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Accreditation Report
for the Postgraduate Study Programme of:

Food Science and Nutrition

Department: Agriculture

Institution: Aristotle University of Thessaloniki

Date: 16/02/2026

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

Report of the Panel appointed by the HAHE to undertake the review of the Postgraduate Study Programme of **Food Science and Nutrition** 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 Food Science and Nutrition of the **Aristotle University of Thessaloniki** comprised the following five (5) members, drawn from the HAHE Register, in accordance with Law 4653/2020:

1. Soultanas Panagiotis (Chair)
   (Title, Name, Surname)
   School of Chemistry, University of Nottingham
   (Institution of origin)

2. ALVANIDES (ΑΛΒΑΝΙΔΗΣ) SERAPHIM (ΣΕΡΑΦΕΙΜ)
   (Title, Name, Surname)
   TU Dortmund University, Germany
   (Institution of origin)

3. KATOPODES NIKOLAOS
   (Title, Name, Surname)
   University of Michigan
   (Institution of origin)

4. LIOLIOU APHRODITE
   (Title, Name, Surname)
   International Hellenic University
   (Institution of origin)

5. TSIAMI AMALIA
   (Title, Name, Surname)
   University of West London, UK
   (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.

In preparation for the review and assessment of the PSP Food Science and Nutrition, the External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel (EEAP) reviewed a multitude of documentary material provided by the Hellenic Authority of Higher Education (HAHE), which included background information and guidance on the review and accreditation process, detailed material and data related to the programme under evaluation, such as the programme accreditation proposal and associated appendices.
The programme review was conducted via Zoom teleconferences, organized and coordinated by HAHE and the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (AUTH). The schedule and agenda of the evaluation were as stated below (all times refer to Athens time).
Monday, 26 January 2026

15:00-16:00 hrs, Preliminary private meeting of the EEAP. Discussion of the programme under review; assignment of writing parts of the draft accreditation report among the members of the EEAP.

16:00-17:30 hrs. Welcome meeting and overviews of the three postgraduate study programmes; PSP1: Management of Soil, Water, Energy Resources and Rural Environment, PSP2: Food Science and Nutrition, and PSP3: Food and Beverage Legislation. At this meeting were present the Head of the School of Agriculture, representatives from MODIP and OMEA, and the directors of the three PSPs. The overview presentations and discussions followed provided information on the history, academic profile, status and future developments, strengths and areas of concern, degree compliance to the quality standards for accreditation, internal procedures, course examinations, review of students' progress, course/instructor evaluations, etc for all three PSPs.

17:30-18:30 hrs: Links to watch videos about the AUTH and the School of Agriculture were provided. Separate video links were provided for each of the three PSPs. These videos were useful for the EEAP to assess classrooms, lecture halls, library facilities, laboratories and other related facilities that support the three PSPs. All the provided videos were viewed by EEAP members at their own convenient times. During the meeting a discussion was held with administrative staff to further evaluate facilities and learning resources as well as any relevant administrative support provided for the successful delivery of the three PSPs.

18:30-19:00 hrs: A final private meeting of the EEAP to debrief, summarize and reflect on the information provided and evaluated during the first day of meetings.

Tuesday, 27 January 2026

The EEAP was fully occupied in multiple back-to-back meetings from 15:00 to 20:30 hrs to evaluate the PSP1 Management of Soil, Water, Energy Resources and Rural Environment from the same department.

Wednesday, 28 January 2026

15:00-15:45 hrs: The EEAP met with the teaching staff of the PSP to discuss several issues relating to staff such as professional development, mobility, student evaluations of teaching, links between research and teaching, teaching staff expertise relating to this PSP, learning outcomes and any potential areas for improvement. The EEAP member Dr. Seraphim Alvanides could not attend this session.

16:00-16:45 hrs: The EEAP met with student representatives of this PSP to discuss their overall experience so far, their satisfaction with teaching, facilities and support. The EEAP sought to obtain student input on any other aspect of student life and welfare too.

17:30-18:15 hrs: The EEAP met with graduates of this PSP to discuss their experience from their studies and whether their careers were supported by taking this PSP, as well as their current connections to the PSP.

18:30-19:15 hrs: The EEAP met with employers, social partners and stakeholders from the private and public sectors to discuss their relations with the PSP, their input in shaping the study program, their overall experience with the PSP and its relevance to the job market and the national economy.

19:30-20:00 hrs: The EEAP met privately via the HAHE zoom link to debrief for the day's discussions and findings.

20:00-20:30 hrs: The EEAP joined the director of this PSP, the Head of School and representatives of MODIP and OMEA to provide summative feedback of the day's findings and to seek any clarifications where appropriate.

Thursday, 29 January 2026

The EEAP was fully occupied in multiple back-to-back meetings from 15:00 to 20:30 hrs to evaluate the PSP3 Food and Beverage Legislation from the same department.

Friday 30 January to Saturday 31 January 2026

Report drafting and communications between EEAP members.

Detailed documentation was provided by the department on the HAHE website in accordance with the relevant requirements set by HAHE. Throughout the review and evaluation process, the EEAP was in close communications with the Department and the PSPs' administrators, which were very accommodating in providing additional information requested by the EEAP. The EEAP found that the Department and the PSPs' administrators, the faculty staff, current students, stakeholders, social partners and recent graduates that were interviewed were eager and helpful in our discussions, providing valuable additional information.

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 Food Science and Nutrition was established since 2018 (Government Gazette vol. B' 4086/18-09-2018) in accordance with relevant legislation. The PSP regulations were updated in April 2019 (Sheet No. 1190) and this process was completed in accordance with law 4957/2022 in September 2024 (Government Gazette, issue B, 5181/13-09-2024) when it was re-established and renewed its operation. This process was the result of comprehensive curriculum discussions during the winter-spring months of 2023, following the 5 years of its operation between 2018-2023. These discussions considered the self-assessment report, the collective student evaluations, the observations and suggestions of teaching staff.

The PSP is delivered in three 6-monthly semesters and a summer semester. The first semester includes 3 compulsory courses carrying 10 ECTS each (Food Microbiology, Food Chemistry & Nutrition, and Food Production Process Design), totalling 30 ECTS. The second semester includes 3 more compulsory courses carrying 10 ECTS each (Special Topics in Food Science and Nutrition, Seminars in Food Science and Nutrition, and Research Approach to the Topic of the Thesis), totalling 30 ECTS. The summer period and third semester, worth 45 ECTS, are dedicated to the preparation of the dissertation Thesis. This PSP has strong emphasis on research. The total ECTS for completion of this PSP is set at 105. The PSP is delivered in Greek but there is a choice between Greek or English for the preparation of the dissertation Thesis.
The number of students enrolled per academic year is set at a maximum of 30 with a minimum of 10. The maximum time permitted for completion of this PSP cannot exceed the normal duration of studies plus 2 additional semesters i.e. a total of five semesters. The PSP does not impose tuition fees and is offered to students free of charge. The number of enrolled students per academic year from 2018-19 to 2024-25 is 11, 16, 12, 11, 10, 13, 10, respectively.

The combined teaching staff of this PSP involves 11 lecturers of which 9 are active faculty members of the School of Agriculture, 1 is an Emeritus Professor in the same School while 1 lecturer is a faculty member of the School of Chemistry of AUTH. In the last academic year 2024-25 2 visiting Professors from foreign Universities were assigned 2 courses. Courses and teaching staff are evaluated at the end of each semester with anonymous electronic questionnaires prepared by MODIP.

The subject area of this PSP is important for Greece as the food sector is one of the most dynamic sectors that drive the Greek economy with significant export activities.

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 establishment, re-foundation, and operation of the Postgraduate Study Programme (PSP) Food Science and Nutrition are fully embedded within the strategic framework of Aristotle University of Thessaloniki and the Department of Agriculture. The MSc Food Science and Nutrition was established following a documented feasibility rationale and has subsequently been re-aligned with the national legislative framework (Law 4957/2022) through an updated founding decision and internal regulation.

A published Quality Assurance Policy is in place at the level of the academic unit, explicitly aligned with the overarching quality policy of AUTH and formally approved by the competent collective body. The policy clearly articulates commitments to academic quality, continuous improvement, stakeholder involvement and transparency, and is publicly available through the programme website.

The sustainability and feasibility of the PSP are supported by a dedicated Sustainability Study, which documents infrastructure availability, staffing adequacy, alignment with labour-market needs, and comparability with equivalent national programmes.

A particularly strong element is the absence of tuition fees, in line with the programme's status as a public good. This removes financial barriers for students while placing increased responsibility on the Institution to ensure long-term resource commitment. The documentation clearly confirms that the Institution has anticipated this obligation and has secured the necessary human and infrastructural resources through public funding and institutional support mechanisms. Where distance-learning components are applied, the Institution has adopted a formal e-learning strategy, integrated into its overall strategy, supported by institutional digital infrastructure, learning platforms, and quality monitoring mechanisms.

The strategy justifies the pedagogical suitability of digital and blended learning approaches and supports innovation, programme review and linkage between teaching and research.

The academic unit has established annual quality objectives, systematic internal evaluation procedures, and cooperation with the Internal Evaluation Group (OMEA) and the Quality Assurance Unit (MODIP) of AUTH. These mechanisms support regular internal reviews, performance monitoring and evidence-based decision-making.

II. Analysis

The evidence demonstrates full structural alignment between the Institution's strategic objectives and the design and operation of the PSP. The programme's aims, learning outcomes and academic profile are consistent with the mission of

the Department and the broader strategic orientation of AUTH towards high-quality postgraduate education, research integration and societal relevance.

The Quality Assurance Policy is not merely declarative but operationalised through defined procedures covering programme structure, learning outcomes at EQF/NQF Level 7, staff selection and development, student evaluation, resource allocation and stakeholder feedback. The policy explicitly commits the academic unit to continuous improvement and is implemented with the participation of staff, students and institutional bodies.

The feasibility and sustainability analysis provides credible evidence that the PSP is viable in the medium and long term. Adequate human resources, laboratory and digital infrastructure, administrative support and institutional funding commitments are documented, while the absence of tuition fees mitigates financial risk for students and supports equitable access.

The e-learning strategy is appropriately justified and pedagogically grounded, supported by institutional platforms for learning management, quality monitoring and data collection. The strategy considers technological developments and allows for innovation, programme revision and strong links between teaching and current research activities.
Internal quality assurance processes are systematic and mature, relying on regular data collection, internal evaluations and cooperation with MODIP. The results of internal reviews are used to inform strategic and operational decisions, including curriculum enhancement and resource planning, demonstrating a functioning quality loop.

The active participation of industry representatives and programme graduates at the validation event is particularly commended, as it provided tangible evidence of the relevance, applicability and external recognition of the PSP. Their contributions highlighted the programme's strong orientation towards addressing real-world challenges in the food science and nutrition sectors, as well as the capacity of both students and academic staff to offer scientifically grounded, problem-solving solutions that respond directly to current industry needs.

Furthermore, despite the relatively recent establishment of the PSP and its online presence (December 2025), the PSP has already developed a diverse and expanding alumni base, reflecting its attractiveness, academic credibility and early impact. This emerging alumni network, together with structured engagement with external stakeholders, demonstrates the programme's potential to strengthen its role as a bridge between advanced academic training, applied research and labour-market demands.

III. Conclusions

The Panel concludes that the Institution and the academic unit comply fully with Principle 1.

The development and delivery of the MSc Food Science and Nutrition are firmly embedded within the Institution's strategic management, supported by a published and implemented quality assurance policy, documented feasibility and sustainability studies, and effective internal evaluation mechanisms. Strategic planning appropriately anticipates benefits, risks and challenges, while the integration of e-learning and innovation strategies is well justified and operationally supported.
Overall, the evidence confirms strong alignment between institutional strategy, quality assurance policy and programme implementation, with no substantive shortcomings identified under 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

The Panel recommends periodic, structured reflection on the integration of research and teaching, including:

- supervision capacity,
- thematic coherence of theses,
- alignment with departmental research priorities.

The Panel recommends that the academic unit enhance the structured involvement of external stakeholders in the formulation and periodic review of quality goals of the PSP.
Indicatively, this could involve:

- consultation with representatives of relevant professional sectors,
- research and public bodies,
- alumni of the programme.

PRINCIPLE 2: DESIGN AND APPROVAL OF POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES

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

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

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

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

In addition, the design of PSP must consider:

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

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

Documentation

- *Senate decision for the establishment of the PSP*
- *PSP curriculum structure: courses, course categories, ECTS awarded, expected learning outcomes according to the EQF, internship, mobility opportunities*
- *Labour market data regarding the employment of graduates, international experience in a relevant scientific field*
- *PSP Student Guide*
- *Course and thesis outlines*

- *Teaching staff (name list including of areas of specialisation, its relation to the courses taught, employment relationship, and teaching assignment in hours as well as other teaching commitments in hours)*

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The PSP "Food Science and Nutrition" was established and has been operating since September 2018 (FEK B' 4086, 18/09/2018) in accordance with the relevant legislation in force, and the new regulations were approved on April 9, 2019 (FEK 1190). The necessary adaptation of the Establishment Decision and the Regulations of the PSP in accordance with Law 4957/2022 was completed in September 2024 (FEK B 5181, 13/09/2024). The approval of the operation of the PSP in 2018, as well as its re-establishment/renewal in 2024 were based on an application submitted to the Postgraduate Studies Support Service of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, taking into account the rationale for establishment/renewal, the academic profile, the orientation of the PSP, the objectives, the subjects, the structure and organization, the expected learning outcomes, and the desired professional qualifications, in accordance with the National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education Level 7.

The PSP is designed to provide graduate students with an excellent opportunity to enrich their existing knowledge, develop important skills, and acquire specialized qualifications in scientific fields that play a central role in Food Science and Technology. In this context, the PSP is structured into various modules and focuses on fields such as Food Chemistry and Analysis, Human Nutrition, Food Microbiology, and Food Processing Design and Optimization. More specifically, during their studies students could explore these scientific fields in depth, delve into advanced techniques and methodologies, develop critical thinking, and acquire the necessary knowledge to address important problems that may arise in the food industry during the production process.

In addition, through the completion of an experimental/research thesis, this PSP allows students to connect theoretical knowledge with practical application, enabling them not only to gain experience in laboratory and research projects, but also to develop excellent communication and collaboration skills. Therefore, it is expected that upon completion graduates will have developed a broad profile of skills and knowledge, which will provide them with the opportunity and appropriate guarantees, not only to fill key positions in the modern food industry, but also to contribute effectively to the research and education sector of food science.

In relation to Greece, the food industry is emerging as one of the most dynamic and driving forces of the Greek economy. With significant export activity and a

notable presence in various countries abroad, the food industry faces significant challenges in the areas of safety and product development. At the same time, the industry is taking a leading role in guiding a public health program and producing safe and organoleptically acceptable foods that meet the modern nutritional needs of consumers. Therefore, the role of the Food Scientist is vital in this critical pillar of the economy. This PSP has been designed to in response to this demand, alongside increasing competition in this field of science and contemporary trends towards the production of safe foods that are consistent with sustainable development goals.

The overall aim of this PSP is to contribute to the expansion of knowledge in the field of Food Science and Nutrition and to create new career opportunities for graduates of the Department of Agriculture and other related departments, by providing them with the opportunity to continue their studies in Greece and avoid the brain-drain of distinguished graduates. In addition, the PSP aims to provide up-to-date knowledge and skills to graduates who are already employed in food businesses and industries. Specifically, this PSP is designed to meet the needs of small and large food businesses, and the graduates can be employed in related public control bodies, research centers, universities, or other educational institutions, while those who wish to continue their studies can enrol for a doctoral studies.

II. Analysis

The learning outcomes and qualifications of those who successfully complete the PSP are summarized below. Graduates of this PSP will:

• acquire in-depth knowledge of the three pillars of Food Science: Food Chemistry, Food Microbiology, and Food Processing and Preservation, and be able to apply this knowledge in practice
• become familiar with the basic food processing procedures implemented in a production line
• understand the most important food ingredients and their significance (nutritional, functional) in a food system
• recognize the action of specific food matrix ingredients in shaping the techno- and bio-functional properties of foods
• are able to study, through the use of nutritional tools and analytical techniques, the eating habits of specific population groups and their potential impact on the physiological state of the body
• recognize the dynamics of food systems, the interactions between ingredients, and the changes brought about by various processing methods
• are able to design and develop new research ideas and produce new foods.

A more detailed description of the intended learning outcomes of each course is provided in the comprehensive course outlines, which are available on the official website of the MODIP. In general, the courses of the first two semesters of the

PSP aim to familiarize, deepen, and train students in the application of theoretical, methodological and technical knowledge, and to cultivate the relevant skills. Familiarization, deepening, and practice in these areas gradually form a solid and coherent foundation that allows for the formulation of clear research questions and working hypotheses, the identification and selection of relevant evidence, its analysis and interpretation, and its synthesis in the form of oral presentations and written assignments.

The means for assessing the degree of achievement of the learning outcomes for each course is defined in the comprehensive Study Guide of the PSP and in the specific Course Descriptions available on the official website. Assessment for individual courses is carried out through written or oral examinations, assignments, or a combination of the above. The method of assessment is determined by the instructor of each course at the beginning of the course, as specified by the Departmental Assembly. Assessment for individual courses is carried out through written or oral examinations, assignments, or a combination of the above. The method of assessment is determined by the instructor of each course at the start of the course, as specified by the Departmental Assembly. The grading scale for evaluating the performance of postgraduate students ranges from zero (0) to ten (10).
Postgraduate students evaluate the courses and feedback is provided through the approved evaluation system of the MODIP. There is also evidence that the past few years an effort has been made to evaluate the learning outcomes of the PSP not only by its current students, but also by graduates, professional bodies, and the private and broader public sector where graduates are employed. The feedback received from all of these stakeholders regarding the areas in which the PSP graduates are lagging behind and where the educational work of the PSP should be strengthened is important.

The PSP is structured around three (3) semesters and one summer session. In the first semester, three (3) compulsory courses are taught, with 10 credit units per course. It should be noted that each semester corresponds to 30 ECTS. In the second semester, three (3) compulsory courses are taught, with 10 credit units/course. During the summer period and the third semester, a postgraduate Thesis is prepared. The official language of the program is Greek, and the language of the Thesis can be either Greek or English. The total number of ECTS credits required to obtain a degree is 105.

III. Conclusions

The PSP "Food Science and Nutrition" complies fully with the HAHE requirements of Principle 2.

The design and approval procedures have been followed comprehensively. The academic staff are experts in their respective fields and deliver teaching related to their research interests. The PSP utilizes the interdisciplinary and specialized

research experience of the teaching staff to familiarize students with contemporary scientific trends, developments and cutting-edge issues in the respective study and research field. The online materials are clearly presented, and the comprehensive student guide is available in Greek and in English.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

No recommendations.

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

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

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

The student-centred learning and teaching process

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

In addition

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

Documentation

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

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The Postgraduate Study Program (PSP) in Food Science and Nutrition focuses on delivering advanced knowledge that addresses current and emerging needs in food production and nutrition. The program's foundation lies in a well-motivated student body, fostering learning and a deep understanding of the subject topics. Student participation is active, with assignments that contribute to transferable knowledge across various scientific fields. Instruction is delivered primarily in person, with flexible hours, encouraging concurrent employment as outlined in program study regulations. The PSP adopts a student-centered approach to learning and teaching, combining theoretical and applied courses that foster active participation, collaborative learning, and the development of creative and critical thinking. Students particularly value the lectures, which they describe as engaging and intellectually stimulating, providing opportunities for in-depth discussion and exchange of ideas.

The academic advisor's role, defined by departmental regulations, complements the intentionally small student cohort, reinforcing the student-centered approach. A platform for student complaints and appeals is available, ensuring concerns are promptly addressed. Beyond educational needs, the program aims to address the region's and the country's broader social needs. Instructors are regularly evaluated by postgraduate students at the end of each semester through anonymous electronic submissions to the University's Quality Assurance Unit (MODIP/AUTH). Teaching evaluation questionnaires, based on the MODIP model, provide insights into course content, usefulness, and instructor effectiveness. Student participation in course evaluation surveys is good, and the feedback collected is positive regarding course content, structure, and teaching methods, as well as the accessibility and support provided by the academic staff.

According to instructors and graduates, the PSP offers a comprehensive study program within a framework of mutual respect. The high number of students who continue to doctoral studies or collaborate with the faculty on research projects after graduation provides evidence of this. There is frequent communication between students and teaching staff, which enhances the smooth operation of the PSP and enables the timely resolution of academic and administrative issues. The schedule is designed with adequate flexibility to accommodate working students, demonstrating the PSP’s adaptability to the diverse needs of its participants. The low student-to-faculty ratio allows an outstanding opportunity for learning and the development of close relations between students and instructors. Both current students and past graduates expressed strong enthusiasm for the PSP, highlighting its contributions to their academic and professional development and its positive impact on their creativity.

II. Analysis

The PSP demonstrates a coherent and effective implementation of student-centered learning and teaching principles. The integration of theoretical, research, and applied courses promotes creativity, active engagement, and intimate

collaboration. The emphasis on teamwork and critical thinking enables students to develop both conceptual and practical skills, which aligns with the program's research philosophy.

Frequent, open communication between students and faculty fosters a supportive and responsive learning environment. This direct interaction encourages continuous feedback, enabling the PSP to address new and emerging issues and adapt teaching methods accordingly. The flexible schedule further facilitates participation, particularly for working students, ensuring inclusiveness and accessibility within the learning process.

Assessment methods are clear, transparent, and aligned with the intended learning outcomes, including project work, presentations, and thesis evaluation by a three-member faculty committee. The teaching evaluation questionnaires are limited to course and instructor quality. Thus, it is difficult to assess student learning and competence.

The existence of a formal regulation for managing complaints and appeals enhances transparency and fairness in academic and administrative procedures. The low student-to-faculty ratio is a crucial component of the program's quality, and it leads to several high-quality publications by students.

While the academic advisor’s role is formally established, further communication and awareness could strengthen its effectiveness in guiding students throughout their studies. Likewise, the course evaluation suggests that introducing learning assessment questions could enhance the effectiveness of the formal feedback process.

The program's structure integrates theoretical courses and a Diploma thesis, aligning with a student-centered approach. The first two semesters focus on in-person, theoretical, and applied courses with mandatory attendance, while the third semester is devoted to thesis research. Students expressed satisfaction with the flexible program and its well-organized lectures. Furthermore, PSP graduates expressed high satisfaction with their Diploma thesis projects, leading to opportunities for doctoral studies or industry employment. Social partners praised the graduates for the scientific knowledge and expertise acquired through their PSP degree.
Overall, the PSP effectively applies the principles of student-centered learning and assessment, maintaining close interaction between students and faculty and promoting an educational culture that values creativity, collaboration, and reflective practice.

III. Conclusions

The PSP effectively implements a student-centered approach to learning and teaching, fostering active participation, collaboration, and creative thinking within a supportive and flexible academic environment. Course design and delivery are meticulously aligned with the intended learning outcomes, and continuous communication between students and faculty contributes to ongoing program improvement. The focus on research makes this a unique program for advancing scientific knowledge in food science and nutrition.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

Consider an enhancement of the course evaluation questionnaires with emphasis on the assessment of student learning and competence.

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 admits students through a transparent and competitive selection process, which includes written examinations in core background subjects, assessment of English language competence (minimum B2 level), evaluation of academic qualifications, and a structured personal interview conducted by a designated Selection and Examination Committee. The increased number of applications in recent academic years (indicatively, 32 applications for 13 available places in the academic year 2025–2026) reflects sustained interest and demand for the PSP.

The duration of studies is set at a minimum of three semesters, corresponding to a total workload of 105 ECTS credits, distributed across two semesters of compulsory coursework (60 ECTS) and the preparation, submission, and public defense of a Master's thesis (45 ECTS). The PSP applies the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS), with each credit corresponding to a clearly defined student workload, as outlined in the publicly available Study Guide

(https://foodsn.agro.auth.gr/%CE%BF%CE%B4%CE%B7%CE%B3%CF%8C%CF%82-%CF%83%CF%80%CE%BF%CF%85%CE%B4%CF%8E%CE%BD). The PSP is offered without the imposition of tuition fees.

Students are informed in advance about the structure of the PSP, course requirements, assessment methods, and progression rules through the officially published Regulation of Studies and the Student Guide. Assessment methods vary across courses and include written and oral examinations, individual assignments, seminars, and research-based work, with grading criteria announced at the beginning of each course. Student performance is evaluated on a standardized grading scale (0–10).
The Master's thesis constitutes a central component of the PSP and is governed by clearly specified procedures regarding supervision, evaluation criteria, and public defense before a three-member examination committee. The Diploma Supplement is issued in accordance with institutional templates, ensuring transparency and international recognition of qualifications.

In addition to the formal curriculum, students are encouraged to engage in academic and professionally oriented activities, including participation in the organization of conferences and thematic events, educational visits to food industry facilities, and involvement in student innovation and applied research competitions related to food science and technology (in ECOTROPHELIA National Competition the participating team was awarded the 2nd place for the proposed product). These activities complement coursework and enhance exposure to applied and research environments.

The PSP operates within the framework of institutional regulations on research ethics, academic conduct, student mobility, and certification, as defined in the relevant approved documents.

II. Analysis

The PSP demonstrates a high degree of internal coherence in the regulation of student admission, progression, assessment, and certification. The multi-stage admission process ensures that incoming students possess an adequate academic background and the necessary competencies to meet the PSP's scientific and research demands. The inclusion of written examinations in core food science subjects reinforces academic coherence and safeguards the level of incoming cohorts. The consistently high application-to-admission ratio further confirms the PSP's attractiveness and academic standing.

The allocation of 105 ECTS credits across coursework and thesis work is appropriate for the PSP's scope and objectives, particularly given the emphasis placed on experimental work, laboratory training, and research-oriented thesis preparation. The structured integration of thesis-related activities already from the second semester supports students' gradual transition into independent

research.

Assessment procedures are clearly defined, consistently applied, and communicated in advance, contributing to transparency and fairness. The publicly defended thesis, evaluated by a three-member committee, further strengthens academic integrity and quality assurance.
Student engagement beyond formal coursework, through academic events, educational visits, and participation in innovation-oriented activities, enriches the learning experience and supports the development of applied, research, and professional skills.

The relatively small number of enrolled students, observed in recent academic cycles, appears to be influenced more by external demand factors than by restrictive admission policies. As a result, close interaction between students and academic staff emerges organically during coursework and thesis supervision, contributing positively to student support and progression rather than constituting an explicit structural objective.

III. Conclusions

The PSP provides a well-regulated and academically coherent framework for student admission, progression, assessment, and certification, fully satisfying the requirements of Principle 4. It is clear that study regulations, transparent assessment practices, and structured thesis process ensure academic reliability and consistency with European higher education standards.

The strong emphasis on laboratory-based teaching, research preparation, and thesis development, combined with close student–staff interaction arising from current cohort sizes, supports effective learning and timely completion of studies. Within its established regulatory and academic framework, the PSP is well positioned to further enhance student experience and to continue producing graduates with solid scientific competence and professional prospects in the fields of food science and nutrition.

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 reconsidering the minimum required level of English language proficiency for admission to the PSP. Upgrading the requirement from B2 to C1 could better support students' engagement with scientific literature, academic writing, and research dissemination, particularly given the PSP's research-oriented character.

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 regulations governing the recruitment of faculty members and laboratory teaching staff (EDIP) are established by the Greek Parliament. Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (AUTh), as a public university, strictly follows these regulations. The roles of the PSP and the Department of Agriculture are therefore limited to selecting the best candidate when the Ministry of Education grants a faculty position. The EEA Panel found that the faculty of the PSP in Food Science and Nutrition has extensive experience in the PSP's topics and strong qualifications to teach the program's courses. Furthermore, some senior faculty members have an excellent record of research accomplishments. During the meeting with the EEA Panel, the faculty expressed their devotion to the PSP and the Department of Agriculture in general.

The faculty's teaching responsibilities consist of two courses per semester, which provides adequate time for research engagement. Faculty also co-teach and involve external lecturers, freeing up additional time for research. The low targets for student admissions to the PSP further reduce the time faculty devote to teaching, allowing them to pursue other professional endeavors. However, there is no evidence of a formal mentoring process for early-career faculty, nor is there any mention of significant support, such as travel funds, equipment, or teaching allowances, to accelerate their professional development. Furthermore, there is low participation and support for sabbatical leaves in the Department.

There is a system in place for evaluating courses and instructors; however, there is no specific mechanism for systematically assessing student learning or for continuous improvement.

Overall, the Department's research activities, publications, and funding are good and commensurate with those of similar graduate programs in Greek universities. There are strong links between teaching and research in the PSP, and students' graduate theses often lead to journal publications.

II. Analysis

The EEAP found that the faculty of the PSP is highly qualified and that their productivity is commensurate with that of leading research universities in Greece and Europe. The Department of Agriculture claims that mobility is important to the faculty, staff, and students. This is evidenced through participation in conferences and some Erasmus+ exchanges. However, there is no systematic approach to provide additional support for the mobility of early-career faculty members. Sabbatical leaves abroad are not particularly encouraged or supported financially by the Department.

Linking teaching to research seems natural, as most students complete their theses on topics covered in the required and elective courses. Most of the instructors research the subjects they teach in the PSP; thus, it is very easy to transfer their new findings into the classroom.

The PSP focuses on Food Science and Nutrition, an extremely important issue for both Greece and the World. The main strength of the PSP is its coverage of these subjects at an advanced level. Thus, it is important to continue developing advanced materials in these areas. The program's research productivity suggests that its quality and viability are secured for the foreseeable future.

III. Conclusions

The faculty members of the PSP Food Science and Nutrition are well qualified to teach the program's courses. The link between teaching and research is excellent. Limited opportunities for faculty mobility exist, and teaching responsibilities are

low to moderate. This allows for the career development of early-career faculty; however, there is no established, systematic mentoring or specific processes to enhance the professional development of new hires.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

Introduce a mentoring process for early-career faculty and other teaching staff to accelerate their professional development and promotion.

Encourage and support the sabbatical leave process.

Consider redesigning the PSP to address better current and emerging needs of society.

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 supported by an extensive and well-organized framework of institutional, departmental, and program-level infrastructure and student support services provided by the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (AUTH) and the Department of Agriculture.

The PSP fully utilizes the central services of AUTH, including the Quality Assurance System (MODIP), the Electronic Secretariat, student information systems, institutional e-learning platforms, and campus-wide wireless network coverage. Through these systems, students have continuous access to academic

information, course materials, grades, evaluations, and administrative services. Course and instructor evaluations are conducted on a regular basis and are systematically monitored.

PSP students benefit from the full spectrum of student welfare provisions available at institutional level, including scholarships and social support schemes, housing and dining services, healthcare provision, accessibility services, counseling and psychological support, career guidance, mobility services, and access to cultural, athletic, and volunteer activities. Dedicated institutional units and committees support students belonging to vulnerable social groups and ensure equal access and inclusivity.

At departmental level, the PSP is supported by highly developed teaching and research infrastructure. Teaching activities are conducted in modern lecture halls and classrooms equipped with contemporary audiovisual systems and internet access. The PSP is hosted in the facilities of the Sector of Food Science and Technology, which includes five fully institutionalized laboratories, pilot-scale processing units, and a wide range of advanced analytical and experimental equipment supporting both educational activities and research-based postgraduate theses.

The Department also provides extensive library services through its local branch and the Central Library of AUTH, offering access to printed and electronic scientific resources, bibliographic databases, and training in information literacy. Supplementary learning materials are systematically provided through the institutional e-learning platform.
Administrative and academic support is ensured through dedicated academic advisors, Program coordinators for Erasmus and mobility schemes, internship supervision, and student support roles, while secretarial support is provided through departmental staff with plans for further reinforcement as the PSP develops. The PSP is offered without tuition fees, in accordance with its founding framework.

II. Analysis

The infrastructure and support services available to the PSP are clearly adequate and well-aligned with the PSP's academic and research objectives. The extensive use of central institutional services enhances transparency, efficiency, and consistency in academic administration, quality assurance, and student monitoring.

The availability of modern, well-equipped laboratories and pilot processing units constitutes a major strength of the PSP, particularly given its strong experimental and research orientation. These facilities provide students with substantial hands-on experience and enable the effective implementation of research-based postgraduate theses across a broad range of food science and nutrition topics.

Student welfare and support mechanisms are comprehensive and accessible, contributing positively to students' academic progression and overall study experience. The presence of structured academic advising and dedicated support roles further enhances guidance and responsiveness to individual student needs.

The high level of research activity and scientific expertise of the teaching staff is strongly supported by the existing infrastructure and equipment, ensuring a close linkage between teaching, research, and postgraduate training. However, as highlighted in internal evaluations, the long-term sustainability and optimal utilization of the advanced laboratory infrastructure would benefit from further reinforcement of technical and administrative staffing, particularly in relation to systematic equipment maintenance and specialized training.

Overall, the absence of tuition fees strengthens accessibility and aligns with the PSP's public character, while reliance on institutional funding and research projects appears sufficient to sustain current operations.

III. Conclusions

The PSP "Food Science and Nutrition" demonstrates a high level of compliance with the requirements of Principle 6. It is supported by robust institutional services, comprehensive student welfare structures, and highly developed departmental infrastructure that collectively ensure a supportive, inclusive, and academically rich learning environment.

The PSP's modern laboratories, pilot-scale facilities, and extensive research equipment effectively promote its research-oriented educational model and contribute significantly to the quality of postgraduate training. While continued enhancement of technical and administrative support would further strengthen long-term sustainability, the existing resources and services are fully adequate for the PSP's current scope and objectives.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

The EEAP encourages the PSP to further strengthen technical and administrative support, particularly in relation to the systematic maintenance and optimal utilization of its advanced laboratory infrastructure, in order to enhance the sustainability of the PSP and further support its strong research-oriented postgraduate training.

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

As part of the quality assurance procedures applied to the PSP, the critical information that guides the program in improving the quality of the education provided is collected in a transparent, uniform, and standardized manner. The administrative and secretarial support of the PSP record, manage, and monitor data on students, teaching staff, the structure and organization of courses, teaching, and the provision of services to students and the academic community in order to provide valid information for a series of critical actions (planning, evaluation, information) and services provided to students, graduates, and teaching staff. In addition, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki respects personal data and complies with the European Union's General Data Protection Regulation 2016/679, applying the necessary technical and organizational measures to

effectively protect personal data.

Internal evaluation is continuous and evaluation questionnaires concern each taught course and each instructor separately. The Internal Evaluation Team (IET) of the Department in collaboration with the MODIP of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, are responsible for conducting the evaluation for the period of the PSP study. The evaluation is carried out through the latter's Quality Management Information System (QMIS). Study satisfaction questionnaires have also been introduced, which graduates complete before receiving their diplomas.

II. Analysis

There is strong evidence of the specific PSP seeking feedback from students and faculty to identify areas for improvement. Feedback is used to consider and implement any changes to the PSP, including updating the curriculum, changes in teaching methods, and upgrades to facilities. The annual internal evaluation and review also assess the quality assurance system of all postgraduate programs (including this PSP) with the assistance of MODIP.

The evaluation questionnaires are standard forms prepared by MODIP, while the Coordinating Committee may, by decision, modify them to meet the specific characteristics and needs of the PSP or specific courses. They are completed electronically (since 2013), and the Coordinating Committee and the Departmental Internal Evaluation Committee take systematic action to encourage students to participate in the evaluation. Specifically for this PSP, after the end of each evaluation period and following the announcement of the semester course grades, the evaluation results are analysed and the findings published (while observing the legislation on the protection of personal data), alongside action for addressing any issues.

The requested data are entered annually into the Integrated Quality Information System of HAHE and that the indicators are used to prepare the annual Quality Targets, in accordance with HAHE’s guidelines.

III. Conclusions

The University and the Department collect the required amount of data regarding student registration, progression and satisfaction, analyse such data comprehensively with the view of improving performance and satisfaction, and store the data observing relevant legislation and reporting requirements.

Panel Judgement

Principle 7: Information management	
Fully compliant	**X**

Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

No recommendations.

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 Institution and the academic unit provide public, direct and readily accessible information concerning the Postgraduate Study Programme (PSP) through a dedicated segment on the Department's website, which is specifically designed for the promotion and presentation of the MSc Food Science and Nutrition. The PSP is hosted within a clearly identifiable and easily navigable online environment, ensuring visibility for prospective students, current students, graduates, external stakeholders and the wider public.

The programme website is available in a bilingual format (Greek and English) and contains complete, clear and objective information on all key aspects of the PSP, including the programme profile, academic objectives, structure, duration, ECTS allocation, admission criteria and governance arrangements. The bilingual provision supports transparency, accessibility and international outreach.

Detailed and up-to-date information is published on the intended learning outcomes, which are explicitly aligned with Level 7 of the European and National Qualifications Frameworks, as well as on the degrees awarded and the academic recognition of the qualification.
Teaching, learning and assessment methods are clearly described through the Study Guide and course descriptions, including information on coursework, examinations, research activities and the Master's thesis.

The website further provides information on learning opportunities available to students, including access to laboratories, digital learning platforms, research infrastructure, academic supervision, and student support services offered by the

Institution. Information on employment perspectives of graduates and links with the food industry, research institutions and public-sector bodies is also communicated, reflecting the programme's applied orientation and labour-market relevance.

A formal provision for website maintenance, updating and quality control is in place. Responsibilities for content management, technical support, data accuracy and periodic review are clearly defined, ensuring that information remains current, reliable and consistent with institutional regulations and quality standards.

II. Analysis

The evidence indicates that public information concerning the PSP is systematically organised, comprehensive and transparent. The use of a dedicated and bilingual website ensures equal access to information for both national and international audiences, while the clarity and structure of the published content support informed decision-making by prospective students and stakeholders.

The information provided covers all required dimensions of Principle 8, including academic activities, learning outcomes, assessment procedures, student support, and employability. The existence of documented procedures for website maintenance and updating further demonstrates a proactive and sustainable approach to public communication, reducing the risk of outdated or incomplete information.

Overall, the academic unit demonstrates a strong commitment to openness, accountability and quality assurance in the dissemination of public information.

III. Conclusions

The Panel concludes that the Institution and the academic unit fully comply with Principle 8.

Public information concerning the MSc Food Science and Nutrition is clear, up-to-date, objective and easily accessible, supported by a dedicated bilingual website and formal procedures for ongoing maintenance and review. The arrangements effectively serve the needs of prospective and current students, graduates, external stakeholders and the wider public, and are consistent with good practice in postgraduate programme transparency and communication.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

Enhance stakeholder-facing information on industry engagement.

Building on the Programme's strong and well-established collaborations with industry partners, the Panel recommends making more explicit reference on the PSP website to the role, composition and contributions of the Industry Advisory Body, including examples of how external input informs curriculum review and programme enhancement.

Introduce periodic public review updates.
The Institution may wish to consider publishing brief annual or biennial public updates summarising key developments, curriculum enhancements or quality improvement actions arising from student feedback and programme review processes, further reinforcing transparency and continuous improvement.

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

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

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

The above comprise the evaluation of:

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

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

Documentation

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

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The PSP is engaging in a process of regular monitoring, review and revision with the collaboration of the Coordinating Committee, the Department's OMEA and the Institution's MODIP. These internal evaluation activities are in accordance with HAHE requirements and standards.

II. Analysis

The internal evaluation process adopted by the PSP monitors specific indicators such as the popularity of the PSP subject matter, student evaluation of courses and teaching, research quality, mobility, administrative and student support services, completion times, student expectations and needs, student satisfaction, graduate career monitoring, stakeholder and social partner involvement, the

interactions between current, past students and stakeholders/social partners, and the continuous changes in societal needs. The internal PSP evaluation by MODIP in 2023 produced a report highlighting weaknesses that needed addressing. The PSP website was found to be missing information regarding complaints regulations, academic advisor, mobility regulations etc It was recommended that the PSP website must be regularly updated to provide all necessary information to current students, alumni and stakeholders/social partners. Other recommendations were also made to strengthen the research quality of the PSP with more international collaborations, to strengthen student mobility opportunities and the attendance at international conferences, the strengthening of the role of the Academic Advisor, and the implementation of a short internship (2-3 months) which can be done wither in national or international institutions via the Erasmus placement scheme.

III. Conclusions

The PSP is engaging in a continuous process of internal evaluations of several key indicators in line with HAHE recommendations and standards. The EEAP considers that the PSP is Fully Compliant with Principle 9.

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

Continue with the monitoring of key PSP indicators in accordance with HAHE recommendations and standards annually.

Publish the findings of such internal evaluations on the PSP website together with the actions taken to address any emerging issues.

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 PSP has not been evaluated by any external panel of experts until now. There was an external evaluation of AUTH in 2015, and some general institutional weaknesses were noted and recommendations made. However, in the progress report submitted by MODIP to HAHE in 2018, it was stated that the individual requirements of different academic subjects do not allow for generalized implementations and it was left up to Departmental general Assemblies whether to adopt or not these general recommendations. One of these recommendations was the organization of institutional seminars relevant to the PSP subject matter so that students can present their research and create an interdisciplinary community of young researchers for the future. The PSP acted on this recommendation and the subject “Seminars in Food Science and Nutrition” was created specifically for this PSP and its students to present their research and interact.

There was an external evaluation of the Department which identified several general weaknesses which were addressed by the Department including the strengthening of seminars, better equipment maintenance and user training, better support for postgraduate students that contribute to teaching, translation of research outputs to the economy, and curriculum reform to better reflect current scientific and technological developments.

II. Analysis

The EEAP would point out that perhaps MODIP should have been a bit more assertive in enforcing the general recommendations from the 2015 Institutional external evaluation, as appropriate, rather than to hand this responsibility back to departmental assemblies on an ad hoc basis. Nevertheless, this PSP has acted on several recommendations from Institutional and Departmental evaluations to improve its operations and effectiveness.

III. Conclusions

No external evaluations have been conducted for this PSP until now. The department has cooperated in the most constructive way with the EEAP in this HAHE-coordinated external evaluation and appears to be committed to fully implementing all recommendations in the pursue of excellence in academic practice. The Department has acted upon several Institutional and Departmental recommendations voluntarily which shows good academic practice in the pursue of excellence. For this reason, the EEAP assesses that the PSP is Substantially Compliant with Principle 10.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

Implement fully all recommendations by this external evaluation exercise.

Voluntary external evaluations, above and beyond current legislation, should be considered for the future as appropriate to ensure good academic practice in the pursue of excellence.

PART C: CONCLUSIONS

I. Features of Good Practice

Excellent teaching staff, enthusiastic, appropriate expertise and research active.

PSP subject matter important for the national economy.

Good infrastructure facilities and support services.

Strong PSP links with research activities of staff.

Well-defined and focused curriculum.

Excellent student satisfaction.

No fees enhancing equity and accessibility.

II. Areas of Weakness

No structured peer review of teaching.

No structured personal development plans for staff.

No organised sabbatical system to allow staff research/teaching mobility opportunities.

Relatively small cohort sizes in recent cycles, influenced mainly by external demand factors rather than admission policy.

Student mobility somewhat limited by poor uptake.

III. Recommendations for Follow-up Actions

Introduce a structured system for annual peer review of teaching for staff.

Introduce annual personal development plans for staff.

Encourage and support the sabbatical leave process and encourage mobility.

Make more explicit reference on the PSP website to the role, composition and contributions of the Industry Advisory Body, including examples of how external input informs curriculum review and programme enhancement.

Actively encourage student participation in ERASMUS+ and other exchange

opportunities with targeted guidance and financial incentives.

Upgrade the English language requirement from B2 to C1.

IV. Summary & Overall Assessment

The Principles where full compliance has been achieved are:

1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9.

The Principles where substantial compliance has been achieved are:

10.

The Principles where partial compliance has been achieved are:

Nil.

The Principles where failure of compliance was identified are:

Nil.

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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