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Accreditation Report
for the Postgraduate Study Programme of:

Sustainable Design of Structures against earthquake and other natural risks

Department: Civil Engineering

Institution: Aristotle University of Thessaloniki

Date: 30/03/2026

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 **Sustainable Design of Structures against earthquake and other natural risks** 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 Sustainable Design of Structures against earthquake and other natural risks of the **Aristotle University of Thessaloniki** comprised the following five (5) members, drawn from the HAHE Register, in accordance with Law 4653/2020:

1. HARITOS GEORGE (Chair)
   (Title, Name, Surname)
   College of Engineering, The University of Akron
   (Institution of origin)

2. KALISPERIS LOUKAS
   (Title, Name, Surname)
   Department of Architecture, College of Arts and Architecture, Pennsylvania State University
   (Institution of origin)

3. STATHOPOULOS THEODORE
   (Title, Name, Surname)
   Centre for Building Studies & Department of Building, Civil & Environmental Engineering (BCEE), Faculty of Engineering & Computer Science, Concordia University
   (Institution of origin)

4. Tsivolas Konstantinos
   (Title, Name, Surname)
   National Technical University of Athens
   (Institution of origin)

5. *(Title, Name, Surname)*

   (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 accreditation review of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (AUTh) Postgraduate Study Programme (PSP) "Sustainable Design of Structures against earthquakes and other natural risks" was conducted on March 9 - 14 2026, in accordance with the procedures and guidelines of the Hellenic Authority for Higher Education (HAHE). The review process adhered to the European Standards and Guidelines and National Accreditation requirements, ensuring that the PSP aligns with best practices in higher education.

The EEAP received all documentation relevant to the accreditation process in an easily accessible digital format. The material was complete, thorough, and very well prepared. Ahead of the review, EEAP members studied the documentation provided through HAHE. To coordinate its work and allocate tasks and priorities in advance of the scheduled online presentations by the Department, the EEAP met in private on the first day (Monday, 9 January). The purpose of this meeting was to establish common terms of reference in relation to the accreditation principles and criteria, to allocate responsibilities to individual EEAP members, and to ensure that all members had full access to, and had carefully reviewed the digital materials.

Following this initial private meeting, a session was held with Prof. Ioannis Xenidis, Head of the Department, Prof. Nikolaos Theodosiou, PSP1 Director, Prof. Dimitris Pitilakis, PSP2 Director, Prof. Eva Loukogeorgaki, OMEA Coordinator, Prof. Panagiotis Seferlis, MODIP Committee Member, Mrs. Alexandra Tzaneraki, MODIP Committee Secretary, and Mrs. Polyxeni Poutiou, MODIP Staff. During this session, the Head of the Department, Prof. Ioannis Xenidis, presented a thorough overview of the Department of Civil Engineering, and the Directors of the two PSPs presented the programmes under their respective responsibility. These presentations were followed by a clarifying discussion with EEAP members.

An online tour was subsequently scheduled, during which classrooms, lecture halls, libraries, laboratories, and other facilities related to the two PSPs were presented. This virtual tour was followed by a discussion of the facilities showcased in the video prepared for this purpose.

The final meeting of the first day was a short debrief session among EEAP members intended to reflect on initial impressions and to prepare for the second day of the online review.

On Wednesday, March 11, the EEAP met with the teaching staff of the PSP2 to discuss professional development opportunities, mobility, staff competence, and adequacy in relation to learning outcomes, workload, student evaluation of teaching, links between

teaching and research, staff involvement in applied research, projects, and programme-related research activities, as well as any potential areas of weakness. Present at this meeting were the following AUTh Faculty:
Prof. Anastasios Anastasiadis, Division of Geotechnical Engineering, Assist. Prof. Andreas Kampitsis, Division of Structural Engineering, Prof. Christos Karayannis, Division of Structural Engineering, Assoc. Prof. Konstantinos Kostinakis, Division of Structural Engineering, Assist. Prof. Grigorios Manoukas, Division of Structural Engineering, Emeritus Prof. Kyriazis Pitilakis, Division of Geotechnical Engineering, Dr. Evi Riga, Division of Geotechnical Engineering, Prof. Georgios Stefanou, Division of Structural Engineering, and Dr. Vasiliki Terzi, Division of Structural Engineering.

This was followed by a meeting with students, during which discussions focused on student satisfaction with their study experience and available facilities, student input into quality assurance processes, and priority issues relating to student life and welfare.
A meeting with graduates of the PSP was subsequently held. During this session, the EEAP had the opportunity to discuss graduates' experiences of their postgraduate studies and their subsequent career paths.
The EEAP then met with a group of external stakeholders from both the private and public sectors to gain their perspectives on collaboration with the Department and, more specifically, with the PSP under evaluation.
Following a short debrief meeting among EEAP members, a closure meeting was held with the following members of the Department and the University:
Prof. Ioannis Xenidis, Head of the Department, Prof. Dimitris Pitilakis, PSP2 Director, Assoc. Prof. Konstantinos Katakalos, PSP2 Steering Committee member, Prof. Eva Loukogeorgaki, OMEA Coordinator, Prof. Panagiotis Seferlis, MODIP Committee Member, Mrs. Alexandra Tzaneraki, MODIP Committee Secretary, and Mrs. Polyxeni Poutiou, MODIP Staff.
This meeting provided an opportunity to discuss various points and preliminary findings requiring further clarification and to present the EEAP's key observations.

Throughout all meetings, the EEAP had the opportunity to meet, speak with, and interact with all participants, who were encouraged to express their views freely regarding their overall academic experience, their involvement in the PSP, matters of strategy and vision, and the adequacy of resources. Participants welcomed the opportunity to engage with EEAP members and to share their perspectives. Discussions were informative and constructive, and were conducted in a cooperative manner. All meetings included presentations followed by question-and-answer sessions. All meetings conducted during the review were characterized by professionalism and a strong spirit of cooperation among all parties involved. Throughout the site visit, University representatives engaged openly and constructively, demonstrating a clear commitment to the principles of quality assurance. This Accreditation Report is based on information collected and views expressed during the online meetings, as well as on the internal evaluation report and other documentation

submitted to HAHE before and during the review process.

The Panel drafted the Accreditation Reports for both PSPs on Thursday and Friday, 12-13 March 2026, and worked to complete and Finalize both Reports beginning with Saturday, 14 March 2026.

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 PSP program "Sustainable Design of Structures against earthquake and other natural risks" (SDS) was designed within the framework of the broader strategy of the Institution, so that it constitutes a natural specialization and deepening in the fied of sustainable design of engineering projects against earthquakes and natural hazards, subjects that are partially taught in the Department's Undergraduate Program. This PSP was designed considering the applicable relevant regulatory framework and the official approval procedures of the PSP by the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (AUTh), while also envisaging the participants and the approval bodies of the programme by the Assembly of the Department of Civil Engineering of the AUTh.

The SDS PSP was established in 1998 and was fully revised and updated in 2018. The decisions of the Senate of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki re-establishing and approving the operating regulations of this PSP were published in the Government Gazette of the Hellenic Republic on October 16, 2024 (ISSUE SECOND Page No. 5725). Since its inception in 1998, more than 400 students have graduated from this PSP.

The scientific field of this PSP focuses primarily on specialization in earthquake engineering and the reduction of risk against earthquakes, as well as against other natural hazards, such as floods and landslides, with the goal of sustainable development. The purpose of this PSP is the comprehensive specialization and training of civil engineers in the design of technical projects which can withstand natural hazards, with seismic risk being the most prominent and particularly significant in Greece.

This PSP is offered annually and enrolls up to a maximum of 40 students per class, although the actual number of admitted students each year is typically much smaller (less than 20).

This PSP offers courses that enrich the theoretical training of postgraduate students while simultaneously enhancing their research skills. Students engage with core principles and concepts of engineering through a multifaceted, interdisciplinary approach, drawing on theoretical and research perspectives. Upon completion of their studies, graduates of the program will have the ability to recognize and assess natural hazards and the risk to infrastructures and networks. They will be able to design structures and other technical projects, as well as infrastructures that will survive earthquakes and other natural hazards, such as landslides and floods, by utilising the most modern design approaches which are in line with current regulations, and will be able to assess the overall risk of structures, infrastructures, and networks against a variety of natural hazards.

Twenty (20) faculty members of the Department, plus one Emeritus Professor, and one

member of the Special Teaching Staff teach regularly the courses of this PSP. In semesters where teaching needs cannot be fully met by these staff, additional members of the Department's Special Teaching Staff may undertake teaching duties on an ad hoc basis, according to their areas of expertise.

The PSP has a duration of three semesters. The curriculum is rationally distributed across the three semesters of study in accordance with the workload defined by the ECTS system. To obtain the MSc degree, students are required to complete 30 ECTS during each of the first two semesters by successfully completing ten (10) compulsory courses, and they are awarded thirty (30) additional ECTS in the third semester during which they research and prepare their thesis, thus earning a total of 90 ECTS.

Specifically, during their 1st semester they need to successfully complete the following Courses: Geotechnical Seismic Engineering and Natural Hazards, Analysis of Structures Under Dynamic Loads, Simulation and Analysis of Structures according to modern regulations, Experimental Seismic Engineering, and Seismic Design of Structures made of load-bearing masonry.

During their 2nd semester, the courses they must complete are: Seismic Design and Assessment of Buildings and Bridges made of Concrete, Design of geotechnical projects against earthquakes and other natural hazards, Earthquake damage, repairs, and strengthening of building projects, Risk assessment of engineering projects against natural hazards, Seismic Design of High-rise Buildings and special Steel Structures.

In their the 3rd semester: Research, Preparation, and Defence of their Postgraduate Thesis.

The teaching language is Greek.

This PSP does not include an internship component.

This PSP awards an MSc Degree with the title: "Sustainable Design of Structures against earthquakes and other natural risks." The successful completion of the PSP program leads to level seven (7) of the National and European Qualifications Framework according to article 47 of law 4763/2020 (A'254).

The fees for the PSP are 650 Euros per Semester for a programme total of 1,950 Euros.

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 EEAP has found that the Quality Assurance Policy (QAP) developed and implemented by the Department of Civil Engineering of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki follows that approved by the Senate of the Institution. This QAP focuses on the continuous improvement of educational work and research, as well as the interconnection with society and the labour market. Moreover, the Department sought and incorporated in its QAP the views of students, alumni, and stakeholders.

The Postgraduate Program (PSP) "Sustainable Design of Structures against earthquake and other natural risks" (SDS) implements and is committed to follow this quality policy, as it believes that its tenets strengthen its academic profile and subject matter, pursues its strategic objectives, which are revisited annually, thus facilitating its continuous improvement.

The quality policy of this PSP is shaped through a set of strategic objectives. They include:

a. The continuous improvement of quality in education and research,
b. the continuous improvement of the services provided and the operation of the PSP,
c. the strengthening of extroversion, and
d. the interconnection with the labour market, and with professional and scientific bodies.

Assigned to each strategic objective are specific goals, quality objectives, and target values which are monitored continuously by the Internal Evaluation Group with the help of a set of indicators and expected progress of each is reviewed annually.

The structure, organization, course content, expected outcomes and the overall design of this PSP were updated upon its re-establishment in 2018. The duration of study in this PSP is set at a minimum of three academic semesters, which include two semesters of teaching, while the third semester is devoted to preparing the MSc thesis.

The PSP SDS follows the European and National Qualifications Framework and the diploma awarded is at level 7. The OMEA and the Coordinating Committee (CC) evaluate the learning outcomes, taking into account the evaluation of students and self-evaluation of teachers.

The teaching staff of this PSP is mainly composed of, but is not limited to, faculty members of the AUTh SDS, who are recruited and developed in accordance with the procedures and conditions provided for by applicable legislation. Additionally, this PSP assigns teaching work to other esteemed professors, researchers and scientists, who have specialized knowledge and extensive experience in the subjects of this MSc.

The EEAP found that the graduates of the SDS PSP are systematically accepted for work or PhD studies at home and abroad as a testament of the high level and relevancy of the knowledge they have acquired through their studies at this AUTh PSP.

The good functioning of this Postgraduate Program is ensured through support services offered by both the Department and the Institution to its students,

namely the Department of Civil Engineering Secretariat, the Libraries, the Computer Island, and the Student Welfare Services.

The EEAP also learned that the financial resources of the PSP SDS, come to a significant extent from tuition fees, and are used for equipment and software, consumables, administrative and technical support, educational trips, publicity, and the like, in support of the needs of this PSP.

To assure the quality of the PMS SDS, the Director of the PMS and the Department OMEA collect academic statistics through the MODIP information system, evaluate them, and prepare an Internal Evaluation Report on an annual basis. The results of these internal evaluations are presented and discussed at the Department meeting and are used to achieve the continuous improvement of all aspects of this PSP.

The quality policy and the objectives of the PSP EPSD are communicated to students and all interested parties and are accessible on the PSP website.

II. Analysis

The EEAP carefully examined all information contained in the relevant documents, as well as the information provided by the Department Chair, the PSP Director, and several PSP faculty members. The Panel found that the Department of Civil Engineering and this PSP academic unit have established and carefully implement a Quality Assurance Policy which is in line with the expectations of the Institution, and that they are committed to the continuous improvement of this PSP.

The goals set forth for this PSP are carefully thought out. During meetings with the Panel all - current students, alumni, and stakeholders - expressed their satisfaction with the structure and organisation of the curriculum. Both alumni and stakeholders clearly indicated that there exists a great need for this PSP's graduates both in the private and the public sectors. Without exception, current and past students expressed their satisfaction with the qualifications and devotion of the teaching staff, and with both the effectiveness of teaching and the ready availability of both the Faculty and the Administrative Staff in the Secretariat whenever they needed support. Moreover, all graduates interviewed by the Panel expressed their satisfaction with the opportunities for securing employment upon completion of this degree, both in Greece and Abroad.

The EEAP also found that the curriculum as well as the specified learning outcomes for this PSP agree with the European and National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education - Level 7. Specific quality goals are defined, discussed, and reviewed on a systematic and continuous basis. These goals are judged relevant, appropriate, and measurable. This academic unit has clearly demonstrated its commitment to the promotion of the quality and effectiveness of teaching and research, as indicated by Department actions, policies and initiatives, and student/graduate/stakeholder opinions. Income from tuition fees appears to be managed effectively.

III. Conclusions

The EEAP was pleased to find that the Institution and the Department of Civil Engineering have established and apply a Quality Assurance Policy for the MSc "Sustainable Design of Structures against earthquake and other natural risks" which ensures that it is monitored and evaluated on a systematic basis. This well-defined process ensures this PSP's continuous monitoring and improvement. Without exception, all students, graduates, and alumni stakeholders and social partners the Panel interviewed expressed their satisfaction with the curriculum and organisation of the PSP, as well as with the Faculty's knowledge, experience, and commitment to their students, and with the careful and capable assistance of the Secretariat to the students throughout their duration of their studies.

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

NONE

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 EEAP was generally satisfied with the development and delivery of this PSP on Sustainable Design of Structures against earthquake and other natural risks of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. The programme was first founded in 1998 and it was fully updated in 2018. More than 400 engineers have graduated from this program through its inception. The PSP programme is well designed and covers a broad selection of topics in the field of Sustainable Structural Design including specializations in the effects of seismic loading, as well as other dynamic loading and natural risks. The 3-semester program structure consists of 5 core courses (30 ECTS) in the first semester and another 5 core courses (30 ECTS) in the second semester followed by a postgraduate diploma work in the area of the student's selection in the third semester (30 ECTS). The program aims at the generation of knowledge, to cover the needs of public and private sector enterprises in terms of engineers with high level knowledge in sustainable environmental design and the study of natural risks.

A special feature of this programme is that all 10 courses available are core, i.e. students admitted do not have the opportunity of specialization in a particular area of their choice with the exception of the diploma thesis, which will help each student to study in their particular domain of interest. There is minimum overlapping with the content of program courses or any similar undergraduate courses. There is a maximum number of students admitted each year (40) but the actual number of new students is low – about 12 on average during the last 5 years. Admission criteria are very good, and the admission of applicants is quite selective. The delivery of the programme is entirely in the presential mode (by physical presence) and exclusively in the Greek language. However, the program is flexible to admit online students under exceptional circumstances. The tuition fees for this programme are 1950 Euros (for all 3 semesters), some of which - typically 4% - is used for well-appreciated student scholarships. There was no evidence of any formal student participation in the curriculum development, although no complaint has been expressed to the EEAP in this regard when talking with the students, graduates and stakeholders, some of whom have been recent or non-recent graduates from this PSP.

II. Analysis

The EEAP was impressed by the success of this program due, among other things, to the hard work, efforts and dedication of the Director and the faculty members teaching in this PSP. This success can also be attributed to the high quality of students admitted to this programme and the field of study, which is in the center

of interest of the society in recent years. Indeed, floods, fires, snowstorms and other natural disasters have affected the country in abundance. The number of admitted students (only 11 this year) is low, but their quality is high. However, an increase in the number of applicants would be desirable to increase the financial viability of the programme without lowering its admission standards.

In addition, it is also remarkable to mention that the numerous stakeholders interviewed by the EEAP panel expressed a very positive opinion of the programme and the technical and professional skills of the programme graduates both in depth and breadth. These stakeholders have known - or worked with - the graduates or have taken the programme themselves.

Finally, the EEAP discussed the possibility of formal development of an External Advisory Board (EAB) and suggested including in its membership the stakeholders of the programme output, for instance senior government or industry officials and other experts from academia and technology to advise the PSP administrators regarding the strategic development of this programme, potential curriculum enhancements, research, technological and socioeconomic needs and the like. The EEAP learned that such a body was already established for the Department of Civil Engineering dealing with all its programmes.

III. Conclusions

The PSP on Sustainable Design of Structures against earthquake and other natural risks of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki is highly successful and complies fully with the HAHE requirements of Principle 2. However, this PSP could be enhanced and enjoy even higher success with the formal establishment of an External Advisory Board providing critical input on issues such as curriculum evolution enhancement of case studies and fieldwork experience, as well as better employability of the graduates of this programme.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

To enhance adherence to Principle 2 and to improve an already excellent programme, the EEAP recommends the following:

R2.1. Establish and publicize an External Advisory Board made of senior government/industry/higher education officials to advise the programme administrators

regarding the strategic development and enhancement of this programme.
R2.2. Establish a formal process for the active participation of students in the curriculum development of the programme.
R2.3. Consider increasing recruitment efforts to increase the number of admission applications to this programme.

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 in Sustainable Design of Structures against earthquakes and other natural risks is a three-semester academic programme. The overwhelming majority of the students' background is civil engineering. The first two semesters contain 5 courses each, and the final semester is dedicated to a thesis project. Each semester has 30 ECTS with the majority of courses at 7 ECTS each. The PSP does not include a formal thesis preparation seminar or a Research Methods course. A Research Methods seminar is offered at the beginning of the second semester. The courses are mainly conducted through lectures, while it is worth mentioning that some of them contain laboratory exercises, but it is reported that additional laboratory exercises and more sophisticated and contemporary software could be helpful. The Thesis Project, as implemented, can either be research-associated or literature-based.

According to the curriculum guide, the predominant method of course assessment are short-answer questions, closed-book questions, and multiple-choice questions. In most courses there is a practical exercise using a sophisticated computer program. Project based learning and assessment is a strong competent of the PSP. The exam period takes place at the end of each semester and the successful completion of each course is mainly based on the performance on these final exams, projects and performance throughout the semester.

The university provides students with an evaluation system at the end of each academic semester. The evaluation system is given in the form of a questionnaire, where students can rate the courses, lecturers, lecture content etc. The same platform provides an opportunity for students to express any complaint, dissatisfaction, or even harassment.

II. Analysis

The curriculum of this postgraduate course includes a wide variety of courses covering current and topical issues in the appropriate fields. Consequently, the theoretical training of the students at the end of the PSP degree is quite excellent since they will have expanded and specialised their knowledge in this field. With respect to the acquisition of practical experience, during the labs, the curriculum includes various laboratory exercises in the context of specific courses, internships, and thesis projects. Through the combination of all of these, following this PSP degree, the student should have gained a satisfactory level of experience in the research areas of their particular subfields. It is worth mentioning that most of the students and graduates suggested the need for additional laboratory training in various contemporary software, in order to be better prepared for the work market.

The courses' and teachers' evaluation system are widespread among students. Unfortunately, a very small percentage of students participate in the internal evaluation process. Those who completed the questionnaires did not express any major dissatisfaction.

The majority of students and graduates informed the EEAP that most of them chose this PSP in order to be more successful at work or to find a job thanks to

this diploma. Students want to participate in Erasmus+ or an internship but due to the demands of the PSP and the lack of formal opportunities through the programme, this was not possible.

III. Conclusions

The curriculum of the postgraduate programme in Sustainable Design of Structures against earthquakes and other natural risks is in line with the standards of the HAHE, as it is of very good quality. Graduates are provided with strong knowledge and experience in both the professional and research fields.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

The EEAP recommends that:

R3.1 Encouragement should be provided to the students to carry out an applied research thesis, as this would help to develop more contacts and relationships with stakeholders or public entities.

R3.2 A one-day conference to connect graduates with the market could be organized annually.

R3.3 The student theses should be posted on the webpage of the programme.

R3.4 Invitation for lecturing to several word leaders in the field (from abroad or from Greece) should be considered.

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

Student admission for the PSP in Sustainable Design of Structures against earthquakes and other natural risks is available to 40 students per year. Eligible for admission are graduates from various fields of studies of engineering studies,

but the overwhelming majority of the applicants are graduates of the undergraduate programme in Civil Engineering from the University of Thessaloniki. Acceptance to the programme is restricted based on a well-defined selection procedure. The selection procedures are clearly described in the required supporting documents, which also contain information for the student rights and obligations, and ways allowing to monitor their progression. Research ethics regulation, regulation of studies, internship, mobility, and student assignments are also provided.

The ratio of women/men is balanced. Some applicants have a part time / full time job, and they attend the PSP as an additional load. This problem could be further accommodated by offering some flexible attendance requirements. A hybrid method of teaching exists, live and remote (30% of the programme in distance learning is the maximum), which is helpful.

The duration of the PSP is one and a half year (three semesters, 90 ETCS in total). Students are evaluated at the end of each semester. Students are also required to write a research thesis, which can be either research-based or project based. The PSP diploma allows the students to get a job in the public or private sector (research institutes, private companies, etc) with specific requirements, or to further develop themselves by pursuing a PhD degree.

There is very good communication between the students and faculty members of the PSP, who are constantly available in helping the students and provide the necessary information. Progress of the students of the PSP is followed closely by the faculty members.

The meeting of the EEAP with current and past students of the PSP provided a positive impression of the quality of this PSP. All participants were enthusiastic and positive concerning their experience and knowledge received. Several past students are excelling in private companies in good positions, and this indicates the importance of this PSP. Several current and past students requested more practical training courses. Concerning the quality and number of courses, students pointed out that courses are well-structured and easy to follow. Similarly, all students and faculty members emphasised that the PSP is rewarding, greatly helping their development.

The mobility of the students is not satisfactory, even though Erasmus+ and other mobility platforms are possible.

The degree certificate template is provided electronically to the students upon completion of the PSP.

II. Analysis

This PSP provides an important and interesting basis for further studies in the fields of Sustainable Design of Structures against earthquakes and other natural risks. The PSP fulfils an important need for education and training of allied Polytechnic Schools.

The length of studies of this PSP is generally considered satisfactory from the EEAP. However, the EEAP thinks that more sophisticated software is necessary, especially for simulation purposes, as well as the offering of some elective

courses.
The EEAP considers that students' mobility is very limited.

III. Conclusions

This is a well-organized and designed PSP on the fields of Sustainable Design of Structures against earthquakes and other natural risks. The laboratory training, as well as the length of the studies for graduation are satisfactory. An effort should be made to use Erasmus+ more actively and other existing mobility platforms.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

The EEAP recommends that:

R4.1 More efforts towards the recruitment of additional students by highlighting the benefits of completing the programme should be made.

R4.2 The creation of a more extensive library of applied thesis topics, from which the students could select should be implemented, in collaboration with stakeholders and public entities. Promote practical training with the professionals and industry partners from the private and public sector.

R4.3 The organization of an informative day where the various stakeholders could explain the possibilities of mobility, job opportunities, and the like should be considered.

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 criteria and recruitment procedures for faculty members and Collaborating Teaching Staff (CTS) are outlined in the Greek State laws. The Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, being a public university, must adhere to strict regulations, akin to all Greek public universities. The EEAP found that the teaching staff of the PSP on Sustainable Design of Structures against earthquake and other natural risks have excellent qualifications to teach the courses offered by the programme. The workload of teaching staff is high and there is no extra compensation for teaching at this PSP. This workload proves to be challenging and demanding, allowing only limited time for research activities. However, research activities and research publications are carried out and several published articles are based on the students' work on their diploma thesis. This is an excellent link of teaching and

research. It is noteworthy that the mean h-index of the professors teaching in this PSP is 14 (based on SCOPUS) and 24 (based on GOOGLE-SCHOLAR).
It is also interesting to mention that the course evaluations are very good, but the percentage of student participation is low. However, the student satisfaction of the quality of teaching became clear during the meetings of the EEAP with the students and graduates of the programme.

II. Analysis

The commitment of the teaching staff is superb, and the students have appreciated their excellent interaction with the professors. Such collaborations have boosted the morale and encouraged the professorial staff to enhance their teaching skills to serve better the student interests. Notwithstanding financial restrictions, conference participation and other interactions with the international scientific community lead to the necessary professional development of teaching staff.
Academic counselling has been activated and the maximum number of students per advisor is very low, which is extremely good. As also confirmed by the students and graduates the EEAP met, the faculty members teaching in the programme are very enthusiastic about teaching their subject matter. Professors' accessibility to the students both when courses are offered and during the time of the diploma work was more than adequate.
Although this PSP is not generally research oriented, the teaching staff has very good research profiles with most of them having significant research output. This should be well highlighted in the university's web pages. Several of the students in this programme are interested in continuing their studies at the Ph.D. level

III. Conclusions

Faculty members have excellent qualifications, and they are highly capable to teach the topics they are assigned to teach; their teaching is enthusiastic. Students appreciate their teachers' efforts, and this makes the program very successful. The EEAP concluded that the programme fully complies with the requirements of Principle 5.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

None

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 is funded through tuition fees, while up to 30% of the students are eligible for tuition fee exemption in accordance with the applicable regulatory framework. Part of the collected tuition fees is reinvested in activities that directly benefit students, such as the organisation of educational field trips. The programme is delivered entirely through face-to-face teaching. However, in some cases and where justified, there is the possibility of distance or hybrid teaching for up to 30% of the course content, allowing flexibility in addressing specific student needs.

The Department provides the necessary infrastructure and facilities for the

delivery of the programme, including lecture rooms and well-equipped laboratories that support the teaching and research activities of the students. Students also have access to the necessary specialised software required for their courses and for the preparation of their thesis. Students benefit from full access to the libraries of the department and the institution, including both physical infrastructure and electronic databases. The main library also offers specialised services and tools to support students with disabilities, ensuring inclusive access to learning resources.

Although the administrative workload of the PSP suggests that additional personnel is needed, students have access to the available electronic administrative services and did not express any complaints regarding administrative support during the meetings with the panel. The responsibilities and job descriptions of the administrative and support staff are clearly documented.

Students also have access to a wide range of support services provided by the University, as well as institutional committees such as the Accessibility Committee and the Gender Equality Committee. Information regarding the available support services is published on the PSP's website. Finally, the programme has established the institution of the Academic Advisor, although the use of this support mechanism currently depends mainly on student initiative, and there are no formally scheduled meetings between students and their academic advisors.

II. Analysis

The PSP appears to have adequate resources, infrastructure, and institutional support mechanisms to effectively cover the teaching and learning needs. The availability of lecture rooms, specialised laboratories, software resources, and access to library services creates a supportive academic environment for postgraduate studies. The possibility of hybrid teaching in exceptional cases demonstrates a degree of flexibility that supports students with different personal circumstances. The University provides a wide range of student support services that are well documented on the PSP's website. These services contribute positively to the overall support framework of the programme.

III. Conclusions

The PSP meets the expectations of Principle 6.

Panel Judgement

Principle 6: Learning resources and student support	
Fully compliant	**X**

Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

R 6.1 The PSP may consider establishing periodic meetings between students and their academic advisors to further enhance academic guidance.

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 PSP utilises the institutional information systems and quality assurance tools developed by the university and HAHE for the systematic collection and monitoring of data related to the programme's operation and performance. Within the framework of the annual internal monitoring process, relevant data are collected and analysed to support the evaluation and continuous improvement of the PSP. More specifically, the collected information covers several key dimensions of the programme's operation. These include the research activity of the teaching staff, such as participation in research projects, scientific publications, and citations of their published work. In addition, information is gathered regarding the educational activity of the teaching staff, including the courses taught and the evaluation of teaching effectiveness by students. Students

also have a chance to evaluate the administrative and supportive services.
The system also records detailed information about the courses offered in the PSP, including educational material, learning objectives and learning outcomes, teaching methods, assessment methods, and course content. Furthermore, data are collected concerning the profile and academic performance of students, as well as the longitudinal evolution of the student population at the Departmental, School, or institutional level, with classification criteria including the level of studies, the academic year, and gender. In addition, at the completion of their studies, graduates are invited to evaluate the overall PSP, providing feedback regarding their educational experience and the quality of the PSP.

II. Analysis

The systematic collection and monitoring of data related to research activity, teaching performance, course design, student progression, student characteristics and evaluation contribute to the effective internal evaluation of the PSP. The availability of such information enables the programme to obtain a comprehensive overview of its academic performance and to monitor key indicators related to teaching quality, student satisfaction, and student progression. The inclusion of graduate feedback regarding the overall PSP further strengthens the internal quality assurance process, as it provides valuable insights from students who have completed the full educational cycle. This allows the PSP to identify strengths and potential areas for improvement from the perspective of its graduates.

III. Conclusions

The PSP meets the expectations of 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 PSP maintains a dedicated website that serves as the primary platform for disseminating public information about the programme. The website is user-friendly, well-structured, and provides comprehensive information regarding the academic organisation and operation of the PSP. More specifically, the website features the e-Study Guide, detailed course descriptions, and clear information on the application and admission procedures. It also provides links to the academic profiles of all faculty members involved in the programme, allowing prospective students to access information about their academic and research work. In addition, the website contains information about available student support services, the applicable regulations governing the PSP, and contact details for further inquiries by prospective candidates. The website also includes information about academic activities such as seminars and invited lectures, which contribute to the academic visibility of the PSP and provide insight into its scientific engagement. The PSP has also established a documented and clearly defined procedure for the maintenance and updating of the PSP website, ensuring the systematic review and renewal of the information provided.

However, certain aspects of public information could still be further enhanced. In particular, educational field trips organised within the framework of the PSP are not sufficiently promoted through the website, despite their potential to increase the programme's visibility and attractiveness. Another issue concerns the availability of information in English. Although the website technically supports an English version and several key pieces of information are provided in English, a considerable portion of the content remains available only in Greek.

II. Analysis

The PSP website provides an effective and accessible source of public information, ensuring transparency regarding the PSP's academic structure, regulations, and admission procedures. The availability of information about courses, faculty members, academic activities, support services, and previous theses allows prospective students to gain a comprehensive understanding of the PSP and its academic environment. Nevertheless, the incomplete availability of information in English reduces the programme's accessibility for international audiences. Expanding the English-language content would significantly improve the PSP's ability to attract and inform prospective international candidates.

III. Conclusions

The PSP meets the expectations of Principle 8.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

R 8.1 Providing complete information in English on the PSP website would improve accessibility for international students and strengthen the visibility of the PSP beyond the national context.

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 self-assessment of the programme is based on procedures and continuous improvement of the level of educational offerings along with supporting the learning environment, ensuring the current character of the programme, and the strategic goals of the Institution. Factors considered for the assessment include students' workload, students' expectations, and the assessment of the students. Also, scientific, and technological developments, societal and job market needs, and national, European, and international environmental policies are considered. The programme director collects information from the delivery of the programme, along with scientific, technological, business, and societal developments. The director collects all requests for changes to the programme,

such as changes to the course content, course schedule and calendar, faculty workload, proposals for new courses, etc. Using the student course/instructor evaluations along with requests related to suggested changes, a proposal is submitted to the Departmental assembly.

The annual report is submitted to QAU for review, and recommendations are shared. Decisions are made at the end of the academic year and are implemented at the beginning of the following academic year.

II. Analysis

Through the process of internal review and continuous improvement plan, the positive aspects of the programme are reinforced, such as by adding new topics based on scientific developments. The collected information is analysed, and the programme is adapted to ensure that it is up to date. There is a strategically designed consideration for improving courses using the course evaluations by students. Programme weaknesses are immediately addressed when problems are identified with the programme in students' evaluation. Remediation of knowledge gaps of the students was achieved through special seminars, extended office hours for the faculty to assist students, in addition to the availability of the academic advisor.

The PSP is reviewed and revised regularly but without the direct involvement of students and other stakeholders. Extension of collaborations with international laboratories and further involvement in external activities such as conferences should be common practice. Seminars from alumni and international researchers should be promoted.

III. Conclusions

The self-assessment procedure of the programme should take place annually. External reviews and evaluations by stakeholders and alumni should be implemented and formalized.

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 EEAP recommends that:

R9.1 The students' participation and the involvement of external stakeholders in the study programme revisions should be enhanced further.

R9.2 Enrichment and update of learning materials should be more frequent.

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 PSP has not undergone an external evaluation until now despite its 27 years of existence. However, after its re-establishment in 2018, the parent Department was evaluated and fully accredited by the Hellenic Quality Assurance and Accreditation Agency (HQA), the pre-runner of HAHE. Several recommendations included in the above-mentioned accreditation report pertinent to the PSPs have been implemented. The Institution, through its Quality Assurance Unit (QAU/MODIP), organizes and supports the external evaluation procedures of the PSP according to the specific guidelines and directions provided by HAHE.

II. Analysis

Given the articulated quality assurance and control policy and procedures (see Principle 1), the experience of the Department administration and teaching staff, as well as the experience of the University QAU (MODIP) administration and staff with the review and accreditation process, it is expected that the PSP will fulfil the expected requirements of Principle 10.

Measures should be taken regarding the systematic and documented feedback by students, alumni, and external stakeholders, as well as the implementation of the programme's periodic internal evaluation findings. The participation of alumni and external stakeholders in the annual PSP evaluation should be made in a formal, structured, and documented manner.

III. Conclusions

The Department and PSP administration, faculty, and staff are aware of the importance of external evaluation and accreditation. The recommendation made by the EEAP will result in an enhanced implementation and documentation of quality policy and continuous development of the programme.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

R10.1 Develop a formalized and systematic process for adopting the recommendations of external evaluations, along with a detailed and documented action plan, as well as implementation timelines.

PART C: CONCLUSIONS

I. Features of Good Practice

- High quality of educational process and curriculum, following the best contemporary practices.
- Excellent collaboration between teaching staff, administrators, and students.
- The preparation that the programme affords their alumni which manifest itself in excellent and remarkable professional careers.
- Ratio of academic staff to students.

II. Areas of Weakness

- Interaction with the local community partners, both in the public and private sectors.
- Updating and improvement of existing infrastructure.
- Declining number of students.
- Inadequate promotion of the programme online and in social media.
- Limited technical and administrative support and resources.

III. Recommendations for Follow-up Actions

- Establish an External Advisory Board (EAB) to enhance the further development and delivery of the programme and to create a permanent link with the outside professional world.
- Consult with all stakeholders in the development of the curriculum on an annual basis, at a minimum. Encourage research thesis project, in collaboration with partners and stakeholders. Enhance the collaboration with stakeholders in the professional development of teaching staff. Create an extensive library of thesis topics, from which the students could select.
- Institutionalize annual external reviews and evaluations, organized by the Programme itself every 4 years. Implement promptly the evaluation recommendations.
- Implement annual one-day workshops (colloquia) in order to connect graduates with the market.
- Collaborate with social bodies of competence, community authorities and stakeholders for project development and implementation.
- Develop a proper electronic presence which would include:
  - students' theses
  - organizing of its alumni
  - Google Scholar, Web of Science, ORCID and/or Scopus ID for each Staff member
  - relevant information for prospective incoming ERASMUS+ students
- Enhance the recruitment of students highlighting the benefits of completing the programme.
- Improve course evaluation procedures to increase their effectiveness.

IV. Summary & Overall Assessment

The Principles where full compliance has been achieved are:

The Principles where full compliance has been achieved are: 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10

The Principles where substantial compliance has been achieved are:

The Principles where substantial compliance has been achieved are: 0

The Principles where partial compliance has been achieved are:

The Principles where partial compliance has been achieved are: 0

The Principles where failure of compliance was identified are:

The Principles where failure of compliance was identified are: 0

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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