



**ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ**  
HELLENIC REPUBLIC



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

**Drama**

**Institution: Aristotle University of Thessaloniki**

**Date: 3 July 2021**

Report of the Panel appointed by the HAHE to undertake the review of the Undergraduate Study Programme (Integrated Master) of **Drama** of the **Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (AUTH)** 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 Undergraduate Study Programme (Integrated Master) of **Drama** of the **Aristotle University of Thessaloniki** comprised the following three (3) members, drawn from the HAHE Register, in accordance with Laws 4009/2011 & 4653/2020:

- 1. Assoc. Prof. Sofia Pantouvaki (Chair)**  
Aalto University, Finland
  
- 2. Prof. Pavlos Sfyroeras**  
Middlebury College, United States of America
  
- 3. Assoc. Prof. Andri H. Constantinou**  
Frederick University, Cyprus

## II. Review Procedure and Documentation

The study programme review was based on a rich set of documentation materials provided by the staff of the Undergraduate Study Programme (Integrated Master) of Drama of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, followed by a series of meetings (teleconferences) with staff members, students, alumni, and social partners of the department, as well as a site visit that was held online due to COVID-19 restrictions.

More specifically, the materials provided for the review included the following:

The department's proposal for the accreditation review of the Programme of Undergraduate Studies (PoUS) of the Department of Drama ("School of Drama"), Faculty of Fine Arts, AUTH (B1); the study programme quality assurance policy (B2); the study guide for the New Programme of Undergraduate Studies (PoUS) effective as of the academic year 2019-2020 (B3); the regulations regarding the PoUS, the diploma thesis and the internship (B4); detailed course descriptions (B5); course evaluation samples with questionnaires and other anonymized written feedback gathered internally (B7); a report of the PoUS internal evaluation (B8); and data from the National Information System for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (NISQA) related to the specific study programme for the years 2015-2019 (B9).

The documentation available for the review process also included statistical data and detailed description of the academic staff's publications, comparable results from the external evaluation held in 2014, information on the entrance exams for those holding degrees in other subject areas, the Tuning Template for Theatre Higher Education in Europe; evidence of the department's research funding, a list of the diploma theses between 2015-2019, and a list of the department's artistic activities, lectures, workshops and other actions outside the university environment at both local/national and international level (B10). Additional materials included other appendices such as the diploma supplement and guidelines for the implementation of the diploma thesis (B11). The department also provided written, visual and audio-visual documentation regarding infrastructure (spaces, equipment, etc.) and services for learning, research and student support.

Moreover, the Panel requested to see samples of student work and diploma theses; on the first day of the review process, the department provided these additional samples of coursework that included practical exercises, artistic projects, student portfolios, samples of examination requirements/questions and essays, and diploma theses.

The Panel examined all the aforementioned materials carefully, before and during the review process, and asked clarifying questions during the interviews and discussions at the site visit.

The site visit took place during three days on 28-30 June 2021 and was held online due to the ongoing pandemic situation with COVID-19. The visit schedule was as follows:

### **Monday 28 June**

- Teleconference with the Vice-Rector/President of MODIP & the Head of the Department (30' mins)
- Teleconference with OMEA (5 academic staff members) & MODIP representatives (1h 30' mins)

### **Tuesday 29 June**

- Teleconference with 10 teaching staff members (45' mins)
- Teleconference with 10 undergraduate students (45' mins)
- On-line tour: classrooms, lecture halls, libraries laboratories, and other facilities /Discussion about the facilities presented in the video produced for this purpose with department staff members (7 faculty members, 1 technical personnel, 2 administration personnel) (1h)
- Teleconference with Programme graduates (12 alumni) (45' mins)

### **Wednesday 30 June**

- Teleconference with stakeholders (10 participants): employers and social partners (45' mins)
- Teleconference with OMEA & MODIP representatives (30' mins)
- Closure with the Vice-Rector/President of MODIP, the Head of the Department, OMEA & MODIP (15' mins)

Each day included debriefing sessions/private meetings among the members of the Panel. All discussions were exceptionally thorough. The site visit was followed by Panel internal meetings and further examination of all the materials and notes gathered from this process, during which this report was discussed, developed, and agreed by the Panel members.

The Panel would like to warmly thank everyone who participated in the External Evaluation and Accreditation Review process for the information they provided and the important insights they shared in the discussions. The Panel wishes to express their thanks especially to the academic, administrative and technical staff of the Department of Drama of AUTH for the exceptional zeal demonstrated in the preparation of the materials, which offered a wide and comprehensive overview of the study programme and of the experience of everyone involved in it, thus providing important information for the purposes of this accreditation review.

The Panel is aware that certain matters addressed in this report expand beyond the Department's remit and responsibility and concern the university (AUTH) and/or the Ministry of Education; therefore, some recommendations for follow-up actions will hopefully support the Department's future efforts to request related improvement actions from these bodies. The Panel believes that differentiating the responsibility of the Department from that of AUTH and

the Ministry of Education clarifies the points made in this report and aims to reinforce the department's future development.

The Panel would also like to acknowledge that they took into consideration the conditions related to the (still ongoing at the time of the accreditation review) COVID-19 pandemic, which has affected not only the academic work but also the artistic profile of the department under review that relates to the pandemic-stricken field of theatre and live performance.

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

The Department of Drama at the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki was chartered in 1984 and started operating in 1992 as part of the School of Fine Arts, which includes a total of four departments. Its mission is twofold: to study the theatrical phenomenon and to cultivate the dramatic arts. It thus aims to produce both scholars and practitioners of theatre. It differs from other Theatre Departments in Greece in that it places equal emphasis both on the study of theatre (its theory and history) and on artistic practice.

To that end, the Department runs a five-year programme and awards an Integrated Master's Degree that corresponds to 300 ECTS. After completing a cycle of required core courses in Theatre Theory and History, students specialize in one or more of the following 'majors': (a) Drama and Performance Analysis; (b) Acting; (c) Scenography and Costume Design; and (d) Stage Directing. All majors culminate with a 'Diploma Project', consisting of a scholarly thesis or artistic production and a lecture. In addition, all students receive full training in the theory and practice of Theatre in Education.

The graduates of the Department of Drama pursue careers in all theatre-related areas; they find employment as scholars, artists, technicians, dramaturgs, critics, educators, among others.

The Department of Drama admits about 80-90 students per year. At the time of the external review, it numbers 16 faculty members (ΔΕΠ), 9 teaching fellows and technical staff (ΕΕΠ/ ΕΔΙΠ), and 7 secretarial and special laboratory staff (ΕΤΕΠ). It operates a Laboratory of Theatre Research and Technology (ΕΘΕΤ), aimed to support all aspects of teaching and research and to coordinate outreach activities. The Department is currently housed in two buildings in very close proximity in down-town Thessaloniki.



## 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

**Findings:** The quality assurance policy of the Drama Department is in line with the policy of AUTH focusing on continuous and constant improvement in all aspects of academic life (education, research, services, life and work within the University) as well as transparency and dissemination of achievements. The policy takes into consideration the particularity of the Programme of

Study which combines theory and practice, i.e. scholarly, artistic and educational approaches to the art of theatre.

The commitment for continuous improvement is promoted by the OMEA committee as follows: a) it collaborates with MODIP and conducts the defined procedures of internal evaluations as directed by the unit; b) it ensures that the learning outcomes are in line with the National and European Framework for Qualifications of Higher Education; c) the programme of studies is in coordination with renowned educational institutions of Europe and takes into consideration good practices in theatre education; d) it has a close collaboration with the institutions hosting student placements and considers the feedback given on the students' adaptability and performance; e) it takes the labour market into account and periodically makes necessary revisions, the most important being lately the cluster of courses in the field of Drama in Education which offer certification for pedagogical and teaching competence (ΠΠΔΕ); f) it considers the feedback of the evaluation questionnaires that students are encouraged to answer for every module/instructor.

Analysis: The described processes constitute a consistent policy, adjusted to the combined scholarly and diverse artistic content of the programme of study. The goals are not particularly paired with Key Performance Indicators (KPI), but the data was neatly presented in the material the Panel received in advance and thoroughly explained during the sessions. KPIs are not clearly articulated, nevertheless the EEAP considers the policy sufficiently clear; too specific directions could be unproductive and restrictive for such a wide subject matter and diverse PoUS.

Conclusions: The compliance of the Study Programme of the Drama Department with Principle 1 concerning its policy for Quality Assurance is evident; the relevant points were clearly stated in their Accreditation Report (B1 «Πρόταση ακαδημαϊκής πιστοποίησης»), and the MODIP unit explained further, during the first day of the review, the objectives of the policy as well as the ways these are published to be accessed by all stakeholders. The list appears on the department's website. The Department worked on the advice resulting from the evaluation that took place in 2014 and made considerable amendments as will be seen in more detail in Principle 10.

### Panel Judgement

<b>Principle 1: Academic Unit Policy for Quality Assurance</b>	
Fully compliant	<b>X</b>
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

### **Panel Recommendations**

- The Department should continue developing processes through keeping in touch with alumni in a systematic way, in order to follow their careers, provide them with an advisory role for the benefit of the progression of the programme of study, listen to the difficulties in the pursuit of their career and reconsider in this respect the programmes of study.
- The Department should devise standardised ways to take advantage of valuable feedback given by placement/internship collaborators; the Panel's session with these stakeholders provided valuable information for the accreditation review.

## 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

Findings: The Programme of Undergraduate Studies (PoUS) of the Department of Drama ("School of Drama"), Faculty of Fine Arts, AUTH has been designed as a combination of all areas in Drama and Theatre, including theory, scholarship, and practice, placing equal emphasis on the art of theatre and theatre-making, as well as its study. The Study Programme includes core course requirements related to the historical and theoretical study of dramaturgy, performance theory and performance analysis, and mandatory introductory courses on areas of theatre practice; it also includes a unit in Theatre in Education. Following that, the students work towards specialization in one of four majors:

- Drama and Performance Analysis (also presented on the department's website as: Dramaturgy and Performance Theory)
- Scenography (Stage Design) and Costume Design
- Acting
- Theatre Directing

The PoUS includes 58 courses and seminars and a diploma thesis which consists of (a) a written dissertation, or a theatre production, or a stage design project, depending on the chosen major and (b) a 45-minute lecture on a subject of the students' choice. The PoUS underwent a

curriculum reform recently and the new Programme of Undergraduate Studies has been effective since the academic year 2019-2020. This reform was based on the evaluation of the experience of teaching staff and students from the previous PoUS, the experience of external stakeholders from the labour market and the creative industries (particularly those who employed students during internships), the professional development of the department's graduates, and the need to expand the area of theatre education. The new PoUS requires active participation of students and supports their smooth progression throughout the stages of the study programme.

Analysis: The study programme has been designed based on appropriate standards in terms of course content and balances organically core/general courses with elective courses in the major. The high number of mandatory core courses ensures that all students can have a firm basis in theatre studies before continuing to the required elective courses in their chosen specialisation area. The PoUS balances successfully and in complementary ways scholarship and practice, placing equal emphasis on theatre theory, history and analysis with artistic practice on the stage and in site-specific performance. The new PoUS is structured in a clearly articulated way and the Study Guide is complete, concise and appropriate. The introduction of a practical training period (work placement/internship) offers the students opportunities for work experience within real frames.

Conclusions: The reform of the PoUS was successful in aligning its educational process both with other international programmes in the same or related fields, as well as with artistic activity in the performing arts and its relevant professional context, preparing the graduates sufficiently to enter a field which is fully multidisciplinary and cooperative. This is evident in both the content of the PoUS as well as in the experience of stakeholders and alumni. One of the most successful developments of the new PoUS is the definition and strengthening of the four distinct majors: this provides deeper and more focused expertise to the students, which also becomes visible in their degree. It is also positive that the new PoUS is 'lighter' than the previous study programme which was far too large (58 courses currently vs. 63 courses earlier) and aligns better with the anticipated student workload according to the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System. The strengthening of the theoretical major (in Drama and Performance Analysis) with compulsory attendance in small-group seminars is also a positive development. The Research Methodology Seminar is useful for all four majors and the diploma theses (written or project-based thesis and related lecture) demonstrate the nature of the department, encouraging a research-oriented approach to theatre praxis. Moreover, it is significant that the new PoUS guarantees pedagogical and teaching proficiency to all graduates through a series of compulsory core courses in the Theory and Practice of Theatre Education, which enables future opportunities for employment in the wider area of education.

## Panel Judgement

<b>Principle 2: Design and Approval of Programmes</b>	
Fully compliant	<b>X</b>
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

<b>The External Evaluation &amp; Accreditation Panel agrees that this Programme leads to a Level 7 Qualification according to the National &amp; European Qualifications Network (Integrated Master)</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO*</b>
	<b>X</b>	

## Panel Recommendations

- The study programme could be renewed with courses that align with latest technologies in the field of the performing arts. Although the current curriculum does include digital design tools (e.g. digital drawing) the content of the courses could be further enriched with other digital applications such as the use of mixed media on stage; the planned implementation of a new course on Projection Design is a welcome addition.
- The study programme is encouraged to develop collaborations with other departments within AUTH and other departments in Greece and internationally, with the aim to work on multidisciplinary collaboration.
- By developing new research projects and attracting doctoral and post-doctoral researchers in areas including practice-based research (as discussed in Principle 5 of this report), the department has the potential to further develop connections between teaching and research, linking the two.

### 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

Findings: The Programme of Undergraduate Studies (PoUS) of the Department of Drama is generally delivered in a student-centred learning environment that promotes collaboration and mutual respect in the student-teacher relationship as well as among students. The PoUS offers flexible learning paths as it consists of a cycle of required core courses followed by specialization in one or more 'majors' at the student's choice. This curricular structure respects the diversity of students and their needs, enabling flexible learning paths based on their interests.

The programme uses a variety of teaching and assessment methods and a research-oriented approach suitable to the nature of each course. All courses that relate to artistic practice are conducted in small groups that enable individual (one-on-one) mentoring as part of student-centred pedagogy. In addition, theoretical courses are also organized in small-scale groups that

facilitate the interaction between students and faculty and encourage independent study through personal projects.

Assessment criteria and methods are either published in each course outline and communicated to students in advance or presented during the introductory session at the beginning of each course; this was also confirmed by the students. Student assessment is often done by more than one examiner. Both faculty members and students confirmed that oral feedback is always offered at the completion of each examination or project presentation as part of the regular assessment method, or additionally at the student's request. This practice offers students the benefits of multiple and continuous feedback on the learning process. The teaching staff are available to students even outside the formal course schedules and are willing to offer advice and feedback, as confirmed by both students and faculty. The department utilizes an evaluation system in the form of digital questionnaires for the assessment of courses and faculty, but the student response percentage is low; this is explained by faculty and students alike as a result of the close student-teacher cooperation in direct contact. The department also has three advisors for student matters (one for study matters and two related to the Erasmus exchange programme). The department's handbook outlines the formal procedure for student appeals.

Analysis: The programme supports the students' individual interests and skills and caters for the development of their personal and independent artistic personality. This approach reinforces the student's sense of autonomy, while ensuring adequate guidance and support from the teaching staff. All students testified that they feel supported by the teaching staff in their learning process and comfortable to approach the faculty to discuss any matter, which is something the panel was also able to identify in the experience transferred from the faculty and graduates of the programme. The students appear to be happy with the staff availability and accessibility. Moreover, the structure of the study programme and the faculty also actively promote the students' work outside the department/university frame, as evident in the numerous projects and actions undertaken in collaboration with external partners, making the students' work known to the wider public.

The learning process is enhanced by the facilities of the department which include adequate specialized workshops, a theatre space and additional equipment that is available for students to use in their courses, projects, and final artistic thesis project. The study programme as a whole, with the variation of courses and projects that it offers, encourages students to not only undertake courses of their choice but also participate in projects initiated by their fellow students in various collaborative roles (e.g. as artistic partners, assistants, etc.). This practice foregrounds collaboration, a particularly important aspect in the field of theatre, and enriches the students' experience in concrete terms. The student-centred approach was also evident in the Panel discussions with the graduates of the program and with the external stakeholders.

Conclusions: As identified in the discussions with both students and graduates, one of the most important and valued aspects of the learning process in the PoUS of the Department of Drama is the fact that students get acquainted with all aspects and areas of theatrical practice, beyond their own area of interest. This is very significant because it strengthens collaboration and increases the understanding of areas beyond one's own field, widening the students' learning experience and further promoting the students' mutual respect in all fields of theatre. This practice also results in the students formulating collaborative creative teams that often continue



working together after the end of the studies, as became evident in discussions with faculty and alumni.

### Panel Judgement

<b>Principle 3: Student- centred Learning, Teaching and Assessment</b>	
Fully compliant	<b>X</b>
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

### Panel Recommendations

- The percentage of students taking part in the evaluation procedure via the questionnaires is too small to collect an objective and useful result. The timing for the collection of student feedback should be re-examined in order to provide students the chance to give their evaluation for the entire duration of the course delivery including the course assessment (criteria and realisation). Further encouragement and motivation should be given in order to increase student participation in the assessment process.
- It would be more coherent if all instructors provided in advance, in the course outline, the assessment criteria and methods.

## 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

Findings: The nature of the studies, the workshop-type courses and the often-one-to-one collaboration among instructor and student requires a relatively low number of incoming students in the department every year, in comparison to other PoUS. It is crucial that the ratio of instructor to student remains high.

The newcomers are supported upon entering through a welcoming event offered by the teaching staff, guidance on the use of the library and an event on behalf of the students' union. The information on grants/scholarships is available on the University's website. A member of the teaching staff acts as the students' counsellor and guides them on matters concerning their study path; mobility is encouraged and coordinated by two Erasmus counsellors (see also Principle 3).

The proportion of active students who attend regularly has been increasing during the last two years, after the decline due to the financial crisis. This improvement is related to the implementation of the new study programme (see Principle 2).

Analysis: The updated Study Guide, concerning the new programme of studies as applied since the previous academic year 2019-2020 is published on the Department's website; the document (B3) supplies all the necessary information. The Panel had access to the detailed regulations for the programme of studies (B4.1), for the Diploma project (B4.2) and for Practical Training (B4.3). However, these documents were not traced on the website. It is also not clear on the website design which links apply only to the old programme of studies and which to the new one (see: <https://www.thea.auth.gr/undergraduate-studies/metavasi-neo-pps/>).

The Panel assumes that the above-mentioned information remains the same, however, a clearer website design should be made for direct access to the most updated guidelines. The diploma supplement function is sufficiently explained on the website and a sample was supplied to the committee (B11.1).

In the opinion of the Panel, the lowering of the faculty-to-student ratio from 1:23 in academic year 2015-2016 to 1:30 in 2018-2019, according to the Accreditation Proposal of the Drama Department, which reduces the effort (time and attention) dedicated to each student, is an obstacle to the learning process.

Conclusions: The Drama Department provides sufficient guidance and access to information for its students.

### Panel Judgement

<b>Principle 4: Student Admission, Progression, Recognition and Certification</b>	
Fully compliant	<b>X</b>
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

### Panel Recommendations

- The Panel would strongly recommend that Practical Training should turn into a core part of the study programme so that all students will benefit from the timely connection to real-life circumstances. Alternative models could be considered e.g. the internships could take place during holiday periods to avoid conflicts with taught lessons. Moreover, the ECTS could increase to reflect its value in the learning process. The relevant network could be easily expanded if the students will not have to remain in Thessaloniki while practising. (Already THOC, the national theatre of Cyprus, is one of the employers and perhaps Cyprus Theatre Museum would be interested; or even other theatre ensembles/organisations outside Greece).
- Encourage student mobility for both studies and practical training (e.g. through strengthening Erasmus+ mobility).
- A minor improvement in the design of the department’s website would make clearer what applies to past PoUS and what to the new one.
- A lesson on theatre taught in secondary education that could be introduced as an alternative entrance requirement as well as a quota from Artistic High Schools (Καλλιτεχνικά Γυμνάσια/Λύκεια) would allow more students really interested in the art of theatre to enter, enhancing the level of the studies.

## 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

Findings: According to the website (considered by the Panel as the most updated source compared to the department's Accreditation Proposal dated 10 May 2020), the department currently comprises 16 full-time members of academic staff (ΔΕΠ) (9 in theatre theory/history, 2 in scenography-costume design, 2 in acting, 2 in acting/directing and 1 in theatre education) and 9 teaching fellows and technical staff (ΕΕΠ/ ΕΔΙΠ) (5 teaching fellows: 1 in choreography, 2 in scenography and 2 in theatre theory; and 4 laboratory teaching staff). Moreover, one more academic staff member with expertise in Theatrical Lighting has been recruited and is expected to join the department in the near future. The combination of these fields of expertise among the faculty members is based on the study programme's teaching needs and covers theatre theory and practice. The strategy behind the definition of the areas of expertise for new faculty positions is aligned with the needs of the courses, majors, and the related learning outcomes.

Research activities in the Department of Drama include traditional/well-established research outputs (e.g. peer-reviewed journal articles, conference proceedings, research book chapters, etc.) as well as artistic activities (e.g. theatrical performances and exhibitions); however, it is not clear whether the latter are invited or 'peer-reviewed' (curated, selected by a committee, etc.). The artistic activity of select faculty members has received awards during the past years. The department also presents four research projects funded by AUTH and/or through national funds during the past five years, of which two have been completed and two are in progress. Only one of these is an international research project in which the department is a partner. Additionally, the faculty has worked with the students on small-scale projects presented in major international artistic/cultural theatre practice related festivals. In the past five years, the

academic faculty has travelled a few times with the Erasmus Teaching staff mobility (4 undertaken and 1 planned) and has delivered several lectures abroad (approx. 15).

Analysis: The overall level and expertise of the faculty is of exceptional standards and covers the specialist areas related to the study programme; however, the number of faculty in each specialist area is very low considering the teaching and supervision workload. The faculty's teaching load is considered by the Panel as significantly high: in addition to the needs related to the 300 ECTS Integrated Master programme, during the past 5 years the faculty has supervised the completion of 252 final diploma theses (written and artistic) and lectures, which is a considerable additional teaching load that is added to the teaching of the courses.

The recruitment process for academic staff follows a central, government-monitored process that is clear, transparent and fair and offers conditions of employment that primarily recognize the importance of teaching and the needs of the field of theatre/drama, particularly in relation to theatre practice. However, given the heavy teaching load for all academic faculty, research does not seem equally facilitated and research and artistic leaves, which were put on hold for several years, were only recently reinstated. Still, systematic and formally framed research output is limited in several cases; some academic faculty (especially those from the theoretical fields of theatre history and theory) are more research active than other academic faculty members. The academic faculty from the majors relating to theatre practice (acting, directing, scenography and costume design) engages with a research-oriented approach as part of artistic practice and appears focused primarily on teaching and on the supervision of artistic theses and study-related artistic projects, demonstrating exceptional devotion to the students' learning process.

The department did not present a defined research strategy focusing on specific scholarly or artistic research areas. Teaching staff mobility is rather low when compared to other national or international departments in related fields. Although some of the faculty demonstrate connections to international associations related to their field of expertise, relatively little activity is presented in the frame of these. Moreover, the evidence provided in the Accreditation Proposal shows that the department did not have sufficient funding to support research activities, such as conference attendance and other scholarly activities for the faculty, nor research visits abroad. This lack of funding from AUTH does not encourage, but rather limits teaching staff mobility. The Panel was not able to trace from the materials provided during the review process other concrete professional development opportunities for the teaching staff.

Conclusions: The Panel recognizes that the number of teaching staff is too small to cover the needs of the department in teaching and research. Most importantly, it must be noted that the number of academic staff is expected to decrease even further where current staff members are scheduled to retire; this risks causing additional teaching load to the current faculty. The department should work towards recruiting suitable additional academic faculty: AUTH should further assist the Drama Department in its effort to enhance the faculty's workload (especially teaching load) with new members that would cover sufficiently the whole spectrum of the subject matters taught and allow the current staff members to focus more on their academic research, international collaborations, Erasmus and other international mobility and professional development. The Panel addresses this suggestion also to HAHE as a mediator to the Ministry of Education.

One of the strong aspects of the department is its unique profile - when compared to other Theatre Studies departments in Greece - combining theatre theory and theatrical practice (including practice-related specialized majors) to exceptional extent and quality. The expertise among its academic staff members would allow the development of synergies between practice and research, especially in order to propose, test and promote methodologies of artistic research (practice-based). This would be a much-needed development in Greek higher education, currently missing from most arts-related departments, that the Department of Drama of AUTH could focus on and take a leading role. There is potential for the Department to undertake actions towards this direction with anticipated strong impact. The Dean's draft proposal (currently in preparation) to launch an Institute of Artistic Research at AUTH is of great value towards this direction offering concrete grounds for the faculty's future development in artistic research. The recent introduction of mixed/practice-based doctoral research topics, which also contributes to the development of artistic research, is a welcome addition to the department's profile as well.

### Panel Judgement

<b>Principle 5: Teaching Staff</b>	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	<b>X</b>
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

### Panel Recommendations

- Hiring more permanent members of academic staff, especially in areas where there is a very limited number of faculty as well as in areas where current staff members are expected to retire, would help to balance the teaching-related workload, allowing further engagement in research activities and international mobility. This recommendation is addressed to the bodies beyond the Department i.e. AUTH and the Ministry of Education.
- The teaching staff are encouraged by the Panel to take part in Erasmus exchange programmes and to further use the ERASMUS+ travel funding. The department is advised to proceed to signing additional/new ERASMUS+ agreements.
- A more strategic development of research aims and actions could strengthen the research profile of the department, promoting the faculty's scholarly development and research.
- A further increase of the volume as well as the quality of systematic research with defined research outputs will be desirable, especially in practice-related fields. The Panel suggests that the faculty works on the preparation of new, clearly framed research projects led by

the department on areas that will be identified as significant for their research agenda, following international practices. Additionally, a further expansion of international and national research exposure of the teaching staff is also desirable.

- The funding made available by the department and/or AUTH to support faculty-related scholarly activities at national and international level should be increased to enhance and accelerate their research and overall professional development.

## 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 of Drama is housed in two buildings ('Clio' and 'Exadaktylou') in close proximity to each other in down-town Thessaloniki (both outside the main AUTH campus). Between them, the two buildings are designed to cover the particular space needs of the Department. There are classrooms for both theoretical and artistic courses (acting, stage design, directing), rehearsal rooms, workshops (including a wood workshop and a sewing workshop), storage rooms, a wardrobe, and performance spaces, notably the converted old cinema that gave the building 'Clio' its name.

All these spaces have functional and frequently state-of-the-art equipment and are used equitably and efficiently, but their sufficiency is in large part contingent on the extraordinary effort, inventiveness, and collaborative spirit of staff and students, who try to make the most of what is available. Examples include using moveable carts with electronic equipment to transform rooms into 'smart' classrooms, refurbishing walls and floors to improve acoustics and create better conditions for movement and devising a system that organizes the use of the spaces according to the course/project rehearsal schedule, enabling students to use parts of the facilities day and night (24/7).

The Departmental Library is an important resource that is used heavily both as a reading room and a lending collection. Its operating hours in the era before COVID-19 seemed sufficient, but teaching staff and students expressed the wish that these be expanded over the weekend.



There is adequate IT infrastructure, provided by AUTH (e.g. SIS, eLearning, HEAL-LINK, Wi-Fi, Office365, etc). Apart from such electronic resources, special reference should be made to Autodesk applications and digital design tools that are particularly useful for artistic projects and accessible to students, faculty, and staff.

In addition to learning resources, the University at large is responsible for providing other support services (pertaining to mobility, career, merit and need-based stipends, student loans, counselling, etc). Besides those general resources that all students are informed about and can access, students in the Department of Theatre receive passes for free entrance to theatrical performances.

Analysis: The acquisition of the ‘Exadaktylou’ building has resulted in improvement in some areas, including the redoubling of the available space for the Library, which now occupies an entire floor of the ‘Clio’ building. The expansion of the archival collection and the acquisition of books through gifts have made up for the drastically reduced funding for the purchase of library items, including scholarly journals in related fields. The generic and special software to which faculty, staff, and students have access ensured an efficient and smooth adjustment to the conditions created by the pandemic.

From all the materials shared with the panel and the various conversations, it became evident that teaching and learning needs are met; yet this is in large part due to the unceasing efforts, resourcefulness, and enthusiasm of a deeply dedicated technical staff, faculty, and students, who collectively transform the Department buildings into a hub of constant activity and creative energy. However, the Panel was surprised to discover that, despite recommendations by the previous external evaluation committee in 2014 and repeated requests by the Department, AUTH has yet to ensure that the Clio Theatre have a certified electrician; this is a matter of concern for the safety of the students and the broader community. In addition, AUTH should continue its efforts to overcome the technical difficulties and make the entire Clio building more accessible to people with movement disabilities.

Conclusions: To the extent that it is in the Department’s power, resources are used adequately. Self-sacrifice is certainly commendable and worthy of respect and admiration, but that should not obscure the reality that more funding should be allocated, especially in relation to Clio theatre, which is in need of renovation.

### Panel Judgement

<b>Principle 6: Learning Resources and Student Support</b>	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	<b>X</b>
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

### **Panel Recommendations**

- There is an urgent need for a full-time licensed electrician, as mandated by law, as already indicated most emphatically in the previous external evaluation of 2014, and as repeatedly requested by the Department.
- The building 'Clio' is in need of renovation.
- Funding for the Library should be restored to the appropriate level, and more personnel should be appointed, so that its operating hours may be expanded.
- Although new students are oriented in the proper and safe use of often complex equipment, it would be a good idea to organize a comprehensive training session on health and safety.
- According to the Accreditation Report (Department's comments on the 2014 report), the wi-fi signal in the Exadaktylou building is still in need of further improvement.

## 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 self-assessment of the programme takes place annually following MODIP criteria, as stated by the Accreditation Proposal of the Department. The data collected are analysed by the OMEA committee and the Department and is constructively used in the internal discussion on possible revisions. The evaluation of the educational process relates to the decision to revise the PoUS and the formation of majors in the framework of the new PoUS, applied since 2019 for the new students, with a rationalization of ECTS. Additionally, the data collected on practical training also helped in the better coordination of stakeholders and led to improvements.

The Panel was provided with quality indicators both regarding the Department and the PoUS for the period 2015-2019. The data concerning the Department provides statistics on various parameters such as the PhD candidates per academic, the female members of academic and administrative staff, the staff coming in and leaving the department, funding, classrooms and workshop spaces available and their capacity, cumulative data on publications by the academic staff, and current research projects. Some of the data concerning the PoUS are not useful anymore since a revised version is currently applied since 2019. However, some useful information is provided on placements, on students' demographics, on the duration of studies and on the students' performance in terms of the GPA.

Analysis of judgement: The data collection was adequately presented in graphs and the overall picture was comprehensive. Indicatively, some comments for the more recent data of 2018-2019: there were no external collaborators in research programmes and no exchanges of

academic staff through Erasmus. The percentage of staff getting a sabbatical was only 5.26%. The value for students leveraging the Erasmus+ opportunities is less than 2%. There is also no data on research projects funding from either European or local resources. It can also be observed that the average GPA is 7.82, a rather high one which is an indicator of the zeal shown by the students and the high level of the work done. The panel understands that the data on publications does not take into consideration the artistic projects (stagings, acting, set design etc.) of members of the academic staff. However, the panel received relevant information through the Accreditation Proposal and the website.

There is not sufficient information on career paths of graduates due to the lack of a career/alumni office. Perhaps apart from the contact with graduates on behalf of the Department, it would be useful to hear the views and experience of the "Graduates Association of Drama Department" and PESYTH (based in Athens). The panel was also impressed by the enthusiasm of the graduates when talking about the benefits from their studies in the Drama Department, although the group the panel had the chance to meet online during the evaluation sessions did not include any recent graduates (the most recent graduated in 2012).

As mentioned in Principle 3, Questionnaires for student satisfaction do not provide sound evidence due to the low participation of them in the evaluation process. The meeting the Panel had with current students provided, however, a lot of feedback, leading to the conclusion that they are in general satisfied or even enthusiastic with their studies.

Conclusions: The data is collected as indicated by MODIP, discussed and deployed for the sake of amendments. The panel received sufficient relevant information through the Accreditation Proposal on additional subjects not measured in the data such as artistic projects of teaching staff.

### Panel Judgement

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

### Panel Recommendations

- The artistic projects of the Department’s academic staff should also be included in the data collection.
- More systematic data related to department alumni could be collected (e.g. information on their employment opportunities, career development, etc.)
- See Principle 3 for student questionnaires.

## 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 website of the Department includes all key information about the undergraduate programme, including programme structure, outlines of courses offered each semester (via eLearning and the MODIP website), the diploma project, the diploma supplements, etc. Online visitors can also access faculty's CVs and material about the department's scholarly and artistic activity, research programmes and international collaborations, outreach efforts, etc. Information about library services and the Erasmus exchange programme is also provided. The News and Announcements page, available also as a 'carousel', is especially helpful. Links to the Policy for Quality Assurance and the previous External Evaluation are easily accessible.

In addition, the online presence of the Department is enhanced through social media i.e. Facebook pages, some of which are reserved for internal communication of students and faculty, while others are aimed at public outreach. In the same vein, the section 'Visual Material' of the website paints a vivid and appealing picture of the artistic output that theatre students produce both in courses and in their diploma projects. Links to the Laboratory for Theatre Research and Technology (EΘET) and to the electronic journal *Skēnē* enrich further the online profile of the Department.

Analysis: The website is informative and rich, representing the Department's study-related activities and projects as well as its many collaborations with local social partners; it is up to date for most of its sections, intuitively organized, and user-friendly. The information presented is accurate and readily accessible. The English version of the website is occasionally less fully developed and shows some inconsistencies in the use of language/terms, but it still contains all essential material.

Conclusions: In the opinion of the Panel, the Department is in full compliance with the criteria regarding public information.

## Panel Judgement

<b>Principle 8: Public Information</b>	
Fully compliant	<b>X</b>
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

## Panel Recommendations

- It is recommended that all academic staff members enrich their presence on the department's website with information about their research interests, artistic activity and publications, and any other scholarly information. There, they can also create direct links with their artistic practice and/or with other scholarly activities, as well as links with stakeholders, highlighting other areas of good practice.
- As indicated under Principle 4, the website should articulate more clearly and explicitly some details of the transition to the new PoUS.
- The website may need more consistent and systematic attention, as some links are broken, and some terminology is inconsistent (translation of terms from Greek to English).

## 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 Department adheres consistently and vigorously to the guidelines that mandate the regular self-assessment of its study programme and its overall operation. Its internal assessment team (OMEA) is constituted annually with representatives from all four specializations and collects all relevant data in collaboration with the quality assurance unit (MODIP) of the University. Given the relatively small size of the Department, its general assembly can efficiently process and discuss the data and come up with concrete steps aimed at improving its teaching, research, and administrative operations.

**Analysis:** The Department's annual self-assessment is thorough and results in action plans, especially in the area of curricular adjustments. The culmination of that process over the last few years has been the implementation of the new PoUS, which features several improvements over the old programme, as outlined above. Sustained contact with alumni and with external stakeholders provides additional though informal input. The collaboration between the OMEA and the MODIP seems to be harmonious and fruitful, although a valid concern of the Department faculty is that there are no appropriate tools to properly recognize artistic and creative work. This is of vital significance as it skews the data of staff productivity.

**Conclusions:** In the opinion of the Panel, the Department is in full compliance with the criteria regarding the annual process for internal review.

## Panel Judgement

<b>Principle 9: On-going Monitoring and Periodic Internal Review of Programmes</b>	
Fully compliant	<b>X</b>
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

## Panel Recommendations

- As mentioned above, it would be useful to solicit feedback from graduating students for the purposes of the periodic internal evaluation. By the same token, external stakeholders could be consulted in a more formal manner. Although the Department remains in contact with both alumni and stakeholders, the Panel believes that a more systematic effort in that direction and the formulation of appropriate questionnaires would pay off.
- It is important to make sure that the artistic output of the faculty is recorded accurately, so that it can be properly taken into account. The Department should devise appropriate methods for doing so, in collaboration with other Departments in the School of Fine Arts and in the framework of AUTH processes.



## 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 programme has undergone an external evaluation in 2014 which resulted in a positive overall feedback as well as suggestions for amendments. The Panel has received and studied the report of the previous Committee and cross checked it with the Accreditation Proposal of the Department of Drama. The Accreditation Proposal and the presentation during the sessions with the Panel included specific references to the preceding evaluation and to the actions implemented by the Department and the University for improvements.

The Department stressed that all proposed amendments that were their responsibility took place, and the unsolved parts depend mainly either on the Ministry of Education or on Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. A list of what was partially or totally solved follows:

- improvements in the pool of candidate students: all directions of secondary education are now included; this resulted in an increase of the entry grades (βάσεις) in the entrance exams (Πανελλήνιες εξετάσεις). The Department has argued for the introduction of a theatre-related exam as a prerequisite for entrance, but no progress has been made in this regard.
- improvements in network and IT infrastructure;
- a major improvement in the spaces allocated to the Department; however, the crucial space of theatre Clio urgently needs a renovation, access for persons with disabilities, and a licensed theatre electrician, whose presence is an urgent matter of safety and compliance with safety regulations.
- technical staff positions are approved, and new technical staff is expected;
- storage space is acquired;
- sabbaticals were reinstated for academic staff ;
- contact with alumni established through their association

All stakeholders of the PoUS under review participated actively in the present process.

Analysis: The Panel also ascertained the high level of the theses through the samples provided and the high level of the teaching and learning process through both the material provided and the sessions with students, graduates and external stakeholders related to the Department either as employers and artistic collaborators or as placement institutions. The Department considers that the collaboration and synergies with other departments of the Faculty of Fine Arts could be pursued further despite the distance of the physical locations. The Panel agrees and notes the fertile collaboration with the Music Department of Macedonia University discussed during the meetings.

Conclusions: The 2014 report refers to self-sacrifice of the staff members in order to keep the Department going. The Panel believes that the academic, technical, and administrative staff should not work in highly stressful conditions to achieve high-level educational, scholarly and artistic results but in suitable conditions which will be conducive to a more balanced working everyday life. The Department took very seriously into account the outcomes of the previous external review and we are confident that it will demonstrate the same level of energetic commitment in response to the current review.

### Panel Judgement

<b>Principle 10: Regular External Evaluation of Undergraduate Programmes</b>	
Fully compliant	<b>X</b>
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

### Panel Recommendations

The Department considers that the formation of research clusters is not possible. The Panel suggests reconsidering this statement and working on developing collaboration with other Theatre Studies and arts-related departments in Greece on topics of shared research interest.

## **PART C: CONCLUSIONS**

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

The Panel has observed that the department participated in the accreditation review process not only because it is a required administrative process, but also with a real interest to receive feedback and support towards the renewal of its study programme and for the future development of the academic unit as a whole.

Most notable is the pedagogical quality of the work of the faculty, which is performed with passion, dedication and commitment, and with a true interest for the students' learning process and their artistic development; this was evident to the Panel members in all the meetings and discussions with faculty, students and alumni. As a result, of great importance is the excellent collaboration across teaching staff, students, technical and administrative staff, and especially the close contact, collaboration and communication between students and academic faculty. The new building ('Exadaktylou') created conditions for the close cooperation of all and contributed to the smooth operation of the Department. The department attracts high level students who have a true interest in the fields that it covers. The Panel was positively impressed by the personalised supervision of students and the care demonstrated by the faculty in order to support the students' individual development on their scholarly and artistic interests.

The department demonstrates performance of high artistic standards by both faculty and students. The available infrastructure (especially the well-equipped Clio theatre) supports this work. The renewed study programme (new PoUS) is an important improvement not only because it supports a more balanced workload for the students, but primarily because it undertakes a student-centred approach in concrete ways, enhancing the learning process according to the students' personal interests and enabling their development effectively in specific, well-identified areas of expertise ('majors') that are now visible in the degree. The study programme follows international standards and balances in complementary ways a wide range of areas of theatre theory and practice. The studies offered follow the scope and the many aspects of theatre on a scholarly and artistic level, as well as the real condition of the professional context in the performing arts. This is demonstrated not only in the courses offered but also in the diversity of topics of the diploma theses (scholarly and artistic) and in the many collaborations that the department fosters outside the university frame with social partners. The diploma theses shape the physiognomy of the department and strengthen the research-oriented approach to the theatrical arts. The department has a well-developed local network of stakeholders.

The Panel was altogether highly impressed by the testimony of students, faculty and graduates who all described "the learning process as a life experience" with highly positive impact.

## II. Areas of Weakness

The Panel has identified the following issues as areas of weakness (more detail is provided in the next section, *III. Recommendations for Follow-up Actions*):

- The number of faculty in the department is low when all areas of responsibility (teaching, research, service and societal cooperation, and administrative duties) are taken into consideration. This is especially worrying when considering the forthcoming retirement of additional academic staff.
- The work of the faculty is primarily teaching-heavy and therefore research (especially in areas related to theatre practice) is relatively underdeveloped. The department's research output and outreach are generally rather limited and could be further developed through new international collaborations in the frame of EU programmes/funding schemes.
- The department has a unique profile among Greek universities in combining theatre theory/history/dramaturgy, theatre education and theatre practice, as reflected in its study programme and pedagogy. However, the department's research profile is not yet fully developed to reflect this. Specifically, the department has suitable faculty and infrastructure to further develop artistic research that combines theory and praxis in systematic ways (practice-based research) that can be communicated through concrete outputs in scholarly, artistic and artistic-research related forums. This is an important area of research that the department has not yet sufficiently developed.
- Teaching staff and student mobility is rather limited. Further financial support from AUTH would release students and staff from the burden of additional costs (not covered by existing programmes such as Erasmus+) that might be demotivating.
- The department follows established practices of quality assurance and data collection but can do better in communication of strategic goals and planning.
- The lack of participation in student satisfaction surveys impedes the systematic assessment of the learning process in quantifiable ways that could be communicated outside the department's environment.
- Although the department is proud of its large number of alumni, many of whom are pursuing distinguished careers, there needs to be a more systematic collection of information about them and more stable communication between the graduates and the Department (faculty and current students).

## III. Recommendations for Follow-up Actions

Recommendations for follow-up actions that would address areas of weakness have been made throughout this report. However, the following summarize the most important follow-up actions that the Panel recommends to the department to undertake:

- The programme needs a more explicit long-term strategic plan for faculty hiring and development.

- The department should focus on strengthening the number of faculty members. AUTH should support the department towards this direction. Given the large workload, the desired student-teacher ratio and the diversity of areas taught in the department, the further reduction of faculty members is a matter of concern.
- A further increase of the volume as well as the quality of systematic research will be desirable, especially in practice-related fields. A further expansion of international and national research exposure of the teaching staff is also desirable.
- The funding available by the department and/or AUTH to support faculty-related scholarly activities at national and international level should be increased to enhance and accelerate their research and overall professional development.
- The department could work with MODIP on establishing a practice for how (criteria, types/format, etc.) artistic projects of the department's academic staff could be considered as research outputs and included in the data collection, possibly in collaboration with the Faculty of Fine Arts where similar issues apply.
- The department is encouraged to work on the planning of larger and international research projects bearing central responsibility for them (with their faculty as PIs). The possibilities and research support offered by the main university services should be further utilized. Considering that AUTH has a strong international research profile and successful experience in research funding in other fields, the Panel suggests the department seek further assistance, advice, and training in the areas of drafting, submitting and executing interdisciplinary research proposals.
- The department could attract post-doctoral researchers (in theatre theory and practice) for the further development and stronger linking between teaching and research.
- The study programme could be further renewed and updated with the implementation of additional digital applications in its courses and practical/artistic projects.
- The content of studies should be enriched with flexible models, such as visiting teachers for educational activities beyond the basic study programme (e.g. seminars, lectures, Masterclasses, practical workshops) so that there is pluralism in the learning process and stronger connection with the fields of practice (also through inviting graduates). For this purpose, it would be good that the department activities be strengthened with relevant funding.
- A licensed electrician should be hired for Clio theatre on a permanent basis as mandated by law.
- The building of Clio theatre and the performance space itself need to be renovated. This requires the attention of AUTH.
- A formalized seminar on health and safety for all new incoming students and staff, as well as for long-term guests, could be established, especially in relation to the use of technical equipment.
- International mobility for both students and academic staff (Erasmus+, etc.) should be further encouraged and enhanced by the department.

- Student evaluation questionnaires should be given after the courses' assessment process is completed (but before the announcement of grades) and the information on their value should be intensified to make the majority of students active in the evaluation process.
- The department is encouraged to further develop and expand its formal partnerships with stakeholders outside the area of Northern Greece, including with other university departments in Greece and with academic and social partners internationally.
- The department is encouraged to establish systematic processes for eliciting input from external stakeholders and alumni, for reviewing and/or consulting purposes towards the continuous enhancement of its study programme and Quality Assurance policy and processes. Also, to connect students and graduates in more stable and systematic ways.
- The department could explore alternative internship models so that the practical training (placement/internship) could be widened to concern, if possible, all students.
- The departmental website may need more consistent and systematic attention, as some links are broken, some terminology is inconsistent (translation of terms from Greek to English) and some materials seem to be missing.
- Considering the nature of the study programme, which involves working in a theatrical context that includes rehearsals with physical contact, in-depth discussions on sensitive issues, personal experiences, etc. (especially for the artistic 'majors'), the department is encouraged to develop guidelines to support early and effective intervention in case of inappropriate treatment in the form of bullying, discrimination or harassment, and offer advice to anyone who experiences it. Such guidelines can be part of the orientation of all staff and students in the future. The Panel suggests that AUTH itself could also provide such guidelines/protocol for use by all its departments.

#### IV. Summary & Overall Assessment

The Principles where full compliance has been achieved are: **1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 9, and 10.**

The Principles where substantial compliance has been achieved are: **5 and 6.**

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

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

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

The 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
	<b>X</b>	

## The members of the External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel

**Name and Surname**

**Signature**

- 1. Assoc. Prof. Sofia Pantouvaki (Chair)**  
Aalto University, Finland
- 2. Prof. Pavlos Sfyroeras**  
Middlebury College, United States of America
- 3. Assoc. Prof. Andri H. Constantinou**  
Frederick University, Cyprus