



ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ
HELLENIC REPUBLIC



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Accreditation Report
for the New Undergraduate Study Programme in
operation of:

Accounting and Finance

Institution: University of Western Macedonia

Date: 9 April 2023



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



Report of the Panel appointed by the HAHE to undertake the review of the New Undergraduate Study Programme in operation of **Accounting and Finance** of the **University of Western Macedonia** for the purposes of granting accreditation.

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PART A: BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT OF THE REVIEW

I. The External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel

The Panel responsible for the Accreditation Review of the new undergraduate study programme in operation of **Accounting and Finance** of the **University of Western Macedonia** comprised of the following five (5) members, drawn from the HAHE Register, in accordance with Laws 4009/2011 & 4653/2020:

1. Prof. Ioannis Violaris (Chair)

City Unity College, Nicosia, Cyprus

Visiting Professor at the Frederick, European, and Neapolis Universities

2. Prof. Fragkiskos Filippaios

University of East Anglia, United Kingdom

3. Prof. Emeritus Spyros Economides

California State University, East Bay, United States of America

4. Mr. Stelios Mastrogiannakis

Member of the Economic Chamber of Greece, Greece

5. Mr. Alexandros Pappas

Student, Department of Accounting and Finance, University of Macedonia, Greece

II. Review Procedure and Documentation

Prior to the review, the External Evaluation and Accreditation Panel (EEAP) received from HAHE (Hellenic Authority for Higher Education) a comprehensive folder containing fully detailed material to support EEAP members for the review. Overall, 32 documents with material have been provided from the Department of Accounting and Finance of Western Macedonia, as well as 9 files from HAHE.

During the early evening of April, the 4th as well as the afternoon and evening of the following day, the EEAP has held separate online meetings with colleagues at the University and Department level and with various stakeholders: The EEAP has met the Vice-Rector, the Head of the Department, the President of the Quality Assurance Unit (QAU/MOΔIP, OMEA & MODIP members), Academic staff members, Students, Employers & social partners.

The EEAP also had the opportunity to virtually observe classrooms, lecture halls, the University library and other facilities via dedicated presentations. Following on from this, the EEAP spent the remaining of the time drafting this Report.

Overall, the EEAP reviewed this Undergraduate Study Programme to explore accreditation. The Accreditation review constitutes a sort of benchmarking of the study programme against a predefined set of Principles (Standards for Quality Accreditation of Undergraduate Programmes). These Principles were formulated by HAHE, in line with the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ESG 2015).

III. New Undergraduate Study Programme in operation Profile

The Department of Accounting and Finance of the University of Western Macedonia was established in 2019. It is located at the city of Kozani. The Department's staff is composed of 12 University level (ΔΕΠ – Διδακτικό ερευνητικό προσωπικό) members, specifically: 5 Professors, 1 Associate Professor, 3 Assistant Professors, 2 Lecturers and 2 Special Teaching staff (STS) members.

The Department offers the Bachelor in Accounting and Finance degree programme, that aims to provide specialization on accounting and finance. In line with all other accounting and finance University programmes in Greece, graduates from this programme are awarded by the Economic Chamber of Greece the professional rights to exercise formally the profession of accountant. Graduates can continue with postgraduate and/or doctorate studies, both at Greek and international Universities. In the near future the Department aims to offer an English-speaking Programme to attract foreign students.

The programme under review is the only undergraduate programme offered by the Department and aims to equip graduates both with advanced theoretical knowledge and technical expertise/competency. Students undertake 48 modules equivalent to 240 ECTS credits.

Teaching proficiency courses are expected to be offered at university level, for all students of all Schools and Departments.

Approximately 740 students are currently enrolled in the programme, all entering after 2019. Currently, every year around 100 students enter the programme. Freshmen represent 15% of all students and the ratio of lecturers to students is 1:76 (1:52 including the STS).

The Department's infrastructure is modern with adequate facilities that are fully equipped with modern educational tools and a library with rich resources. Its laboratories are also fully equipped, with several software packages, logistics, interactive media, personal computers and its classrooms and amphitheatres are equipped with modern presentation tools.

The Department is new, so is the programme. The first graduates are expected to enter the labour market by the end of the Spring 2023 semester. This also explains, why neither the Department nor the programme have undergone any evaluation in previous years through HAHE's procedures.

PART B: COMPLIANCE WITH THE PRINCIPLES

Principle 1: Strategic Planning, Feasibility and Sustainability of the Academic Unit

Institutions must have developed an appropriate strategy for the establishment and operation of new academic units and the provision of new undergraduate study programmes. This strategy should be documented by specific feasibility and sustainability studies.

By decision of the institutional Senate, the Institutions should address in their strategy issues related to their academic structure in academic units and study programmes, which support the profile, the vision, the mission, and the strategic goal setting of the Institution, within a specific time frame. The strategy of the Institution should articulate the potential benefits, weaknesses, opportunities or risks from the operation of new academic units and study programmes, and plan all the necessary actions towards the achievement of their goals.

The strategy of their academic structure should be documented by specific feasibility and sustainability studies, especially for new academic units and new study programmes.

More specifically, the feasibility study of the new undergraduate study programmes should be accompanied by a four-year business plan to meet specific needs in infrastructure, services, human resources, procedures, financial resources, and management systems.

During the evaluation of the Institutions and their individual academic units in terms of meeting the criteria for the organisation of undergraduate study programmes, particular attention must be placed upon:

a. The academic profile and the mission of the academic unit

The profile and mission of the department should be specified. The scientific field of the department should be included in the internationally established scientific fields of Higher Education, as they are designated by the international categorisation of scientific fields in education, by UNESCO (ISCED 2013).

b. The strategy of the Institution for its academic development

The academic development strategy for the operation of the department and the new study programme should be set out. This strategy should result from the investigation of the factors that influence the studies and the research in the scientific field, the investigation of the institutional, economic, developmental, and social parameters that apply in the external environment of the Institution, as well as the possibilities and capabilities that exist within the internal environment (as reflected in a SWOT Analysis: strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats). This specific analysis should demonstrate the reason for selecting the scientific field of the new department.

c. The documentation of the feasibility of the operation of the department and the study programme

The feasibility of the operation of the new department should be justified based on:

- *the needs of the national and regional economy (economic sectors, employment, supply-demand, expected academic and professional qualifications)*
- *comparison with other national and international study programmes of the same scientific field*
- *the state-of-the-art developments*

- *the existing academic map; the differentiation of the proposed department from the already existing ones needs to be analysed, in addition to the implications of the current image of the academic map in the specific scientific field.*

d. The documentation of the sustainability of the new department

Mention must be made to the infrastructure, human resources, funding perspective, services, and all other available resources in terms of:

- *educational and research facilities (buildings, rooms, laboratories, equipment, etc.)*
- *staff (existing and new, by category, specialty, rank and laboratory). A distinct five-year plan is required, documenting the commitment of the School and of the Institution for filling in the necessary faculty positions to cover at least the entire pre-defined core curriculum*
- *funding (funding possibility from public or non-public sources)*
- *services (central, departmental / student support, digital, administrative, etc.)*

e. The structure of studies

The structure of the studies should be briefly presented, namely:

- **The organisation of studies:** *The courses and the categories to which they belong; the distribution of the courses into semesters; the alignment of the courses with the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS).*
- **Learning process:** *Documentation must be provided as to how the student-centered approach is ensured (modes of teaching and evaluation of students beyond the traditional methods).*
- **Learning outcomes:** *Knowledge, skills and competences acquired by graduates, as well as the professional rights awarded must be mentioned.*

f. The number of admitted students

- *The proposed number of admitted students over a five-year period should be specified.*
- *Any similar departments in other HEIs with the possibility of student transfers from / to the proposed department should be mentioned.*

g. Postgraduate studies and research

- *It is necessary to indicate research priorities in the scientific field, the opportunities for interdisciplinary research, the challenges towards new knowledge, possible research collaborations, etc.*
- *In addition, the postgraduate and doctoral programmes offered by the academic unit, the research projects performed, and the research performance of the faculty members should be mentioned.*

Relevant documentation

- *Introductory Report by the Quality Assurance Unit (QAU) addressing the above points with the necessary documentation*
- *Updated Strategic Plan of the Institution that will include its proposed academic reconstruction, in view of the planned operation of new department(s) (incl. updated SWOT analysis at institutional level)*
- *Feasibility and sustainability studies for the establishment and operation of the new academic unit and the new study programme*
- *Four-year business plan*

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The profile of the Department is clearly specified and its mission is stated. The scientific field of the Department is included in the internationally established scientific fields of Higher Education, as they are designated by the international categorisation of scientific fields in education, by UNESCO (ISCED 2013).

The academic development strategy for the operation of the Department and the study programme were set out in 2019, when the Department was created. This strategy appears to result from the investigation of the factors that influence the studies and the research in the scientific field, the investigation of the institutional, economic, developmental and social parameters that apply in the external environment of the Institution, mainly the region of Western Macedonia. The Department's staff is fully aware of the structural changes that the economy of this region is undergoing, with the influence based primarily on the issues related to the extraction of lignite. The Western Macedonia region has the second highest unemployment rate in Greece (21.6%). The region's business world though is strongly supporting the Department's expected graduates.

The Department organizes a "career day" where students meet the local and regional business world and participates in other events in order to promote the programme under review.

The structure of the programme is transparent with 48 (44 compulsory + 4 compulsory electives) courses divided in 8 semesters. Elective courses start in the senior level semesters. The courses are aligned with the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) equivalent to 240 ECTS. Knowledge, skills and competences acquired by expected graduates, as well as the professional rights awarded have been elaborated during the presentations of the Vice Rector and the Department's Head.

II. Analysis

The academic development strategy of the Department, its opportunities and risks are reflected in a SWOT Analysis that was presented to the EEAP: strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. The strategy has been formulated through meetings at the Department, School and Senate level. The strategy should aim to substantially differentiate the Department and the UGP in Accounting and Finance from other similar programmes in Greek Universities and should consider differentiating the offering to create a competitive advantage for the Department and the programme when recruiting new students.

The Department features a strong will to further develop its undergraduate Programme but also aims to develop further postgraduate programs. There is a continuing effort for improvements both in educational matters and in research activity. The number of freshmen remains at a moderately good level. Compared to other larger Greek universities the students

have a quite easy access to the entire teaching staff. Interaction between professors and students is quite strong.

The Department also aims in further collaborating with other departments and foreign universities, to offer new original teaching programmes (one such master level programme in Forensic Accounting is already offered in collaboration with the Neapolis University in Paphos, Cyprus).

The main weaknesses of the Department and the programme are related to its young age. The Department has only been created in 2019. The attractiveness of the programme is lower than the ones offered by large cities' universities, but this is mainly due to the locational choices of students. However, students housing and living conditions in Kozani seem to be adequately attractive. Erasmus exchanges still remain at a low level, partly because of the Covid19 pandemic. The Department offers also 3 post-graduate study programmes.

III. Conclusions

The Study Programme achieves full compliance with this principle, although there is scope for improvement in relation to specific sub-principles.

Panel Judgement

Principle 1: Strategic planning, feasibility and sustainability of the academic unit	
a. The academic profile and the mission of the academic unit	
Fully compliant	√
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	
b. The strategy of the Institution for its academic development	
Fully compliant	√
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	
c. The documentation of the feasibility of the operation of the department and the study programme	
Fully compliant	√
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	
d. The documentation of the sustainability of the new department	
Fully compliant	√
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	
e. The structure of studies	
Fully compliant	√
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	
f. The number of admitted students	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	√
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	
g. Postgraduate studies	
Fully compliant	√
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Principle 1: Strategic planning, feasibility and sustainability of the academic unit (overall)	
Fully compliant	√
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

R1.1 The EEAP recommends that the Department explores ways of further differentiating its strategy, by taking into consideration the needs of its local environment and therefore creating a competitive advantage in attracting new students.

R1.2 The EEAP recommends the continuation and further strengthening of consultation with the institutions and businesses of the region in order to respond, at their best, to the needs of the different local labour markets.

R1.3 The EEAP recommends that in the following years, important information should continue to be collected about the capacity of students to enter the regional and national labour markets or to continue on postgraduate studies.

R1.4 Finally, the EEAP encourages the Department's staff to continue building original teaching proposals and programmes with other Western Macedonia University departments, as well as departments of universities abroad.

Principle 2: Quality Assurance Policy of the Institution and the Academic Unit

The Institution should have in place an accredited Internal Quality Assurance System, and should formulate and apply a Quality Assurance Policy, which is part of its strategy, specialises in the operation of the new academic units and the new study programmes, and is accompanied by annual quality assurance goals for the continuous development and improvement of the academic units and the study programmes.

The quality assurance policy of the Institution must be formulated in the form of a published statement, which is implemented by all stakeholders. It focuses on the achievement of special annual quality goals related to the quality assurance of the new study programme offered by the academic unit. In order to implement this policy, the Institution, among others, commits itself to put into practice quality procedures that will demonstrate: the adequacy and quality of the academic unit's resources; the suitability of the structure and organisation of the curriculum; the appropriateness of the qualifications of the teaching staff; the quality of support services of the academic unit and its staffing with appropriate administrative personnel. The Institution also commits itself to conduct an annual internal evaluation of the new undergraduate programme (UGP), realised by the Internal Evaluation Group (IEG) in collaboration with the Quality Assurance Unit (QAU) of the Institution.

The quality assurance policy of the academic unit includes its commitment to implement quality procedures that will demonstrate: a) the adequacy of the structure and organisation of the curriculum, b) the pursuit of learning outcomes and qualifications in accordance with the European and National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education, c) the promotion of the quality and effectiveness of the teaching work, d) the adequacy of the qualifications of the teaching staff, e) the promotion of the quality and quantity of the research work of the members of the academic unit, f) the ways of linking teaching with research, g) the level of demand for graduates' qualifications in the labour market, h) the quality of support services, such as administration, libraries and student care, i) the implementation of an annual review and audit of the quality assurance system of the UGP through the cooperation of the Internal Evaluation Group (IEG) with the Quality Assurance Unit (QAU) of the Institution.

Relevant documentation

- Revised Quality Assurance Policy of the Institution
- Quality Assurance Policy of the academic unit
- Quality target setting of the Institution and the academic unit (utilising the S.M.A.R.T. methodology)

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The Department of Accounting and Finance of the University of Western Macedonia, in cooperation with the Quality Assurance Unit and the relevant services of the University has harmonized the quality policy of its Department with the quality policy of the University and focuses on continuous improvement of the quality of the study Programme, of educational, research and administrative work.

The Quality Assurance Policy for the Department is implemented through the Institution's Quality Assurance Unit (QAU/MOΔΙΠ) in collaboration with the Department. The Quality Policy of the Department is made public and disseminated to its members who are actively involved to shape, change, improve and adapt to current conditions and requirements, and it is constantly fed with the active participation of all members of the Department. The Department communicates the Quality Assurance Policy through a variety of channels, including the University and Department websites (both in Greek and English). The policy is also communicated to new members of teaching staff during their induction upon commencement of their service and to all first-year undergraduate students during their induction event.

The Quality Assurance policy aims to address four key areas: Quality of teaching, quality of research activity, quality of study programmes and quality of national and international networks. These areas are articulated and mapped on key performance indicators that are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound (SMART). The indicators are reviewed annually, and their achievement (or lack of) forms part of the annual report compiled by OMEA and MODIP. As the institution has only been created in 2019, there is not yet made available information for some issues (such as the capacity of students to enter the regional business labour markets or to secure a post-graduate programme).

The EEAP acknowledges that the Department has produced a complete accreditation folder and has submitted for review all relevant documentation.

The MODIP is exchanging views and information on a permanent basis with the Department's Advisory Board on the undergraduate programme to constantly improve it. There is a specific committee which evaluates the programme on a yearly basis and provides information to students on all changes that concern them. The students participate in this evaluation through questionnaires on courses and labs.

The Department has developed excellent on-line services – partly because of the pandemic. The website is very informative and provides useful information both in Greek and English.

II. Analysis

Despite the relatively young age of the University and the Department we have seen adequate evidence of the implementation of the quality assurance policy in practice. The evidence was also complemented by several changes to the programme of studies over the last 3 years with the introduction of new modules focusing on Green Accounting, Sustainable Development and the creation of digital skills.

The Department has produced a set of key performance indicators but due to the relatively limited time that both the Department and UGP in Accounting and Finance are in existence the information provided still has several gaps, especially in the area of measuring the indicators and demonstrating progress. For example, several indicators have a target date at the end of 2023 well beyond the timeframe of the present accreditation visit.

The University fosters a culture of continuous improvement and the MODIP engages frequently with the Department's OMEA in the dissemination and sharing of best practice. It is also worth commenting that MODIP is well-resourced and supported by competent administrative staff.

Given the Institution's recent creation, the establishment and adoption of the quality policies, procedures and targets are very recent. However, the EEAP considers that there is already important work and data on this field.

It is also important to work in a more systematic way on the connection of the Undergraduate and Postgraduate Programs' content with the demands of the labour market and society and also with the content of the Doctoral Programme.

III. Conclusions

The University and Department are fully compliant with principle 2. There is a clear policy that is communicated, implemented and reviewed annually, and linked with key performance indicators. The quality assurance policy drives changes to the programme of studies and assessment methods.

Panel Judgement

Principle 2: Quality assurance policy of the Institution and the academic unit	
Fully compliant	√
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

R2.1 The EEAP recommends that the Department should include representatives of the graduates in the formulation and application of the quality assurance policy as soon as the programme has its first cohort of graduates.

R2.2 The EEAP recommends that the market experience of the Advisory Board is taken into consideration more frequently through regular – at least 4 annual meetings – that are scheduled to take place twice each semester.

R2.3 The EEAP recommends that both the University and Department maintain the high quality of quality assurance process and explore ways of communicating to stakeholders not only the process but its main outcomes (for example they could address student feedback by creating campaigns under the banner: “You asked -We did”).

Principle 3: Design, Approval and Monitoring of the Quality of the New Undergraduate Programmes

Institutions should design the new undergraduate programmes following a defined written process, which will involve the participants, information sources and the approval committees for the programme. The objectives, the expected learning outcomes, the intended professional qualifications and the ways to achieve them are set out in the programme design. The above details, as well as information on the programme's structure, are published in the Student Guide.

The Institutions develop their new undergraduate study programmes, following a well-defined procedure. The academic profile, the identity and orientation of the programme, the objectives, the subject areas, the structure and organisation, the expected learning outcomes and the intended professional qualifications according to the European and National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education are described at this stage. An important new element in the structure of the programmes is the introduction of courses for the acquisition of digital skills. The above components should be taken into consideration and constitute the subject of the programme design, which, among other things, should include: elements of the Institution's strategy, labour market data and employment prospects of graduates, smooth progression of students throughout the stages of the programme, the anticipated student workload according to the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS), the option of providing work experience to the students, the linking of teaching and research, the international experience in study programmes of similar disciplines, the relevant regulatory framework, and the official procedure for the approval of the programme 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 Quality Assurance Unit (QAU).

Relevant documentation

- *Senate decision for the establishment of the UGP*
- *Curriculum structure: courses, course categories (including courses for the acquisition of digital skills), ECTS awarded, expected learning outcomes according to the EQF, internship, mobility opportunities.*
- *Labour market data regarding the employment of graduates, international experience in a related scientific field.*
- *Student Guide*
- *Course outlines*
- *Teaching staff (list of areas of specialisation, its relation to the courses taught, employment relationship)*
- *QAU minutes for the internal evaluation of the new study programme and its compliance with the Standards*

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The UGP in Accounting and Finance is a new programme with limited similarities to the pre-existing programme offered by the TEI. In its creation and development, the Department considered several factors such as the research and professional background of teaching staff, benchmarks of quality programmes in Greece and abroad, input from local stakeholders through an advisory board and feedback from students from the previous programme delivered as part of the TEI. The Department has constituted an Advisory Board made up by prominent representatives of the regional private and public sectors who advise on the programme's development.

The programme attracted significant number of students in the first two years of operation (252 and 309 respectively) but with the implementation of the minimum entry requirements the numbers dropped to a sustainable level the last two years (76 and 116). The Department is making every effort to proactively advertise the programme and recruit high quality students. Despite these efforts the programme ranks at the bottom (in terms of entry requirements) of Accounting and Finance programmes in Greece.

The structure of the programme is clear and reflects existing research strengths of the Department. Two possible questions raised are about the availability and necessity of prerequisites – they do not currently exist – and about the extent to which students engage in internships (Πρακτική άσκηση) and final year project (πτυχιακή) given their optional non-contributory to the degree classification nature.

II. Analysis

The Department has addressed well the balance of teaching a relatively traditional subject (accounting and finance) with the need to equip students with digital skills but also embed elements of green and forensic accounting in the curriculum.

The programme of studies does not fully reflect the needs of the local economy. This is an opportunity for the Department to recruit more students from the local population and ensure that the existing good links with stakeholders are maintained and developed further.

It is also unclear how the two existing scientific laboratories that operate in the Department are engaged with the programme of studies and the review process. These could help further the integration of research with teaching and provide a unique identity to the programme of studies.

III. Conclusions

The programme fully complies with principle 3. While there is always scope for improvement (reflected in the recommendations below), substantial effort has been put in the development and continuous improvement of an accounting and finance degree.

Panel Judgement

Principle 3: Design, approval and monitoring of the quality of the new undergraduate programmes	
Fully compliant	√
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

R3.1 The EEAP recommends that the Department enhances efforts to further develop digital skills and offer exciting new subjects on green and forensic accounting.

R3.2 The EEAP recommends that the Department should leverage further the existing advisory board to tailor the programme to the needs of the local economy.

R3.3 The EEAP recommends that the Department should seek to integrate further the two existing laboratories in the programme of studies.

Principle 4: Student-centred Approach in Learning, Teaching and Assessment of Students

The academic unit should ensure that the new undergraduate programmes are delivered in a way that encourages students to take an active role in creating the learning process. The assessment methods should reflect this approach.

In the implementation of student-centered learning and teaching, the academic unit:

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

Relevant documentation

- *Questionnaires for assessment by the students*
- *Regulation for dealing with students' complaints and appeals*
- *Regulation for the function of the academic advisor*
- *Reference to the planned teaching modes and assessment methods*

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The programme has a student-centred approach in learning, teaching methods and assessment. The delivery of the programme builds on several teaching methods, including more traditional ones such as slides-based lectures and more interactive ones through tutorials. Teaching is also complemented with project-based learning, cooperative learning, and learning through research.

There is also a substantial variety of assessment methods. Despite the usual reliance on final exams there are several other assessment methods for the learning outcomes such as essays, presentations and group work. Grading criteria are publicised through E-class, professor announcements in the classroom, syllabi, and mock exams.

Several software programmes are used for learning purposes and there is an adequate number of applied courses that use such software.

The Department has a strong ethos in supporting vulnerable students at all levels and there is excellent collaboration with the relevant University Unit (MYFEO).

II. Analysis

The diversity of learning and teaching methods enables students to achieve the programme learning outcomes through a personalised approach. Our session with the students provided evidence of this approach that is also supported by the academic advisor.

There is no overarching assessment strategy for the programme and each teaching staff member sets their own assessment. This could lead to an overassessment for certain areas and skills.

The support offered to vulnerable students is rather unique in the Greek Higher Education context and clearly puts the Department at the forefront of such initiatives.

III. Conclusions

The programme fully complies with principle 4. There are certain areas under this principle that can also be highlighted as best practice such as the student support services and the Department's strong commitment to support vulnerable students.

Panel Judgement

Principle 4: Student-centred approach in learning, teaching and assessment of students	
Fully compliant	√
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

R4.1 The EEAP recommends that the Department should consider performing a mapping of all assessment methods (exams, coursework, presentations, groupwork etc) by semester. This mapping will offer a holistic view of all assessments and ensure that these are balanced between the different types and that all skills are properly assessed (neither over assessed nor under assessed).

R4.2 The EEAP recommends that the Department should maintain its ethos of supporting vulnerable students and find ways of disseminating this best practice throughout the Greek Higher Education sector.

Principle 5: Student Admission, Progression, Recognition of Academic Qualifications and Award of Degrees and Certificates of Competence of the New Study Programmes

Academic units should develop and apply published regulations addressing all aspects and phases of studies of the programme (admission, progression, recognition and degree award).

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

- ✓ *the registration procedure of the admitted students and the necessary documents - according to the law - and the support of the newly admitted students*
- ✓ *student rights and obligations, and monitoring of student progression*
- ✓ *internship issues, granting of scholarships*
- ✓ *the procedures and terms for writing the thesis (diploma or degree)*
- ✓ *the procedure of award and recognition of degrees, the duration of studies, the conditions for progression and assurance of the progress of students in their studies*

as well as

- ✓ *the terms and conditions for enhancing student mobility*

Appropriate recognition procedures rely on relevant academic practice for recognition of credits among various European academic departments and Institutions in line with the principles of the Lisbon Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region. Graduation represents the culmination of the students' study period. Students need to receive documentation explaining the qualification gained, including achieved learning outcomes, and the context, level, content and status of the studies that were pursued and successfully completed (Diploma Supplement).

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

Relevant documentation

- *Internal regulation for the operation of the new study programme*
- *Regulation of studies, internship, mobility and student assignments*
- *Printed Diploma Supplement*

Certificate from the President of the academic unit that the diploma supplement is awarded to all graduates without exception together with the degree or the certificate of completion of studies

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

There is a mixed picture on the admissions of the first four cohorts of the UGP in Accounting and Finance. In the first two years of admissions an unsustainably high number of students were admitted. These were 252 and 309 for 2019 and 2020 respectively. This high number led to significant student attrition, a very diverse student body that required significant support,

especially in technical subjects and was very resource intensive on physical infrastructures. The Department implemented in 2021 the minimum entry requirement and reduced the admitted students to more sustainable numbers. These were 76 and 116 for 2021 and 2022 respectively. The introduction of minimum entry requirement was complemented by a significant effort to advertise the programme to schools.

The new students have an induction and receive important information regarding the study programme, housing, alimentation services, athletic life, and generally every detail that will be necessary for them during the university years. The Department also looks after incoming students with special needs.

There is a complete Study Guide with all the necessary information about the programme, the semesters, the courses, and opportunities for students to engage and plan. The document with the analytic description of courses is complete and in standardized format. Throughout their studies, students are assigned an academic advisor who monitors their progress and can suggest steps for further development whether during the programme or later.

An important aspect is the possibility of getting a certification of IT skills with the completion of four semester-long courses from a list provided by the Department.

The programme is equipped with the necessary electronic tools for the provision of diplomas, certificates, analytic grade lists and everything that the students may need. The final diploma is available in both Greek and English languages and includes the degree, certificate of analytical performance throughout the programme of studies, and information on the Department of Accounting and Finance.

An internship and a final year project are offered as optional after the 6th semester of studies. Both carry an appropriate ECTS and are reflected in the diploma supplement but do not contribute to the degree classification.

The Department of Accounting and Finance participates in the ERASMUS+ programme for student mobility. An impressive number of partnerships exists (38 in total). However, due to the newness of the programme instituted just before the pandemic, the activities have been limited.

II. Analysis

Despite the best efforts of the Department to advertise the programme widely and link with schools and other local stakeholders, the entry requirements place it at the bottom of similar programmes in Greece and in one of the lowest places for the 4th scientific domain that covers Economics and Information and Communication Technology subjects.

The nature of internships and dissertations (optional and non-contributory) disincentivises students from participating in these important activities for the development of professional and research-oriented skills. The Department should consider developing incentives for students to select these two important activities as part of their studies.

There is an impressive number of ERASMUS+ partners that offers ample opportunities to students to travel and study abroad. The uptake has been significantly influenced by the Covid19 lockdowns and therefore has been limited thus far both for outgoing and incoming students.

III. Conclusions

The programme fully complies with Principle 5.

Panel Judgement

Principle 5: Student admission, progression, recognition of academic qualifications, and award of degrees and certificates of competence of the new study programmes	
Fully compliant	√
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

R5.1 The EEAP recommends that the Department, in collaboration with local stakeholders, should intensify its efforts to raise the profile of the UGP in Accounting and Finance, especially in the local region.

R5.2 The EEAP recommends that the Department should consider changing the nature of the internship and the final year project to make them contributory to the degree classification and hence incentivise students' participation.

R5.3 The EEAP recommends that the Department should incentivise students to take up ERASMUS+ opportunities. This can be done by information sessions where academic partners could give short (perhaps on-line) presentations on their academic institutions and life abroad.

Principle 6: Ensuring the Competence and High Quality of the Teaching Staff of the New Undergraduate Study Programmes

Institutions should assure themselves of the competence, the level of knowledge and skills of the teaching staff of the academic units, 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, the appropriate staff-student ratio, the suitable categories of staff, the appropriate subject areas and specialisations, 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 and offer them conditions of employment that recognise the importance of teaching and research; offer opportunities and promote the professional development of the teaching staff; encourage scholarly activity to strengthen the link between education and research; encourage innovation in teaching methods and the use of new technologies; promote the increase of the volume and quality of the research output within the academic unit; follow quality assurance processes for all staff members (with respect to attendance requirements, performance, self-assessment, training, etc.); develop policies to attract highly qualified academic staff.

Relevant documentation

- *Procedures and criteria for teaching staff recruitment*
- *Regulations or employment contracts, and obligations of the teaching staff*
- *Policy for staff recruitment, support and development*
- *Performance of the teaching staff in scientific-research and teaching work, also based on internationally recognised systems of scientific evaluation (e.g., Google Scholar, Scopus, etc.)*

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The Department has 12 permanent academic members (5 full Professors, 1 Associated Professor, 3 Assistant Professors, 2 Lectures and 3 Technical Laboratory staff members). It also has 3 non-permanent teaching staff. A percentage of 40% of the staff is women and the Department has an excellent gender balance especially at the professorial level. By future appointments the Department aims to decrease the relatively high student-staff ratio. The Department has a clear policy for recruitment, the policy complies with the regulatory framework and includes criteria of research and publications activities.

The research work of the Department has been improving over time. During 2022 there were 31 publications in peer-review journals and 245 cross-references according to Scopus and h-index in Google Scholar.

The Department aims to sustain and strengthen the research activity using incentives and financial assistance for all members and encouraging them for more collaboration within or outside the Department. The Department also participates to the organization of International Conferences on campus as well as with European Universities and Research Institutions.

II. Analysis

The EEAP considers that the student staff ratio significantly burdens the teaching work and restricts the research activity. This is primarily an outcome of the high number of new students admitted in the first two years and it will reduce to more sustainable numbers with the graduation of these two first cohorts.

The skills, the research experience and activities of the teaching staff fit well to the needs of the UGP in Accounting and Finance.

The recruitment of new staff is based on criteria of good publication record, research programmes and research income, citations in high quality journals, participation in international scientific conference etc. (This policy fully complies to the legal requirements).

The EEAP finds that there is a team spirit of the staff which participates enthusiastically and ensures the very good operation of this Programme as well as in various committees (Department's and social) that demonstrates the Department societal impact.

Considering the background of the Department and the transition phase it is in currently, the teaching and research performance of the Department needs further strengthening. (in line with the Department's set strategy). Given the significant number of professors we would expect to see a more balanced approach to the development of all teaching staff, perhaps with an emphasis of mentoring and guidance to more junior academics.

III. Conclusions

Despite the current efforts there is still substantial work required to ensure a sustainable, balanced and high performing research strategy in the Department. The Department achieves substantial compliance with this principle.

Panel Judgement

Principle 6: Ensuring the competence and high quality of the teaching staff of the new undergraduate study programmes	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	✓
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

R6.1 The EEAP recommends that the Department, in collaboration with the University, intensifies the efforts to recruit new highly qualified staff.

R6.2 The EEAP recommends that the Department develops a research strategy that encourages the research activities of all members at all ranks and provides clear incentives for career progression to junior academics.

R6.3 The EEAP recommends that the Department incentivises all teaching staff members to increase their international mobility through the ERASMUS Programme and to continue the activities participating in international conferences and collaborating with other international universities.

Principle 7: Learning Resources and Student Support of the New Undergraduate Programmes

Institutions should have adequate funding to meet the needs for the operation of the academic unit and the new study programme as well as the means to cover all their teaching and learning needs. They should -on the one hand- provide satisfactory infrastructure and services for learning and student support and -on the other hand- facilitate direct access to them by establishing internal rules to this end (e.g., lecture rooms, laboratories, libraries, networks, boarding, career and social policy services, etc.).

Institutions and their academic units must have sufficient resources, on a planned and long-term basis, to support learning and academic activity in general, in order to offer students the best possible level of studies. The above means include facilities such as, the necessary general and specific libraries and possibilities for access to electronic databases, study rooms, educational and scientific equipment, information 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. Students should be informed about 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.

Relevant documentation

- *Detailed description of the infrastructure and services made available by the Institution to the academic unit to support learning and academic activity (human resources, infrastructure, services, etc.) and the corresponding specific commitment of the Institution to financially cover these infrastructure-services from state or other resources*
- *Administrative support staff of the new undergraduate programme (job descriptions, qualifications and responsibilities)*
- *Informative / promotional material given to students with reference to the available services*

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The EEAP panel examined the following documents and information links to assess the learning resources and student support of the Department:

- B1. Proposal for Accreditation
- Departmental presentation of the ERASMUS office facilities
- The on-line tour presentation of the Kozani campus facilities
- The on-line tour presentation of the Career Office facility
- The Departmental presentation on the Library and Information Centre Facilities
- The Departmental presentation on the Administrative Office Facility and Staff
- The Departmental presentation on the Student Advisory and Psychological Support Services
- The Department Chair presentation on the Overview of the Department

- The MODIP presentation relative to the ETHAAE Principles for Evaluation and Accreditation

All the facilities and support services are accessible for detailed information to be found in the Departmental website (<http://accfin.uowm.gr>).

II. Analysis

The EEAP determined that there are academic and instructional facilities which are well -kept and they include: Three (3) laboratories fully equipped with desk computers, four (4) classrooms fully equipped with up to date electronic equipment, one (1) large amphitheatre of 120 seats and two (2) research laboratories, one for banking and financial research studies and one for economic and social research and studies with full access to the institutional internet network and adequate software applications.

Additional infrastructure facilities, not necessarily for exclusive Departmental use yet fully accessible, such as a large, modern conference room, a central library with up-to-date electronic searching capabilities, an office dedicated to the ERASMUS operational activities, an office dedicated to the activities of the practical training (internships), a dining facility, a gymnasium, a canteen and student residences.

The Department's academic community has in place or has access to all the basic, conventional academic student support services which include, Student Welfare Service (food, accommodation, and medical care), Innovation and Entrepreneurship Unit, Holistic Care Unit, Asynchronous Platform distance learning, (Open E-Class), Access to Central University library, Internet access, Study advisor, Student advocate, Student support unit of Vulnerable Groups (ΜΥΦΕΟ).

III. Conclusions

The EEAP feels that the Department has adequate infrastructure facilities and academic student and staff support services to operate and perform its functions well.

Panel Judgement

Principle 7: Learning resources and student support of the new undergraduate programmes	
Fully compliant	√
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

R7.1 The EEAP recommends that the Department focuses on the recruitment of additional teaching staff to rapidly reduce the relatively high student-staff ratio.

Principle 8: Collection, Analysis and Use of Information for the Organisation and Operation of New Undergraduate Programmes

The Institutions and their academic units bear full responsibility for collecting, analysing and using information, aimed at the efficient management of undergraduate programmes of study and related activities, in an integrated, effective and easily accessible way.

Effective procedures for collecting and analysing information on the operation of Institutions, academic units and study programmes feed data into the internal quality assurance system. The following data is of interest: key performance indicators for the student body profile, student progression, success and drop-out rates, student satisfaction with the programme, availability of learning resources and student support. The completion of the fields of National Information System for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (NISQA) should be correct and complete with the exception of the fields that concern graduates in which a null value is registered.

Relevant documentation

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

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The Department has established an information system for the collection, analysis and use of data. This system builds on an effective process to support a variety of activities and feed into proposals for improvements in quality assurance.

The process of collection and analysis of data takes place periodically and systematically at the end of each midterm for every individual course and focuses on the content of the course, the teaching methods, the evaluation of teaching staff, students' satisfaction and quality of facilities.

Also, the Department has a clear system collecting and analysing the data concerning the percentage of students' population and profiles, number of active students, students transferring to other Universities, the progress and participation in the evaluation, the library use, etc.

II. Analysis

By an appropriate statistical analysis of data, various key performance indicators and statistical tables are produced which facilitate OMEA's and MODIP's monitoring and evaluation of the performance of the UGP in Accounting and Finance, facilities and infrastructure services.

Key performance indicators are also utilised for the Department’s goal setting. All members of teaching staff are informed and participate in the annual monitoring and improvement process. At the end of this process the Department’s General Assembly discusses the results for the proposed programme’s changes and develops an evaluation report.

For the collection and processing of the data IT technologies are used through an electronic questionnaire that the students complete. The process is monitored and managed by MODIP.

Finally, the Department develops and implements an annual action plan with key performance indicators regularly monitored and evaluated.

III. Conclusions

The EEAP considers that the Departmental system of collection, analysis and the use of information data are fully compliant.

Panel Judgement

Principle 8: Collection, analysis and use of information for the organisation and operation of new undergraduate programmes	
Fully compliant	√
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

R8.1 The EEAP recommends that the Department continues this process of collecting and analysing the data by strengthening the system through digital technologies for a more integrated, complete and efficient system. This could lead to the development of a colour coded dashboard that can be used in communication with stakeholders when evaluating the Department’s and UGP in Accounting and Finance progress.

R8.2 The EEAP recommends that the process of complaints and its final outcomes are also integrated in the quality assurance process and the way these complaints are resolved is better disseminated to various stakeholders.

Principle 9: Public Information Concerning the New Undergraduate Programmes

Institutions and academic units should publish information about their teaching and academic activities in a direct and readily accessible way. The relevant information should be up-to-date, clear and objective.

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 new undergraduate programmes they offer, the intended learning outcomes, the degrees awarded, the teaching, learning and assessment procedures used, the pass rates and the learning opportunities available to their students. Information is also provided, to the extent possible, on graduate employment perspectives.

Relevant documentation

- *Dedicated segment on the website of the department for the promotion of the new study programme*
- *Bilingual version of the website of the academic unit with complete, clear and objective information*
- *Provision for website maintenance and updating*

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The EEAP examined the following documents and information links to assess the learning resources and student support of the Department:

- B1. Proposal for Accreditation
- The Department Chair presentation on the Overview of the Department
- The MODIP presentation relative to the ETHAAE Principles for Evaluation and Accreditation
- The Departmental Website (www.acffin.uowm.gr).

II. Analysis

The primary source of information on the Departmental activities is the website. Links, primarily associated with information on the undergraduate and graduate programs of study are provided which may be of interest to current students, graduates, stakeholders and the public at large.

These links are organized in categories targeted to various groups of interest, and each one in turn provides relevant detailed information. As such, one can find general, overview information on the Department, the academic and administrative staff, e-class and individual course information, useful documents and files relating to student progress and status, class and event calendars, newsletters, departmental activities, seminar and social event calendars, social media platforms, available student support services and last but not least, all aspects related to Quality Assurance issues, mechanisms and documents.

The website is well organized with user friendly access, a good correspondence between Greek and English versions and it appears that it is regularly maintained and updated.

In addition to the website, information is disseminated frequently via documents such as pamphlets, newsletters, and guidelines, as generated by the academic community. Finally, the Departmental office provides updates and public announcements via relevant electronic platforms such as personalized emails.

III. Conclusions

The EEAP found the means and mechanisms of information dissemination to the academic community and the public at large to be thorough and extensive.

Panel Judgement

Principle 9: Public information concerning the new undergraduate programmes	
Fully compliant	v
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

R9.1 No specific recommendation related to this principle

Principle 10: Periodic Internal Review of the New Study Programmes

Institutions and academic units should have in place an internal quality assurance system, for the audit and annual internal review of their new programmes, so as to achieve the objectives set for them, through monitoring and amendments, with a view to continuous improvement. Any actions taken in the above context, should be communicated to all parties concerned.

Regular monitoring, review and revision of the new 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: the content of the programme in the light of the latest research in the given discipline, thus ensuring that the programme is up to date; the changing needs of society; the students' workload, progression and completion; the effectiveness of the procedures for the assessment of students; the students' expectations, needs and satisfaction in relation to the programme; the learning environment, support services, and their fitness for purpose for the programme. Programmes are reviewed and revised regularly involving students and other stakeholders. The information collected is analysed and the programme is adapted to ensure that it is up-to-date.

Relevant documentation

- Procedure for the re-evaluation, redefinition and updating of the curriculum
- Procedure for mitigating weaknesses and upgrading the structure of the UGP and the learning process
- Feedback processes on strategy implementation and quality targeting of the new UGP and relevant decision-making processes (students, external stakeholders)
- Results of the annual internal evaluation of the study programme by the QAU and the relevant minutes

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The Department has developed a process to address the need for an annual Internal Review of the Programme in the context of the University. MODIP has the overarching responsibility of supervising the process for the continuous Internal Reviewing of the programme. OMEA is also responsible for the Internal Evaluation each year at the programme level. OMEA collects and analyses all data and relevant information. Also, information is collected from external stakeholders.

The findings are shared with all members of the Department for discussion. The teaching staff, as well as the students through their representatives, are involved and participate in various meetings and offer their input. They take into consideration various qualitative and quantitative targets and key performance indicators in accordance to HAHE directions and guidance and reflecting the set goals of the Department.

All issues are discussed in a collegiate environment and OMEA submits the report to the MODIP for discussion and constructive feedback. The evaluation report is discussed in the Department's General Assembly.

II. Analysis

The self-assessment procedure take place annually and the results are shared to all academic and administrative staff and other external stakeholders. Areas with concerns are identified and the president of Department engages in discussions with all relevant teaching staff, permanent or adjunct.

The comments and the evaluation of students are also taken into consideration and addressed properly. The Department's staff is applying an open-door policy for students to visit lecturers, The Advisor of Studies or the Legal Advisor accommodate students in addition to their office hours if needed.

In the most recent annual cycle several recommendations were included in MODIP's evaluation report. While the Department has addressed the majority of those recommendations it was not clear what was the action plan, the different milestones and the owners of actions. It was clear that while MODIP's input has been taken into consideration and several outcomes were produced this was not done in a systematic way.

III. Conclusions

The Internal Evaluation procedure is performed in an efficient way. The Department should institutionalise an annual action plan that would address the outcome of the process. The EEAP considers that the Department is substantially compliant.

Panel Judgement

Principle 10: Periodic internal review of the new study programmes	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	√
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

R10.1 The EEAP recommends that the Department institutionalises the annual action plan (strategic annual goal setting and attainment) addressing the requirements of the quality assurance process and communicates this to all relevant stakeholders.

R10.2 The EEAP recommends the use of a Quality Manual with a clear and detailed flow chart to ensure achievement of the internal assessment plan.

Principle 11: Regular External Evaluation and Accreditation of the New Undergraduate Programmes

The new undergraduate study programmes should regularly undergo evaluation by panels of external experts set by HAHE, aiming at accreditation. The results of the external evaluation and accreditation are used for the continuous improvement of the Institutions, academic units and study programmes. The term of validity of the accreditation is determined by HAHE.

HAHE is responsible for administrating the programme accreditation process which is realised as an external evaluation procedure and implemented by a panel of independent experts. HAHE grants accreditation of programmes, based on the Reports submitted by the panels, with a specific term of validity, following to which revision is required. The accreditation of the quality of the programmes acts as a means of verification of the compliance of the programme with the 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.

Relevant documentation

- *Progress report on the results from the utilisation of the recommendations of the external evaluation of the Institution and of the IQAS Accreditation Report.*

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The EEAP panel examined the following documents and information links to comment on this Principle, being fully aware that this is the first External Evaluation of the Study Programme of the Department of Accounting and Finance of the University of Western Macedonia. The Department is in existence since 2019.

- B1. Proposal for Accreditation
- B25. Progress Report (Έκθεση Προόδου)
- B32. Report on the Progress of Transition from the OLD to the NEW Study Programme
- The Department Chair presentation on the Overview of the Department
- The MODIP presentation relative to the ETHAAE Principles for Evaluation and Accreditation

II. Analysis

Typically, the External Evaluation report of the EEAP results in a set of recommendations by the EEAP for improvements, adjustments, and revisions on the departmental Programme of Study. It is expected that the recommendations are implemented with the support of the OMEA staff of the Department and reported in the B25. Progress Report document in a tabular form which displays, for each recommendation, its Description, the actions taken, the responsible bodies involved in the implementation, the percent completion to date and the expected date of full completion. However, document B25. Progress Report, as described in

the above paragraph and typically expected, cannot be produced. The Department implied this in its write up of Principle 11 in the submitted document B1. Proposal for Accreditation. The EEAP, is in agreement with this claim and disregards the content of document B25 Progress Report which the Department submitted nevertheless, as being not appropriate.

III. Conclusions

The EEAP recognizes the lack of a previous External Evaluation of the Programme of Study and believes that the Department has the ability and the mechanism to produce a Progress Report that meets the requirements of the IQAS, after having on hand the EEAP recommendations of the next External Evaluation.

Panel Judgement

Principle 11: Regular external evaluation and accreditation of the new undergraduate programmes	
Fully compliant	v
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

R11.1 In the next External Evaluation and/or Accreditation process, the Department should address all EEAP recommendations and produce a Progress Report in the standard tabular format, as required by the IQAS

Principle 12: Monitoring the Transition from Previous Undergraduate Study Programmes to the New Ones

Institutions and academic units apply procedures for the transition from previously existing undergraduate study programmes to new ones, in order to ensure compliance with the requirements of the Standards.

Applies in cases where the department implements, in addition to the new UGPs, any pre-existing UGPs from departments of former Technological Educational Institutions (TEI) or from departments that were merged / renamed / abolished.

Institutions should implement procedures for the transition from former UGPs to new ones, in order to ensure their compliance with the requirements of the Standards. More specifically, the institution and the academic unit must have a) the necessary learning resources, b) appropriate teaching staff, c) structured curriculum (courses, ECTS, learning outcomes), d) study regulations, award of diploma and diploma supplement, and e) system of data collection and use, with particular reference to the data of the graduates of the pre-existing UGP. In this context, the Institutions and the academic units prepare a plan for the foreseen transition period of the existing UGP until its completion, the costs caused to the Institution by its operation as well as possible measures and proposals for its smooth delivery and termination. This planning includes data on the transition and subsequent progression of students in the respective new UGP of the academic unit, as well as the specific graduation forecast for students enrolled under the previous status.

Relevant documentation

- *The planning of the Institution for the foreseen transition period, the operating costs and the specific measures or proposals for the smooth implementation and completion of the programme*
- *The study regulations, template for the degree and the diploma supplement*
- *Name list of teaching staff, status, subject and the course they teach / examine*
- *Report of Quality Assurance Unit (QAU) on the progress of the transition and the degree of completion of the programme. In the case of UGP of a former Technological Educational Institution (TEI), the report must include a specific reference to how the internship was implemented*

Study Programme Compliance

- I. Findings**
- II. Analysis**
- III. Conclusions**

We have determined that the new Programme is not related to any pre-existing programme. The Programme of the TEI (Technological Educational Institute), that was offered prior to the establishment of the University, was of a different academic level and although some of its courses were transferred to the new programme, students transferring from it to the new university level programme have to take 6 additional courses in order to acquire the necessary university learning level.

Panel Judgement

Principle 12: Monitoring the transition from previous undergraduate study programmes to the new ones	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

Not applicable

PART C: CONCLUSIONS

I. Features of Good Practice

- The UGP in Accounting and Finance is modern and in line with international standards.
- The Department enjoys an excellent, collegial culture of collaboration among teaching staff and an important teamwork spirit. This is also complemented by an excellent gender balance especially at the professorial level.
- Local institutions and industry representatives are strongly involved in the development of the programme through an institutionalised active Advisory Board that interacts well with the Department.
- There is a friendly approach towards the students with a personalised approach complemented by an open-door policy.

II. Areas of Weakness

- Internship's and Final Year Projects' ECTS should be part of the 240 ECTS leading to graduation, to encourage students' participation
- The programme lacks important prerequisites and students can progress to more advanced courses without establishing prior knowledge to introductory courses. Prerequisites need to be introduced for some of the courses, such as Accounting I and II
- ERASMUS+ incoming and outgoing mobility (for both students and staff) is still at low numbers.
- The programme ranks very low in entry requirements. This reflects the lack of proper differentiation of the programme leading to a competitive advantage in recruitment.
- There is still limited research production (especially in the form of publications). There is no clear research strategy incentivising research activities.

III. Recommendations for Follow-up Actions

- The EEAP recommends that the UGP in Accounting and Finance is revised to develop a strategy on creating a set of prerequisite courses.

- The EEAP recommends that the Department, in addressing the MODIP evaluation, follows the suggestions, procedures and documentation requirements of the University Quality Manual in the conduct of the Internal and External Evaluation procedures (Principles 10 and 11). This should be reflected in the creation of a goal attainment plan.
- The EEAP recommends that the Department should make sure that the most important, repeatable operating quality assurance procedures are properly recorded and processes which are deemed to be of importance, should appear in an easy-to-follow graphical form, such as a flow chart. Such a collection of documents would standardize these procedures and serve as a “standards manual” that can be followed to ensure consistency of implementation (execution).
- The EEAP recommends that the Department supports the eventual creation of an alumni society by providing resources such as internet access and support from the Career office. Furthermore, the Department should consider modifying the Career Office computer system to serve as a communications platform for Departmental Teaching Staff, Administration, Alumni and members of the institutionalized Advisory Board.
- The EEAP recommends that the Department should find ways to provide additional specialised training in soft skills, including CV creation, and mock interviews to facilitate student interviews in their attempts to seek employment.

IV. Summary & Overall Assessment

The Principles where full compliance has been achieved are: **1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, and 11.**

The Principles where substantial compliance has been achieved are: **6 and 10.**

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

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

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

The members of the External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel

Name and Surname

Signature

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Visiting Professor at the Frederick, European and Neapolis Universities

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4. Mr. Stelios Mastrogiannakis

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