ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ
HELLENIC REPUBLIC

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Accreditation Report
for the Postgraduate Study Programme of:

Meteorology, Climatology and Atmospheric Environment

Department: Geology

Institution: Aristotle University of Thessaloniki

Date: June 2026

Με τη συγχρηματοδότηση της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης
ΕΣΠΑ 2021-2027
Πρόγραμμα
Ανθρώπινο Δυναμικό και Κοινωνική Συνοχή
enqa.

Report of the Panel appointed by the HAHE to undertake the review of the Postgraduate Study Programme of **Meteorology, Climatology and Atmospheric Environment** of the **Aristotle University of Thessaloniki** 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 postgraduate study programme of **Meteorology, Climatology and Atmospheric Environment** of the **Aristotle University of Thessaloniki** comprised the following five (5) members, drawn from the HAHE Register, in accordance with Law 4653/2020:

1. KOKKALA IRENE (Chair)
   University of North Georgia

2. ARGYROPOULOS DIMITRIOS
   North Carolina State University (NCSU)

3. CONSTANTINOU STAVROS
   Department of Geography, College of Arts and Sciences, The Ohio State University

4. PANAGOPOULOS THOMAS
   Universidade do Algarve

5. Ζυγούρη Ευαγγελία
   National and Kapodistrian University of Athens

II. Review Procedure and Documentation

The members of the External Evaluation and Accreditation Panel (EEAP) for the review of the postgraduate study programme (PSP) Meteorology, Climatology and Atmospheric Environment of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki were appointed by the Hellenic Authority for Higher Education (HAHE) from the Register of Independent Experts on June 2026, in accordance with Laws 4009/2011 and 4653/2020. The EEAP reviewed all the supplied documents (which we, as panel members, had pre-read and listed below in tabulated form) and agreed on the key questions and issues to focus on during our evaluation. The evaluation was based on the documents provided and the discussions held during the evaluation and took place remotely.

M0. Table of Contents
M1. Master's ProgrammeAcademic Certification Proposal
M1.1. Master's Programme Quality Policy
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M2.1. Senate Decision
M2.2. Internal Operating Regulations of the Master's Programme
M2.3. Study Guide
M2.4. Course Descriptions and Diploma
M2.5. Teaching Staff Directory
M3.1. Student Evaluations
M3.2. Complaint Regulations
M3.3. Academic Advisor Regulations
M3.4. Teaching and Assessment Methods
M4.1. Research Ethics Regulations
M4.2. Study Regulations
M4.3. E-Learning Regulations
M4.4. Diploma and Diploma Supplement Templates
M5.1. Summary Performance Report
M5.2. Selection of Teaching Staff
M5.3. Teaching Staff Contracts
M5.4. Staff Support Policy
M6.1. Description of Infrastructure and Services
M6.2. Tuition Fee Utilization Plan
M6.3. Sustainability Study of Programme Operations
M6.4. Resource Adequacy Assessment
M6.5. Administrative Staff Directory
M6.6. Student Information Material
M7.1. OPESP Data Reports
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M7.3. Data Collection Tools
M7.4. Information Analysis Report

M8.1. Website Maintenance
M8.2. Programme Website (Link)
M9.1. Internal Evaluation Results
M10.1. Master's Progress Report

The first day of the online meeting began on Monday, 8 June 2026, at 15:00 (all times are in Greek time) with a private session of the EEAP members. During the meeting, the committee members were introduced, discussed the submitted files, and assigned responsibilities. At 16:00 the panel met with the following administrators:

Prof. Prodromos Zanis, Head of the Department,
Prof. Dimitris Kostopoulos, Director of PSP1
Prof. Konstantia Tolika, Director of PSP2
Prof. Nikolaos Kantiranis, Director of PSP3
Prof. Maria Triantafylloy, Member of steering com. PSP1
Prof. Panagiotis Tsourlos, OMEA coordinator, member of steering com. PSP3
Prof. Nikolaos Maghioros, President of MODIP, Vice Rector of Academic Affairs and Development
Prof. Konstantinos Papazachos, Member of the QAC
Mrs. Alexandra Tzaneraki, MODIP Committee Secretary

They provided a comprehensive overview of the postgraduate programme, including its academic profile, status, strengths, and potential areas of concern, and they responded to the committee's questions. During the meeting, the panel was shown PowerPoint presentations, which was also emailed to the panel members. The committee also viewed several videos focusing on facilities, equipment, and services available.

At 18:15 the committee reviewed videos of the online tour to Evaluate facilities and learning resources to ascertain that the learning materials, equipment, and facilities are adequate for the successful provision of the PSP. Present were:

Koukousioura Olga, Assist. Prof., Lab of Geology & Paleontology, School of Geology AUTH, PSP1.
Dr. Dimitrios Babzelis – EDIP – Applied Meteorology, Weather Modification, PSP2. Ms. Tania Kovaiou, M.Sc. Geologist Technical and Secretarial Support, PSP3.

At 19:00 the EEAP members convened in a private meeting to reflect on impressions of the first day and prepare for the next day of the online review.

On Wednesday, 10 June 2026 at 15:00 EEAP met with faculty members of the PSP Meteorology, Climatology and Atmospheric Environment. The panel discussed with them professional development opportunities, mobility, competence and adequacy of the teaching

staff to ensure learning outcomes, workload, evaluation by students; link between teaching and research; teaching staff's involvement in applied research, projects and research activities directly related to the programme; possible areas of weakness. The participants included:

Prof. Christina Anagnostopoulou –Climatology, Synoptic and Dynamical Climatology
Prof. Haralabos Feidas –Satellite Meteorology and Climatology
Prof. Theodoros Mavrommatis - Agrometeorology
Prof. Eleni Katragou – Physical Climatology and Climate Models
Prof. Ioannis Pytharoulis –Synoptic Meteorology

At 16:00 the EEAP met with current students to review Students' satisfaction from their study experience and Department / Institution facilities; student input in quality assurance; priority issues concerning student life and welfare. The participants included:

Katerina Papadopoulou -1st year student
Eustathios Papadopoulos – 1st year student
Eustratios Avgerinos – 1st year student
Magdalini – Eleni Stoikou – 1st year student
Maria Margariti – 1st year student
Nikolaos Koulakis - 1st year student
Hara Sahsamanoglou – 1st year student
Dimitra Gkeka – 2nd year student
Alexandros Tsampazis – 2nd year student
Eva Tsalafouta – 3rd year student

At 17:30 the EEAP met with graduates of the PSP Meteorology, Climatology and Atmospheric Environment to discuss their experience of their postgraduate studies and their career path. The participants included:
Dr. Georgia Lazoglou – Climate Scientist STO Centre for Maritime Research and Experimentation -NATO
Dr. Effie Rousi - Senior Editor Springer Nature /Nature Communications
Dr. Stefi Tringa - Independent Researcher & Project Leader at Getty Conservation Institute, Los Angeles, California, USA
Dr. Stefanos Mistakidis - Weather and Agro Risk Specialist at Swiss Re, Zurich, Switzerland
Dr. George Zittis - Research Scientist at the Climate and Atmosphere Research Center (CARE-C) of the Cyprus Insitute
Dr. Thanos Tsikerdekis - KNMI, Utrecht, the Netherlands
Marina Hostelidou - Senior Operational Meteorologist, Met Office
Anastasios Plataniotis - Associate Weather Risk Analyst.- DTN Netherlands

At 18:30 the EEAP met with employers, social partners of the PSP Meteorology, Climatology and Atmospheric Environment to discuss relations of the PSP with external stakeholders from the private and the public sector. The participants included:

Stavroula Stolaki – ELGA – Center for Meteorological Applications Head of Studies, Applications and Communication
Stilianos Mixalopoulos – Director Commander, Regional Meteorological Center of Macedonia, National Meteorological Service of Greece
Stelios Kotsopoulos - Neuralio AI, CEO
Evangelos Kosmidis – Draxis, CEO

After a private meeting at 19:30 during which the EEAP members discussed the outcomes of the virtual visit, the EEAP held a meeting at 20:00 to discuss several points with representatives from the department, the Director of the programme, and representatives of MODIP. The participants included:

Prof. Prodromos Zanis, Head of the Department
Prof. Konstantia Tolika, Director of PSP2
Prof. Panagiotis Tsourlos, OMEA coordinator
Prof. Konstantinos Papazachos, Member of the QAC
Mrs. Alexandra Tzaneraki, MODIP Committee Secretary
The entire process was conducted in a spirit of excellent collaboration. The faculty, staff, administrators and social partners were helpful and transparent about the issues concerning the programme, and they were highly willing to provide any additional information we requested. The Department was very responsive and forthcoming in providing the panel with additional material.

III. Postgraduate Study Programme Profile

The postgraduate study programme in "Meteorology, Climatology and Atmospheric Environment" is organized by the Department of Geology at the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (AUTh).

History and Academic Remit

The programme began operation during the 1995-1996 academic year. Originally titled "Meteorology and Climatology" (1995-2005), it was later expanded to its current name to include "Atmospheric Environment". It remains the only postgraduate programme in Greece awarding a specialized Master's degree in these combined fields.

Its academic remit is the scientific study of the atmosphere, weather, climate, and air quality. Students delve into:

- Meteorology: Synoptic and dynamic meteorology, atmospheric physics, cloud physics, and weather forecasting.
- Climatology: Climate change, climate models, extreme weather events, and physical/applied climatology.
- Atmospheric Environment: Atmospheric pollution, chemistry, and radiation balance.

A key component is a one-month mandatory practical internship conducted at the Macedonia Airport Weather Office or the Center for Meteorological Applications of ELGA, focusing on forecasting and meteorological data analysis.

Duration of Studies and Qualification Awarded

- Duration: The minimum duration is four semesters. The maximum allowed time for completion is six semesters.
- Qualification: Graduates are awarded a Diploma of Postgraduate Studies in "Meteorology, Climatology and Atmospheric Environment". This degree corresponds to Level 7 of the National and European Qualifications Framework.

Employment Opportunities and Challenges Graduates find employment in:

- Public Sector: National Meteorological Service, ELGA, Fire Service, and secondary education.
- Private Sector: Specialized roles requiring atmospheric and environmental expertise.
- Academic/Research: Continuing for a PhD.

Orientation challenges identified in external evaluations include a need for more teaching staff and better interdisciplinary coordination between departments. However, the programme is noted for successfully filling a vital gap in Greek higher education.

Home Department and Institution Context

- Institution: AUTH is the largest higher education institution in Greece. As of recent years, its total student population exceeds 72,000–82,000 undergraduates and between 5,000–7,000 Master's students across 41 departments.
- Department: The Department of Geology, part of the Faculty of Sciences, hosts the programme.

- Campus and Facilities: The programme is primarily housed in the "Meteoroskopeio" (Observatory) building. It features a central Meteorological and Climatological Station that has operated continuously since January 1, 1930, along with several regional stations, including one on Mount Olympus. The sector also utilizes advanced computing clusters for operational weather forecasting and research.

PART B: COMPLIANCE WITH THE PRINCIPLES

PRINCIPLE 1: QUALITY ASSURANCE POLICY AND QUALITY GOAL SETTING FOR THE POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES OF THE INSTITUTION AND THE ACADEMIC UNIT

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD APPLY A QUALITY ASSURANCE POLICY AS PART OF THEIR STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT. THIS POLICY SHOULD EXPAND AND BE AIMED (WITH THE COLLABORATION OF EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS) AT THE POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES OF THE INSTITUTION AND THE ACADEMIC UNIT. THIS POLICY SHOULD BE PUBLISHED AND IMPLEMENTED BY ALL STAKEHOLDERS.

The quality assurance policy of the academic unit should be in line with the quality assurance policy of the Institution and must be formulated in the form of a public statement, which is implemented by all stakeholders. It focuses on the achievement of special goals related to the quality assurance of the study programmes offered by the academic unit.

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

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

a) the suitability of the structure and organisation of postgraduate study programmes
b) the pursuit of learning outcomes and qualifications in accordance with the European and National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education - level 7
c) the promotion of the quality and effectiveness of teaching at the PSP
d) the appropriateness of the qualifications of the teaching staff for the PSP
e) the drafting, implementation, and review of specific annual quality goals for the improvement of the PSP
f) the level of demand for the graduates' qualifications in the labour market
g) the quality of support services, such as the administrative services, the libraries and the student welfare office for the PSP
h) the efficient utilisation of the financial resources of the PSP that may be drawn from tuition fees
i) the conduct of an annual review and audit of the quality assurance system of the PSP through the cooperation of the Internal Evaluation Group (IEG) with the Institution's Quality Assurance Unit (QAU)

Documentation

- *Quality Assurance Policy of the PSP*
- *Quality goal setting of the PSP*

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The Department of Geology has a formal, documented Quality Assurance (QA) Policy for its PSPs, which is explicitly aligned with the QA Policy of AUTH. A specific policy document exists for the "Meteorology, Climatology and Atmospheric Environment" PSP. The policy is comprehensive and it includes commitments to:

- Promoting the academic profile and orientation of the PSP.

o Pursuing learning outcomes at Level 7 of the National and European Qualifications Framework.
o Implementing quality procedures for teaching, staff qualifications, and support services.
o Conducting annual internal reviews and setting annual quality goals.
o Ensuring the efficient use of financial resources.

A separate, specific document on Quality Goal Setting for the PSP exists for the 2025 academic year. This document sets strategic goals (e.g., reducing average study duration, increasing student participation in evaluations, internationalization) with measurable baseline and target values, actions, responsibilities, and timelines.

The policy states its commitment to developing the PSP in collaboration with external stakeholders, including social partners, public and private sector bodies. Revisions to the PSP are based on feedback from students, instructors, and alumni surveys. The QA Policy is publicly available on the PSP's official website (https://geo.auth.gr/postgrad_meteo/), and information is disseminated through the department's website, email, and the student guide.

The PSP does not charge tuition fees. The policy acknowledges this and states its commitment to efficient use of resources from the state budget, EU programmes, donations, and the university's Special Account for Research Funds (ELKE).

II. Analysis

The quality policy is highly appropriate for a specialized scientific PSP. It includes explicit commitments to implementation and continuous improvement, evidenced by the annual quality goal-setting process. The goal-setting document is a concrete example of moving from policy to action, with specific KPIs.

Continuous improvement is promoted through multiple mechanisms, which is a strength: Specifically, Student Evaluation, External Evaluations subject to periodic external accreditation by HAHE and Regular Programme Reviews. For example, a significant revision occurred for the 2024-25 academic year reducing its duration from 4 to 3 semesters and updating the curriculum based on feedback.

The policy is publicly communicated via the website, which is the primary channel. However, the MODIP internal evaluation report identified that the website was not fully complete in both Greek and English. This represents a minor weakness in ensuring all information is easily accessible to international and local stakeholders.

The PSP’s learning outcomes are explicitly mapped to Level 7 of the National and European Qualifications Framework, aiming to provide specialized knowledge, advanced skills, and the ability to conduct independent research, which is appropriate for a Master’s degree.

The main area of weakness is not in the existence of the policy but in a few operational details:

1. The website requires updating to be fully bilingual and comprehensive.
2. Student participation in the internal evaluation process has historically been low which risks the statistical reliability of feedback. The goal-setting document acknowledges this and has set a target to increase participation to 60%.
3. Formal, documented mechanisms for the systematic involvement of external

stakeholders in the annual review cycle are implied but not extensively detailed in the core policy documents.

III. Conclusions

The PSP "Meteorology, Climatology and Atmospheric Environment" has a robust and well-documented Quality Assurance Policy that is fully aligned with the institution's strategic goals. The policy is appropriate, includes clear commitments, and promotes continuous improvement through a cyclical process of goal-setting, internal evaluation, student feedback, and periodic curriculum revision.

The PSP has successfully translated its QA policy into practice by establishing specific, measurable, and time-bound quality goals (e.g., reducing study duration, increasing student participation in evaluations). The learning outcomes are correctly aimed at EQF Level 7. The lack of tuition fees does not hinder the policy, as the PSP demonstrates financial accountability through declared funding sources.

The primary areas for minor improvement relate to enhancing the public information portal (website) and intensifying efforts to boost student and external stakeholder participation in the quality assurance cycle. However, these issues are being actively addressed, as evidenced by the corrective actions listed in the quality goal-setting document.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

R.1.1. Systematize Stakeholder Feedback: Develop a formal, documented annual process for soliciting, recording, and responding to structured feedback from external stakeholders (e.g., employers like EMY or ELGA) to further strengthen the labour market alignment of the PSP and employment possibilities for its graduates.

R.1.2. Maintain Focus on Evaluation Participation: Continue the targeted actions (as listed in the quality goals for 2025) to increase student participation in course and instructor evaluations to ensure the data used for improvement is statistically robust and representative.

PRINCIPLE 2: DESIGN AND APPROVAL OF POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD DEVELOP THEIR POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES FOLLOWING A DEFINED WRITTEN PROCESS WHICH WILL INVOLVE THE PARTICIPANTS, INFORMATION SOURCES AND THE APPROVAL COMMITTEES FOR THE POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES. THE OBJECTIVES, THE EXPECTED LEARNING OUTCOMES AND THE EMPLOYMENT PROSPECTS ARE SET OUT IN THE PRORAMME DESIGN. DURING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES, THE DEGREE OF ACHIEVEMENT OF THE LEARNING OUTCOMES SHOULD BE ASSESSED. THE ABOVE DETAILS, AS WELL AS INFORMATION ON THE PROGRAMME'S STRUCTURE ARE PUBLISHED IN THE STUDENT GUIDE.

The academic units develop their postgraduate study programmes following a well-defined procedure. The academic profile and orientation of the programme, the research character, the scientific objectives, the specific subject areas, and specialisations are described at this stage.

The structure, content and organisation of courses and teaching methods should be oriented towards deepening knowledge and acquiring the corresponding skills to apply the said knowledge (e.g. course on research methodology, participation in research projects, thesis with a research component).

The expected learning outcomes must be determined based on the European and National Qualifications Framework (EQF, NQF), and the Dublin Descriptors for level 7. During the implementation of the programme, the degree of achievement of the expected learning outcomes and the feedback of the learning process must be assessed with the appropriate tools. For each learning outcome that is designed and made public, it is necessary that its evaluation criteria are also designed and made public.

In addition, the design of PSP must consider:

- *the Institutional strategy*
- *the active involvement of students*
- *the experience of external stakeholders from the labour market*
- *the anticipated student workload according to the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) for level 7*
- *the option of providing work experience to students*
- *the linking of teaching and research*
- *the relevant regulatory framework and the official procedure for the approval of the PSP by the Institution*

The procedure of approval or revision of the programmes provides for the verification of compliance with the basic requirements of the Standards by the Institution's Quality Assurance Unit (QAU).

Documentation

- *Senate decision for the establishment of the PSP*
- *PSP curriculum structure: courses, course categories, ECTS awarded, expected learning outcomes according to the EQF, internship, mobility opportunities*
- *Labour market data regarding the employment of graduates, international experience in a relevant scientific field*
- *PSP Student Guide*
- *Course and thesis outlines*
- *Teaching staff (name list including of areas of specialisation, its relation to the courses taught, employment relationship, and teaching assignment in hours as well as other teaching commitments in hours)*

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The PSP in Meteorology, Climatology, and Atmospheric Environment was established and has been operating continuously and successfully since 1995-1996, and has undergone successive updates as published in the Government Gazette Φ. 711/22/Β7/2114/10/4/1995 (ΦΕΚ 298/17/4/1995, τ.Β). The PSP functioned as Meteorology and Climatology from 1995 to 2005, and as Meteorology, Climatology, and Atmospheric Environment thereafter.

The PSP clearly meets the National and European Qualifications Frameworks standard Level 7. The design and implementation of the PSP followed a formal, well-documented procedure that included participation and input from all relevant committees and constituencies. The approval process included review by the relevant University bodies and formal publication in the Government Gazette. The design process followed extensive consultations with academic staff, researchers, students, and external stakeholders. The design included defined goals, expected learning outcomes, and programme structure. Thus, the PSP is compliant with national legislation and institutional requirements and demonstrates a robust quality assurance framework. It aligns with institutional strategy and national higher education policy.

The PSP addresses a clear national need for a postgraduate studies programme in Meteorology, Climatology, and Atmospheric Environment, and is distinctive as the only such programme in Greece.

The programme curriculum focuses on developing advanced knowledge and skills in Meteorology, Climatology, and Atmospheric Environment, including research, analytical, technical, and interdisciplinary competencies. The programme prepares graduates for doctoral studies, research roles, and professional careers in the field.

The programme's curriculum focuses on critical social and environmental issues, including climate change, atmospheric pollution, and extreme weather phenomena.

The PSP is a four-semester programme in which students must complete 120 ECTS. During the first three semesters, each of which corresponds to 30 ECTS, students must attend and complete their coursework. During the 4th semester, students complete a traineeship lasting one (1) month, and work on their Master's Thesis (30 ECTS).

The revised PSP will span three semesters and equal 90 ECTS. The first and second semesters will cover coursework, and the third semester will be devoted to the thesis (25 ECTS) and fieldwork at the airport (5 ECTS).

The curriculum is well-structured, balancing theory, practice, and research. Students receive a learning experience that prepares them to be competitive in the marketplace and comparable to other European programmes. The quality of the programme is best reflected in graduates' placements at highly respected European universities and agencies.

The programme is systematically monitored through quality assurance processes, including student evaluations, self-assessment reports, and feedback from academic staff and graduates. The lrate of student responses to instructional evaluations remains low.

II. Analysis

The PSP in Meteorology, Climatology, and Atmospheric Environment demonstrates a systematic, structured design process and clear adherence to quality assurance standards. The approval process followed institutional and legislative procedures and practices. The outstanding strength of the PSP is its distinctiveness as the only existing programme in Greece.

There is a constructive alignment between learning outcomes, teaching methods, and assessment. This alignment ensures coherence and supports student achievement. Continuous monitoring and evidence-based curriculum revisions demonstrate a mature quality culture and a commitment to robust, ongoing quality improvement.

There is strong evidence of integration between research and teaching, facilitated by the high research performance and activity of the academic staff.

The employability of the graduates reflects the quality of the PSP. Several graduates have been hired into high-profile positions in industry and academia in Europe and other countries. The high-profile hiring of the PSP graduates speaks to the quality of the graduates and the programme's standing within the scientific and professional communities.

A minor limitation is small cohort sizes, which affect statistical robustness but support personalized learning.

III. Conclusions

The PSP in Meteorology, Climatology, and Atmospheric Environment is of high quality and a nationally significant postgraduate study programme.

Panel Judgement

Principle 2: Design and approval of postgraduate study programmes	
Fully compliant	**X**
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

R.2.1. Consider the establishment of a formal External Advisory Board composed of students, alumni, and external stakeholders to support continuous review and further enhancement of the PSP's curriculum and strategic vision

PRINCIPLE 3: STUDENT-CENTRED LEARNING, TEACHING, AND ASSESSMENT

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD ENSURE THAT POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES PROVIDE THE NECESSARY CONDITIONS TO ENCOURAGE STUDENTS TO TAKE AN ACTIVE ROLE IN THE LEARNING PROCESS. THE ASSESSMENT METHODS SHOULD REFLECT THIS APPROACH.

Student-centred learning and teaching plays an important role in enhancing students' motivation, their self-evaluation, and their active participation in the learning process. The above entail continuous consideration of the programme's delivery and the assessment of the related outcomes.

The student-centred learning and teaching process

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

In addition

- *The academic staff are familiar with the existing examination system and methods and are supported in developing their own skills in this field.*
- *The assessment criteria and methods are published in advance. The assessment allows students to demonstrate the extent to which the intended learning outcomes have been achieved. Students are given feedback, which, if necessary is linked to advice on the learning process.*
- *Student assessment is conducted by more than one examiner, where possible.*
- *Assessment is consistent, fairly applied to all students and conducted in accordance with the stated procedures.*
- *A formal procedure for student appeals is in place.*
- *The function of the academic advisor runs smoothly.*

Documentation

- *Sample of a fully completed questionnaire for the evaluation of the PSP by the students*
- *Regulations for dealing with students' complaints and appeals*
- *Regulation for the function of academic advisor*
- *Reference to the teaching modes and assessment methods*

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The Postgraduate Study Programme (PSP) in Meteorology, Climatology, and Atmospheric Environment adopts a comprehensive student-centered teaching approach that enhances active learning and participation.

The Programme integrates a wide range of pedagogical methods, including lectures and discussions, laboratory exercises, group projects, written assignments and presentations, digital tools, fieldwork, and participation in scientific presentations from related areas.
Teaching methods accommodate student diversity and address different learning needs, while promoting engagement, autonomy, and mutual respect between students and instructors. Teaching is delivered face-to-face, and attendance is mandatory.
The PSP spans four semesters, totaling 120 European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) credits. The coursework is completed in the first three semesters (30 ECTS each), and the fourth semester is dedicated to the MSc thesis (30 ECTS) and a one-month traineeship. Students are required to attend lectures and workshops, participate in field trips, conduct lab work, and undergo evaluations at the end of each semester.
The revised new PSP will span three semesters and equal 90 ECTS. The first and second semesters will cover coursework, and the third semester will be devoted to the thesis (25 ECTS) and fieldwork at the airport (5 ECTS).
Students are informed in advance through published materials about the assessment criteria and teaching methods. Information about the Programme is communicated through websites, digital platforms, and email, ensuring continuous access to relevant information.
At the start of the programme, students are assigned an advisor to assist them throughout the degree completion process. The advisor provides continuous academic guidance throughout the thesis process. Students are offered training in scientific writing and presentation.
Students with special needs are supported through flexible arrangements, and the Programme adheres to policies on equality and diversity. Complaints and appeals are handled through formal procedures.
The above processes are transparent and align with expected learning outcomes, enhancing student autonomy and active participation in the learning process while honoring student diversity.

Systematic student feedback is collected anonymously via electronic questionnaires regarding both the course and the instructors. A challenge is the extremely low response rate.

II. Analysis

A major strength of the PSP in Meteorology, Climatology and Atmospheric Environment is its alignment with student-centred learning principles, combining theoretical instruction with practical and research-based activities.

There are several mechanisms to ensure student success within the Programme. One of these is academic advising and thesis supervision, which enhances students' progress toward completing a sound thesis. The second is the assessment of instruction. Practices are transparent and varied, supporting continuous learning and ensuring multiple opportunities for students to demonstrate their knowledge.

The Programme effectively supports inclusion and diversity and has established formal procedures to address student concerns. Communication channels are comprehensive and ensure easy accessibility of information.

The meeting with employers and social partners highlighted the need for the PSP, recognizing the Programme's uniqueness as a collaborative effort of four universities. Employers and social partners expressed strong support for the Programme and appreciated this ongoing collaboration.

It is encouraging that student feedback is systematically used, indicating a commitment to quality improvement. Faculty report strong faculty-student communication and interaction in a variety of settings. However, the low return on formal student feedback makes it difficult to interpret the results.

III. Conclusions

The PSP programme in Meteorology, Climatology, and Atmospheric Environment is fully compliant with student-centered learning, teaching, and assessment.

Panel Judgement

Principle 3: Student-centred learning, teaching, and assessment	
Fully compliant	**X**
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

R3.1. Consider improvements in the programme website. It would be helpful to include a listing of graduates and their areas of employment.
R3.2. Consider marketing to promote the PSP and its many accomplishments to society and the public.

PRINCIPLE 4: STUDENT ADMISSION, PROGRESSION, RECOGNITION OF POSTGRADUATE STUDIES, AND CERTIFICATION.

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

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

- *the student admission procedures and the required supporting documents*
- *student rights and obligations, and monitoring of student progression*
- *internship issues, if applicable, and granting of scholarships*
- *the procedures and terms for the drafting of assignments and the thesis*
- *the procedure of award and recognition of degrees, the duration of studies, the conditions for progression and for the assurance of the progress of students in their studies*
- *the terms and conditions for enhancing student mobility*

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

Documentation

- *Internal regulation for the operation of the Postgraduate Study Programme*
- *Research Ethics Regulation*
- *Regulation of studies, internship, mobility, and student assignments*
- *Degree certificate template*

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The selection of incoming students for the Interdepartmental PSP is conducted through a call for applications issued during the spring semester (June) of the academic year preceding the year of admission. The announcement lists the eligibility requirements for prospective graduate students, the supporting documents that need to be submitted, the deadlines for submission and any other necessary details. The submission of supporting documents and the entire application process for admission to the PSP is conducted online, as candidates are invited to send their documents by email to the Secretariat. The evaluation of applicants includes an interview. The entire process is detailed in the Internal Regulations and the Study Guide of the PSP.

The PSP has a duration of 3 academic semesters, while the maximum duration may extend to 6 semesters. The first three semesters are dedicated to teaching and coursework (60 ECTS) and the fourth semester to the mandatory thesis (25 ECTS) and a one-month mandatory internship (5 ECTS) at two public organisations. There are only mandatory courses for the PSP. Up to 35% of the programme can be delivered via distance learning methods, as per the e-learning regulation.

The assignment and completion of the PSP thesis is governed by regulations listed in the Internal Regulation and the Study Guide. These documents also include student rights and obligations, practical training and mobility regulations and the procedure of award and recognition of degrees. There is also a detailed Diploma Supplement, both in the Greek and the English languages. Student progression is

monitored by written and oral exams, as well as the presentation of projects.

II. Analysis

The PSP provides material towards supporting the students in taking full advantage of all available services. Student progression is monitored comprehensively, the ECTS is applied consistently across the curriculum. Student progression is monitored through clear regulations and procedures detailed in the Study Guide and other relevant documents.

There is strong evidence that the mandatory Internship is a valuable component of the PSP, while students develop skills specific to their career development. The internship is also awarded 5 ECTS and may also provide students with data for their thesis.

Student mobility is encouraged via the Erasmus+ programme, providing students not only with an opportunity to work abroad, but also has led to the employment of graduates, as was discussed in the meetings.

III. Conclusions

The learning resources and student support are in line with the standards and requirements of the HAHE for Principle 4

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

R4.1. Include more regulations in the PSP website.

PRINCIPLE 5: TEACHING STAFF OF POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD ASSURE THEMSELVES OF THE LEVEL OF KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS OF THEIR TEACHING STAFF, AND APPLY FAIR AND TRANSPARENT PROCESSES FOR THEIR RECRUITMENT, TRAINING AND FURTHER DEVELOPMENT.

The Institution should attend to the adequacy of the teaching staff of the academic unit teaching at the PSP, the appropriate staff-student ratio, the appropriate staff categories, the appropriate subject areas, the fair and objective recruitment process, the high research performance, the training-development, the staff development policy (including participation in mobility schemes, conferences, and educational leaves-as mandated by law).

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

Documentation

- *Procedures and criteria for teaching staff recruitment*
- *Employment regulations or contracts, and obligations of the teaching staff*
- *Policy for staff support and development*
- *Individual performance of the teaching staff in scientific-research and teaching work, based on internationally recognised systems of scientific evaluation (e.g. Google Scholar, Scopus, etc.)*
- *List of teaching staff including subject areas, employment relationship, Institution of origin, Department of origin*

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The review of the provided documentation and the relevant discussions with the accreditation panel reveals the following findings regarding the teaching staff of the PSP:

The recruitment of permanent teaching staff (DEP) is governed by Greek Law (4957/2022) and follows clear, transparent, and merit-based national procedures. Candidates are evaluated on their total teaching, research, and administrative work. The process includes a public scientific lecture. For assigning teaching duties within the PSP, the Department Assembly follows a proposal from the Coordinating Committee, considering scientific expertise and teaching experience. The PSP is staffed by 7 members of the Didactic Educational Personnel (DEP), 1 Emeritus Professor, and 1 member of the Laboratory Didactic Personnel (EDIP). All

staff hold PhDs and have specialized expertise in Meteorology, Climatology, and Atmospheric Environment. Their research performance, as documented is high, with significant publication records in international peer-reviewed journals, citations, and participation in research projects. The faculty exhibit a wide range of scholarly impact. Senior members have accumulated between approximately 900 and over 5,800 citations on Google Scholar while the h-index values for the academic staff (Professors and Associate Professors) range from 16 to 39 on Google Scholar and 11 to 28 on Scopus. A core group of faculty members maintain h-indices consistently above 25, reflecting sustained, high-impact research activity.

The Department has a published "Policy for Staff Support and Development". This policy encourages and facilitates:

- Educational and research leave (e.g., 1 year for every 6 years of service).
- Participation in mobility schemes (ERASMUS+ staff training, ERASMUS+ teaching).
- Attendance at international conferences.
- Collaboration with the Teaching and Learning Support Center (KEDIMA) for training in innovative teaching methods and new technologies.

Staff mobility is actively encouraged. The provided data reports several outgoing DEP members under ERASMUS+ (e.g., 12 in 2017, 7 in 2018, 8 in 2023) and incoming visiting lecturers, demonstrating a healthy level of international academic exchange. Teaching faculty show a highly responsible attitude towards their teaching by placing teaching first before mobility considerations.

The PSP is offered free of tuition fees, and all teaching staff participate voluntarily and without pay . This ensures their teaching load for the PSP does not interfere with their statutory obligations. The strong research profiles of the staff are directly linked to their teaching, since the PSP courses cover cutting-edge topics derived from their ongoing research. Students also engage in research through their Master's theses, supervised by active researchers.

All teaching staff are formally and regularly evaluated by students at the end of each semester through the MODIP online quality assurance system. The evaluation questionnaires cover organization, ability to stimulate interest, consistency, and accessibility. The aggregated results are available to the PSP Director and are used to provide feedback and recommend improvements to instructors.

While the PSP does not have a separate, explicit "research strategy" document, the research focus is defined by the scientific areas of its staff and the three pillars of the PSP: Meteorology, Climatology, and Atmospheric Environment. The staff's publication records, conference participation, and externally funded research projects clearly indicate the specific scientific priorities.

II. Analysis

The PSP demonstrates a high level of compliance with Principle 5. The teaching staff are highly qualified, and their research output is substantial, ensuring a strong research-led teaching environment.

The recruitment process for permanent staff is not at the PSP level but is governed by rigorous, national, merit-based legislation. This is acceptable and ensures transparency and objectivity. The assignment of teaching duties within the PSP follows a transparent, criteria-based process (scientific work, teaching experience, specialization).

The Department has an explicit, published policy for staff development and actively encourages mobility. The documented participation in ERASMUS+ and conferences confirms that this policy is implemented effectively.

A critical strength is that all PSP teaching is voluntary and unpaid. This completely resolves any potential workload conflict with the staff's primary duties. The link between teaching and research is excellent, as evidenced by the advanced, current topics in the course syllabi and the active research profiles of the.

Student evaluation is systematic, regular, and electronic, providing a formal feedback mechanism for quality improvement. While the PSP acknowledges low participation rates as a challenge (noted in Principle 1), the system itself is functional.

A notable departmental realization is the formal, structured pedagogical training offerings specifically available centrally via KEDIMA. The staff intends to take advantage of these opportunities in the future to enrich their teaching effectiveness and capabilities.

The lack of tuition fees means no financial incentives can be offered for teaching excellence, although the staff's voluntary participation is a testament to their intrinsic motivation.

III. Conclusions

The teaching staff are highly qualified, their recruitment and assignment follow transparent merit-based procedures, and a clear policy exists for their professional development and mobility. The link between research and teaching is exceptionally strong, and student evaluations are systematically conducted. The voluntary, unpaid service of the teaching staff is a unique strength, ensuring focus on quality over financial compensation. The minor areas for improvement (formalizing the research strategy and increasing student evaluation participation) do not detract from overall compliance.

Panel Judgement

Principle 5: Teaching staff of postgraduate study programmes	
Fully compliant	**X**
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

R.5.1. Formalize a PSP Research Strategy: Develop a concise, written research strategy document for the PSP that explicitly outlines priority research themes (e.g., Mediterranean climate change, extreme events, atmospheric pollution modeling) aligned with national and EU priorities. This would further strengthen the PSP's external visibility and help attract research funding.
R.5.2. Enhance Pedagogical Training: While KEDIMA offers central training, the PSP Coordinator should formally encourage and facilitate staff participation in specific workshops focused on postgraduate-level pedagogy, such as thesis supervision skills or advanced active-learning techniques for small classes. Document this encouragement as part of the annual staff development review.
R.5.3. Address Student Evaluation Participation: Continue targeted efforts (e.g., in-class time to complete evaluations, clear communication of how feedback led to changes) to increase student response rates, thereby enhancing the statistical validity and representativeness of the data used for instructor development.

PRINCIPLE 6: LEARNING RESOURCES AND STUDENT SUPPORT

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD HAVE ADEQUATE FUNDING TO COVER THE TEACHING AND LEARNING NEEDS OF THE POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMME. THEY SHOULD –ON THE ONE HAND- PROVIDE SATISFACTORY INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES FOR LEARING 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, CAREER AND SOCIAL POLICY SERVICES ETC.).

Institutions and their academic units must have sufficient resources and means, on a planned and long-term basis, to support learning and academic activity in general, so as to offer PSP students the best possible level of studies. The above means include facilities such as the necessary general and more specialised libraries and possibilities for access to electronic databases, study rooms, educational and scientific equipment, IT and communication services, support and counselling services.

When allocating the available resources, the needs of all students must be taken into consideration (e.g. whether they are full-time or part-time students, employed students, students with disabilities), in addition to the shift towards student-centred learning and the adoption of flexible modes of learning and teaching. Support activities and facilities may be organised in various ways, depending on the institutional context. However, the internal quality assurance proves -on the one hand- the quantity and quality of the available facilities and services, and -on the other hand- that students are aware of all available services.

In delivering support services, the role of support and administration staff is crucial and therefore this segment of staff needs to be qualified and have opportunities to develop its competences.

Documentation

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

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The Aristotle University of Thessaloniki makes available a number of facilities and services to cover the teaching and learning needs of the PSP, such as the University Libraries, the Internship Office, the Career Office, the Academic Councilor and student welfare services. The School of Geology provides a 3 teaching rooms for the PSP, one of which includes computers and PSP-related software (both commercial and open-source). The University also provides a range of IT services and a student portal (elearning platform). The course material is taught on-site and online (up to 35 %). All students have access to laboratory equipment for their PSP thesis work and other projects related to the PSP.

Regarding the PSP teaching staff, it is comprised of 9 members, all of whom are members of the Department of Geology teaching staff. There is one administrative staff member, who is a member of the Department of Geology Secretariat. Administrative duties are also covered by the PSP Director. The study guide is well developed, covering all aspects of the PSP. There are no student fees for the PSP. Any standard administrative and teaching needs are covered by the Department. Any additional supporting costs are covered by the University.

II. Analysis

A wide variety of student services and resources (physical and online) is offered for the successful implementation of the PSP, all of which are functional and easily accessible. The teaching resources cover the courses' learning objectives. The administrative staff is competent to ensure the smooth operation of the student support services.

Regarding data acquisition, there are a number of meteorological stations operated by the University, which provide data, as well as a recently installed meteorological radar, the only one of its kind at a Greek University.

The PSP has secured the collaboration of various, high-profile external stakeholders with very high competence. During the EEAP virtual meetings, the fruitful collaboration of the teaching staff members and the external stakeholders was very apparent, including thesis projects and practical training, which is an integral part of the PSP. The external stakeholders are very open to collaborations in the context of students' theses as well as related publications.

III. Conclusions

The learning resources and student support are in line with the standards and requirements.

Panel Judgement

Principle 6: Learning resources and student support	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	**X**
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

R6.1 Inform students at the start of the second semester about the available research projects, public and private sector partnerships with the PSP School and collaborations with other research and academic institutes, as well as companies, so that they can make timely and informed decisions when selecting and planning their thesis project.
R6.2. Inform students about ERASMUS opportunities.
R6.3. Increase lab and administrative staff.

PRINCIPLE 7: INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

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

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

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

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

- *key performance indicators*
- *student population profile*
- *student progression, success, and drop-out rates*
- *student satisfaction with their programmes*
- *availability of learning resources and student support*

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

Documentation

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

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The services utilized for data collection for supporting academic and administrative operations throughout the PSP include: the MODIP Quality Management System (QMS), Institutional Repository of Scientific Works (IKEE), Electronic Services of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki Research Committee, the elearning.auth platform, support for live streaming and recording of courses, institutional account and SSO services for easy access to academic resources and applications, support services for individuals with disabilities (PWD), etc.

MODIP-AUTH has developed and operates an information system through which the data required for the implementation of the Internal Quality Assurance System (IQAS) are managed. This is a continuously evolving Quality Management Information System (QMS) that is interconnected with the electronic databases of

Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (AUTH), enriched with information entered by teaching and administrative staff, as well as by internal users under the responsibility of MODIP. Information collected is used to generate reports and indicators concerning staff and students, as well as the institution's educational, research, and operational processes, enabling their monitoring and evaluation over time. Automatic extraction of data from the services of AUTH (Central Administration, Departments, Central Library, Research Committee), as well as from reliable international bibliographic databases, ensures the reliability of the data and the resulting reports and indicators.

AUTH has established Academic Support Systems for student affairs, including registration of new students in the PSP, creation of an institutional account and associated student benefits (academic ID, meals, and textbooks), course registration, semester enrolment, processing of grades and issuing of certificates. In addition, the PSP uses various platforms for supporting the faculty in management and delivery of the courses, such as grading review and submission, communicating with students, delivering remote lectures, workshops and meetings workshops etc. Administrative tools for managing the student registry provide the necessary information for technical support to students and faculty members with restricted access through the secretariats' closed network for authorized individuals. AUTH is ensuring Data Protection through a dedicated Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT) addressing any security incidents involving students and network staff/users, while a public key (publickey-PGP) is used to communicate encrypted sensitive information.

II. Analysis

The PSP uses the AUTH MODIP data collection system to gather information from instructors (instructor profiles and course profiles) as well as from graduate students through online course evaluation questionnaires. Students complete the course evaluation questionnaires using their institutional account credentials, and participation rates are very high. The questionnaires are analyzed by the PSP committee and utilized by the Academic Council with the aim of continuously improving indicators across all evaluation categories. Course evaluations by students are conducted through the MODIP platform with pre-coded questions regarding the course and the instructor alongside the opportunity for students to provide additional comments. This is followed by statistical analysis of the collected data after it has been checked, coded, and tabulated. Following the completion of course exams, the evaluation results are made available to the instructors of the PSP for the courses they teach. Student evaluations are used by instructors to improve their courses, as well as in the performance reviews of faculty members from partner departments as one of the criteria for evaluating their work. Statistical data regarding the human resources of the PSP (instructors, support staff and students) are compiled by the Programme every two years.

The Committee evaluates the PSP by collecting information from the Registrar's electronic system regarding student matters (success rates, time to completion, number of theses, etc.), from MODIP as well as faculty members (course

objectives met, problems, shortcomings, etc.) and recommends modifications and adjustments. Regular communication processes are evident for the provision of timely updates and addressing any reported issues promptly. In short, various methods are used to collect information and the PSP encourages staff and students to contribute to the process of collecting and analyzing information.

The PSP maintains a database of graduates in an effort to retain contacts with its alumni. Graduates of the PSP who have assumed important positions of responsibility in public institutions or have carried out significant work in the field of are invited to deliver lectures presenting the progress of their work, within the framework of seminars organized by the program. There is strong evidence that the PSP is informed about the career progress of alumni and facilitates the exchange of information regarding job opportunities, achievements, potential collaborations, events, etc. In addition, the AUTH MODIP Secretariat has distributed a questionnaire to graduates as part of its active engagement with them, with the aim of ensuring its continuous development and further improvement of the PSP.

III. Conclusions

The documentation and discussions with the PSP administration, academic staff and students provide strong evidence that the University have established procedures for the collection and analysis of data regarding staff, students, teaching methods and student progression. Student evaluation and satisfaction surveys are regularly conducted, analysed and communicated to academic staff towards improving the PSP courses and the staff performance. The required amount of data regarding student registration and progression, is collected, analysed and stored according to the relevant legislation and reporting requirements. There is also evidence of good practice regarding the collection and analysis of data from graduates of the PSP with the view of remaining in touch with alumni and improving the PSP for future cohorts.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

N/A

PRINCIPLE 8: PUBLIC INFORMATION CONCERNING THE POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD PUBLISH INFORMATION ABOUT THEIR TEACHING AND ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES RELATED TO THE POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES IN A DIRECT AND READILY ACCESSIBLE WAY. THE RELEVANT INFORMATION SHOULD BE UP-TO-DATE, OBJECTIVE AND CLEAR.

Information on the Institutions' activities is useful for prospective and current students, graduates, other stakeholders, and the public.

Therefore, Institutions and their academic units must provide information about their activities, including the PSP they offer, the intended learning outcomes, the degrees awarded, the teaching, learning and assessment procedures applied, the pass rates, and the learning opportunities available to their students. Information is also provided on the employment perspectives of PSP graduates.

Documentation

- *Dedicated segment on the website of the department for the promotion of the PSP*
- *Bilingual version of the PSP website with complete, clear and objective information*
- *Provision for website maintenance and updating*

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The PSP maintains a dedicated and comprehensive website, which serves as the primary platform for disseminating public information about the Programme https://websites.auth.gr/meteorology/en/home-eng/. The bilingual website is well-structured, and provides a high level of detail regarding all key aspects of the PSP. It includes general information about the Programme, the application and admission procedures, and all required supporting documents. The regulatory framework governing the PSP is clearly presented through accessible documentation. In addition, the website provides detailed information on the curriculum, including the e-Study Guide and course descriptions offered. Information on the Programme's structure is available, including teaching staff, committees, and administrative personnel. Emphasis is also placed on the promotion of academic and educational activities. Finally, the documentation includes a clearly defined procedure for maintaining and regularly updating the website, ensuring that the information provided remains accurate and up to date.

II. Analysis

The PSP website serves as a clear and reliable source of information for both prospective and current students. It provides all the essential details regarding the Programme's structure, regulations, academic content, and activities in an accessible and user-friendly format. The availability of information such as course descriptions, information on teaching staff, helps users develop a solid understanding of the Programme and its academic environment.

However, the website could be improved by presentation of academic and educational activities, along with regularly updated announcements, research activities, and completed theses. The website should support effective communication with students and interested stakeholders and could increase

academic visibility. The PSP has already graduated numerous students. However, there is no specific section in the PSP website on the programme's alumni, and no alumni testimonials. The Programme does not have a presence on social media platforms to contribute to the wider dissemination of information, allowing its activities to reach a broader audience beyond the immediate academic community.

An English-language version of the website is available and provides access to essential information. Its further development would support the programme's potential intention to attract international students and strengthen its outward orientation.

III. Conclusions

Overall, the PSP publishes all the necessary information about teaching and learning activities through a well-structured and regularly updated website. However, the PSP does not complement its presence on social media in order to reach not only enrolled students but also any other interested party.

Panel Judgement

Principle 8: Public information concerning the postgraduate study programmes	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	**X**
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

R8.1. Regularly update the PSP website and enrich it with more information to promote the PSP more effectively.
R8.2. Establish a dedicated section for alumni on the website and include some alumni testimonials.
R8.3. Add selected student projects and/or theses on the programme's website to further enhance the visibility of the academic work produced within the PSP.
R8.4. Implement organized, institutionalized seminars where postgraduate students can present their research, receive feedback, and build a "community of young researchers".

PRINCIPLE 9: ON-GOING MONITORING AND PERIODIC INTERNAL EVALUATION OF POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES

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

The regular monitoring, review, and revision of postgraduate study programmes aim at maintaining the level of educational provision and creating a supportive and effective learning environment for students.

The above comprise the evaluation of:

a) the content of the programme in the light of the latest research in the given discipline, thus ensuring that the PSP is up to date
b) the changing needs of society
c) the students' workload, progression and completion of the postgraduate studies
d) the effectiveness of the procedures for the assessment of students
e) the students' expectations, needs and satisfaction in relation to the programme
f) the learning environment, support services, and their fitness for purpose for the PSP in question

Postgraduate study programmes are reviewed and revised regularly involving students and other stakeholders. The information collected is analysed and the programme is adapted to ensure that it is up-to-date.

Documentation

- *Procedure for the re-evaluation, redefinition and updating of the PSP curriculum*
- *Procedure for mitigating weaknesses and upgrading the structure of the PSP and the learning process*
- *Feedback processes concerning the strategy and quality goal setting of the PSP and relevant decision-making processes (students, external stakeholders)*
- *Results of the annual internal evaluation of the PSP by the Quality Assurance Unit (QAU), and the relevant minutes*

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The PSP follows a defined procedure for the periodic review of its curriculum, overseen by the Coordinating Committee and the Study Programme Committee. Evidence of this procedure in action is found in the recent comprehensive curriculum revision planned for the 2024-2025 academic year, which was triggered by a five-year milestone review. This re-evaluation resulted in structural changes, such as reducing the programme duration from four to three semesters and streamlining the syllabus from 17 to 11 courses to better align with contemporary scientific trends and labor market needs.

Weaknesses are identified through systematic data collection from the Quality

Management Information System of MODIP AUTH. The programme implements a multi-level action plan to address issues:

- Minor issues: Resolved directly by the Director through discussions with faculty or students.
- Structural issues: Referred to the Coordinating Committee for formal decisions and implementation.
- Specific interventions: For example, the programme has established a Academic Advisor to support students in timely completion and has implemented corrective actions for courses receiving negative feedback.

The PSP employs formal feedback mechanisms to shape its strategy and quality goals:

- Student Feedback: Mandatory anonymous online questionnaires are administered every semester through MODIP for every course and instructor.
- Stakeholder/Alumni Feedback: The programme conducts surveys among graduates to assess career progression and satisfaction, which directly informs strategic planning.
- External Input: The 2023 review specifically incorporated opinions from cooperating institutions and external experts to ensure the program's scientific relevance.

The MODIP AUTH recently conducted an internal evaluation of the PSP, resulting in high overall quality scores (average quality index Q = 85.4% over three years). Key findings include:

- Strengths: High satisfaction among students (84% would recommend the program) and full compliance regarding infrastructure and teaching staff qualifications.
- Identified Weaknesses: The evaluation noted the need for a specialized independent website and improved student mobility (Erasmus+).
- Corrective Actions: In response, the programme has committed to updating its bilingual web presence and enhancing notification systems to increase student participation in evaluation surveys.

Findings and corrective actions are documented in the Annual Internal Evaluation Report and communicated to the Department Assembly and MODIP to ensure transparency and continuous improvement

II. Analysis

The programme meets the core requirements of Principle 9 through a systematic and institutionalized approach:

- Established Internal Quality Assurance System (IQAS): The PSP utilizes the certified Quality Management Information System of AUTH to monitor performance indicators across all levels—academic, administrative, and research.
- Annual Internal Review: There is clear evidence of annual audits conducted by the Quality Assurance Unit (MODIP/QAU). The most recent evaluation confirms that the PSP has defined quality goals and monitors their achievement using specific indicators.
- Evidence of Continuous Improvement: The 2023 comprehensive curriculum

review serves as a primary example of "monitoring and amendments." This review, triggered by a five-year milestone, incorporated student feedback (2018–2023), internal self-evaluation reports, and market research to streamline the syllabus and reduce the programme duration for better efficiency.

- Communication of Results: Findings from internal evaluations and planned corrective actions are presented to the Department Assembly and published on the university's quality assurance platform to ensure transparency for all stakeholders.

While the programme is compliant, the documentation identifies several "weak points" or reasons where it falls short of ideal standards:

1. Public Information and Transparency: The internal evaluation noted that the PSP did not have a specialized, independent website. Currently, its information is hosted on the broader Sector website, and the existing bilingual (Greek/English) content is considered incomplete and currently undergoing updates.
2. Decline in Student Participation: Although a feedback mechanism is in place, participation in course evaluations dropped significantly from 78.6% in 2020-2021 to 37.5% in 2022-2023. This decline reduces the statistical reliability of the data used for internal reviews.
3. Administrative Resource Adequacy: The assessment of human resources indicated only "partial compliance" regarding administrative and support staff, suggesting that the current workload may hinder the optimal efficiency of the program’s operational monitoring.
4. Student Mobility: Monitoring data shows zero participation in Erasmus+ programs for the latest reporting periods, which is identified as a strategic weakness in the program’s goal for internationalization.

Corrective Action Plan for 2024–2025

To address these gaps, the PSP has committed to a specific Action Plan (Table 1) with the following targets:

- Reduce average study duration from 2.95 to 2.00 years through closer thesis progress.
- Increase student participation in evaluations to 60% by implementing an enhanced notification system using alternative email addresses.
- Establish a fully independent and updated bilingual website to improve public access to information.
- Promote student mobility with a target of at least two applications per year

III. Conclusions

In conclusion, the PSP possesses the necessary structural framework for ongoing monitoring, but the effectiveness of these processes is currently limited by administrative staffing levels and student engagement rates.

Panel Judgement

Principle 9: On-going monitoring and periodic internal evaluation of postgraduate study programmes	
Fully compliant	**X**
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

R9.1. To improve the statistical reliability of internal audits, the programme is recommended to raise student participation in course evaluations to at least 60% (from current levels below 40%).
R9.2. Given that administrative staffing was rated as only "partially compliant," the sources recommend optimizing support services to ensure that academic and administrative procedures are not bottlenecked.
R9.3. The PSP is recommended to deepen its analysis of alumni career progression and the degree of satisfaction with their acquired qualifications in the labor market.
R9.4. A specific recommendation is to boost student mobility (Erasmus+), which currently stands at zero participation, by better informing students of available opportunities and exchange benefits.

PRINCIPLE 10: REGULAR EXTERNAL EVALUATION OF POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES

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

HAHE is responsible for administrating the PSP accreditation process which is realised as an external evaluation procedure, and implemented by panels of independent experts. HAHE grants accreditation of programmes, based on the Reports delivered by the panels of external experts, with a specific term of validity, following to which, revision is required. The quality accreditation of the PSP acts as a means for the determination of the degree of compliance of the programme to the Standards, and as a catalyst for improvement, while opening new perspectives towards the international standing of the awarded degrees. Both academic units and Institutions must consistently consider the conclusions and the recommendations submitted by the panels of experts for the continuous improvement of the programme.

Documentation

- *Progress report of the PSP in question, on the results from the utilisation of possible recommendations included in the External Evaluation Report of the Institution, and in the IQAS Accreditation Report, with relation to the postgraduate study programmes*

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The documentation explicitly states that this accreditation proposal constitutes the first External Evaluation specifically for this PSP. While the programme has operated since 1995, previous institutional and departmental evaluations covered broader aspects:

- Institutional Evaluation (AUTH, 2015): A university-wide external evaluation found all postgraduate programs to be excellent, though it noted general weaknesses such as understaffing and varying durations (2–4 semesters) across different programs.
- Departmental Evaluation (Geology, 2012): The Department was evaluated very positively regarding its teaching and research work, with no negative recommendations for the postgraduate programs operating at that time.
- Departmental Certification (Geology, 2021): The Department was certified as fully compliant with HAHE Quality Standards, again with no specific negative findings for its master's programs.

The PSP follows established AUTH procedures for preparing for external audits. The Coordinating Committee (SE) and Study Programme Committee (EPS), in collaboration with the university's Quality Assurance Unit (MODIP), are responsible for:

- Collecting and submitting required data to HAHE via the integrated quality management platform (qdata.ethaae.gr).
- Processing internal self-evaluation reports to serve as the basis for the external panel's review.
- The Senate of AUTH provides the final institutional approval required before

HAHE's final certification decision.

Strategic Meetings and Preparation Records show that the Coordinating Committee met between December 2022 and February 2023 to specifically address the upcoming certification requirements under Law 4957/2022. This period of self-reflection focused on:

- Identifying organizational and educational problems highlighted in previous institutional reports.
- Implementing structural reforms, such as standardizing the programme duration and updating the syllabus, to ensure alignment with HAHE accreditation criteria.

Compliance Assessment

The PSP is fully compliant with the procedural requirements of Principle 10.

- Engagement with HAHE: The PSP has proactively initiated the accreditation process as mandated by current legislation.
- Use of External Feedback: Although this is the first direct program-level external review, the PSP has demonstrated a commitment to implementing past recommendations directed at the Institution and Department level, such as enhancing interdisciplinary cooperation and standardizing degree requirements.
- The PSP has committed to publishing the findings of the external evaluation on its website once the process is complete, ensuring that all interested parties are informed of the accreditation term and results.

II. Analysis

The PSP meets the accreditation criterion regarding its commitment to external review through several institutionalized mechanisms:

- Institutional Framework and Regulatory Compliance: The PSP's Internal Operating Regulations and the Senate Decision explicitly mandate that the programme regularly undergo evaluation by HAHE panels. The documentation confirms that the PSP is integrated into the broader departmental and institutional quality cycles, which have consistently received positive external evaluations.
- The PSP has already submitted its formal Proposal for Academic Accreditation as required by Law 4957/2022. This indicates a proactive stance in transitioning from general departmental oversight to specific program-level certification.
- The Internal Evaluation Report shows that the university's Quality Assurance Unit (MODIP) monitors the implementation of external recommendations as a standing indicator. For this PSP, the PSP has utilized results from the 2015 institutional evaluation to drive specific reforms, such as standardizing the study duration and increasing syllabus transparency.
- Transparency and Public Communication: The PSP has committed to making external evaluation results publicly available on its website (currently undergoing updates to its bilingual content) to ensure all stakeholders are informed of the accreditation term and findings.

Consideration of Compliance and Reasons for Gaps

Eventual reasons for current gaps or historical lack of compliance include:

1. Prior to current legislation (Law 4957/2022), postgraduate programs in Greece

were primarily evaluated as parts of their host Departments rather than as independent entities. Consequently, there is no historical term of validity specifically for this programme to review.

2. Past institutional evaluations (2015) identified general weaknesses in Greek HEIs, such as understaffing and variable programme durations. The documentation suggests that while the PSP has addressed the duration issue by reducing it to three semesters in its upcoming 2024-2025 revision, administrative staffing remains a noted "weak point" that may affect the speed of implementing external feedback.

3. As the PSP shares resources with the Department of Geology, its ability to meet specific external recommendations (e.g., regarding infrastructure or support staff) is tied to the broader administrative constraints

III. Conclusions

In conclusion, the PSP is successfully navigating the transition to the new national certification framework, with its Institution and the parent Department already possessing a proven track record of positive external evaluations. The PSP meets the criterion of engaging with external evaluation, however, it should present a clear action plan for satisfying the previous recommendations of external evaluation related to increasing the support staff, improving the website and supporting the internationalization through Erasmus mobility.

Panel Judgement

Principle 10: Regular external evaluation of postgraduate study programmes	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	**X**
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

R10.1. Address the previous recommendations of external evaluation, which noted shortage in administrative and support staff, as the inaction since the previous evaluation is viewed by the EEAP external experts as a risk to the program’s operational sustainability.

R10.2. Since external panels heavily weigh internationalization, the programme must take action to move beyond its current "zero participation" status in Erasmus+ student mobility.

PART C: CONCLUSIONS

I. Features of Good Practice

Harmonized Quality Policy: The programme implements a Quality Policy that is fully aligned with the strategic planning of AUTH, promoting a distinct academic idPSP and continuous improvement.

Systematic Quality Goal Setting: The PSP establishes specific annual quality goals (quantitative and qualitative) in accordance with the standards of the Hellenic Authority for Higher Education (HAHE).

Labor Market Relevance: The curriculum design is based on a thorough investigation of labor market needs and contemporary international scientific trends in the fields of atmospheric sciences.

Stakeholder Engagement: The programme actively incorporates feedback from students, alumni, and external cooperating bodies in its design and redesign processes.

Modern and Distinct Curriculum: The syllabus is organized according to the latest developments in the field, provides a high level of specialization, and ensures there is no overlap with the undergraduate curriculum.

Alignment with Qualifications Frameworks: Learning outcomes and qualifications are specifically designed to meet Level 7 of the National and European Qualifications Framework.

High Faculty Credentials: Teaching staff possess excellent academic qualifications, extensive specialized research experience, and significant teaching expertise.

Student-Centered Learning: The programme emphasizes modern, student-centered teaching and learning methods, including discussions, lab exercises, and group projects.

Transparent Assessment Criteria: Evaluation criteria and teaching methods are clearly documented in course outlines and are made accessible to students in advance.

Robust Student Support Mechanisms: There are institutionalized procedures for student guidance, notably through the Master's Studies Advisor and a formalized Student Complaints Procedure.

Adequate Infrastructure and Resources: The programme utilizes high-quality scientific, electronic, and educational equipment, including specialized facilities for distance learning.

Efficient Information Management: Effective use of AUTH's centralized information systems (SDP/MODIP and Electronic Secretariat) allows for the systematic monitoring of student progress and academic data.

Regular Internal Evaluation: The PSP conducts scheduled annual internal reviews that lead to documented action plans for further development, maintaining a high average quality index.

II. Areas of Weakness

The programme lacks a specialized bilingual website.

There is a low rate of student participation in course and instructor evaluations.

The assessment of human resource adequacy is noted regarding administrative and other support staff, indicating a need for more personnel to ensure smooth operations.

Participation in international exchange programs (Erasmus+) stands at zero.

Evaluations have noted the absence of a coordinated mechanism to promote interdisciplinarity and cross-departmental cooperation at the programme and student levels.

There is a recognized need for institutionalized seminars where postgraduate students can present their research, receive feedback, and build a community of young researchers.

III. Recommendations for Follow-up Actions

1. Strengthen the programme's public visibility, transparency, and outreach by developing and maintaining a fully updated bilingual (Greek/English) website that provides comprehensive information on study regulations, quality assurance policies and objectives, evaluation results, graduate employment prospects, alumni achievements, student projects, theses, and programme accomplishments. The website should also include motivational student and graduate testimonials, a dedicated alumni section, and other promotional content that highlights the programme's academic and professional impact.
2. Develop a formal and systematic process for collecting, documenting, analyzing, and responding to feedback from external stakeholders, including employers, professional organizations, alumni, and public-sector agencies, to ensure that the curriculum remains aligned with labour market needs and professional developments.
3. Establish a formal External Advisory Board comprising students, alumni, employers, and other external stakeholders to support continuous curriculum review, strategic planning, quality assurance, and programme development.
4. Continue targeted initiatives to increase student participation in course and instructor evaluations, with the objective of achieving statistically reliable and representative feedback. Measures may include dedicating class time for evaluations, improving communication regarding the impact of student feedback, and setting participation targets for continuous monitoring.
5. Develop a formal written research strategy for the programme that identifies priority research themes, aligns with national and European research priorities, promotes interdisciplinary and inter-institutional collaborations, enhances external visibility, and supports the attraction of research funding.

6. Strengthen research engagement and student participation in scholarly activities by informing students early about available research projects, partnerships, collaborations, and thesis opportunities, and by organizing regular research seminars where postgraduate students can present their work, receive feedback, and contribute to a vibrant research community.

7. Enhance the pedagogical development of teaching staff by encouraging and facilitating participation in specialized professional development activities focused on postgraduate teaching, thesis supervision, student-centred learning approaches, and advanced active-learning methodologies.

8. Strengthen alumni engagement by establishing systematic alumni tracking mechanisms, monitoring career progression and graduate satisfaction, and utilizing alumni feedback to support programme evaluation, curriculum enhancement, and labour-market alignment.

9. Promote internationalisation and student mobility by actively encouraging participation in Erasmus+ and other exchange programmes, increasing awareness of available opportunities, and integrating mobility objectives into the programme's strategic planning.

10. Improve administrative and support services by strengthening administrative staffing and operational support structures to ensure efficient programme management, effective quality assurance processes, and the long-term sustainability of programme operations.

11. Ensure that all relevant recommendations to the PSP of the previous external evaluations are addressed with a specific action plan.

IV. Summary & Overall Assessment

The Principles where full compliance has been achieved are:

1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 9

The Principles where substantial compliance has been achieved are:

6, 8, 10

The Principles where partial compliance has been achieved are:

NONE

The Principles where failure of compliance was identified are:

NONE

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

The members of the External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel

Name and Surname	Signature
KOKKALA IRENE	Signed by KOKKALA IRENE
ARGYROPOULOS DIMITRIOS	Signed by ARGYROPOULOS DIMITRIOS
CONSTANTINOU STAVROS	Signed by CONSTANTINOU STAVROS
PANAGOPOULOS THOMAS	Signed by PANAGOPOULOS THOMAS
Ζυγούρη Ευαγγελία	Signed by Ζυγούρη Ευαγγελία