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Accreditation Report
for the Postgraduate Study Programme of:

Political Analysis

Department: Political Sciences

Institution: Aristotle University of Thessaloniki

Date: 06/05/2026

Με τη συγχρηματοδότηση της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης
ΕΣΠΑ 2021-2027
Πρόγραμμα
Ανθρώπινο Δυναμικό και Κοινωνική Συνοχή
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Report of the Panel appointed by the HAHE to undertake the review of the Postgraduate Study Programme of **Political Analysis** 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 Political Analysis of the **Aristotle University of Thessaloniki** comprised the following five (5) members, drawn from the HAHE Register, in accordance with Law 4653/2020:

1. STIVACHTIS YANNIS (Chair)
   (Title, Name, Surname)
   Department of Political Science, College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences, Virginia Polytechnic Institute & State University (Virginia Tech)
   (Institution of origin)

2. Kyriakopoulos Irene
   (Title, Name, Surname)
   National Defense University, Washington, DC, USA
   (Institution of origin)

3. Papadopoulos Fotios
   (Title, Name, Surname)
   University of the Peloponnese
   (Institution of origin)

4. PAPAKOSTAS APOSTOLIS
   (Title, Name, Surname)
   Södertörn University
   (Institution of origin)

5. TSAGOURIAS NICHOLAS
   (Title, Name, Surname)
   School of Law, University of Sheffield
   (Institution of origin)

II. Review Procedure and Documentation

Brief reference to the Panel preparation for the postgraduate study programme review, as well as to the documentation provided and considered by the Panel. Dates of the review, review, meetings held, and any additional information regarding the procedure, as appropriate.

The External Evaluation and Accreditation Panel (Panel) was formed by the Hellenic Authority for Higher Education (HAHE) in February 2026, approximately two months before the review process.

The visit took place on 20-25 April 2026 and covered a total of two (2) Postgraduate Study Programmes (PSPs) run by the Department of Political Sciences of the School of Social & Economic Sciences of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki.

By virtue of a HAHE decision, all meetings were held through the Zoom digital platform. The onsite visit was held by viewing a video prepared by the Department of Political Sciences. The virtual tour provided an overview for Panel members to the Department's/School's classrooms, lecture halls, computer laboratories, administrative offices, meeting spaces, and the library.

The documentation that was received prior to the virtual meetings contained, on the one hand HAHE material, and on the other hand, material produced by the PSP in Political Analysis. It also contained the Accreditation Proposal (The Proposal), which dealt with the ten (10) accreditation principles for the PSP. The material provided was comprehensive, informative and very well prepared. It adequately described the current programme and practices that are in place.

Furthermore, the Panel asked for and received copies of the PowerPoint presentations created by the Department of Political Sciences and the PSP in Political Analysis. It is worth noting that the PowerPoint Presentation of the PSP included a SWOT analysis, which greatly facilitated the Panel's deliberations during the accreditation process.

During the online visit, the Panel conducted online interviews with various stakeholders including the Head of PSP in Political Analysis, members of MODIP, members of Faculty, groups of students, alumni, and employers, social partners and external stakeholders selected by the Department/School according to the timetable of Panel Review by electronic means prepared by HAHE. Due to the online nature of the visit, the panel did not have an opportunity to interact informally with the broader student community.

All online interviews pertaining to the PSP in Political Analysis ran smoothly over two working days. The Panel found all discussions to be collegial, constructive and productive. It wishes to thank the Department of Political Sciences of the School of Social & Economic Sciences of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, the Director of the PSP in Political Analysis, and all those involved for making the process easier, and for the constructive and trusting cooperation.

The Panel would like to particularly thank the Head of the Department of Political Sciences for the warm, collaborative, purposeful and cordial reception afforded and the members of OMEA for their cooperation, which greatly assisted the Panel in its deliberations.

Finally, the Panel would like to thank everyone involved in the process for earnestly sharing the Panel's commitment to constructive dialogue, transparency and inclusivity.

III. Postgraduate Study Programme Profile

Brief overview of the postgraduate study programme with reference to the following: history, academic remit, duration of studies, qualification awarded, employment opportunities, orientation challenges or any other key background information. Short description of the home Department and Institution, with reference to student population, campus or any other related facts.

THE UNIVERSITY

The Aristotle University of Thessaloniki was founded in 1925 and is the largest university in Greece. The main campus is located in the centre of the city of Thessaloniki. It comprises 10 faculties which consist of 41 schools and one (1) single-School Faculty. Some educational and administrative facilities are located off campus for practical and operational reasons. A number of these facilities are located outside the city of Thessaloniki or even in other cities.

About 89.945 students study at the Aristotle University (78.840 in undergraduate programmes and 11.105 in postgraduate programmes, of which 4.681 at doctoral level). There are 1.599 faculty members.

Administrative services consist of approximately 400 permanent employees and 528 employees under a private law contract of indefinite duration. Moreover, 596 people employed by third parties provide services at the university.

THE DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCES

The Department of Political Sciences of the School of Social & Economic Sciences was founded in 1999. The Department admitted its first undergraduate students in 2000 and its first postgraduate students in 2006. The number of undergraduates admitted per year, as well as the criteria for their admittance are set by the existing Greek laws and regulations of student admittance into all state higher education institutions and is currently 120 plus students of special categories and transfer students. The number of postgraduate students is set each year by the Department of Political Sciences itself following the entry examinations held yearly in January and cannot exceed a total number of 80 (20 for each study area).

Through its study programmes (undergraduate and postgraduate) and its multiple research activities, the Department of Political Sciences focuses on the study of politics and policy-making: on political institutions, structures, processes, and antagonisms. Its main goal is to

cultivate and disseminate the theoretical and empirical tools necessary for the scientific analysis of the structure of, and relationships between, collective and individual identities within organized society.

Its study programmes combine theoretical and empirical analysis so as to achieve a rigorous and multi-layered approach towards political action and political structures. The Department of Political Sciences aims at producing graduates capable of describing and analyzing identities, relations, ideologies and policies, as well of supporting decision-making processes in the public sphere. Above all, it serves and encourages the exercise of critical thought in the spirit of academic freedom that characterizes a democratic institution like a public university.

The Department of Political Sciences awards an undergraduate degree, a postgraduate degree and a doctoral degree. Currently, the Department has 1.600 students, 20 faculty members and seven (7) PSPs.

In order to receive the postgraduate degree of specialization, the Department of Political Sciences requires its students to successfully attend six (6) courses of the postgraduate studies programme. In each course, assessment is based on written or oral examinations, the submission of essays or a combination of the aforementioned methods. In general, priority is given to the preparation of essays with the use of Greek and international bibliography and to the development of associated skills in fieldwork and/or the effective control of sources.

Eligible for applying are graduates of Greek or foreign universities who have majored in Political Science or relevant fields of study.

All eligible applicants for admission to the Postgraduate Programme are required to:

- Submit proof of their proficiency in a foreign language (English, French or German) or Greek if they are not Greek citizens.
- Take a written examination relevant to their chosen field of specialization.
- Participate in an interview with the Graduate Board of the School.

All successful applicants are required to:

- Attend the courses and fulfill the assignments of their chosen field of specialization for the first two semesters of study, and
- Submit a dissertation by the end of the third semester.

The Department of Political Sciences offers programmes of study in four (4) subject areas:

Political theory: Covering the history of ideas from antiquity up until late modernity, this orientation focuses on modern and contemporary political theory and philosophy including the study of ideologies and political discourses. It endorses a multi-dimensional methodological perspective in order to encourage critical and independent thinking and to provide the necessary skills for a reflexive analysis of political ideas and projects.

Political analysis: This orientation purports to study political antagonism in its various dimensions. Emphasis is placed in the agency of individual and collective actors (including parties, movements, pressure groups, etc.), the effects of institutional settings and opportunity structures (electoral systems, participation, etc.) and political identification. Survey methods, content analysis and quantitative research form the methodological kernel of this subject area.

Political history: In this orientation, the focus is on examining Greek and international political issues, issues from a predominantly historical perspective. The comparative aspect also plays a central role, while special emphasis is given to the place of Greece within broader historical, cultural and political frameworks.

Governance: Students following the Governance subject area will be familiarised with the national and international framing of institutional systems, the different levels (local, regional, etc.) of state functioning, the various types of public administration models as well as issues of strategic design within state institutions. They will also be encouraged to interact – through participant observation – with the institutions under examination.

Learning outcomes

Upon graduating from the postgraduate programme of the Department of Political Sciences, graduates are equipped with:

- Knowledge pertaining to their chosen specialization, allowing them to map and understand political phenomena with advanced analytical/theoretical competence.
- Required tools and methods, originating from various analytical/ philosophical research traditions in political science and related disciplines, permitting them to arrive at consistent and innovative accounts of political life.
- Intellectual/critical skills allowing them to act with scientific integrity, creativity and confidence in complex academic and professional contexts.
- Practical skills necessary for the successful collection and evaluation of complex evidence, the systematic processing and synthesis of information from a variety of sources (traditional and electronic), the sustained scientific

questioning and development of arguments in written and oral discourse in both Greek and a foreign language, the intelligent tackling of multiple challenges in a comprehensive way, the efficient completion of individual and group assignments, as well as for participating in the design and implementation of research and professional projects with an advanced sense of social and democratic responsibility.

THE PSP IN POLITICAL ANALYSIS

The objective of the PSP is the clear and multi-perspective study of Political Analysis in its various manifestations. The PSP aims to develop scientific critical skills, provide professional training, and enhance the opportunities of its graduates to gain employment in both the public and private sectors.

The PSP awards a Master's degree in Political Analysis.

Successful completion of the studies leads to level seven (7) of the National and European Qualifications Framework.

The PSP is offered free of tuition fees.

The competent bodies for the administration, organization, and operation of the PSP include: the University's Senate, the Assembly of the Department of Political Science, the PSP Coordinating Committee, and the Director of the PSP.

Categories of candidates who can be accepted for the PSP in Political Analysis include holders of first-cycle degrees from domestic (Greek) institutions of higher education, as well as holders of first-cycle degrees from equivalent foreign institutions.

Each academic year, at the end of the spring semester, the Department Assembly, following a relevant recommendation from the Faculty Council, announces a call for expressions of interest with an open procedure for admission to the Postgraduate Programme. The number of admissions per year is set at a maximum of fifteen (15) postgraduate students. Upon recommendation of the Academic Council, the Department Assembly may decide not to operate the PSP if the number of admitted students is less than four (4) postgraduate students.

The minimum duration of studies for the acquisition of the Master's degree in Political Analysis is set at a total of three (3) semesters. The first two (2) semesters are teaching-based, while during the third semester students are required to prepare and submit a

postgraduate thesis.

The maximum permitted time for students to complete their studies is set at six (6) semesters (three years in total). The possibility of part-time study is not provided.

Students may be granted by the Academic Council, upon submission of a relevant application during the first two academic semesters of study, a temporary suspension of studies for one academic year. During the suspension, the student loses student status. The period of suspension is not counted towards the maximum duration of regular studies. Upon resumption of studies, students return to a state of regular studies with all the rights and obligations provided for in the PSP.

In exceptional cases and while the student is in the phase of writing his/her postgraduate thesis and cannot make use of the possibility of suspending their studies, an extension of up to one (1) year may be granted, upon request of the interested party. The decision is taken by the Department Assembly. Applications by postgraduate students for suspension or extension of studies are made at the beginning of the academic semesters.

The PSP is structured into three (3) semesters. In the first and second semesters, three (3) courses are taught, which are all compulsory. In the third semester, the postgraduate thesis is prepared.

The PSP publishes a Study Guide with the aim of informing postgraduate students about its operation.

Each course is taught for three (3) hours per week and is credited with ten (10) credit units (ECTS) while each teaching semester is credited with thirty (30) credit units (ECTS). The postgraduate thesis is credited with thirty (30) credit units (ECTS) and is graded separately. The total number of credit units (ECTS) for obtaining the Master's degree in Political Analysis is ninety (90). The grading scale is set at 0-10 points. According to the postgraduate regulations of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, the minimum passing grade is six (6).

Attendance of courses is mandatory. A student is considered to have attended a course (and therefore has the right to participate in exams or submit semester assignments) only if he/she has attended at least thirty (30) hours of instruction in the course. Otherwise, the postgraduate student is required to re-attend the course in the following academic year.

The teaching work of the PSP is assigned to a) Members of the Teaching and Research Staff (T.E.P.), Special Educational Staff (S.E.P.), Laboratory Teaching Staff (E.D.I.P.) and Special Technical Laboratory Staff (E.T.E.P.) of the Department or other Departments of the same or another Higher Educational Institution (HEI) or Higher Military Educational Institution (ASEI);

b) Emeritus Professors or retired T.E.P. members of the Department or other Departments of the same or another HEI; c) Collaborating professors; d) Appointed lecturers; e) Visiting professors or visiting researchers; f) Researchers and special functional scientists of research and technological bodies or other research centers and institutes in Greece or abroad; and g) Scientists of recognized prestige, who have specialized knowledge and relevant experience in the subject of the PSP.

The Department of Political Sciences has adopted the practice of appointing an Academic Advisor for each of its postgraduate students. Therefore, a permanent member of the PSP Teaching and Research Staff is appointed to serve as an Academic Advisor. The Academic Advisor provides the postgraduate student with the necessary counseling to meet the requirements of the PSP.

Administrative and secretarial support is provided to the PSP by the Secretariat of the Department of Political Sciences. The Department of Political Sciences also provides the classrooms and the necessary computer equipment and teaching aids for the smooth operation of the PSP.

To ensure and improve the quality of postgraduate studies, the Quality Assurance Unit of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (MODIP) carries out a periodic internal evaluation of the PSP within the framework of the Institution's Internal Quality Assurance System and in accordance with the instructions and guidelines of the ETHAAE. The evaluation is carried out under the responsibility of the Internal Evaluation Team (OMEA) operating in the Department, in collaboration with the MODIP, and is carried out through the Quality Management Information System (QMIS) of the latter. The Administration and the OMEA of the Department are required to take systematic actions for the attendance of students in the evaluation, in accordance with the directions of the MODIP and the relevant decisions of the University’s Senate.

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 PSP's "Political Analysis" Quality Assurance Policy (QAP) is aligned with the corresponding policies of the Department of Political Sciences and Aristotle University of Thessaloniki.

At the departmental level, the PSP policy focuses on promoting knowledge and interdisciplinary engagement; enriching and deepening research and teaching within a pluralistic methodological and thematic framework; and enabling students to develop high-level academic, professional, and transferable skills and qualities.

The aims of the PSP "Political Analysis" include the advancement of knowledge and the further development of teaching and research so that students acquire both theoretical and practical knowledge of political analysis; the introduction of modern and contemporary topics alongside familiarity with interdisciplinary methodologies; and the acquisition of transferable skills that enhance professional opportunities.

II. Analysis

The PSP has established a QAP that is fully aligned with the quality assurance frameworks of both the Department and the University.

In designing its QAP, the PSP has taken into consideration the recommendations of the 2014 External Evaluation Report of the Department.

The PSP has set out specific learning objectives, while the Faculty possesses the academic expertise required to deliver the PSP effectively and fulfill its objectives.

The existing physical infrastructure and academic support services are adequate to support its successful implementation.

The PSP has put in place the necessary mechanisms to ensure the continuous review of its structure, organisation, delivery, and human resources, with a view to maintaining high educational standards and achieving its stated objectives.

III. Conclusions

The PSP fully complies with this principle.

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

- Institutionally involve external stakeholders/social partners in the design, adaptation and delivery of the PSP.

- Place particular emphasis on and ensure the internationalisation of the PSP in line with the University's policy on internationalisation.

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 Department of Political Science obtained official approval and has been offering the programme on Political Analysis since 2024, following the publication of the official approval decision in 2022 (law 497/2022). The most recent Senate PSP approval decision is dated 30 May 2025.

The programme, which may accept 4-15 incoming students per academic year, rests on a comprehensive and extensive admissions procedure for the selection of students, to include a final interview with programme candidates.

The PSP student is expected to complete the programme over a minimum of 3 and a maximum of 5 semesters, allowing for extension under exigent circumstances.

Programme requirements include five mandatory and one elective course plus a final thesis, which carries the equivalent of three courses in ECTS credits.

The aim of the PSP is to prepare students for careers in policy and politics-related disciplines, in the public and private sectors.

The PSP's course content includes a strong component on the use of applied quantitative methodologies.

The PSP's courses provide face-to-face seminar instruction in a wide range of subjects, which are in full support of the programme vision as published. Courses listed are: Methodology of Political Science; Comparative Politics, International Political Economy, Governance and Public Policy; Electoral Analysis; Electoral Sociology; and Political Parties.

The PSP requires a high degree of student effort for successful programme completion. The Course Guide provides an estimate of 275 hours of student workload per course; this estimate implies that the full-time student workload for 3 courses per semester is in excess of 800 hours.

The PSP's teaching staff of 6 consists of one full professor, two associate professors and three assistant professors. The Department provides an estimate of one teaching staff member per 5-8 students, depending on the course.

Meetings with the Department and teaching staff were highly informative and provided additional opportunities to inquire about many facets of the structure and process of delivering the PSP in its entirety. The teaching staff is highly qualified and very active in conferences, research and publications.

Meetings and interviews with members of the Department, students and external stakeholders provided additional input on the degree to which the PSP is highly valued for its academic rigor, particularly in quantitative methods, dedication to excellence of the teaching staff, and student-centric learning.

II. Analysis

The design and structure of the Political Analysis programme follow a well-defined process that is fully documented and comprehensive.

The goals of the programme, admission requirements, scientific objectives and desired learning outcome are clearly stated. Department faculty is highly qualified and strongly motivated to excel in teaching and research.

Students, programme graduates and external stake-holders express appreciation for the rigorous academic programme, its orientation to quantitative analysis, and value added of the skills developed during the learning process.

To reach its potential, the programme should receive greater attention in some areas:

- First, the rigor of course content should be enhanced by thorough review of course bibliographies. Classical works should be complemented by recent studies dealing with theoretical and applied aspects of political analysis, to include the implications of the use of Artificial Intelligence in the sphere of electoral politics and public communication.

- Second, the employability of graduates, traditionally addressed through informal processes, needs to be more formalized. Employment prospects should be comprehensively described. The Department should make a greater effort to regularize and communicate practices and procedures to encourage job placement of future graduates, such as, for example, the establishment of career days and job fairs with employers, in the fall and spring, and disseminating information on student internships during the summer or holidays.

- Third, course load metrics should be explained and interpreted in student-friendly and practical terms, in the Course Guide. The ECTS quantification of course work load hours provides an estimate of 275 hours per course; this implies that the full-time student workload for 3 courses per semester is in excess of 800 hours. The Course Guide should help students plan their work schedules by providing a realistic time requirement for efficient time management and successful completion of course work.

III. Conclusions

The PSP is a high-quality programme in all respects.

To reach its full potential, the course content should be reviewed and its bibliography updated and complemented by recent studies dealing with theoretical and applied aspects of political analysis, to include the implications of the use of Artificial Intelligence in the sphere of electoral politics and public communications.

The employment prospects and employability of graduates should be addressed explicitly as part of the Department's programme vision and a process for linking external stakeholders with programme graduates should be formalized.

The Course Guide should clarify and quantify the minimum number of student workload hours required for successful programme completion.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

- The Political Science Department could enhance the international orientation of the Political Analysis PSP by attracting more international students, especially from the Balkans and South-East Europe. To succeed in this endeavor, the programme would have to be offered in English.

- The policy of zero tuition fees should be subjected to thorough cost-benefit analysis. Factors to consider include:

1) The Department's own SWOT analysis, indicating lack of resources for a variety of important Department and faculty activities;
2) Programme graduates' leaving Greece for doctoral study abroad;
3) Deficiencies in maintenance, repair and upkeep of the University's physical infrastructure;
4) Resource constraints and competing resource claims at the national level, in the context of Greece's external indebtedness; and

5) Maintain tuition-free study or tuition discounts and scholarships to students of limited means.

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 PSP demonstrates a clear student-centred orientation, combining lectures, seminars, research-based assignments, and effective use of e-learning tools. Students are actively engaged in the learning process, with particular emphasis placed on the development of both quantitative and qualitative research skills, which were consistently identified as a key added value of the Programme.

Academic support is strengthened through the use of a structured handbook for assignments, which is systematically used for coursework and thesis preparation. The Programme also exhibits a research-oriented character, with some student participation in research projects (such as the "Heteropolitics" project) and academic conferences.

The learning environment is characterized by direct and responsive communication between students and teaching staff, fostering mutual respect and facilitating the prompt resolution of issues. Also, assessment methods are clearly communicated in advance and feedback is provided in a timely and constructive manner. Student feedback mechanisms appear to function effectively, as students reported that their suggestions are taken into account and have, in some cases, led to adjustments in teaching practices.

A well-defined and transparent procedure for student complaints and appeals is in place and operates effectively.

At the same time, it was observed that the Academic Advisor system, although formally established, is not fully implemented in practice, as advisory responsibilities appear to be concentrated in a single individual.

It was also noted that course bibliographies are sometimes communicated later than desirable, limiting early student preparation.

Finally, the Programme currently does not include a structured practical training component, while the degree of its internationalization remains relatively limited.

II. Analysis

The PSP appears to create a supportive and student-centered learning environment, with emphasis on methodological training, active participation of studets and use of digital tools. The responsiveness of teaching staff and the demonstrated use of student feedback are particularly positive elements.

However, the full realization of the student-centered approach seems to somewhat constrained by gaps in the implementation of academic advising and by limited diversification of learning opportunities, particularly in terms of practical training and limited international exposure of the Programme.

III. Conclusions

The PSP is substantially compliant with Principle 3.

It provides a student-centered learning environment with strong academic and methodological foundations.

Nonetheless, further improvements are required, particularly with regard to the effective implementation of academic advising and the enrichment of learning opportunities, including internationalization and practical training.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

- The panel recommends the consistent implementation of the Academic Advisor system, the diversification of learning opportunities through practical training and enhanced internationalization as well as the timely communication of Programme's bibliographies.

- Further strengthening of student participation in research and the development of an alumni tracking mechanism are also encouraged.

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 PSP provides structured and extensive documentation covering the full cycle of the postgraduate studies.

There exists full documentation on the admission process, student categories, credit allocation, thesis requirements, options for part-time study, and possibilities for the granting of extension of the course of study.

Admission eligibility criteria, enumeration of necessary supporting documents,

the phases of the selection processes, explanation of the grading system used for ranking candidates and the final stage of candidate interviews are clearly described in detail.

Academic mentoring is addressed adequately, to include the role of the Advisor assigned to each student. Incoming students are provided with clear guidelines as to ethical research practices and the way in which these are regulated.

A comprehensive e-learning platform is provided to facilitate communication among students and faculty. Documentation is extensive, comprehensive and easily accessible. The regulations and procedures governing selection of thesis topic and the process of development and completion of the thesis requirements are clearly stated.

II. Analysis

The programme demonstrates thorough alignment with formal requirements and quality assurance standards in all key areas.

Admission and progression procedures are clearly documented and include provisions for appeals. Thesis supervision and evaluation processes are well-defined. The mentoring system is formally established, although its practical application could benefit from clearer operational guidelines.

During interviews, students indicated that they had a good understanding of guidelines and regulations governing admission, progression and successful completion of the programme.

The presence of a comprehensive e-learning platform enables online teaching, as needed, allows for identity verification, examination security, and communication between faculty and students.

The regulation of research ethics, including plagiarism, is compliant with legal requirements.

III. Conclusions

The PSP in Political Analysis meets all the requirements of Principle 4, particularly in terms of compliance and structural organization.

Continuous monitoring is warranted to ensure that the students maintain a good understanding of the role of the Academic Advisor.

In general, there is a high level of interaction between faculty and students, which facilitates communication on all aspects of academic policies, including those pertaining to students' rights, responsibilities and obligations for successful completion of the programme.

The programme is assessed as fully compliant.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

- Continuous monitoring is warranted to ensure that the students maintain a good understanding of the role of the Academic Advisor.

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

Teaching staff is adequate, and the teaching staff-student ration is satisfactory. Staff are appropriately trained, and their research specialisations match the programme of study. The recruitment process appears to be fair, objective and transparent, in accordance with national standards and following national regulations.

Historically, the hosting department has been male dominant. During the last years some female academics have been hired, but still the ratio signifies a male dominance.

All staff are research-active and (despite the lack of national funds) strive to

remain mobile, attend conferences and link with departments in other countries.

There are stable research leave (sabbatical) arrangements and generally we were given the impression that career development is not hindered in any way by structural factors, or implicit academic hierarchies.

The Panel had the opportunity to talk and listen to members of the teaching staff and got the impression that they are committed, accessible, understanding, and ready to provide support and guidance to their students. Current and previous students have praised the teaching staff for their commitment and support.

II. Analysis

All staff are highly specialised and produce significant research. Scholarly activity is encouraged at staff level and research outputs are significant and closely linked to what is taught at programme level. There are no irregularities in how staff are hired or develop career-wise.

The hosting department, as a whole, has a positive reputation. It can and it does attract highly qualified academic staff who are familiar with new technologies in research and teaching. Funded and unfunded research is published in national and international publishing houses and journals, and staff maintain productive research links with colleagues at national and international levels.

The Study of Democracy Lab at the hosting department, where the teaching staff participates, is a fine example of interaction with the surrounding society.

III. Conclusions

Hiring and development processes at Aristotle University follow national regulations.

Staff are aware of how to develop their career; they are appropriately trained and conduct research that closely matches the subjects taught on the PSP.

The department does not seem to hinder professional development, but we are not sure that it facilitates adequately the production of scholarly activity and the exchange of research knowledge between all strata of the academic community (including research and taught postgraduate students).

Panel Judgement

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

Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

- Strengthen the presence and the visibility of female academics in the programme.

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 PSP benefits from adequate learning resources and student support services provided at the institutional level, which contribute to a satisfactory teaching and learning environment.

The University offers well-equipped facilities, including lecture rooms, IT infrastructure and access to digital libraries and databases through HEAL-Link, ensuring that students have access to essential academic resources.

Furthermore, the University's Library offers both physical and electronic

resources, as well as dedicated study spaces. Notably, specialized study booths for individual and group work are available, which enhance students' ability to study effectively in different settings.

Student support services are also in place and appear to function satisfactorily. In particular, the University's Career Office is active and contributes to students' professional orientation by supporting their connection with the labour market. In addition, a Psychological Support Centre operates providing counselling services and contributing to student well-being. Students also have access to a student restaurant offering affordable and good-quality meals.

Communication with teaching staff is described as direct and effective, which further supports students in addressing academic or administrative issues in a timely manner. Overall, students appear to be aware of and able to access the available services.

However, certain limitations were identified. Medical support services dedicated specifically to students are relatively limited in scope, with restricted availability, and students rely largely on public healthcare services (hospitals).

In addition, while core academic resources are adequate, access to specialized academic databases appears to be limited to those provided centrally (for all Universities in Greece), with no indication of additional programme-specific domestic and international subscriptions (journals, databases etc.).

II. Analysis

The PSP operates within a well-supported institutional environment that provides the necessary infrastructure and services for learning and student support.

The availability of library resources, study spaces, digital tools, and support services contributes positively to the overall student experience.

Particular strengths include the quality of the library facilities, the availability of specialised study areas, and the active role of the Career Office.

The presence of psychological support services further enhances the support framework and reflects attention to student well-being.

At the same time, certain aspects could be further strengthened. The limited availability of dedicated medical services suggests a gap in student welfare provision.

Additionally, the absence of more specialized or programme-specific academic resources may limit the depth of academic support in certain areas.

III. Conclusions

The PSP is fully compliant with Principle 6.

It provides an adequate and functional set of learning resources and student support services that meet the needs of students and support the effective delivery of the Programme.

Nonetheless, targeted improvements in specific areas, particularly in student healthcare services and access to specialized bibliographic resources, would further enhance the overall support environment.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

- The panel recommends strengthening student welfare provision, particularly by enhancing the availability of medical support services.

- It is also suggested that the PSP explore opportunities to expand access to specialized academic resources where needed.

- Continued support of existing services, including the library, study facilities and career guidance, is encouraged.

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 Aristotle University has established centrally administered mechanisms and procedures for the collection, storing, management, and monitoring of data regarding students, teaching staff, learning resources, and services. The University uses an integrated system to collect information (sis.auth.gr).

The data collected includes key performance indicators, student population profiles, progression, and student satisfaction. Students and administrative and teaching staff are involved in providing and analyzing information.

Student records are diligently kept.

II. Analysis

The electronic procedures for monitoring admission, enrolment, attendance, and student welfare are reliable and efficient.

The protection of student data, intellectual rights, and ownership of student work is secure.

There are also clear rules and procedures for registering and resolving issues and complaints. Overall, the EEAP has the clear impression that the procedures and mechanisms of data collection and management are straightforward, reliable, well-performing, and feeding data into the internal system of quality assurance.

III. Conclusions

- Based on the above analysis, the EEAP finds that the PSP fully complies with Principle 7.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

None.

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 communication of the activities and the general profile of the Department of Political Sciences and the PSP in Political Analysis and the provision of relevant information are useful not only for attracting future, but also for serving current students, other stakeholders and the general public. In this context, the Department of Political Sciences and the PSP in Political Analysis offer information: about the courses offered, the expected learning outcomes, the applied teaching and learning procedures, and the learning opportunities they offer.

In particular, the Department of Political Science has a specialized (bilingual) area on its website for the promotion of the PSP https://www.polsci.auth.gr/basic_page_polsci/ms-political-analysis/

In addition, a separate bilingual version of the PSP in Political Analysis website (https://websites.auth.gr/polan/) is in operation. However, the Panel observed that due to some technical problems, this website was not always functioning properly. The Panel was informed that a new staff member with relevant expertise had already been hired to address these technical issues affecting the website of the PSP.

The maintenance and renewal/updating of the Departmental and the PSP websites is ongoing. They are currently under the supervision of specialized personnel (category ΕΤΕΠ – Special Technical Laboratory Personnel), holders of a university degree (electrical engineer) and a postgraduate degree in

Telecommunications Electronics.

The maintenance/renewal of the content takes place by the lecturers under the supervision of the Director and with the assistance of the EDIP and other auxiliary staff.

Finally, the Department and the PSP use video and printed forms of communication as a means of communication and dissemination of information, as appropriate (especially for the publication of events through posters, programmes, etc.).

II. Analysis

Following the analysis of the information received by its members, the Panel concluded that:

- Key information regarding the academic unit and the PSP is available online.

- The PSP website is published both in the Greek and English languages.

- There is a dedicated segment in the Department's website for the promotion of the PSP.

- All course outlines of the PSP are complete and available online on the PSP website.

- The academic unit Policy for Quality Assurance is available online on the PSP website.

- All information published on the PSP website is up-to-date and it is clear and easily accessible.

III. Conclusions

As far as Principle 8 is concerned, the PSP is in full compliance.

Panel Judgement

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

Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

- Update the PSP website regularly (both the Greek and English versions) and ensure that it works properly.

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 MODIP of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, following the guidelines of the ETHAAE and in close collaboration with the academic units of the Institution, has integrated within the framework of the Institution's Internal Quality Assurance System (ESDP) the processes for the internal and external evaluation of the Institution's PSPs.

The Internal Evaluation Team (OMEA), which is responsible for the internal evaluation of the study programmes and the preparation of external evaluations, is also responsible for the evaluation of the PSP, in collaboration with the

Coordinating Committee of the latter.

The quality policy for the Department's PSPs emphasizes the need for "the continuous improvement of all its educational programmes, in order to provide students with an excellent education that prepares them for a successful career in political science".

In addition, to ensure the qualitative development of its PSPs, the Department follows a policy that actively involves its students in the development of the graduate programmes, regularly requesting their evaluation and incorporating their comments in the redesign of the PSPs.

To achieve this goal, the Department seeks and implements the continuous evaluation of its PSPs. Thus, the department regularly reviews its curriculum, teaching methods and, to the extent possible, its facilities and infrastructure to ensure that they meet the needs of its students.

This quality policy objective is also applied to the PSP in Political Analysis. To this end, the PSP seeks feedback from students and faculty to identify areas for improvement. Feedback is used to examine and implement any changes to the PSP, including updating curricula, changes in teaching methods and upgrades to facilities.

The PSP's internal evaluation is continuous.

The evaluation questionnaires are the standard forms prepared by the MODIP, while the Coordinating Committee, by its decision, may differentiate them to cover the specific characteristics and needs of the PSP or some courses. Their completion is carried out electronically.

The Coordinating Committee and the OMEA of the Department of Political Sciences take systematic actions to ensure that students attend the evaluation. Thanks to the evaluation of courses and teachers, it becomes possible to identify any weaknesses in the execution of the educational work in a timely manner. In addition, the Programme's lecturers regularly have the opportunity to discuss issues and good practices regarding the teaching of courses in their research areas within the framework of the Assembly of the Department of Political Science.

II. Analysis

Following the analysis of the information received by its members, the Panel concluded that:

- The self-assessment procedure of the PSP takes place annually.

- The outcomes of the self-assessment properly recorded and submitted to the QAU/MODIP of the Institution.

- The findings of the self-assessment of the PSP shared within the academic unit.

- The self-assessment of the PSP result in action plans that are communicated to the interested parties.

- The required action plans are implemented.

III. Conclusions

With reference to Principle 9, the PSP is in full compliance.

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

- The PSP's internal evaluation should remain continuous and, if necessary, corrective actions should be taken in a timely and effective manner.

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

This was the first time the PPS was externally evaluated. The process followed the timeframe provided by HAHE, as well as the accompanying regulations and guidelines. It involved members of staff, OMEA, MODIP, students, graduates, and external stakeholders.

II. Analysis

The entire process was conducted professionally and constructively. The Panel's Report and the accompanying recommendations aim to assist HAHE in its decision to accredit the PSP , as well as to improve the PSP

III. Conclusions

The PSP is fully compliant with this principle.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

None.

PART C: CONCLUSIONS

I. Features of Good Practice

- Necessary mechanisms have been put in place to ensure the continuous review of PSP structure, organisation, delivery, and human resources, with a view to maintaining high educational standards and achieving its stated objectives.

- Student-centered learning environment is offered with strong academic and methodological foundations.

- A high level of interaction between faculty and students exists, which facilitates communication on all aspects of academic policies, including those pertaining to students' rights, responsibilities and obligations for successful completion of the programme.

- Apart from serving a invaluable scholarly endeavour, the Study of Democracy Lab serves as the meeting point for faculty, students and external social partners.

- Procedures for monitoring admission, enrolment, attendance, and student welfare are reliable and efficient.

- Student data, intellectual rights, and ownership of student work are protected.

- Clear rules and procedures for registering and resolving issues and complaints are envisaged.

- The maintenance and renewal/updating of the PSP website is ongoing and all the relevant information is offered both in the Greek and English languages.

- The PSP's internal evaluation takes place regularly.

II. Areas of Weakness

-The Academic Advisor system, although formally established, is not fully implemented in practice, as advisory responsibilities appear to be concentrated in a single individual.

-Course bibliographies are sometimes communicated later than desirable, limiting early student preparation.

-The PSP currently does not include a structured practical training component.

-The degree of its internationalization remains relatively limited as the PSP is offered only in Greek language.

- The presence and the visibility of female academics in the programme needs to be further strengthened.

- Access to student healthcare services after certain hours should be secured.

- Access to specialized bibliographic resources needs to be further strengthened.

III. Recommendations for Follow-up Actions

- Institutionally involve external stakeholders/social partners in the design, adaptation, and delivery of the PSP.

- Place particular emphasis on and ensure the internationalisation of the PSP in line with the University's policy on internationalisation. To this end, consider offering the PSP in English.

- Reconsider the tuition free policy.

- Implement consistently the Academic Advisor system and ensure that the students maintain a good understanding of the role of the Academic Advisor.

- Enhance learning opportunities through practical training.

- Strengthen student participation in research.

- Consider developing an alumni tracking mechanism.

- Strengthen the presence and the visibility of female academics in the programme.

- Strengthen student welfare provision, particularly by enhancing the availability of medical support services.

- Explore opportunities to expand access to specialized academic resources where needed.

- Continue supporting existing services, including the library, study facilities, and career guidance.

- Update the PSP website regularly (both the Greek and English versions) and ensure that it works properly.

- The PSP's internal evaluation should remain continuous and corrective actions should be taken, if necessary.

IV. Summary & Overall Assessment

The Principles where full compliance has been achieved are:

1, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10.

The Principles where substantial compliance has been achieved are:

2 and 3.

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
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