staff seemed to be eager to promote a culture of excellence among the student body. During our visit, faculty members have expressed their commitment to a learner-centered pedagogy. Good practices such as the establishment of the office of student advisors and the use of information technology in teaching and distance learning have made positive contributions to this mission.

According to the "Student Guide of Studies" multiple learning paths are possible and are decided by each student. The coherence of multiple learning paths is assured with the use of course prerequisites and caps on the number of courses and ECTS units a student can take each semester. Guidance and support to students are often provided at personal level by professors and advisors. Students are well informed of the expectations of their professors and the procedures and criteria their professors use to assess learning. The EEC met with about fifty students, all of whom expressed their overall satisfaction with the levels of support they receive from faculty. In addition, students stated that, over the last three years, there is a steady improvement in the quality of services and the way they interact with their professors. Many attributed the improvement, at least in part, to the adoption of quality assurance processes. Finally, students mentioned that they were always well informed about changes due to unforeseen circumstances in schedule or other activities.

The Institution has a formal procedure for addressing complaints and objections by students. However, because of the somewhat small size of the Institution and the opportunities students have to frequently interact with faculty members, most of the time these issues are addressed informally. There were some concerns among students about a very small number of professors who were not to be found in their offices during their posted consultation hours. Some students also stated that they have sent email correspondence to administrators and the administrators never replied to them. These seemed to be rather isolated incidents. However, if real, such occurrences need to be addressed.

The EEC members believe that the participation of students in the internal quality assurance processes is important. The Institution needs to increase student participation, both formal (e.g., student participation in course evaluation) and informal.

Please decide in respect to the specific evaluation area (&4.3):

	Tick
Worthy of merit	
Positive evaluation	X
Partially positive evaluation	
Negative evaluation	

Justify your rating:

The Institution needs to increase student participation, both formal (e.g., student participation in course evaluation) and informal.

4.4 Admission of students, progression and recognition of studies

Please comment on:

- whether the procedures and criteria for admission to the second and third cycle of studies are implemented with consistency and transparency
- whether there are clear and distinct procedures within the Departments/Faculties, as regards recognition of higher education degrees, periods of study and knowledge acquired at an earlier stage
- whether there are clear and distinct procedures of recognition of study periods and prior learning (including the recognition of non-formal and informal learning)
- whether there are clear procedures in place regarding the cooperation of other Institutions with national ENIC/NARIC centres for ensuring coherent recognition and mobility among programmes within / among Institution (s)
- whether students are provided with detailed information (e.g. Diploma Supplement) regarding the degrees conferred to them, the achieved learning outcomes as well as the framework, the level and the content of studies they successfully completed
- whether the Institution has in place processes and tools to collect, monitor and use information regarding student progression

Do you wish to make any comment on a point not included above?

Units and the Institution have control neither over the number of students admitted each year nor over the number of students who can transfer from other institutions. Such matters are decided centrally and on the basis of student performance in national exams. Centrally are also decided, by the Ministry of Education, questions about the length of study towards a degree.

Some statistical data are currently used by individual QACs in order to calculate quality indices. On the other hand, the OQA still does not have in place a clear process to collect information about and monitor the continuous progress of each student in the course of his or her studies.

Admission into the graduate programme is based on an applicant's first degree GPA, letters of recommendation, and interviews conducted by one faculty member. Admission procedures and criteria are clearly stated and applied with consistency. The interview process assures the accurate assessment of a broad array of formal and non-formal qualifications. The EEC recommends that more than one faculty member is involved in the interview phase to ensure even higher levels of consistency and transparency.

There are clear and distinct procedures regarding recognition of HE degrees, periods of study and knowledge acquired an earlier stage at other HEI, which are described in legal documents. DOATAP (Inter-university Institution for the Recognition of Academic Degrees) is the Body responsible for the recognition of university degrees in other countries and operates at national level.

Please decide in respect to the specific evaluation area (&4.4):

	Tick
Worthy of merit	
Positive evaluation	X
Partially positive evaluation	
Negative evaluation	

Justify your rating:

4.5 Quality Assurance as regards the teaching staff

Please comment on:

- how it is guaranteed that the vacancy notices and recruitment of teaching staff include procedures which provide assurance that all new teaching staff members have at least the basic teaching skills
- opportunities offered to the teaching staff for their professional/scientific advancement
- how potential weaknesses of the teaching staff are identified as regards the delivery of their teaching courses
- the Institution's procedures for the support of new teaching staff as regards the teaching and evaluation methods
- how scientific activity is assessed and encouraged among the teaching staff in order to strengthen the connection between education and research
- the procedures in place so that the teaching staff members receive the necessary feedback on their personal performance as well as on the opinion of students
- whether a regulatory framework is in place for the investigation of disciplinary and academic misconduct of the teaching staff

Do you wish to make any comment on a point not included above?

The Institution's hiring procedures are clearly defined and reflect the national policy requirements, which are the same across all institutions. A regulatory framework is in place for the investigation of disciplinary and academic misconduct relating to teaching staff. There is evidence that a good number of the teaching staff engages in scholarly activities and that the results of these activities are embedded in their teaching and other interactions with students.

Potential weaknesses of teaching staff are identified with the customary use of student opinion surveys. Currently, students are provided with anonymous access to an online questionnaire, which they can complete in their own time. An identified flaw of this particular method is that not many students participate in the process. Besides increasing student participation in the QA process, the EEC recommends the use of additional methods for the improvement of teaching. For instance, the teaching staff could use the method of peer observation, which means an instructor invites a colleague of his or her choice to observe his/her teaching and provide feedback.

Although the national policy does not require a hired individual to demonstrate a certain level of skill in pedagogy, the EEC would like to suggest that the Institution develop training and/or professional development programmes that focus on enhancing the pedagogical capabilities of all teaching staff. This is normal practice in most world-class HE institutions.

Members of teaching staff, if they wish, can teach in other HEI for short periods, through the ERASMUS program. They can also engage in research for periods of one semester (every 3 years), during sabbaticals.

Potential weaknesses of the teaching staff are identified through assessments of the quality of teaching by students each semester. The EEC would like to suggest the use of more assessment tools (e.g., measuring learning outcomes achieved by students) and the development of supporting mechanisms to help faculty members who have been identified with weaknesses.

Scientific activity is encouraged by the approval of educational leave of absence (sabbatical) and mobility for short-term engagement in educational or research activities abroad.

There is a regulatory framework for the investigation of disciplinary and academic misconduct of the teaching staff. The regulatory framework includes the nature of disciplinary and academic misconduct, the nature of penalties, the bodies responsible for enforcing regulations and the procedures followed in cases of disciplinary or academic misconduct.

Please decide in respect to the specific evaluation area (&4.5):

	Tick
Worthy of merit	
Positive evaluation	X
Partially positive evaluation	
Negative evaluation	

Justify your rating:

4.6 Learning resources and student support

Please comment on:

- whether there are procedures for the systematic monitoring, evaluation, review and improvement of the appropriateness and effectiveness of supporting services available to students
- the available support services in regard to Libraries, Information systems and infrastructure
- the procedure in place for offering individual assistance (counselling and tutoring) to students

Do you wish to make any comment on a point not included above?

In relation to library and information services, the following services/facilities are available:

- library facilities
- computer, internet and networking facilities
- printing and photocopying facilities
- Erasmus office services
- career services (which include information on postgraduate studies).

A typical coverage of the librarian needs is provided with central managements and libraries on each campus. The library is a member of the Network for University Libraries. The EEC recommends the extension of library hours. Students have access to academic tutors and the usage of this service is satisfactory. Each department appoints on a yearly basis one member of the teaching staff as “Consultant”, who can counsel students on personal non-educational issues.

Overall, students were satisfied with the quality of the provided services and support. However, in areas identified as in need of improvement, the Institution did not provide clearly stated plans for remedial action. There are formal methods (e.g. based on questionnaire distribution) for collection of documentation, which according to established procedures, are electronically linked to MODIP. However, there is an obvious need for further statistical support. Such procedures should be established in a consistent way, where periodically and in clearly defined time-slices relevant data can create records, which can be accessible and have the advantage of correlative character over time.

Please decide in respect to the specific evaluation area (&4.6):

	Tick
Worthy of merit	
Positive evaluation	X
Partially positive evaluation	
Negative evaluation	

Justify your rating:

4.7 Information Systems for Recording and Analysing Data and Indicators

Please comment on:

- whether the Institution possesses reliable means for collecting, analysing and utilizing valid information in respect to key performance indicators, the profile of the student population and student progression, success and drop-out rates
- whether the Institution possesses reliable means for collecting, analysing and utilizing valid information regarding its other functions and activities
- whether the Institution collects information about student satisfaction with their programmes of study and the career paths offered to graduates
- whether the Institution seeks comparison with other similar establishments within and beyond the European Higher Education Area, with a view to developing self-awareness and finding ways to improve its operation

Do you wish to make any comment on a point not included above?

The tools to collect and monitor information regarding student progression exist in the information system called “Cardisoft University.” An integrating system to link OQA with the QACs is still under trial use (Integrated System of Quality Assurance, ISQA – Ο.ΣΥ.ΔΙ.Π.). When completed, the system will allow to manage data regarding the programmes of studies of the academic departments, the regulations of studies, the inflow of students, the individual study programs of students, students’ grades and dates of exams, the title of their degree thesis, date of their thesis oral exam and grade, and the dates and places of the practical training of students. At the time of the visit no such specific results of analysis were provided (e.g. no correlation with attendance, student profile, etc.).

It was clear that the participating units had assessed their programme curricula in reference to international standards and practices. An area in need of improvement is the availability of all unit reports and OQA follow-ups in English.

<i>Please decide in respect to the specific evaluation area (&4.7):</i>	Tick
Worthy of merit	
Positive evaluation	
Partially positive evaluation	X
Negative evaluation	

Justify your rating:

The Institution needs to complete the development of its electronic system for the collection and analysis of valid information (Integrated System of Quality Assurance, ISQA – Ο.ΣΥ.ΔΙ.Π.).

4.8 Dissemination of information to stakeholders

Please comment on:

- how the Institution sees to the publicization of information on the programmes offered, the expected learning outcomes, the degrees awarded, the teaching, learning and assessment procedures it uses and the learning opportunities it offers to students
- whether the information regarding the Institution's offered programmes of study is available in English or in other languages
- whether the teaching staff's CVs are included in the publicized information, both in Greek and in English

Do you wish to make any comment on a point not included above?

The Institution is in the final stages of completing the electronic platform of the ISQA (Ο.ΣΥ.ΔΙ.Π.). Currently, the official electronic page of UoP offers limited (out of date or incomplete) information about faculty CVs, programmes, carrier office activities, etc. The provided data are mostly in Greek. Staff CVs are in various forms, many are indeed in English, but again not all of these data are accessible by visitors who do not speak Greek.

Please decide in respect to the specific evaluation area (&4.8):

	Tick
Worthy of merit	
Positive evaluation	
Partially positive evaluation	X
Negative evaluation	

Justify your rating:

The Institution needs to complete the development of its electronic platform (ISQA – Ο.ΣΥ.ΔΙ.Π.) and provide uniform and up to date information in both Greek and English.

4.9 Continuous monitoring and periodic review of the study programmes

Please comment on:

- the procedure followed with regard to assessment and periodic review of the contents of study programmes
- whether this procedure takes into account the changing needs of society
- whether this procedure takes into consideration the findings emanating from monitoring the graduates' career paths
- the procedure with which the reviews take into account the students' work load, the progress rate and completion of studies
- whether this procedure takes into account the cutting edge research activities in that particular discipline
- whether the involvement of students and other stakeholders is secured in the revision of the programmes

Do you wish to make any comment on a point not included above?

Student involvement in the revision of the programmes is secured by law (Greek Law 4009/2011). The contributions of stake holders in program revisions have become evident during the discussions the EEC have had with their representatives. On the other hand, the monitoring and periodic review of the study programmes needs to become more systematic. For example, the collection of OQA data about the employability of graduates could help monitor the career paths of the Institution's graduates and use the results for making program revisions.

Clear procedures should be established and followed by all units for the assessment and revision of programs of study. The study programs should be updated according to standards of the disciplines, the evolution of social needs and the developments in industry.

Please decide in respect to the specific evaluation area (&4.9):

	Tick
Worthy of merit	
Positive evaluation	
Partially positive evaluation	X
Negative evaluation	

Justify your rating:

Clear procedures should be established and followed by all units for the assessment and revision of programs of study.

4.10 Periodic external evaluation

Please comment on:

- the procedure already planned by the Institution in order to deal with the observations of the Institutional External evaluation
- how the anticipated implementation of plans by Departments / Faculties is monitored in response to any comments included in their external evaluation and in the accreditation of their programmes

Faculty and administrators were very positive about the quality assurance process. Members of the OQA were very eager to hear the EEC suggestions. They were also very well informed about the process and prepared to assist the EEC in the completion of its tasks.

All units have undergone the External Evaluation procedure. The mostly positive reports have helped the units improve their programmes. As aforementioned, the Institution will soon start making full use of its electronic system for the collection and analysis of valid information (Integrated System of Quality Assurance, ISQA – Ο.ΣΥ.ΔΙ.Π.). It is expected that the latter will further assist in the monitoring of progress in the area of program improvement.

Please decide in respect to the specific evaluation area (&4.10):

	Tick
Worthy of merit	
Positive evaluation	X
Partially positive evaluation	
Negative evaluation	

Justify your rating:

4.11 Internal System of Quality Assurance – Conclusions and recommendations

Please complete the following sections regarding the **internal system of quality assurance**:

- *Underline specific positive points:*

- All departments/units have gone through formal internal and external evaluation processes.
- Most units have made good use of the recommendations of the external evaluation committees to improve their programmes.
- The QA system is organized so that all stakeholders are involved: students, employers offering student placements, teaching staff, heads of departments, heads of departmental secretariats and heads of central administration.

- *Underline specific negative points:*

- Low student participation in QA.
- Units have produced reply documents for the recommendations made in the external evaluation report which at times are superficial.
- The official electronic page of UoP offers limited (out of date or incomplete) information about faculty CVs, programmes, carrier office activities, etc. The provided data are mostly in Greek.

- *Make your suggestions for further development of the positive points:*

- Encourage all units to provide concrete, specific evidence and supporting documentation to illustrate beyond question what actions were taken to address the external evaluation report recommendations.

- *Make your suggestions on needed steps for improvement:*

- Involve more students in the processes of QA. Use alternative practices (in addition and beyond the existing collection of student opinion survey results).
- Identify good practices already in use by individual units and disseminate these good practices to all units in the Institution.
- Use alternative methods for the improvement of teaching (e.g., peer observation).
- The Institution needs to complete the development of its electronic platform (ISQA – O.ΣY.ΔI.II.) and provide uniform and up to date information in both Greek and English.

5. OPERATION OF THE CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION OF THE INSTITUTION

5.1 Central Administration Services of the Institution

Please comment on:

- The operation of the central administration services of the Institution in regard to the:
 - Special Account for Research Funds (SARF)
 - Financial services
 - Supplies department
 - Technical services
 - IT services
 - Student support services
 - Employment and Career Centre (ECC)
 - Public/ International relations department
 - Foreign language services
 - Social and cultural activities
 - Halls of residence and refectory services
 - Institution's library

The EEC had the opportunity to tour some parts of the University buildings and facilities in Tripoli and speak with a number of support services personnel and faculty. It also visited the building in Korinthos. The EEC did not have the opportunity to visit the University buildings in Sparti, Kalamata and Nafplio.

The IT of the Institute seemed to effectively support all the traditional services (internet, wireless, proxy servers, PC labs, etc) and related facilities in the Tripoli campus.

The Special Account for Research Funds (ELKE) offers effective support to the research programmes of the Institution. However the EEC was told of the difficulties the SARF is confronted with in its management due to the complicated government regulations imposed.

The EEC met with the staff of the administrative groups of the Institution who presented the functions and services of each group. During the interview it became evident that the administrative team offers good support to the teaching and research programmes of the various Departments.

The EEC also identified a lack of some critical functions of student services that are addressed in other sections above. Students complained about the halls of residence and refectory services.

Student services need to be improved.

<i>Please decide in respect to the specific evaluation area (&5.1):</i>	Tick
Worthy of merit	
Positive evaluation	X
Partially positive evaluation	
Negative evaluation	

Justify your rating:

5.2 Operation of the Central Administration of the Institution – Conclusions and recommendations

Please complete the following sections regarding the **operation of the Institution's central administration** :

- *Underline specific positive points:*

- The administrative services in the different departments of the University, despite the shortage of staff, provide satisfactory support to the academic community, staff and students.
- The SARF office performs its duties by assisting in budget preparation and management of funds from research and other programmes.
- The IT services effectively serve and support the University departments providing all the required IT services.
- Team leaders and high performers should be given the flexibility to make changes through a systematic approach and collaborative planning. There are some good practices in certain departments that can be transferred to other departments.

- *Underline specific negative points:*

- Student support services need to improve.

- *Make your suggestions for further development of the positive points:*

- Team leaders and high performers should be given the flexibility to make changes through a systematic approach and collaborative planning. There are some good practices in certain departments that can be transferred to other departments.

- *Make your suggestions on needed steps for improvement:*

- A yearly appraisal system for administrative staff should be developed in consultation with them. This will provide administrators with an annual opportunity to talk about their achievements and workloads and to set agreed targets for the following year.
- Those performing well should be celebrated whilst those who are underperforming should be given support and training to improve their performance.
- The EEC suggests the improvement of student support services and the establishment of an endowed fellowship programme.

6. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In connection with the

- general operation of the Institution
- development of the Institution to this date and its present situation
- Institution's readiness and capability to change/improve
- Internal system of Quality Assurance of the Institution

please complete the following sections:

- *Underline specific positive points:*

General operation of the Institution

- The administrative officials are enthusiastic and dedicated.
- High quality teaching staff.
- The UoP has established good relationships with the local labour market and business representatives.
- Good relationships with the local authorities based on mutual trust.
- English-language courses in some departments facilitate the mobility of students and staff in the Erasmus program.

Development of the Institution to this date and its present situation

- Units have elaborated their vision, mission, and strategy in conformity with their academic goals.
- With only a few exceptions the undergraduate curriculum is relevant to the job market needs.

Institution's readiness and capability to change/improve

- As a young and dynamic entity the Institution has great potential to change and improve.
- Units are proactive in seeking multiple alternative sources, such as EU funds, to support research and infrastructure needs.
- UoP demonstrates a good rating in research output as well as national and some international recognition as a research institution.

Internal system of Quality Assurance of the Institution

- All departments/units have gone through formal internal and external evaluation processes.
- Most units have made good use of the recommendations of the external evaluation committees to improve their programmes.
- Participating units have assessed their programme curricula in reference to international standards and practices.
- The QA system is organized so that all stakeholders are involved: students, employers offering student placements, teaching staff, heads of departments, heads of departmental secretariats and heads of central administration.
- Individual units have, on their own initiative, implemented good practices to improve the quality of their programmes and services to students.

- *Underline specific negative points:*

General operation of the Institution

- Distances between the main campus and the satellite campuses of the UoP.
- The Institution has a partial environmental policy.
- The Institution has limited number of scholarships and prizes for students.
- Student attendance, time to graduation and other related processes are areas that need attention.

Development of the Institution to this date and its present situation

- The issue of buildings sufficiency and of spaces is one of the main issues of the University.
- The Internationalization Strategy of the Institution needs further development.
- Low student participation in classes.

Institution's readiness and capability to change/improve

- Heavy teaching load of staff in all departments.
- The sustained, strong and organized association with the alumni is necessary.

Internal system of Quality Assurance of the Institution

- Low student participation in QA.
- The monitoring and periodic review of the study programmes needs to become more systematic across all units.
- There were some concerns among students about a small number of professors who were not to be found in their offices during their posted consultation hours. Some students also stated that they have sent email correspondence to administrators and the administrators never replied to them.

- *Make your suggestions for further development of the positive points:*

General operation of the Institution

- Use the good relationships of the Institution with the community to help improve services to students.
- Increase the number of courses offered in languages other than Greek.

Development of the Institution to this date and its present situation

- Having a common vision and strategy facilitates the creation of positive synergies and result-oriented implementation.

Institution's readiness and capability to change/improve

- Intensify efforts for long-term alternative funding sources to meet specific targets (e.g., through research or externally funded projects).
- The number of research faculty who actively participate in research programmes is adequate, but the EEC believes that the number can increase through intensified coordinated efforts which will also enhance research momentum and culture.

Internal system of Quality Assurance of the Institution

- Encourage all units to provide concrete, specific evidence and supporting documentation to illustrate beyond question what actions were taken to address the external evaluation report recommendations.
- Several individual units have, on their own initiative, implemented good practices to improve the quality of their programmes and services to students. Disseminate these good practices to other units.

- *Make your suggestions on needed steps for improvement:*

General operation of the Institution

- Clarify the role and strengthen the functioning of the Administrative Council in the development of an overall institutional strategy.
- Administration and academic staff need to coordinate their efforts in developing mechanisms and methodologies in looking for alternative sources and coping with current and future challenges.
- Develop a more comprehensive strategy regarding energy efficiency and measure key performance indicators to monitor progress.
- Collect data and monitor performance indicators in areas of research. Use data to inform policy and strategy in such areas.
- The various issues about student accommodations and services should be addressed through long- and short-term planning.
- The Institution needs to complete the development of its electronic platform (ISQA – Ο.ΣΥ.ΔΙ.Π.) and provide uniform and up to date information in Greek as well as in English and other foreign languages.

Development of the Institution to this date and its present situation

- Develop concrete and achievable short- and long-term plans in order to address the building issues.
- Increase the number of participating students and academic staff in international collaborative projects.

- Model to all units the good practices of units that have made progress in areas of research and internationalization.

Institution’s readiness and capability to change/improve

- Develop indicative time frames and ways to monitor progress and measurable outcomes in areas that improvements are needed.
- Develop a strategy to communicate research outcomes and promote a culture of excellence.
- Develop specific strategies for establishing long-lasting relationship with the alumni community.

Internal system of Quality Assurance of the Institution

- Involve more students in the processes of QA. Use alternative practices (in addition and beyond the existing collection of student opinion survey results).
- Identify good practices already in use by individual units and disseminate these good practices to all units in the Institution.
- Use alternative methods for the improvement of teaching (e.g., peer observation).
- Develop training and/or professional development programmes that focus on enhancing the pedagogical capabilities of all teaching staff.
- Provide concrete, specific evidence and supporting documentation to illustrate beyond question what actions were taken to address the external evaluation report recommendations.
- Embrace and spread a culture of excellence that encourages creativity and the undertaking of initiatives.
- Ensure that all student concerns are registered and properly addressed.
- The relationship between programme outcomes and learning objectives should be better defined.
- Established procedures for follow-up of careers of graduates and assessment of their studying experience.

6.1 Final decision of the EEC

Please decide in respect to the overall Institutional evaluation:

	Tick
Worthy of merit	
Positive evaluation	X
Partially positive evaluation	
Negative evaluation	

Justify your rating:

The UoP has a dedicated administration and high quality teaching staff. Faculty and administrators are very positive about the quality assurance process. Also, the Institution has established good relationships with the community and its stakeholders. The Institution will benefit by developing more systematic approaches in the collection of data for the improvement of its programmes and internationalization strategy.

Members of the Committee

**UNIVERSITY OF THE
PELOPONNESE**

Name and Surname

Signature

Prof. Loucas Petronicolos

University of Wisconsin Oshkosh, U.S.A.

Prof. Panayiotis Angelides

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