Accreditation Report
for the Undergraduate Study Programme
(Integrated Master) of:

Fine and Applied Arts
Institution: University of Western Macedonia
Date: 27/11/2021

Report of the Panel appointed by the HAHE to undertake the review of the Undergraduate Study Programme (Integrated Master) of **Fine and Applied Arts** of the **University of Western Macedonia** for the purposes of granting accreditation

PART A: BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT OF THE REVIEW

I.   The External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel

The Panel responsible for the Accreditation Review of the Undergraduate Study Programme (Integrated Master) of **Fine and Applied Arts** of the **University of Western Macedonia** comprised the following three (3) members, drawn from the HAHE Register, in accordance with Laws 4009/2011 & 4653/2020:

1. **Professor Maria Chatzichristodoulou**, Associate Dean (Chair)
   Kingston University London, United Kingdom

2. **Dr Stella Baraklianou**
   University of Huddersfield, United Kingdom

3. **Professor Anna Tahinci**
   The Glassell School of Art, United Sates of America

II.   Review Procedure and Documentation

Due to the ongoing pandemic-related complications with travel, the accreditation review was conducted online. Instead of a physical site visit, all meetings of the External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel with stakeholders (senior management of the department and university, faculty, students, alumni, and collaborating organizations) took place online using video conferencing software. During the meetings the Panel had the opportunity to ask questions and discuss the challenges and opportunities faced by the academic unit. In addition, a virtual tour of the facilities took place and supplementary video documentation material was made available to the Panel. The accreditation Panel was provided with documentation and information from both Hellenic Authority for Higher Education (HAHE) as well as extensive documentation from the Department of Fine and Applied Arts, University of Western Macedonia. These were as follows:

HAHE Documentation

1) European Qualifications Framework
2) Guidelines for Accreditation
3) Guidelines for the Members of External Accreditation and Evaluation Panel
4) Mapping Grid
5) Template for the Accreditation Report
6) Quality Indicators 2015-16, 2016-17, 2017-18, 2018-19, 2019-20, both for the Department and the UGP of Fine and Applied Arts
7) Standards for Quality Accreditation of Undergraduate Programmes

UGP Fine and Applied Arts Documentation

1) Proposal for the Academic Accreditation of the UGP (Integrated Master) in Fine and Applied Arts
2) Quality Assurance Policy for the Department of Fine and Applied Arts
3) Department of Fine and Applied Arts Study Guide 2019-20
4) Internal Regulations, Department of Fine and Applied Arts
5) Module Descriptors
6) Module Evaluation Questionnaire template
7) Analysis of Student Feedback
8) Internal Evaluation Report, MODIP, May 2020
9) Departmental Quality Data 2015-16, 2016-17, 2017-18, 2018-19
10) Record of Staff Research and Exhibition Outputs
11) Study on Graduate Outcomes, 2020
12) Annex B11 concerning Integrated Master Qualification
13) Study Guide Table

The Panel consulted all the relevant documents as well as examining online resources such as the Department's website both before and after the online site visit. Prior to the accreditation event, the Panel was invited to an orientation meeting hosted by HAHE, which also took place online.

The online meetings and virtual tour took place during a 3-day period (November 23-25, 2021). All meetings went smoothly. The University of Western Macedonia and the academic unit were prepared for the meetings with PowerPoint presentations that were structured to address the ten principles examined through this accreditation process. The presentations were detailed and in-depth, offering plenty of content and visual material; the latter was particularly useful for the Panel to get a good sense of the facilities and their different locations (the programme is delivered in more than one location). Academic and management staff, students, graduates and external stakeholders were fully engaged in the process and willing to answer questions and offer their experiences in an open and collegial manner.

Decisions regarding compliance and the writing of the accreditation report were made with equal participation from each Panel member and were unanimously agreed upon through a consensus-building process. The academic unit fully collaborated with the Panel during the accreditation process and provided any additional information and clarifications that were requested in a timely and professional manner. HAHE efficiently facilitated the exchange between the academic unit and the Panel.

The Panel would like to thank academic and administrative staff on the course of Fine and Applied Arts for putting together a detailed and robust proposal and for their full engagement with this process.

III.   Study Programme Profile

The University of Western Macedonia is one of the newest Universities in Greece. It was founded in Kozani in 2003 but first became self-governing as an institution in 2015, with the appointment of a Rector. In 2019, the University was merged with the Technological Education Institute of Western Macedonia (TEI), which run courses in 5 schools and 5 cities of Western Macedonia. The administrative centre of the University remains in the city of Kozani. The new University of Western Macedonia runs 7 Schools and 22 Departments in 5 cities (Kozani, Florina, Kastoria, Ptolemaida, and Grevena).

The Department of Fine and Applied Arts (DFAA) at the University of Western Macedonia, which offers the programme Integrated Master in Fine and Applied Arts, was founded in 2006. It became part of the School of Fine Arts, which was founded in 2013. The Department itself is operational since 2006-7 when it admitted its first student cohort. As of 2000, the Department has 11 teaching members of staff. Additionally, it has 5 EEP, 2 EDIP and 2 ETEP (studio support) members of staff. The Department has a student population of 367 (in v+2 years of study).

The Department and study programme's learning goals, as presented on the Department's website (https://eetf.uowm.gr/en/learning-goals-of-the-fine-arts-diploma/), are as follows:

> (a) the cultivation and promotion of knowledge in the areas of painting, sculpture and applied arts, in photography, video, digital art forms (animation, 3D animation), illustration, in design and decoration,
>
> (b) a solid training for an artistic, scientific and professional career;
>
> (c) pedagogical skills for the teaching of arts in primary and secondary education
>
> (d) academic and professional qualifications in line with the prospects of the international academic and wider professional environment in the field of education, culture and research
>
> (e) the introduction of new innovative approaches in the field of art through its connection with other disciplines, such as digital technologies, the environment and the formation of a new environmental consciousness and ethics, and finally, the promotion of interdisciplinarity and research cooperation
>
> (f) the development of artistic and research work through active participation in exhibitions and artistic events and collaborations, in line with the integration of art in other social fields, such as science and technology.

The Department is located in Florina. It is, however, geographically distributed, as it also has facilities and delivers teaching, cultural and educational activities in several neighbouring locations, specifically:

- Painting, in Messonissi
- Sculpture, in Messonissi
- Painting, in Proti
- Art (residency) Studio in Psarades, Prespes

There are also some student accommodation facilities in Florina.

The duration of studies is 5 years, as is common in Fine Art Schools in Greece. The qualification offered by this study programme is an Integrated Master (no interim qualification offered).

Students graduating from the study programme can work in the public sector as art teachers in primary and secondary education, seek employment across the spectrum of cultural and creative industries in Greece and abroad, work as artists /designers/ photographers /digital media artists (as per their particular expertise developed in the course through their choice of modules) or follow postgraduate (taught or research) studies in Greece and abroad.

PART B: COMPLIANCE WITH THE PRINCIPLES

Principle 1: Academic Unit Policy for Quality Assurance

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

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

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

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

a)   the suitability of the structure and organization of the curriculum;

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

c)   the promotion of the quality and effectiveness of teaching;

d)   the appropriateness of the qualifications of the teaching staff;

e)   the enhancement of the quality and quantity of the research output among faculty members of the academic unit;

f)   ways for linking teaching and research;

g)   the level of demand for qualifications acquired by graduates, in the labour market;

h)   the quality of support services such as the administrative services, the Library, and the student welfare office;

i)   the conduct of an annual review and an internal audit of the quality assurance system of the undergraduate programme(s) offered, as well as the collaboration of the Internal Evaluation Group (IEG) with the Institution's Quality Assurance Unit (QAU).

Study Programme Compliance

<u>Findings</u>

The Department of Fine and Applied Arts has a quality assurance policy which was submitted to the Panel for consideration (B2). The policy is published on the University's website; moreover, on the Department's website there is extensive published information regarding the University's Quality Assurance Unit, its purpose, principles, strategy and evaluation processes. The Accreditation Proposal (B1) also informs us that the Policy is presented to new students, through public events and conferences.

The Policy submitted lists the Department's objectives in terms of areas of quality improvement and suggests that action-setting and planning takes place annually between MODIP and the Department. The programme's Accreditation Proposal (B1) also signals the major quality requirements which are part of its ongoing mission.

The Department's website offers some additional information regarding the University's Quality Assurance Unit (QAU) and its operational principles. For example, we learn that members of the QAU change every four years; and that the Unit includes student representatives which are appointed for a one-year term. The QAU is normally chaired by the Vice-Rector and is supported by administrative staff.

The University's Quality Assurance Policy and QAU puts in place quality procedures which monitor the required areas, such as the suitability of the structure and organisation of the curriculum; the pursuit of learning outcomes and qualification in accordance with national and European qualification frameworks for HE; the appropriateness of the qualifications of the teaching staff; and so on.

MODIP's website offers detailed information into the University's quality assurance processes and policies, listing, as well as the University's quality policy, also an anti-corruption policy, a policy for the management of natural resources, policy for social responsibility and the University's policy for the management of personal data (with references to ISO certification). Those policies were also presented to the Panel during the first day of meetings. MODIP's well-developed website presents extensive information and documentation, also pointing to the University's processes for the internal and external evaluation of Departments. Though this was not among the materials submitted to the Panel, we referred to the Department's internal evaluation report (2020) available on MODIP's website (https://modip.uowm.gr/nfe/docs/EEA19-20_TEET.pdf)

Analysis

Through the published information on the University's Quality Assurance Unit, its principles, strategy and processes, the University and Department declare their core values and commitment to continuous quality improvement of courses and services. Though it is clear from the information available to the Panel that the Department has a quality assurance policy and undergoes an objective-setting process, the objectives listed on the policy document submitted to the Panel are broad and generic e.g. the qualitative development of the Department, achievement of learning outcomes etc. The Panel was not provided with a more detailed break-down of those overarching aims into objectives that act as 'stepping-stones' to achieving them; nor was it provided with any measurable targets on the part of the Department. Moreover, the Panel is not in a position to know how the objectives are being delivered in terms of accountability – which member or group of staff is responsible for achieving which objectives, and how is progress periodically monitored.

The objectives listed in the Accreditation Proposal are the same as those presented on the Department's Quality Policy and do not offer the Panel any new insights into the more detailed aspects of the objective-setting process, or the concrete aims which the Department aspires to achieve over the course of the next years. The Proposal refers to a "continuous internal and

external assessment of the Department" and the University's policy refers to annual internal assessment and evaluation procedures.

The University's QAU and its principles, processes and functions as described on the Department's website appear wide-ranging, continuous and robust. It was reassuring to the Panel to be able to refer to the extensive and detailed information presented on MODIP's website, as well as through MODIP's presentation during the 1st day of meetings. The Panel read with interest the Department's latest internal evaluation report, which pointed to a robust and detailed process of annual internal assessment. Equally, the Panel was reassured by document B8, MODIP's report on the Department's internal evaluation and assessment process (dated May 2020). The report refers to the findings of the internal evaluation report, the Department's internal regulatory framework (also submitted to the Panel as document B4), the Department's objective-setting process, and internal data collection and reporting processes. The Panel appreciated the fact that points for improvement are listed on MODIP's report in a manner than is open and meaningful for the Department's future development. Those points for improvement include the need to quantify objectives and set measurable targets for areas including the quality of research outputs produced by academic staff, implementing additional support mechanisms for the students' professional development, and developing activities aiming to increase the Department's external profile and 'attractiveness'.

Conclusion

Overall, the programme complies with the requirements for quality assurance by aligning its mission to the strategic aims and quality assurance processes of the University of Western Macedonia. This ensures that the programme's academic identity remains aligned to its founding principles; that Department staff and students actively participate in educational activities; that the Department and University respond to ongoing societal developments and global challenges; and that the Department and University adapt and improve as a result of those quality assurance processes. However, the Panel was not able to assess the detailed aspects of this process due to the lack of concrete, measurable targets in the materials presented; and is thus unable to judge how those generic principles and aims are applied so as to lead to concrete and continuous improvement.

Panel Judgement

Principle 1: Academic Unit Policy for Quality Assurance	
Fully compliant	x
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

The Department needs to undertake a more detailed target setting process with quantifiable and measurable targets (where appropriate). Each target should be aligned to specific actions.

Each action should be allocated to named individuals or groups of staff as 'leads' responsible for driving the process. This will aid accountability and make the process more effective. The Panel recommends quarterly monitoring cycles leading to annual review; this will ensure progress is on track and, where this is not the case, will give the Department the opportunity to adjust actions in-cycle as appropriate.

Principle 2: Design and Approval of Programmes

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

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

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

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

Study Programme Compliance

<u>Findings</u>

The Programme has a clear goal of offering students the study of Fine and Applied Arts, where students' learning is centered around three main studio modules, of Painting, Sculpture and Printmaking, as well as electives. The overall aim is to equip students with creative, technical and theoretical skillsets and knowledge in the field of Fine and Applied Arts. By the end of their Final Year students are expected to have refined their personal style and approach within their Fine Art practice and be able to work independently as artists within their chosen area of Fine, Applied or Decorative Arts.

The Panel reviewed the information provided, attended the presentation of the Quality Assurance Unit, and the discussion sessions with the faculty, students, alumni, social partners, and employers. It is the Panel's opinion that the Programme is largely successful in achieving a balance between the theoretical and practical components of the curriculum and between fine and applied arts. Upon completion of the Undergraduate programme, which is five years, students are granted the Integrated Master Degree. This is compliant with the European ECTS points system (300 ECTS) and runs over 10 academic semesters. At the end of their five-year

studies, students are expected to present their Final Major Project (Ptychiaki) in a public exhibition context. The School organises its Final Year Degree show presentations for all graduating students and invites members of the public.

Analysis

Unlike the historical model of the European art Academy, which is organised around workshops where students choose to study under one professor/artist throughout their studies, the curriculum at the Department of Fine and Applied Arts at the University of Western Macedonia gives students the opportunity to take different classes with the academic staff teaching on the program. This model offers flexibility and the opportunity to experience diverse subjects, visions and styles, which benefits the personal and professional development of the students.

The curriculum undergoes annual review, which allows for continuous improvement and keeps the Programme current and relevant. Although for the time students can only choose between two 'concentrations' (painting and sculpture), the curriculum includes an array of fine and applied arts courses including photography, video art, digital art forms (animation, 3D animation), jewellery, set design and decoration, and performance art, giving students the opportunity to explore and experiment with a variety of media.

Links between the Department and stakeholders are evident and presented by the academic staff as well as various local and regional stakeholders who attended a meeting with the Panel. Opportunities for internships through an elective practicum are offered through connections with local and regional archaeological and art museums (in Florina, Kozani, Thessaloniki), making the Programme a major stakeholder in the community and the region.

Conclusion

The Department has undertaken important steps towards developing its curriculum to include new media and subject areas, including the introduction of digital arts and performance. It also retains a unique link with the traditional arts and crafts, like ceramics and marble carving. Hiring a new academic staff member who is teaching ceramics and micro-sculpture is a great addition to the Department. A balance between tradition and modernity will contribute to the Department establishing its position on the map for cultural education nationally and internationally.

Panel Judgement

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

The External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel agrees that this Programme leads to a Level 7 Qualification according to the National & European Qualifications Network (Integrated Master)	YES	NO*
	x	

Panel Recommendations

The Panel recommends a better presentation of the various studio modules and their artistic production through visual documentation of past and present students' artworks. By providing a digitised platform in both English and Greek, this wealth of student work can become accessible to the wider international public.

Principle 3: Student- centred Learning, Teaching and Assessment

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

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

The student-centred learning and teaching process

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

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

Study Programme Compliance

<u>Findings</u>

From the material provided prior to the online meetings, the Panel was able to access documentation regarding the overall course structure of the Undergraduate programme of the Department of Visual and Applied Arts at the University of Western Macedonia.

During Semester 1, 2, 3 students attend the introductory and compulsory Painting, Sculpture and Printmaking studios/workshops alongside two chosen electives. From semester 4 onwards, until entering the final year 9th and 10th semesters, students can choose a general Direction (κατεύθυνση) in Painting or Sculpture. They can also choose an applied studio three-course

study (εμβάθυνση) in digital arts, performance, printing, decorative arts, photography, jewellery, icon and fresco painting and scenography. Alongside the Directions and applied studios, students also have compulsory and elective theoretical courses, compulsory pedagogical courses within art education and, lastly, English as a foreign language.

Theoretical courses work alongside the applied arts curricula, supporting the students' development. According to the course guide, students are expected in their final year, Semesters 9 & 10, to conduct their Final Major Project (Ptychiaki) and complete the units pertaining to the compulsory pedagogical course.

Academic staff and members of MODIP and OMEA briefed the Panel, through their presentations, on individual courses and the practical aspects of pedagogical delivery, as well as on teaching and learning styles. The presentation material evidence the application of a broad range of pedagogical methods, ranging from traditional studio workshops (e.g. life drawing classes), to outdoor painting and drawing in nature, performance art as well as digital art and projection mapping.

The programme was adapted to online delivery during to the pandemic, via e-classes https://eclass.uowm.gr/

There is an official procedure for students' complaints, as stipulated in principle on the University Regulations and website.

Analysis

The teaching methods are mainly focused around the studios and workshops, which by nature are student-centred and involve the active participation of both students and faculty. A positive feature is the small student cohorts, especially for taught studio sessions, with no more than 20 students per group. This creates a close-knit community of faculty working alongside students and offering support at each stage of their learning.

Apart from the compulsory courses, painting, sculpture and printmaking, the programme benefits from the addition of courses like performance art, digital art and photography. There is also an abundance of electives and workshops on offer, especially from Semester 4 onwards.

Another positive feature is the clear guidelines offered for the Major Project, as well as the fact this involves supervision by three academic staff members, chosen according to each student's proposed theme of study. There is an outline detailing how to submit a 300-word proposal of the key themes and methodology for approval by the committee of academic staff, and also stipulation of how the final practical work is to be submitted alongside a theoretical essay of no more than 1,000 words in support of the Major Project. The final exam Panel consists of five members of staff, including the three supervisors plus two elected permanent academic members of staff.

The Learning Outcomes as presented in the Course Guide are largely intuitive and based on skillsets, with an emphasis on the technical and making skills relevant to each workshop. Learning Outcomes for Semesters 1- 6 can be repetitive and do not 'scaffold' as the student

progresses in the study of each workshop. The Learning Outcomes do not engage with the critical and reflective skills required to lead to the development of reflective practitioners.

Conclusions

Overall, the level and content of each individual course content is extremely high and directly linked to students' learning in a close-knit and supportive environment; one that assists the development of technical skillsets and creative production. What is missing in the documentation material provided, and which was not evidenced through presentations and discussions with academic staff either, is evidence of clear assignment briefs. Another aspect that was found lacking, is offering students structured written feedback on assessment, apart from the continuous oral feedback offered during studio sessions.

With the exception of the theoretical modules and the Major Project, which list clear indications of what is expected from students for the successful completion of those modules, assessment criteria lack clarity.

It appears that grades are often left to the discretion of the module leader, as there are no second-marking processes in place for practical modules other than the Major Project. Therefore, it is not always evident how the final autonomy and individual style of the student is quantifiable in the overall outcome of their final grade.

The Panel found that the degree grade average over the last 5 years is just above 8,5 (Excellent), which is a marker of grade inflation.

The above observations suggest that Learning Outcomes and assessment criteria are not aligned against a benchmarking process or a progression map that would ensure their gradual scaffolding as students' progress through the programme. The lack of second marking processes for applied studio courses and Directions – other than the Major Project, for which robust marking processes are in place – could be a contributing factor to grade inflation.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

- The Panel recommends that each course publishes clear submission guidelines and assessment criteria for students, as well as offering formal written feedback along with the mark.
- Learning Outcomes need to become more focused and aligned with assessment criteria and assessment requirements. Learning Outcomes need to indicate a progression of skillsets as well as critical engagement with themes or ideas as deemed appropriate.

- It is advisable to offer students thematics, which they can develop alongside developing their skillsets. This would also facilitate greater interaction between the different subject areas of the Programme.

Principle 4: Student Admission, Progression, Recognition and Certification

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

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

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

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

Study Programme Compliance

<u>Findings</u>

The Programme has clear published guidelines for the admission of new students as well as the progression of existing students. Students in the Department of Fine and Applied Arts are not admitted through the Pan-Hellenic exam system, but through special exam assessment organised by the Department. Each year there are entry exams *in situ* that take place over the course of three days, in specially prepared exam rooms. Each candidate must complete a set number of tasks to demonstrate basic technical and drawing skills. The completed submissions are graded by academic members of staff, with the base mark set at 5, and excellent being 10.

First Year students are inducted into the programme and offered the opportunity to experience different studios and workshops in order to orient themselves. The progression from each academic semester to the next is marked by compulsory attendance. Studies on the programme last for five years, following the model of Integrated Master in accordance with the European framework. Students are expected to complete 300 ECTS units, 208-222 of which are expected to have come from the compulsory and elective studio courses alone, i.e. Painting, Sculpture and Printmaking and elective workshops, and 78-92 ECTS are from the theoretical modules. The students are also expected to fulfill 30 ECTS units towards the pedagogical modules or practicum.

There are clear guidelines as to how many courses (ECTS units) are compulsory for students to progress from one year to the next. The Final Major Project during the 9th and 10th semesters leads to successful graduation. The procedure for the Major Project is rigorous and includes several points of monitoring progress, from the initial proposal submission to the final project

submission/presentation, as well as the involvement of three academic supervisors and five examiners. At the end of their studies, students are automatically offered a Diploma Supplement, which is available in both Greek and English.

Analysis

Students' progression and mobility in encouraged in a variety of ways. Alongside the core course curriculum, students take part in practicum and work placements at local museums, public and private institutions. Through the pedagogical course, students gain work experience by completing their placement at schools. The Department is part of the ERASMUS mobility scheme and has established agreements with a list of Universities in countries including Switzerland, Turkey, Poland, Portugal and Egypt. However, for the year 2017 indicatively, there was little uptake, with only 3 students going on an ERASMUS exchange. Due to the pandemic, the ERASMUS scheme has been inactive over the last two years.

Through Open Calls students have opportunities to gain experience in working with art professionals on designated projects, such as Projection Mapping.

Graduates of the Programme may choose to continue their studies at a post-graduate level, either choosing to remain at the University of Western Macedonia or by applying to study elsewhere. Students can apply for the State Scholarship (IKY) or other public and private scholarships. Students can take part in private residencies.

Conclusion

Overall, the programme is compliant with the standards of European academic departments and Institutions, in line with the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

The Department should make better use of the ERASMUS scheme and bilateral partnerships established between the Department and other European institutions in order to increase student and staff mobility.

Principle 5: Teaching Staff

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

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

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

Study Programme Compliance

<u>Findings</u>

Staff are employed by the Department following the Greek legislative framework, which requires that posts are advertised and sets out a process. The Department currently numbers, including its President, 3 Professors, 3 Associate Professors and 5 Assistant Professors; there are also 11 Adjunct Faculty members, 6 Special Laboratory Teaching Staff, and 7 Teaching Staff from the Faculty of Education listed on the Department's website.

The conditions of employment recognize the importance of both teaching and research. The workload of teaching and research staff is defined by legislation; however, it is also dependent on the specificities of context – in this case, the small number of faculty, combined with the practice-based nature of many of the modules, results to heavier than average teaching workloads for academic staff. Faculty are offered some opportunities for professional development. There are also opportunities for teaching mobility through Erasmus agreements (according to the Accreditation Proposal there are 13 established Erasmus agreements with Universities in Turkey, Portugal, Poland, Switzerland, Cyprus, Netherlands, Czech Republic, Italy and France, plus a new one in Egypt as per the presentations).

Faculty are evaluated by students using Module Evaluation Questionnaires (MEQs). According to the Accreditation proposal, MEQs number 42 questions and have a relatively low take-up by students (approx. 30% of students complete them). The take-up of MEQs dropped during the pandemic as a result of e-learning. The Panel was also advised that MEQs have been reviewed since the submission of the Accreditation Proposal, with a view of condensing and making them more attractive to students. It is interesting to note that the University places great emphasis on student feedback; 30% of the financial support for the Department is dependent on the quality of student feedback. The Panel also noted that a student Rep was present in all meetings with OMEA and MODIP.

<u>Analysis</u>

The Panel studied the profiles of the faculty which are available online (https://eetf.uowm.gr/en/teaching-and-research-staff/) and concluded that their credentials are appropriate and indeed, on occasion, excellent. Faculty have wide-ranging expertise as is appropriate to cover the diverse and extensive needs of this broad 5-year Integrated Master Programme. Most faculty are artists with established practice, which is appropriate to the applied nature of the Art School. All members of staff appear self-motivated and committed to their teaching, research and practice. This is also evident through individual outputs, which include publications but are, in their majority, practice-based outputs (individual or group exhibitions, performances, other). It is also evident through the academic and artistic activities which academic staff organize or contribute to (primarily in Florina, but also in Kozani, Prespes, Thessaloniki, Athens and elsewhere). Some of the activities are in partnership with regional cultural institutions such as MOMus - the Museum of Contemporary Art of Thessaloniki, the Archaeological Museum of Florina, and others.

Though faculty are, overall, research active (primarily through the production of practice-based outputs, as well as some publications), research culture in the Department appears to be in a nascent state. This is perhaps unsurprising given the relative 'newness' of the Department and University, its geographic location (which makes participation in conferences, symposia, etc. harder to manage in logistical and financial terms), and the Department's relatively small base of teaching and research staff. Though faculty are offered opportunities for professional development it is not clear how consistent these are, and how they align to the Department's priorities. The Panel was advised that faculty have been offered staff development around research programmes and opportunities to initiate external research bidding activity, which would be a very beneficial development. A matter of concern, but which is not unique to this programme, is the still limited understanding of practice-research within Greek academic environments. Some attention must be paid to the correlation of practice-research outputs to traditional academic outputs, which is a nuanced process and should consider contribution to knowledge; data provided to the Panel regarding research outputs of academic staff suggest a muddled picture (B10a and B10b). It is commendable that within its relatively short lifespan the Department has developed 14 Erasmus agreements with 10 countries. However, mobility data suggest very small outward-going activity on the part of academic staff (4 over 5 years, internal evaluation report 2020) and equally small incoming activity (5 over 5 years, ibid - the Panel acknowledges that this data is skewed by the Covid pandemic).

Faculty appear to carry a relatively heavier teaching workload comparative to their colleagues in other Greek Universities. This is due the combination of a small faculty and an applied programme, which requires intensive and/or small-group instruction on a number of modules. Even so, according to the internal evaluation report (2020), faculty teach on average 6-12 hours per week, which is as recommended. During discussions it was mentioned that the School relies heavily on adjunct faculty, which is not generally conducive to the smooth running of a programme or the student experience. In 2018-2019 there were 8 permanent faculty members (DEP) and 14 adjunct faculty members. At the time of the Panel's visit the Department numbered 11 DEP, 7 EEP and EDIP, and 12 adjunct faculty. The proportion of permanent versus adjunct faculty has thus somewhat improved. The Department currently relies on adjunct faculty for approximately 30% of the delivery.

Module Evaluation Questionnaires are being reviewed to encourage greater take-up from students. The current levels of take-up are low but perhaps similar to other such programmes in Greek Universities. Given the emphasis placed by the University of Western Macedonia on student feedback and the fact this is linked to income for the Department, the Panel would expect to see greater student participation in these processes.

Conclusion

The Institution applies fair and transparent processes for the recruitment of academic staff as evidenced by its compliance with the legislative framework and the faculty's CVs. Faculty is offered staff development opportunities but those do not appear to be systematic and tailored to the Department's priorities across learning and teaching, and research. Though all staff have artistic and/or research practice, and this is assumed to overlap, more attention needs to be paid to international debates around practice-research. A more nuanced understanding of the nature and quality of individual outputs should be encouraged and cultivated. The same applies to practices of innovation in learning and teaching – the Panel did not see evidence of relevant staff development activity or exposure of staff to current literature and practices of innovation for the teaching of creative subjects internationally. Quality assurance processes for staff members appear to be robust and consistently applied.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

- The University and Department need to establish a research strategy. This should be appropriate to the Department's applied nature and cognisant (and conversant) with relevant international practices and approaches to practice research.
- The Panel recommends that the Department develops and formalises research groupings (clusters, groups, centres, labs – whatever structure works best in its particular institutional context) in the Department's different priority research areas. Those should support the faculty's research activity (including the development of competitive bids for external research funding), facilitate externality, encourage interdisciplinary research initiatives (e.g. around art and well-being, eco-art practices, sustainable design, etc.), support the development of quality research and facilitate student engagement in research-informed learning and teaching practices.
- The Panel commends the existing Erasmus agreements and recommends that the Department encourages greater staff mobility, both outward-going and in-coming, inviting staff from partner Universities to engage in teaching, research, and cultural activities with Department faculty and students. This would encourage wider and more far-reaching externality beyond the local and regional areas and would assist in raising

the Department's profile in Greece and abroad; raising staff and student confidence, their understanding of and engagement with relevant debates; improve student experience and widen the horizons of students, bringing them into greater contact and exchange with contemporary and current international practices.

- The Panel commends the University's current efforts to offer staff development, particularly around research. It recommends that the University develops a more extensive and targeted programme of staff development activities to support faculty in developing knowledge and understanding on relevant learning and teaching processes (e.g. developing learning outcomes; setting assessment criteria; equality, diversity and inclusion; research ethics; research funding opportunities; practice-research, and more).

- The Panel appreciates the financial limitations of the Institution but recommends that staff are supported to participate in national and international networks, conferences and symposia as generously as possible, given the geographic location of the Department and the danger of staff becoming 'disconnected' from current developments on the international stage.

- The Department must find ways to re-invigorate student interest in quality assessment processes such as MEQs and encourage greater take-up of those processes on the part of the student body. The fact that a significant proportion of its income is tied to student assessment offers an opportunity to 'bring home' to students how important and valued their views and feedback are to the Department and the University.

Principle 6: Learning Resources and Student Support

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD HAVE ADEQUATE FUNDING TO COVER TEACHING AND LEARNING NEEDS. THEY SHOULD –ON THE ONE HAND- PROVIDE SATISFACTORY INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES FOR LEARNING AND STUDENT SUPPORT AND–ON THE OTHER HAND- FACILITATE DIRECT ACCESS TO THEM BY ESTABLISHING INTERNAL RULES TO THIS END (E.G. LECTURE ROOMS, LABORATORIES, LIBRARIES, NETWORKS, BOARDING, CAREER AND SOCIAL POLICY SERVICES ETC.).

> *Institutions and their academic units must have sufficient funding and means to support learning and academic activity in general, so that they can offer to students the best possible level of studies. The above means could include facilities such as libraries, study rooms, educational and scientific equipment, information and communications services, support or counselling services.*
>
> *When allocating the available resources, the needs of all students must be taken into consideration (e.g. whether they are full-time or part-time students, employed or international students, students with disabilities) and the shift towards student-centred learning and the adoption of flexible modes of learning and teaching. Support activities and facilities may be organised in various ways, depending on the institutional context. However, the internal quality assurance ensures that all resources are appropriate, adequate, and accessible, and that students are informed about the services available to them.*
>
> *In delivering support services the role of support and administrative staff is crucial and therefore they need to be qualified and have opportunities to develop their competences.*

Study Programme Compliance

Findings

The Department has specialized facilities to cover all the disciplines taught but they are currently spread out in different locations. The construction of a new building in three years, as well as the renovation of the Agia Olga building, will fully cover the educational and exhibition needs of the Department. The studios are well-equipped and there is at least one PC with internet access in each studio (Printmaking, Digital Arts, Decorative Arts, Jewellery, and Byzantine Painting). The Department has an annexe (εικαστικός σταθμός) in Psarades, Prespes that can accommodate up to 30 students.

The University of Western Macedonia runs the Accessibility Centre for Students of Vulnerable Social Groups and provides support (including psychological support) and counselling, as well as accommodation and transportation of students with disabilities.

Adequate administrative services are offered to the students for the duration of their studies. During the online meetings students reported that they are satisfied with the administrative services of the department, especially during this distant-learning period, reporting that the administrative personnel's response has been impressively quick for all of their inquiries.

Analysis

Some of the facilities issues will be resolved by the upcoming unification of the campus thanks to the addition of the new building and the renovation of the Agia Olga building. The annexe in Psarades, Prespes offers unique opportunities for the study of thought-provoking contemporary themes (ecology and sustainability, mapping and borders) and could attract international residents.

Students can take advantage of the ERASMUS and ERAMUS+ opportunities to widen their knowledge and exposure to new ideas. The Department has many agreements in place, increasing the choice of places to visit and topics to study. Students can further be encouraged to take advantage of those international opportunities.

Conclusion

The Panel commends the use of current infrastructure and resources and recommends adequate funding to cover teaching and learning needs, as well as the cultivation of a digital culture.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

The Panel recommends greater investment in core teaching and learning resources, such as access to online library resources and the acquisition of books for the Library. The Panel urges the University to support the Department with funds for the acquisition of robust teleconferencing equipment.

Principle 7: Information Management

INSTITUTIONS BEAR FULL RESPONSIBILITY FOR COLLECTING, ANALYSING AND USING INFORMATION, AIMED AT THE EFFICIENT MANAGEMENT OF UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMMES OF STUDY AND RELATED ACTIVITIES, IN AN INTEGRATED, EFFECTIVE AND EASILY ACCESSIBLE WAY.

Institutions are expected to establish and operate an information system for the management and monitoring of data concerning students, teaching staff, course structure and organisation, teaching and provision of services to students as well as to the academic community.

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

The information gathered depends, to some extent, on the type and mission of the Institution. The following are of interest:

- *key performance indicators*
- *student population profile*
- *student progression, success and drop-out rates*
- *student satisfaction with their programme(s)*
- *availability of learning resources and student support*
- *career paths of graduates*

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

Study Programme Compliance

Findings

The department has established procedures for the collection of data regarding students, their progression, teaching methods, employability and career paths of graduates. Quantitative data is collected via ΜΟΔΙΠ. Student satisfaction surveys are conducted twice per year through Module Evaluation Questionnaires. The Department collects and assesses its own data concerning public engagement.

Data made available to the Panel concerns the academic years 2015-16, 2016-17, 2017-18 and 2018-19 and includes information regarding the number of academic staff, adjunct, and specialized technical staff. It also gives insight into the number of new hires and presents the capacity and availability of teaching rooms and library resources. Moreover, there is available data concerning the number of registered students per year, broken down into gender, graduating students, and students graduating later than their initial registration period of 5 years.

A document dated 2020 provides, for the first time, data and analysis on the theme of employability of recent graduates, indicating that a high percentage of the Department's graduates (over 70%) are in graduate employment relevant to their studies.

<u>Analysis</u>

Student satisfaction is assessed through Module Evaluation Questionnaires; however, the Panel was advised that only approximately 30% of student currently engage in this process. This suggests a low confidence, on the part of the students, that their feedback will be taken into consideration and effect change. However, it is worth mentioning that during the Panel's meetings with current and former students, it was communicated that students have a great rapport with their faculty and that there is a continuous loop of informal, oral feedback and response on both sides.

It was brought to the Panel's attention that academic staff who receive poor feedback from students via the Module Evaluation Questionnaires (less than 3%) are held accountable. Conversely, there are also incentives for staff members who achieve very positive student feedback.

The Panel was not presented sufficient evidence that the information obtained is systematically analysed and evaluated by the Department or MODIP in order to form conclusions about the profile of the student population. Though the Department holds data concerning student retention and graduation rates; student progression, success, and dropout rates; course evaluations; and career paths of graduates, it is not clear how this data is monitored and assessed by the Department, and how it is used for the Department's and Programme's continuous development. The Accreditation Proposal does not lay out a clear process for data management and analysis (e.g. there is no designated committee) and the processes described are vague and generic. The Panel was not shown any data visualisations or graphs that would allow to assess trends and facilitate direct interpretation and comparisons.

<u>Conclusion</u>

Alhough the Department and MODIP have processes in place for data collection and evaluation, the latter are not robust enough. Data collected is not made full use of for the Department's and programme's continuous improvement.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

- The Panel recommends that the Department, with MODIP's support, puts clearer and better-defined processes in place for data analysis and evaluation. It is advisable that the

Department and MODIP undertake to produce visualisations of key datasets, in order to be able to recognize trends over time.

- The Panel recommends that the Department and University publicizes to students a clear 'feedback loop', so that students understand what change their feedback can effect to curricula and practices. This will enhance student confidence in the evaluation and feedback processes and encourage greater participation.

Principle 8: Public Information

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD PUBLISH INFORMATION ABOUT THEIR TEACHING AND ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES WHICH IS CLEAR, ACCURATE, OBJECTIVE, UP-TO-DATE AND READILY ACCESSIBLE.

> *Information on Institution's activities is useful for prospective and current students, graduates, other stakeholders and the public.*
>
> *Therefore, institutions and their academic units provide information about their activities, including the programmes they offer, the intended learning outcomes, the qualifications awarded, the teaching, learning and assessment procedures used, the pass rates and the learning opportunities available to their students, as well as graduate employment information.*

Study Programme Compliance

Findings

The Department has a comprehensive website (https://eetf.uowm.gr), which is user friendly and well indexed. It is bilingual, and most information is available in both Greek and English. The Department's history, curriculum programme of undergraduate studies, as well as Handbook for students are all easily accessible and downloadable. There are details about staff members and administration contacts, the course practicum and ECTS credits, Departmental facilities, the professional rights of graduates, the University's quality assurance processes and the locale. Support offered for disabled students, including psychological support, student welfare, career office and other useful information is also available. Moreover, there are links to an alumni newsletter, and to news and current announcements.

The Greek version of the website is richer, including information on faculty research and artistic outputs, as well as conferences and symposia organised by the Department. The Department's website also links to information on life-long learning programmes, the teaching timetable, the central University website, the website of MODIP, and more. It also holds imagery of student work and artistic output of academic staff, as well as images of the new Departmental building under development (expected delivery date 2024). All modules have access to the asynchronous e-learning platform Open e-Class, where students can access supportive materials, assessment information, and instructor notes. The exam entry system requirements and call for prospective candidates is updated with necessary information provided for the public.

Beyond its website, the Department also communicates information via the local press and the University's stakeholder engagement office.

Analysis

The website is well designed and easy to navigate. Its structure is clear and the links functional. The information available on the website is current and relevant. There are good links to social activity and the student community via informal social media pages, provided through the main website. The Panel found that the social media presence of the Department has been expanded through its presence on the YouTube channel of the University of Western Macedonia, offering a virtual tour of the facilities as well as examples of students' artworks.

<u>Conclusion</u>

The academic unit has a strong existing digital presence. The University's YouTube channel is a step in the right direction and more activities like this, including translating the titles of the videos in English (so that they are searchable by non-Greek speakers), will allow further visibility of the department and dissemination of information internationally.

Panel Judgement

Principle 8: Public Information	
Fully compliant	**x**
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

- The Panel recommends that staff maintain more consistent and in-depth public profiles, listing their teaching, research and professional practice activity, academic outputs, any relevant funding successes, doctoral students, and so on.
- Given the applied and artistic (visual) nature of the programme, the Panel recommends establishing digital portfolios for student dissertation projects, which could link to the Department's main website, making it a visually rich, attractive, and current document of the Department's and students' artistic and scholarly output.
- The study guide is currently provided in English as a monolithic digital document, which makes navigation challenging. Providing the same information as a structured web document with links to modules, module outlines, and the course structure would facilitate navigation and search.
- The Department has an extensive network of collaborating organisations. These could be highlighted on the Department's webpage to showcase the networking, practicum, and employment opportunities available to students.
- The Panel recommends translating the titles of the YouTube videos in English (so that they are searchable by non-Greek speakers), so that the Department gets further visibility and dissemination of information internationally.

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

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

> *Regular monitoring, review and revision of study programmes aim to maintain the level of educational provision and to create a supportive and effective learning environment for students.*
>
> *The above comprise the evaluation of:*
> - *the content of the programme in the light of the latest research in the given discipline, thus ensuring that the programme is up to date;*
> - *the changing needs of society;*
> - *the students' workload, progression and completion;*
> - *the effectiveness of the procedures for the assessment of students;*
> - *the students' expectations, needs and satisfaction in relation to the programme;*
> - *the learning environment, support services and their fitness for purpose for the programme*
>
> *Programmes are reviewed and revised regularly involving students and other stakeholders. The information collected is analysed and the programme is adapted to ensure that it is up-to-date. Revised programme specifications are published.*

Study Programme Compliance

Findings

The study programme of the Department of Fine and Applied Arts is monitored continuously and reviewed on an annual basis. Through MODIP's website, the Panel was able to access the Department's internal evaluation report for academic year 2019-20. Annual reports are put together by the Department's OMEA based on the University's quality assurance processes and overseen by its quality assurance unit. As well as being published on MODIP's website, the internal evaluation report is communicated to relevant internal stakeholders through the Department's standard administrative and governance functions (e.g. Γενική Συνέλευση – General Assembly).

According to the Accreditation Proposal document (B1.9), the programme is updated and adjusted annually by the Study Guide Committee, which is comprised by 7 members of staff (both academic and administrative). The Committee is guided by the student evaluation results and collects proposals by faculty on responses to issues raised. It also takes into consideration the students' performance at dissertation, graduate outcomes concerning employability, issues raised and debated at the Department's General Assembly (by either students or staff) and employer feedback. The Committee makes suggestions for changes to the programme, which it submits for approval to the Department's General Assembly as its decision-making body.

Analysis

The Panel studied the most recent internal evaluation report, which was thorough, detailed and specific. The Panel can confidently confirm therefore that the outcomes of the programme's self-assessment process are properly recorded and submitted to the University's MODIP for

further processing, as required. The Panel is also in receipt of a MODIP report (B8) which certifies positive annual internal review results and recommends steps for improvement. The Panel is in agreement with MODIP's findings and recommendations. It considers these to be a meaningful and insightful intervention to the Department's self-reflection and self-assessment processes.

Conclusion

The University has in place an internal Quality Assurance process which appears to be well-considered, robust, and operating smoothly. Annual internal evaluation of the programme and Department is undertaken, with a view to continuous improvement. The Department's internal evaluation and assessment processes appear to be open and transparent, evidence-led and inclusive of all staff, student representatives and external stakeholders.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

None

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Principle 10: Regular External Evaluation of Undergraduate Programmes

PROGRAMMES SHOULD REGULARLY UNDERGO EVALUATION BY COMMITTEES OF EXTERNAL EXPERTS SET BY HAHE, AIMING AT ACCREDITATION. THE TERM OF VALIDITY OF THE ACCREDITATION IS DETERMINED BY HAHE.

> *HAHE is responsible for administrating the programme accreditation process which is realised as an external evaluation procedure, and implemented by a committee of independent experts. HAHE grants accreditation of programmes, with a specific term of validity, following to which revision is required. The accreditation of the quality of the programmes acts as a means of verification of the compliance of the programme with the template's requirements, and as a catalyst for improvement, while opening new perspectives towards the international standing of the awarded degrees.*
>
> *Both academic units and institutions participate in the regular external quality assurance process, while respecting the requirements of the legislative framework in which they operate.*
>
> *The quality assurance, in this case the accreditation, is an on-going process that does not end with the external feedback, or report or its follow-up process within the Institution. Therefore, Institutions and their academic units ensure that the progress made since the last external quality assurance activity is taken into consideration when preparing for the next one.*

Study Programme Compliance

Findings

The current accreditation review is the second external review of the programme following the first External Evaluation of 2014. In the Accreditation Proposal, the Department suggests that it has implemented about 80% of the recommendations made by the external evaluation Panel of 2014. The Accreditation Proposal lists a series of improvements made to facilities pertinent to studio spaces for the painting, sculpture, print-making and set design, photography and digital art workshops, as well as the Library (thought there are still significant improvements required), and the fire safety of those and other spaces. Additional staff have been employed as lab technicians, though this need has only been partially met. Though the Department's facilities are not yet fully accessible for wheelchair users, the relevant approval has just been gained and financial commitment secured. Most importantly, the Department has plans in place to permanently and decisively address its infrastructural shortcomings through the development of two significant new facilities: a new-built, plans of which were commissioned following an open competition process, and the restoration of the historic building of Agia Olga, in the centre of the town of Florina.

Before the virtual visit, the Panel was given a thoroughly prepared Accreditation Proposal that addressed all aspects of the Department and University that would lead to a successful accreditation of the quality of the programme, as well as verification of the required compliance. During our virtual meetings, staff showed awareness of the importance of the external review and its contribution to improvement of the programme and Department. They actively engaged

in the external review, contributed detailed documentation, explained the implementation of several recommendations made since the last evaluation, and showed willingness to engage with our feedback and recommendations in their continuing effort toward progress and improvement. All stakeholders, including current undergraduate students and alumni, were actively engaged in the programme review.

Analysis

The first External Evaluation Report of 2014 noted the challenges the Department faced at the time, from its initial establishment to achieving various changes and realignments in its curriculum, and the hiring of faculty. The 2014 Report noted the importance of the Department for the geographical region of Florina and its positive impact on the creative and cultural industries of the region. This constitutes a particular strength for this Department, and it was highlighted through the presentations of academic staff, as well as by the cultural stakeholders the Panel engaged with through this process.

The 2014 Report found an urgent need for upgrading existing facilities and resources, particularly with regards to the studio spaces of painting, sculpture, photography and digital arts. The Library section was also in need of serious investment for the acquisition of specialised material for art and design students; unfortunately, despite some additional investment, this continues to be the case.

The 2014 Report recommended that accessibility to workshop spaces outside the town of Florina is improved, which has been achieved through the introduction of an internal transport system. It also recommended the introduction of Printmaking as another formal direction within the curriculum; this has now been fully offered to students from the first semester onwards (though it is not recognised on the degree title despite efforts on the part of the Department to align this with the programme's content). The 2014 Report's recommendation that the Department strengthens the more Applied Arts areas on offer has also been responded to. The Report noted a further need for enhancing collaborations and bilateral relations with local stakeholders as well as raising the profile of the Department in the region. Though significant efforts have been made in that direction, there is still scope for improvement.

Conclusions

The Panel has found the Department to be compliant and willing to meaningfully engage in external evaluation processes, and with the resulting feedback provided by the assessors. The plans for a new building to house the Department and programme constitute an extremely positive outcome. This will be a great addition to the programme and hugely upgrade the existing infrastructure and teaching facilities. Other positive outcomes include the hiring of new faculty, the introduction of Printmaking, Performance and Ceramics as directions (/concentrations) as well as the addition of modules on 3D design and jewellery design to the curriculum.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

- There remains an urgent need for the enrichment of Library resources in the form of books and access to relevant image and data banks.
- There is still a need to work towards improving externality and raising the Department's profile locally, regionally, and internationally. Cross-border collaborations, especially with neighbouring countries like Albania and North Macedonia, would work in that direction.

PART C: CONCLUSIONS

I.   Features of Good Practice

- The Study Programme offers unique training in both Fine and Applied Arts. This is an important addition to the landscape of arts education in Greece and serves as a respite to the concentration of prospective students to other three Fine Art Schools of Greece, in Athens, Thessaloniki and Ioannina.

- The foundational 'cycle' of studies, which allows students to experience all different workshops (εργαστήρια) before choosing one to commit to going forward, supports holistic and rounded learning practices.

- The location of the Department in its natural, social and geopolitical environment allows for unique study opportunities. Its engagement with the natural surroundings and resources (e.g. Annex in Prespes) can become a unique identifying feature of the Department and Study Programme – a particularly timely one within the context of global environmental crisis.

- The Department has achieved commitment on the part of the University for the delivery two new buildings (a new-built and the refurbishment of an existing building). The plans for the new building, due to be delivered by 2024, are impressive. The Department's facilities will hugely improve as a result of these developments, vastly improving the student experience.

- The supportive and close-knit relationships of staff and students were highlighted during meetings and should continue.

- Practical modules are taught to small groups of students, which enhances the quality of learning and teaching.

- Alumni and collaborating organisations praise the professionalism and excellence of the Department

- The Final Major Project is well defined and supported through a clear brief and three academic supervisors. It is also examined by a 5-strong Panel, which ensures a robust and transparent assessment process.

- Faculty are passionate and committed, often working above and beyond the requirements to deliver quality education to the students.

- The Department has established partnerships with local and regional cultural organizations and appears to be embedded in the cultural and creative life of Florina, Kozani and the region, offering service to society.

- Students are actively involved in the Department's governance bodies (e.g. Geniki Sinelefsi).

- Academic staff are active in organizing conferences and symposia. Activities such as the conference WAC 2021 International Encounters/Conference WALKING AS A QUESTION, organized by the Department in July 2021 (https://icowaf.eetf.uowm.gr/), which was also accompanied by the publication of the book *Walking Arts Encounters* featuring a wide spectrum of artistic practices and theoretical essays (https://icowaf.eetf.uowm.gr/conference-proceedings/) are commendable. So are publication initiatives such as the volume *10 Years Performance Now* edited by Angeliki Avgitidou.

- The Department responded well to the last external evaluation report making significant changes to its Study Programme, which evidences a willingness to engage with external feedback and commitment to continuous improvement.

II.   Areas of Weakness

- The Department's current facilities are spread across Florina and two villages; however, the unification of the campus with the new buildings will solve this issue.
- There is need for a greater focus on student employability, particularly in careers other than teaching.
- The Department's website does not currently hold much imagery or information on student work (particularly the Major Project).
- There is relatively low take-up of Module Evaluation Questionnaires on the part of the students.
- The Department would benefit from more synergies and collaborations between different faculty members and studio modules.
- The grade average of just over 8.5/10 (Excellent) over the last 5 years suggests degree inflation.
- Pedagogical practices of offering qualitative, developmental written feedback to students, publishing assignment briefs (/assessment requirements) and appropriate marking criteria in advance of assessment are not yet consistently established in the Department
- The Department's research culture is in a nascent state. The University does not have a research strategy. No established research infrastructure exists in the Department.
- The Department does not currently make full use of the data it gathers, which presents an obstacle to strategising actions for continuous improvement.
- There is very limited staff and student mobility, both outgoing and incoming.

III.　Recommendations for Follow-up Actions

- Create a strong strategic vision for the Department and Study Programme, exploiting its geographical position in the region and its situation within an environment of outstanding natural beauty, emphasizing ecological and sustainable practices.
- Create a set of inter-disciplinary modules driven by thematic concerns rather than subject areas (Painting, Sculpture etc.)
- Develop a research strategy at Institutional and Departmental level.
- Make better use of the existing Erasmus agreements and establish further international collaborations, encouraging greater mobility for both students and staff.
- Undertake a more detailed target-setting process, which breaks down generic overarching aims to achievable stepping-stones, and enhances accountability by allocating actions to named individuals or groups.
- Publish clear submission guidelines and assessment criteria for all modules.
- Focus learning outcomes and align them with the appropriate expectations for each level of study ('scaffolding') to support student progress.
- Offer students structured developmental feedback along with the final mark on all modules.
- Establish a 2nd marking process for all practical modules.
- Offer academic staff more consistent and targeted staff development opportunities in pedagogic practices and research.
- Support academic staff to participate in national and international networks, conferences and symposia, ensuring greater externality and engagement with current practices and debates on the international stage.
- Find ways to re-invigorate student engagement with quality assurance processes such as Module Evaluation Questionnaires, and improve take-up.
- Put efforts into collecting reliable data-sets, systematically processing available data and using it to inform strategic decision-making.
- Update the Departmental website with information and documentation of student work. Ensure that all faculty web-pages and CVs contain updated and consistent information.

IV.   Summary & Overall Assessment

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

The Principles where substantial compliance has been achieved are: **3, 5 and 7**

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

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

Overall Judgement	
Fully compliant	**x**
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

The External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel agrees that this Programme leads to a Level 7 Qualification according to the National & European Qualifications Network (Integrated Master)	YES	NO
	x	

The members of the External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel

Name and Surname   **Signature**

1. **Professor Maria Chatzichristodoulou**, Associate Dean (Chair)

    Kingston University London, United Kingdom

2. **Dr Stella Baraklianou**

    University of Huddersfield, United Kingdom

3. **Professor Anna Tahinci**

    The Glassell School of Art, United Sates of America