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Accreditation Report for the Foreign Language Programme (Integrated master) of:

Materials Science and Engineering (IM)

School: Chemistry

Institution: Aristotle University of Thessaloniki

Date: June 2026

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

Report of the Panel appointed by the HAHE to undertake the review of the Foreign Language Programme (Integrated master) of **Materials Science and Engineering (IM)** 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 Foreign Language Programme (Integrated master) of Materials Science and Engineering (IM) of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki comprised the following four (4) members, drawn from the HAHE Register, in accordance with Law 4653/2020:

1. KONTIS KONSTANTINOS (Chair)
   School of Engineering, University of Glasgow

2. ANANIADIS EVANGELOS
   University of Thessaly

3. ANDRITSOS FIVOS
   Commission of the European Communities, Joint Research Center

4. KATOPODES NIKOLAOS
   University of Michigan

II. Review Procedure and Documentation

The External Evaluation and Accreditation Panel (EEAP) reviewed the new Foreign Language Undergraduate Study Programme (FLP) in Materials Science and Engineering (IM) of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (AUTh) during the period 2–8 June 2026. All meetings were scheduled according to the Greek time zone. The review was organised in accordance with the HAHE Standards for Quality Accreditation of Foreign Language Programmes, which cover strategic planning, quality assurance, programme design, student-centred learning, admissions, teaching staff, learning resources, information management, public information, internal review and external evaluation.

The Panel preparation included an online preparatory exchange of emails before the site visit, during which the EEAP members allocated tasks and identified key issues to be addressed. This was followed by a private Panel meeting on the evening of Tuesday, 2 June 2026, after the arrival of the EEAP members in Thessaloniki, to review the preparatory discussion and finalise the focus of the site visit.

The documentation considered by the Panel included the submitted accreditation material for the FLP, together with the HAHE Standards for Foreign Language Programmes and the final review timetable. The standards specify the expected documentation for FLP accreditation, including institutional and academic unit strategy, quality policy and quality targeting, Senate decision for programme establishment, bilingual FLP Guide, course outlines, teaching staff information, feasibility study, QAU records, student support documentation, and procedures for information management and internal review.

On Wednesday, 3 June 2026, the EEAP visited the Department. The day began with transport to the Department, followed by a welcome meeting with the Rector, the Vice-Rector/President of MODIP, and the Head of the Department of Chemistry. The Panel then met with the Head of the Department, the Director of the FLP, OMEA members and MODIP representatives to discuss the academic profile, status, strengths, possible areas of concern, strategy, feasibility study and degree of compliance with the accreditation standards.

The Panel subsequently met with teaching staff from the Departments of Chemistry, Physics and Mechanical Engineering. This meeting focused on staff competence and adequacy, workload, mobility, professional development, student evaluation, links between teaching and research, and involvement in applied research and projects related to the programme.

A separate meeting was held with administrative staff to discuss quality culture, institutional quality assurance policy, quality management, administrative responsibilities and professional development. The Panel also conducted a tour of the Institution/FLP facilities, including classrooms, lecture halls, libraries, and laboratories, supported by video material from the Departments of Chemistry, Physics, and Mechanical Engineering, and AUTh more broadly. The purpose was to assess whether the learning resources, equipment and facilities were adequate for the successful delivery of the programme.

Later on, the same day, the EEAP met with external stakeholders and employers from organisations including Sunlight Technosystem, Alumil Group, Loufakis Chemicals, DELVEC, Superalloys Engineering, Sklero SA, Carbon Fiber Technologies and ISOMAT. This meeting focused on the FLP's relationship with external stakeholders in the private and public sectors.

The day concluded with an internal EEAP debriefing and a closure meeting with institutional leadership, the FLP Director, OMEA and MODIP representatives, during which the Panel presented its preliminary key findings informally.

From Thursday, 4 June to Sunday, 7 June 2026, the EEAP held internal drafting interactions for the accreditation report. On Monday, 8 June 2026, the Panel completed the Accreditation Report and submitted it to HAHE.

III. Foreign Language Programme Profile

The Foreign Language Undergraduate Study Programme Materials Science and Engineering (MSEN) is a new English-taught interdepartmental programme of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (AUTh). It is offered through the cooperation of three AUTh academic units: the Department of Chemistry as the leading/hosting unit, together with the Department of Physics and the Department of Mechanical Engineering. The programme is presented as part of AUTh's wider strategy for internationalisation and outward engagement.

The programme is designed as a five-year undergraduate programme leading to a Diploma with Integrated Master. Teaching, assessment and communication are in English. It is intended primarily for non-Greek citizens and students without a Greek Lyceum diploma. The planned annual intake is up to 40 students, with tuition fees of €8,000 per year. A diploma thesis is undertaken in the fifth year.

Academically, MSEN aims to provide systematic education and specialisation in Materials Science and Engineering, combining chemistry, physics and mechanical engineering. The programme covers the design, development, characterisation, processing and application of advanced materials. Its academic remit includes metals and alloys, polymers, ceramics, composites, nanomaterials, smart materials, biomaterials, semiconductor and electronic materials, renewable energy materials, batteries and fuel cells, advanced manufacturing, computational modelling, simulation and sustainable materials design.

The programme's orientation is strongly interdisciplinary. Chemistry contributes expertise in synthesis, characterisation and molecular design; Physics contributes expertise in structure, properties and characterisation; and Mechanical Engineering contributes expertise in mechanical behaviour, processing and applications. The programme therefore seeks to offer a holistic approach to materials science and engineering, linking theoretical knowledge with applied research and industrial practice.

The Department of Physics strengthens the programme through its long academic history, broad scientific scope and strong interdisciplinary character. It is presented as having operated since the early decades of the twentieth century, with historical milestones including the Department of Physical and Mathematical Sciences in 1927, the Physico-Mathematical Department in 1958 and the Faculty of Sciences in 1982. Its academic sectors include Astrophysics, Astronomy and Mechanics; Electronics and Computers; Applications of Physics and Environmental Physics; Nuclear and Elementary Particle Physics; and Condensed Matter Physics and Materials. This last area is especially relevant to the MSEN programme.

The Department of Physics also brings significant international and research capacity. The documentation notes regular Erasmus activity, with approximately 5–10 incoming Erasmus students per year and 15–20 outgoing Erasmus students per year, as well as rich research activity and a high number of publications. It is also described as holding the second position in AUTh in research funding, representing around 8% of the university total. The Department has 60 faculty members, 22 EDIP members, 4 ETEP members and 6 administrative staff, providing a strong academic and support base for the programme.

The Department of Mechanical Engineering contributes the engineering dimension of the programme, particularly in mechanical behaviour, processing, manufacturing and applications

of materials. The Department has more than 50 years of operation and is an established academic unit of excellence in Greece and internationally. It emphasises quality assurance, continuous improvement, student-centred education, responsiveness to technological and industrial change, and contribution to the development of mechanical engineering nationally and internationally.

The Department of Mechanical Engineering also has a strong research and innovation profile. It includes 30 faculty members— 17 Professors, 7 Associate Professors and 6 Assistant Professors — together with 11 EDIP members, 1 ETEP member and 6 administrative staff. Its reported research activity includes 180 publications in 2025, approximately 30,000 citations during 2021–2025, 60 active research projects, a budget of around €3 million, and approximately 180 research collaborations. These strengths directly support the programme's applied engineering, manufacturing and innovation orientation.

The Department of Mechanical Engineering also contributes to the student experience through educational and student-led activities. The documentation specifically refers to educational student missions and highlights the Aristotle Racing Team as a strong example of student innovation and excellence. This is relevant to MSEN because it supports practical, project-based and industry-facing learning in areas such as design, manufacturing, materials performance and engineering application.

Employment opportunities are broad and aligned with high-technology sectors. Graduates are expected to be prepared for careers in research and development, advanced manufacturing, quality control, innovation management and entrepreneurship, as well as for further postgraduate or doctoral study. Relevant industrial and societal fields include energy, electronics, transportation, aerospace, healthcare, environmental technologies, circular economy and sustainable development.

The institutional context is strong. AUTh was founded in 1925, is located in the centre of Thessaloniki, and is described in the student information material as one of the largest universities in Greece, with a broad range of Departments, a large student population, extensive teaching and administrative staff, museums, student services, sports facilities, Erasmus activity and a Career Services Office.

The FLP benefits from the complementary strengths of three major AUTh academic units. The Department of Chemistry provides the molecular and chemical foundation of materials; the Department of Physics provides understanding of structure, properties and characterisation; and the Department of Mechanical Engineering provides the engineering, processing, manufacturing and application perspective. Together, they create a coherent interdisciplinary platform for an English-taught programme aimed at international students and aligned with global priorities in advanced materials, sustainability, energy, digital technologies and industrial innovation.

PART B: COMPLIANCE WITH THE PRINCIPLES

Principle 1: Strategic Planning

INSTITUTIONS AND ACADEMIC UNITS SHOULD HAVE IN PLACE AN APPROPRIATE STRATEGY FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT AND PROVISION OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE PROGRAMMES (FLP).

By decision of the Institutional Senate, the Institutions and their academic units should adapt their strategy to allow for the provision of FLP, in addition to attending to any special needs in terms of infrastructure, services, human resources, procedures, financial resources, and administrative systems. In this strategy, the Institutions and the academic units should anticipate the potential benefits, weaknesses, opportunities, and/or risks from their implementation and plan all the necessary actions to achieve their goals.

Relevant documentation

- *Institutional Strategy*
- *Academic unit Strategy, including a plan for effective revenue utilisation*

Foreign Language Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The Panel found that the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (AUTh) and the participating academic units have, in general, developed a concise strategic framework for the establishment and delivery of their undergraduate and postgraduate offerings. The FLP on "Material Science and Engineering" is formally embedded in AUTh's wider strategic orientation for internationalisation, extroversion, quality enhancement and global academic visibility. The AUTh Strategic Plan 2024–2028 explicitly emphasises internationalisation, outward engagement, digital transformation, quality assurance, student support, innovation and links with society and the economy.

The establishment of the FLP has been approved by the AUTh Senate. The Senate decision approves the foundation and operation of the interdepartmental foreign-language undergraduate programme from academic year 2026–2027, involving the Department of Chemistry as the coordinating unit, together with the Departments of Physics and Mechanical Engineering. The same decision refers to the accompanying feasibility study, sustainability report, budget analysis, cooperation protocol and internal regulation.

The programme is clearly positioned as a strategic internationalisation initiative. It is designed as an English-taught interdepartmental programme in Materials Science and Engineering, targeting international students and responding to global demand in advanced materials, sustainable development, circular economy, green industry and technological innovation. The programme offers a five-year pathway leading to a Diploma with Integrated Master in Materials Science and Engineering.

The academic unit strategy identifies the programme as part of the Department of Chemistry's wider effort to strengthen internationalisation, interdisciplinary education and additional revenue generation. It also states that revenue from foreign-language programmes can be reinvested in scholarships, infrastructure and academic development. The strategy places the FLP within a wider plan to position AUTh and Thessaloniki as a regional academic hub in South-Eastern Europe.

The submitted documentation includes a feasibility study and strategic analysis. These documents consider the academic rationale, international demand, student recruitment model, tuition level, sustainability, resource needs and the wider scientific and labour-market relevance of the programme. The feasibility study justifies the programme by reference to technological and industrial challenges, including sustainable materials, energy efficiency, circular economy and environmental requirements.

The programme has a clearly defined financial model. The feasibility study and internal regulation indicate a planned intake of up to 40 students per year and annual tuition fees of €8,000, designed to support the economic sustainability of the programme and reinvestment in academic and research development. The internal regulation further defines the allocation of resources, including the ELKE deduction and the use of remaining revenues for operational needs and the support of the collaborating Departments and their educational, research and operational activities.

The documentation also demonstrates planning for support services for international students. The internal regulation refers to the Foreign Student Support Unit, which supports international students with enrolment, entry visas, residence permits, settlement in Greece, cooperation with university services, and access to Greek or other language courses. Administrative support is assigned to the coordinating Department of Chemistry and the Programme Secretariat.

The MODIP/QAU review confirms that the accreditation proposal and accompanying annexes address the HAHE requirements, including strategic planning, institutional strategy, academic unit strategy, quality policy, feasibility study, regulations, student support and public information. MODIP approved the proposal and its supporting documentation for submission to HAHE.

II. Analysis

The evidence indicates that the FLP is not an isolated initiative but is aligned with the institutional strategy of AUTh and the strategic priorities of the participating academic units. The programme directly supports AUTh's aims for internationalisation, academic visibility, quality education and stronger links with society, industry and innovation.

The strategic rationale is strong. Materials Science and Engineering is an internationally relevant, interdisciplinary field, and the programme draws on the complementary strengths of Chemistry, Physics and Mechanical Engineering. The academic rationale is particularly convincing because the programme combines materials synthesis and molecular design, materials structure and properties, and mechanical behaviour, processing and applications. This creates a coherent interdisciplinary platform rather than a simple collection of courses from different Departments.

The Panel considers the existence of a Senate decision, internal regulation, feasibility study, sustainability analysis, cooperation protocol and academic unit strategy to be strong evidence of institutional preparedness. These documents show that AUTh and the participating Departments have considered the legal, academic, administrative, financial and operational requirements for establishing the FLP.

The financial and revenue-utilisation plan is also appropriate. The annual tuition fee and planned student intake are justified in relation to sustainability and reinvestment. The strategy states that generated revenue will support scholarships, infrastructure and academic development, while the internal regulation specifies how resources are allocated and managed. This satisfies the requirement for a realistic plan for effective

revenue utilisation.

The strategy also takes account of potential opportunities and risks. Opportunities include rising international demand for advanced materials expertise, green transition priorities, digital transformation, industrial innovation and the attraction of international students. Risks and challenges include international competition, demographic and economic pressures, geopolitical uncertainty, infrastructure needs and the need for sustained administrative and student support. The documentation recognises these issues and links them to planned actions, quality assurance processes and monitoring mechanisms.

A positive feature is the explicit planning for international student support. The presence of a Foreign Student Support Unit and dedicated administrative arrangements is important, given that the FLP targets foreign students and will operate in English. This demonstrates awareness that successful internationalisation requires more than English-language teaching; it also requires support for visas, residence permits, settlement, language integration and student services.

The main area requiring continued attention is implementation. Since the programme is new, the Panel cannot yet assess whether student recruitment, revenue projections, international support services and reinvestment plans will operate effectively in practice. The strategic framework is strong, but the achievement of its objectives will depend on active monitoring of student demand, financial sustainability, international marketing, administrative capacity, quality of support services and the effectiveness of the programme's international positioning.

III. Conclusions

The Panel concludes that AUTh and the participating Departments have established an appropriate and well-documented strategy for the creation and delivery of the FLP "Materials Science and Engineering". The programme is clearly aligned with AUTh's institutional strategy for internationalisation and quality enhancement, has been formally approved by the Senate, and is supported by an academic unit strategy, feasibility study, sustainability planning, revenue-utilisation plan and internal regulation.

The programme responds to a clearly identified international academic and industrial need and is supported by the combined strengths of Chemistry, Physics and Mechanical Engineering. The Panel also notes positively the existence of specific arrangements for international student support and the planned reinvestment of programme revenue into academic development, infrastructure and student support. The programme satisfies the requirements of Principle 1.

Panel Judgement

Principle 1: Strategic Planning	
Fully compliant	**X**
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

R1.1 Develop a detailed operational implementation plan for the first three years of the FLP, including recruitment targets, marketing actions, international partnerships, support-service milestones and annual review points.
R1.2 Monitor closely whether the projected intake of up to 40 students per year is achieved and prepare alternative scenarios in case recruitment is lower than expected.
R1.3 Make the revenue-utilisation plan more visible to stakeholders by publishing a concise annual summary showing how tuition income is reinvested in teaching, laboratories, student support, scholarships and programme development.
R1.4 Strengthen the role of external stakeholders and international partners in reviewing the strategic direction of the programme, especially regarding graduate employability and emerging industrial needs in materials science and engineering.
R1.5 Review annually the capacity of administrative and international student support services, especially visa/residence support, onboarding, welfare, accommodation guidance and integration into the academic and social environment of AUTh.

Principle 2: Quality Assurance Policy

ACADEMIC UNITS SHOULD DRAFT AND IMPLEMENT A QUALITY ASSURANCE POLICY, ARISING FROM THEIR STRATEGY AND SPECIALISED FOR THE SPECIFIC FLP DOMAIN, THAT IS ACCOMPANIED BY ANNUAL QUALITY ASSURANCE TARGETS, FOR CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT.

The quality assurance policy of the academic unit must be formulated in the form of a statement, which is made public, and is implemented with the contribution of all stakeholders. The objective is to pursue specific annual quality goals, related to the quality assurance of the study programmes offered by the academic unit, including its FLP. In order to implement this policy, the academic unit, along with other assurances, is committed to implement effective procedures that will provide the suitability of the structure and organisation of the FLP, the suitability of the qualifications of the teaching staff, as well as the quality of the support services of the academic unit that has adequate administrative staff. The academic unit also commits itself to conduct an annual internal evaluation of the FLP, realised by the Internal Evaluation Group (IEG) in collaboration with the Quality Assurance Unit (QAU) of the Institution.

Relevant documentation

- *Quality Policy*
- *Quality Targeting (utilising S.M.A.R.T. methodology)*

Foreign Language Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The collaborating AUTh Departments have formally adopted a Quality Assurance (QA) policy for the Interdepartmental Undergraduate Foreign Language Programme (FLP) in Materials Science & Engineering, which is currently under accreditation. This policy is aligned with the institutional QA policy of AUTh, as approved by the Institution's governing bodies and applied across all AUTh undergraduate and postgraduate study programmes. It is supported by the dedicated AUTh and Departmental QA services and support staff.

The Institutional policy sets out a clear commitment to quality assurance and continuous improvement across teaching, research, administration and student support. It also explicitly refers to the implementation of the institutional Internal Quality Assurance System in cooperation with the AUTh Quality Assurance Unit (MODIP). The policy addresses all core dimensions required, including programme structure and organisation, learning outcomes aligned with the European and National Qualifications Frameworks, teaching effectiveness, staff qualifications, demand for graduates' qualifications in the labour market, quality of support services, and the efficient use of resources derived from tuition fees.

The Materials Science & Engineering FLP (MS&E FLP) has adapted the Institutional QA policy to the specific needs and characteristics of the FLP, particularly in relation to the extroversion and international appeal of both the Institution and the programme.

The FLP has defined specific, measurable and time-bound quality objectives, documented in documents ι, ια, ιβ and θ. These objectives are grouped under strategic goals related to educational quality, research excellence and internationalisation. They are supported by clearly defined indicators (KPIs), baseline values, target values, concrete actions, assigned responsibilities and relevant implementation timelines.

II. Analysis

The QA Policy is coherent and compliant with the requirements of Principle 2. It represents a structured approach to quality management and is implemented through established mechanisms, as evidenced by both the documentation provided and the discussions held during the evaluation meetings.

Document ιβ presents a set of well-defined quality objectives, linked to measurable indicators, assigned responsibilities (e.g. FLP Director, academic advisors, teaching staff, secretariat) and implementation timelines, thereby supporting effective monitoring and accountability.

The learning outcomes of the FLP are aligned with the European and National Qualifications Frameworks. The quality objectives directly support their achievement through improvements in teaching effectiveness, assessment and student progression. Staff are mindful of the need to ensure a state-of-the-art student experience. Communication and dissemination of the quality policy are expected to be addressed through publication on the programme website and internal communication within the academic unit.

The Panel welcomes the introduction of strategic goal Σ.3, which focuses on linking the FLP with the market through an External Advisory Board and dedicated external collaborations. Overall, the evidence demonstrates a mature QA culture, with systematic goal setting, monitoring and feedback mechanisms embedded in the operation of the FLP.

III. Conclusions

The Interdepartmental Undergraduate FLP in Materials Science & Engineering fully meets the requirements of Principle 2. A publicly available and institutionally aligned QA policy is in place, supported by a detailed and measurable quality targeting framework. Quality objectives are clearly defined and will be monitored through appropriate KPIs, as part of the FLP's continuous improvement processes.

Panel Judgement

Principle 2: Quality Assurance Policy	
Fully compliant	**X**
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

None

Principle 3: Design, Approval, and Monitoring of the Quality of Foreign Language Programmes

ACADEMIC UNITS SHOULD DEVELOP THEIR FOREIGN LANGUAGE PROGRAMMES FOLLOWING A DEFINED WRITTEN PROCESS WHICH WILL INVOLVE THE PARTICIPANTS, INFORMATION SOURCES, AND THE APPROVAL COMMITTEES FOR THE PROGRAMME. THE OBJECTIVES, THE EXPECTED LEARNING OUTCOMES, THE INTENDED PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS, AND THE WAYS TO ACHIEVE THEM ARE SET OUT IN THE FLP DESIGN. THE ABOVE DETAILS AS WELL AS INFORMATION ON THE PROGRAMME'S STRUCTURE ARE PUBLISHED IN THE STUDENT GUIDE.

Academic units develop their Foreign Language Programmes following a well-defined procedure. The academic profile and orientation of the programme, the objectives, the subject areas, the structure and organisation, the expected learning outcomes and the intended professional qualifications according to the National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education, are described at this stage. The above components should be taken into account and pertain to a feasibility study, which, among other things, should take into consideration the strategy of the Institution, the experience of external stakeholders from the labour market, the smooth progression of students throughout the stages of the Programme, the anticipated student workload according to the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS), the option to provide work experience to the students, the linking of teaching and research, the international experience in Programmes of the given discipline, the relevant regulatory framework, and the official procedure for the approval of the Programme by the Institution.

The process of the approval or revision of the Programmes provides for the verification of compliance to the basic requirements of the Standards by the Quality Assurance Unit (QAU).

Relevant documentation

- *Institutional Senate decision for the establishment of the FLP (par. 2, 3, and 5 of article 82 of Law 4692/2020)*
- *FLP Guide (bilingual, in Greek and English)*
- *Course outlines*
- *Teaching staff (list of names with scientific specialisations, employment relationship, and assignment of teaching in the FLP and other Programmes)*
- *Special protocols on cooperation or memoranda of agreement*
- *Feasibility study*
- *QAU records*

Foreign Language Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The Interdepartmental Undergraduate Foreign Language Programme (FLP) in Materials Science & Engineering, currently under accreditation and also referred to as the Joint Undergraduate Programme of Studies in English (JEUPS) in Materials Science and Engineering, has been designed and will be implemented and operated jointly by the Departments of Chemistry (coordinator), Physics, and Mechanical Engineering of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (AUTh).

Its objective is the systematic education and specialisation of non-Greek students in Materials Science and Engineering, with emphasis on the connection between theoretical knowledge, applied research, and industrial practice. Upon completion of

the five-year cycle of studies, the programme will lead to an Integrated Master's Diploma in Materials Science and Engineering, with three distinct streams/specialisations:

1. Materials Manufacturing and Circular Economy
2. Micro and Nanotechnology Engineering
3. Biomaterials and Biotechnology

The FLP documentation relevant to Principle 3, as provided on the HAHE site, is complete and well written. However, several documents have not been updated and still refer to a previous version of the FLP, which offered either a Bachelor's degree after four years or an Integrated Master's Diploma after five years. As explained during the meetings, the Bachelor option was not accepted by HAHE; consequently, the current FLP under accreditation offers only one option: the Integrated Master's Diploma.

The FLP Operational Regulations (Document β), provided in both Greek and English, are concise and well written. They outline the FLP's objectives, governance structure, regulations, and the decisions/procedures related to its establishment.

The overall strategy of AUTh is presented in Document ι. It is a detailed and well-written document that maps both AUTh's internal development and the external environment in which the Institution operates and seeks to grow. Reference is also made to the National Strategy for Higher Education, as well as to the European and international context.

The Study Guide (Document ιδ) is provided, as required by HAHE, in both Greek and English. It includes an overview of the host Departments, the FLP regulations and procedures, the study programme, individual course content, and practical information and links relating to AUTh and Thessaloniki.

The FLP requires a total of 300 ECTS for completion. Each course carries 6 ECTS and is delivered over four hours per week. The programme spans ten semesters: five courses per semester during the first eight semesters, and two courses per semester during the ninth and tenth semesters. Elective courses are limited to three, plus one elective to be selected from streams other than the one followed by the student. Two diploma theses are planned during the final two semesters, each carrying 15 ECTS. Two soft-skills courses/seminars, each carrying 3 ECTS, complement the final two semesters.

There are no prerequisites and, according to Greek legislation, the maximum duration of studies is five plus two years. All courses and laboratories require physical presence, and no part-time enrolment is foreseen.

The FLP fees are €8,000 per year, with a target intake of 40 students annually. Students will have access to all benefits available to the standard AUTh student population, except the right to accommodation in AUTh dormitories. In addition, they will be supported by an AUTh service dedicated to international students.

II. Analysis

The FLP in Materials Science and Engineering has been established in accordance with all formal procedures required by Greek legislation and AUTh. It is aligned with the strategy and relevant policies of AUTh, is well focused, and offers knowledge and skills that are relevant in Greece, Europe, and internationally.

The planned courses will be delivered by academic staff with expertise in their respective fields, integrating both research-based content and elements targeted towards industrial and societal needs. A significant strength of the FLP is that it is

delivered jointly by two scientific Departments, Chemistry and Physics, and one engineering Department, Mechanical Engineering. This provides students, as well as teaching staff, with different perspectives and approaches that are necessary for the formation of well-educated professionals capable of operating in the modern, multi-faceted world.

The FLP is well structured and corresponds to Level 7 of the European Qualifications Framework (EQF), ensuring that students acquire advanced academic and professional knowledge, skills, and competences. The expected student workload also appears consistent with the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) requirements for a Level 7 programme.

The University's Quality Assurance Unit (MODIP), which is responsible for supervising internal and external evaluation procedures, has provided effective guidance during the preparation and documentation of the new FLP. Its support has contributed to the development of a clear and well-organised set of high-quality practical documents, most of which are available in both Greek and English.

All meetings with the FLP management, academic staff, and support personnel took place in a cordial and sincere environment. The Panel had only limited time for the laboratory and other facility visits, which were restricted to the Chemistry and Physics Departments. Some of the laboratories visited included very expensive, state-of-the-art equipment.

The Materials Science and Engineering FLP is aligned with the AUTh strategy and policies, as outlined in the extensive Document ι on the AUTh Strategic Plan for 2024–2028. Moreover, a similar FLP is already operational within AUTh in the medical field and is reported to have achieved outstanding success in terms of demand.

However, despite the extensive statistical data and comprehensive contextual analysis included in AUTH's strategic plan, the plan does not provide specific reasons or data concerning the establishment and development of academic FLP offerings, particularly at undergraduate level. During the on-site discussions with the FLP management, no specific reasons for establishing such FLPs were provided beyond complementing AUTh public funding.

Since tuition fees represent only a fraction of the overall FLP costs, it may be questioned why AUTH, and consequently the Greek state, should finance the higher education of foreign nationals. No plausible reason was provided beyond the generic need for internationalisation and institutional extroversion.

Furthermore, the exclusion of Greek residents from FLP enrolment may provide grounds for legal action regarding discriminatory access to public higher education. In the event of a successful legal challenge, the FLP could become a backdoor route for accessing Greek HEIs while bypassing national examinations and could therefore endanger its own existence. The Panel has no legal expertise and cannot provide an expert opinion on this matter. However, such exclusion represents a risk that the Institution's legal services should examine and that the FLP management should include in its planning.

III. Conclusions

The three collaborating Departments have developed a well-focused and well-structured programme in accordance with the procedures prescribed by AUTh and HAHE. The FLP study programme and the expected learning outcomes are aligned with relevant industrial and societal needs. The documentation provided is concise and well-

written.

The FLP under accreditation fits well within the host Institution's strategy, which is well documented and clearly explained. However, the strategy does not adequately explain the specific reasons, needs, and benefits associated with such FLPs. The generic need for internationalisation and extroversion is not sufficient and should be further specified and, where possible, quantified.

The host Institution should undertake all possible actions, including workshops, dedicated studies and/or other activities, to analyse and document the need for undergraduate FLPs and their expected benefits for the academic community, the public, and the country. Such measures, in addition to their obvious value for the design and implementation of AUTh's development strategy, may also contribute to a wider consensus within the academic community and the general public.

Panel Judgement

Principle 3: Design, Approval, and Monitoring of the Quality of Foreign Language Programmes	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	**X**
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

The External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel agrees that this Programme leads to a Level 7 Qualification according to the National & European Qualifications Framework (Integrated Master)	**YES**	**NO***
	X	

Panel Recommendations

R3.1 Develop and adequately document the need for undergraduate FLPs and their expected benefits for the academic community, the public, and the country. This should be undertaken at AUTh level, possibly through a dedicated study, workshop, or conference involving the Region of Northern Greece, industry, and other relevant societal groups.

R3.2 Elaborate on the risk of legal action concerning the exclusion of Greek nationals/residents from enrolment in the FLP and include this risk in the FLP's planning and risk-management framework.

Principle 4: Student-Centred Learning, Teaching and Assessment

ACADEMIC UNITS SHOULD ENSURE THAT THE FOREIGN LANGUAGE PROGRAMMES ARE DELIVERED IN A WAY THAT ENCOURAGES STUDENTS TO TAKE AN ACTIVE ROLE IN CREATING THE LEARNING PROCESS. THE ASSESSMENT METHODS SHOULD REFLECT THIS APPROACH.

In the implementation of student-centred learning and teaching, the academic unit:

- *Respects and attends to the diversity of students and their needs, enabling flexible learning paths*
- *Considers and uses different modes of delivery, where appropriate*
- *Flexibly uses a variety of pedagogical methods*
- *Regularly evaluates and adjusts the modes of delivery and pedagogical methods aiming at improvement*
- *Regularly evaluates the quality and effectiveness of teaching, as documented especially through student surveys*
- *Reinforces the student's sense of autonomy, while ensuring adequate guidance and support from the teaching staff*
- *Promotes mutual respect in the student - teacher relationship*
- *Applies appropriate procedures for dealing with students' complaints*

Relevant documentation

- *Questionnaires for assessment by the students*
- *Operating procedure for managing student complaints*
- *Operating procedure for the function of the academic advisor*
- *Report on teaching methods and student assessment*

Foreign Language Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The Programme aims to uphold high standards in the quality of learning and teaching. Most key aspects of student-centred learning, teaching, and assessment are adequately addressed. The Panel notes, however, that certain points should be addressed to support the future development and sustainability of the Programme, if and when it begins operation.

II. Analysis

The curriculum covers a wide range of topics and offers three orientation options: Materials Manufacturing and Circular Economy, Micro and Nanotechnology Engineering, and Biomaterials and Biotechnology. The Programme provides six elective courses for fourth-year students — 2+2 from one specialisation and 1+1 from any specialisation — balancing learning flexibility with robust specialisation.

Assessment criteria and methods have not yet been published for most courses. In addition, course descriptions are incomplete.

The Programme includes eight core courses with laboratory components, while the remaining thirty-two core courses are lecture-based. Consequently, the diversity of pedagogical approaches will depend significantly on how these lectures are designed and delivered. Co-teaching is planned as a means of balancing the lecturers' heavy

workloads.

Student autonomy is promoted mainly in the later years of study through the selection of an orientation pathway and additional elective laboratory courses. It is especially encouraged during the diploma thesis, where students are expected to undertake independent laboratory work using specialised equipment.

Students are provided with the institution-wide evaluation questionnaire. The questionnaire covers basic aspects of course quality and generates simple quantitative metrics from student responses.

The Academic Advisor regulation is in place and provides a framework for academic support, particularly during the early years of study. Academic advisors are responsible for arranging an introductory meeting with students during their first winter semester. Students can identify their assigned advisor through the students. AUTh platform and through introductory emails sent upon enrolment. Additional information about the academic advising system will be published on the Programme website.

III. Conclusions

The curriculum seeks to provide students with a strong theoretical foundation while allowing them to specialise in one of the three available orientation options. Although the current evaluation questionnaire may adequately address the needs of domestic students, it is unlikely to capture the more specific and complex needs of foreign students. The Programme indicates that Academic Advisors will assume an active role in supporting students' academic progression throughout their studies.

Panel Judgement

Principle 4: Student-Centred Learning, Teaching and Assessment	
Fully compliant	**X**
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

R.4.1 Assessment criteria and methods should be published for all courses, together with complete and accurate course descriptions.

R.4.2 Care should be taken towards better English in all FLP-related documents and websites. Where possible, text should be written directly in English rather than translated from the Greek text.

R.4.3 Co-teaching arrangements should be managed carefully to ensure that each course maintains a coherent identity and structure.

R.4.5 The student evaluation questionnaire should be tailored for the foreign students, who should also be surveyed on their level of social and societal integration. Such feedback would help both the Programme and the International Studies Office strengthen support mechanisms and services.

Principle 5: Student Admission, Progression, Recognition of Academic Qualifications, Award of Degrees and Certificates of Qualifications of Foreign Language Programmes

ACADEMIC UNITS SHOULD DEVELOP AND APPLY PUBLISHED REGULATIONS COVERING ALL ASPECTS AND PHASES OF STUDIES (ADMISSION, PROGRESSION, RECOGNITION OF STUDIES, AND DEGREE AWARD).

The internal regulations that govern the Foreign Language Programmes should regulate all the matters pertaining to these, from the beginning to the end of the studies. Indicatively:

- *The admission criteria and the required supporting documentation according to the law*
- *The rights and obligations of students*
- *Internship issues*
- *The language of instruction*
- *Procedures concerning the award and recognition of higher education degrees, the duration of studies, rules ensuring students progression*
- *Terms and conditions for enhancing student mobility*

Appropriate recognition procedures rely on institutional practice for recognition of credits among various European academic departments and Institutions, in line with the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention. Graduation represents the culmination of the students' study period. Students need to receive documentation explaining the qualification gained, including achieved learning outcomes and the context, level, content and status of the studies that were pursued and successfully completed (Diploma Supplement).

All the above must be made public within the context of the Study Guide.

Relevant documentation

- *Internal regulation for the operation of the FLP (Senate decision)*
- *Regulation of studies, internship, mobility, and student assignments*
- *Diploma Supplement*

Foreign Language Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The Programme has established and published regulations concerning student admission, progression, recognition of studies, and degree award. Admission criteria and supporting documentation are available through the Programme website. In addition to the formal admission requirements, applicants participate in a short interview that primarily assesses English language proficiency and overall suitability for the Programme.

II. Analysis

The Programme operates within the established regulatory framework of the Institution and follows the procedures applied across the University's Foreign Language Programmes. The language of instruction is English. Regulations concerning student rights and obligations, academic progression, mobility, recognition of studies, degree award, and the issuance of the Diploma Supplement have been approved and are

available.

Student mobility is supported through the University's established Erasmus+ framework and associated recognition procedures.

Although practical training is not currently included in the curriculum, industry stakeholders expressed strong interest in hosting students for practical training activities and highlighted the potential value of such experiences for future graduates.

III. Conclusions

The Programme has established clear and transparent procedures from admission to graduation. Relevant regulations, recognition procedures, and qualification-award mechanisms are in place and aligned with the Institution's established practices.

Panel Judgement

Principle 5: Student Admission, Progression, Recognition of Academic Qualifications, Award of Degrees and Certificates of Qualifications of Foreign Language Programmes	
Fully compliant	**X**
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

R.5.1 The Programme should consider introducing practical training as an elective course.

R.5.2 Student mobility should be actively encouraged.

Principle 6: Ensuring High Quality of the Teaching Staff of the Foreign Language Programmes

ACADEMIC UNITS SHOULD ASSURE THEMSELVES OF THE QUALIFICATIONS AND COMPETENCE OF THE TEACHING STAFF. THEY SHOULD APPLY FAIR AND TRANSPARENT PROCESSES FOR THE RECRUITMENT AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE TEACHING STAFF.

The academic unit and the Institution should attend to the adequacy of the teaching staff numbers, the appropriate student-teacher ratio, the appropriate categories of staff (and in the respective foreign language of instruction), the appropriate learning outcomes, a fair selection procedure, high research performance, training, an effective personnel development policy / participation in mobility schemes, conferences, and educational leave (according to the law).

More specifically, the academic unit should set up and follow clear, transparent, and fair processes for the recruitment of properly qualified staff and offer them conditions of employment that recognise the importance of teaching and research. It should 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, and promote the increase of the volume and quality of the research output within the academic unit. It should also follow quality assurance processes for all staff members (with respect to attendance requirements, performance, self-assessment, training, etc.) and develop policies to attract highly qualified academic staff.

Relevant documentation

- *Procedures and criteria for teaching staff recruitment*
- *Regulations or employment contracts, obligations*
- *Staff support and development policy*
- *Performance of the teaching staff in research and teaching*

Foreign Language Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The teaching staff of the new Foreign Language Undergraduate Study Programme (FLP) in Materials Science and Engineering at Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (AUTh) consists of 57 faculty members from the Departments of Chemistry, Physics, and Mechanical Engineering, one laboratory instructor, one laboratory technical instructor, and an unspecified number of faculty members from other universities, as well as collaborating instructors from research institutes in Greece and abroad.

The regulations governing faculty recruitment are established by the Greek Department of Education. AUTh, as a public university, strictly follows these regulations. The roles of the FLP and of the coordinating Department of Chemistry are limited to selecting the best candidate when the Ministry of Education grants a faculty position. The selection criteria include holding a PhD, publishing scientific work, and having practical experience. The new FLP retains the final decision on instructor selection from within the overall faculty of the contributing Departments, thereby ensuring adequate quality control.

The EEAP found that the faculty of the FLP in Materials Science and Engineering has extensive experience in the FLP's subject areas and sufficient qualifications to teach the Programme's courses. Furthermore, several faculty members have strong records of

research achievement. During the meeting with the EEAP, the faculty expressed their dedication to the FLP and to the Departments of Chemistry, Physics, and Mechanical Engineering.

Faculty teaching responsibilities consist of at least two courses per semester, in addition to thesis supervision, which leaves reasonable time for research engagement. The prudent student admission targets for the FLP further reduce the time faculty members devote to teaching, allowing them to pursue other professional activities. There is some evidence of a mentoring process for early-career faculty; however, there is no mention of significant support, such as travel funds, equipment, or teaching allowances, to accelerate their professional development. Furthermore, participation in and support for sabbatical leaves appear limited in the associated Departments.

The new FLP leadership is confident that all faculty involved are proficient in English. However, there is no detailed documentation of sufficient teaching experience in other English-speaking programmes, especially at the undergraduate level. The new FLP proposal suggests that evidence of teaching quality will be obtained through student questionnaires for course evaluation each semester.

Overall, the FLP's research activity, publications, and funding levels are high compared with those of other departments at AUTh and similar programmes in Greek universities. There are strong links between teaching and research in the FLP, and student theses have the potential to lead to journal publications and/or conference presentations.

II. Analysis

The EEAP found that the faculty of the FLP is sufficiently qualified and that their productivity is higher than that of most Greek universities. Publication numbers vary among faculty members but are generally very strong. The Departments of Chemistry, Physics, and Mechanical Engineering believe that mobility is essential for faculty, staff, and students. However, there is no systematic approach to providing additional support for the mobility of early-career faculty members. Sabbatical leaves abroad are not particularly encouraged or financially supported by the partner Departments.

Linking teaching to research appears natural, as most students will complete their theses on topics covered in the required courses. Most FLP instructors conduct research in the subjects they teach, and it should therefore be straightforward to transfer their research findings into the classroom.

The questionnaire samples provided to the EEAP include routine questions prepared by AUTh's central administration. These will require significant revision by FLP faculty if they are to provide meaningful information about the specific FLP and a measurable assessment of the learning achieved by students. Finally, the effectiveness of instruction in English should be monitored carefully by the FLP leadership using direct quality-control methods. These could include teaching awards for outstanding faculty and similar motivational measures.

III. Conclusions

The faculty members of the FLP in Materials Science and Engineering are highly qualified to teach the Programme's courses. The link between teaching and research is excellent. Some opportunities for faculty mobility exist, and teaching responsibilities are moderate. These factors support the professional development of early-career faculty; however, there is no systematic mentoring process or specific mechanism to

enhance the professional development of new hires. The concept of sabbatical leave should be embedded in the Departments' culture, as it can be an effective way to reinforce teaching quality in English.

Panel Judgement

Principle 6: Ensuring High Quality of the Teaching Staff of the Foreign Language Programmes	
Fully compliant	**X**
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

R6.1. Introduce a formal mentoring process, including seed funding and teaching allowances for early-career faculty and other teaching staff, to accelerate their professional development and promotion.

R6.2. Encourage and support the sabbatical leave process.

R6.3. Improve the generic course-evaluation questionnaire to include learning assessments for specific subjects aligned with each course's deliverables.

R6.4. Consider creating excellence-in-teaching awards, especially for early-career faculty members.

R6.5. Consider broadening the pool of teaching staff through temporary appointments of prominent academics from abroad.

Principle 7: Learning Resources and Student Support of Foreign Language Programmes

ACADEMIC UNITS SHOULD HAVE ADEQUATE FUNDING TO COVER ALL THEIR TEACHING AND LEARNING NEEDS. THEY SHOULD PROVIDE ADEQUATE INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES FOR LEARNING AND STUDENT SUPPORT AND FACILITATE DIRECT ACCESS BY ESTABLISHING INTERNAL RULES TO THIS END (E.G. LECTURE ROOMS, LABORATORIES, LIBRARIES, NETWORKS, BOARDING, CAREER AND SOCIAL POLICY SERVICES, ETC.).

Institutions and their academic units must have sufficient funding and means to support learning and academic activity in general, so that they can offer to the students of the FLP the best possible level of studies. The above means include facilities such as libraries, study rooms, educational and scientific equipment, information and communications services, support, and counselling services. When allocating the available resources, the needs of all students -including foreign students- must be taken into consideration (e.g. whether they are full-time or part-time students, employed or international students, students with disabilities, etc.), 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. Internal quality assurance processes should ensure that all resources are appropriate, adequate, and accessible, and that students are informed about all available services. In delivering support services, the role of support and administrative staff is crucial and therefore this segment of staff needs to be qualified and have opportunities to develop its competencies.

Relevant documentation

- *Insurance contract for foreign students*
- *Level, structure, and organisational setup of the Foreign Students Support Unit (Senate Decision)*
- *Administrative support staff of FLP (positions, qualifications, and responsibilities)*
- *Information material for the students with reference to the services provided (in English)*

Foreign Language Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The Programme benefits from the extensive academic, administrative, and support infrastructure of the Institution. Foreign students are supported by the International Studies Office, which guides admission support, residence permit procedures, insurance matters, housing assistance, orientation activities, and other relevant issues. An open day is planned for incoming students and will include introductions to faculty members, the academic advisor, and the University's facilities and services.

The three Departments contributing to the Programme collectively operate eighteen laboratories, supported by active research programmes, modern equipment, and a large faculty body. Students will also have access to the Institution's libraries, student services, extracurricular activities, sports clubs, and free Greek language courses.

II. Analysis

The Programme is supported by adequate funding and benefits from the resources and services already established at the institutional level. The Panel found the library facilities and laboratories to be brand new and of a particularly high standard, while the teaching facilities were appropriate and undergoing continuous improvement.

The International Studies Office appears prepared to support the initial implementation of the Programme and has developed a comprehensive support model for foreign students. The number of staff is currently limited and will require reinforcement as student numbers grow. Staff training is in progress and should be completed within the coming years.

The combined resources of the three Departments create a strong academic environment and provide students with access to significant research activity and specialised infrastructure. While access to most research laboratories is necessarily restricted due to the specialised and expensive nature of the equipment, students will have opportunities to engage with some of these facilities during their diploma thesis work.

A current limitation is the absence of dedicated technical staff with specialised laboratory expertise (ΕΤΕΠ/ΕΔΕΠ). As a result, teaching staff are expected to assume additional responsibilities related to laboratory supervision, further increasing their already substantial workload.

III. Conclusions

The Programme provides adequate learning resources, infrastructure, and student support services. Through the combined capabilities of the Institution and the three participating Departments, students will benefit from a rich academic environment, strong support structures, and extensive opportunities for personal and professional development.

The long-term success of the Programme will depend on maintaining and strengthening both administrative support and technical laboratory staffing as the Programme matures.

Panel Judgement

Principle 7: Learning Resources and Student Support of Foreign Language Programmes	
Fully compliant	**X**
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

R7.1. The International Studies Office, academic advisors, and faculty members should actively encourage students to engage with the University's vibrant student community, including both academic and extracurricular activities.

R7.2. The recruitment of dedicated technical staff (ΕΤΕΠ/ΕΔΕΠ) should be considered a high priority for the long-term health and sustainability of the Programme.

R7.3. The International Studies Office should further enhance the visibility and transparency of its support processes so that students and their families clearly understand the range of services available to them.

R7.4. As the Programme develops, consideration should be given to creating additional opportunities for students to gain access to selected research laboratories to provide them with a competitive advantage.

Principle 8: Collection, Analysis, and Use of Information for the Organisation and Operation of Foreign Language Programmes

ACADEMIC UNITS BEAR FULL RESPONSIBILITY FOR COLLECTING, ANALYSING, AND USING INFORMATION, AIMED AT THE EFFICIENT MANAGEMENT OF FLP AND RELATED ACTIVITIES, IN AN INTEGRATED, EFFECTIVE, AND EASILY ACCESSIBLE MANNER.

Efficient procedures for collecting and analysing information on FLP provide data to the internal quality assurance system. The information collected depends, to some extent, on the type of accreditation (initial, or re-accreditation).

The following are of interest: key performance indicators, student body profile, student progression, success and drop-out rates, student satisfaction with the FLP, availability of learning resources and student support, career paths of graduates.

During the initial accreditation, the data concerning the profile and structure of the FLP must be entered (National Information System for Quality Assurance in Higher Education - NISQA fields: M4001 - M4030, M4033 - M4038, and M4127 - M4133).

Relevant documentation

- *Report from the National Information System for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (NISQA) on the launching of FLP*
- *Operation of an information management system for the collection of administrative data for the implementation of the Programme (Students' Record)*

Foreign Language Programme Compliance

I. Findings

To collect reliable data from the academic community, including faculty members, academic staff, administrative staff, and students, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (AUTh) monitors progress and collects qualitative and quantitative information each academic year. AUTh has adopted the standards of the Hellenic Authority for Higher Education (HAHE). Data are collected using the methodology and tables proposed by HAHE and are stored so that they can be retrieved and processed in the future.

All members of the AUTh academic community participate in this process. Specifically, students participate by completing questionnaires evaluating instructors and the overall educational process. Teaching staff participate by completing individual achievement inventories and annual course reports. In addition, administrative staff complete evaluation reports prepared by their Departments and AUTh.

For the new Foreign Language Undergraduate Study Programme (FLP) in Materials Science and Engineering, the information systems for collecting and recording data from the collaborating Departments will incorporate all data from the FLP Evaluation Tables. These data will be available to the Internal Evaluation Teams (OMEA) of the collaborating Departments and will be used to prepare each Department's internal evaluation reports, in accordance with the standards of the National Council for Higher Education. The analysis of the reports by OMEA will be carried out using statistical methods to identify areas that are operating satisfactorily and areas that may need improvement.

II. Analysis

The management and monitoring of student data in the FLP in Materials Science and Engineering will be conducted by the FLP Secretariat using a dedicated Institutional Information System. The data will include student personal information, registration information, study history, course performance, diploma thesis, mobility, and related information.

The data will also be used by the internal quality assurance system to produce basic performance monitoring indicators for the FLP, including the profile of incoming students, duration of studies, grades, timely completion of studies, and performance in specific courses. Student evaluation of the FLP will be obtained through the course evaluation process.

The information system will also be used by the Quality Assurance Unit (QAU) of AUTh to extract and analyse the information required to present the characteristics of the Institution and to support the continuous improvement of academic programmes and the services offered by the Institution.

III. Conclusions

The EEAP believes that the proposed collection and analysis of information by the new FLP offers a high standard of information management. AUTh employs sophisticated, multi-layered digital tools to ensure that administrative and academic data are used effectively for the management and improvement of the FLP.

Panel Judgement

Principle 8: Collection, Analysis, And Use of Information for The Organisation and Operation of Foreign Language Programmes	
Fully compliant	**X**
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

None

Principle 9: Public Information concerning the Foreign Language Programmes

ACADEMIC UNITS SHOULD PUBLISH INFORMATION ABOUT THEIR TEACHING AND ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES WHICH IS CLEAR, ACCURATE, OBJECTIVE, UP-TO-DATE, AND READILY ACCESSIBLE.

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 Foreign Language Programmes they offer, the intended learning outcomes, the degrees awarded, the teaching, learning, and assessment procedures used, the pass rates and the learning opportunities available to their students, as well as graduate employment information.

Relevant documentation

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

Foreign Language Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The new Foreign Language Undergraduate Study Programme (FLP) in Materials Science and Engineering has created an official website at www.msen.AUTh.gr, as well as Facebook and LinkedIn accounts. The website includes links to the collaborating Departments' websites and to the AUTh website. Significant promotional material is provided to attract new students. Information on student services and answers to frequently asked questions are also available. The Programme overview, curriculum, and course syllabi are also provided.

The FLP website offers an excellent description of Aristotle University and the city of Thessaloniki and presents a strong case for the quality of the FLP and the future careers of its graduates. Application materials and a detailed description of the admission process are also available for download.

The quality of the website is very good, and the FLP plans to monitor all access data and use this information to improve the site's navigability and functionality.

II. Analysis

The FLP website provides all basic information regarding the new Programme. The promotion of the FLP is more than adequate for a newly established programme. The English description is satisfactory; however, when following the links to the partner Departments, navigation is not straightforward, as these links contain some information in Greek. Individual faculty profiles also contain information in Greek, and the English sections would benefit from the use of a grammar-correction application.

Some titles are confusing, as the collaborating Departments are identified as "Departments" and their sections as "Departments". Department Chairs are referred to as "Presidents". Furthermore, course descriptions could be improved by following international standards for content and prerequisites.

Finally, the effort to disseminate information through the Department's social media channels and correspondence is commendable. It may be useful to consult current undergraduate students from the collaborating Departments about the modern communication channels used by their peers.

III. Conclusions

The FLP website provides all the necessary information for prospective students. Some minor improvements may increase the site's functionality, and these should be easy to identify as the Programme admits its first cohort this year.

Panel Judgement

Principle 9: Public Information concerning the Foreign Language Programmes	
Fully compliant	**X**
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

R9.1. Ensure that all links from the main website contain data and graphics exclusively in English.
R9.2. Provide titles for Departments and administrators that conform to international standards.
R9.3. Describe potential student projects and/or thesis topics.

Principle 10: Periodic Internal Review of Foreign Language Programmes

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

Regular monitoring, review, and revision of the FLP aims at maintaining the level of educational provision and creating a supportive and effective learning environment for students.

The above comprise the evaluation of: the content of the FLP in light of the latest research in the given discipline, thus ensuring that the programme is up to date; the changing needs of society; the students' workload, progression, and completion; the effectiveness of the procedures for the assessment of students; the students' expectations, needs, and satisfaction in relation to the FLP; the learning environment, support services, and their suitability for the programme; FLP are reviewed and revised regularly involving students and other stakeholders. The information collected is analysed and the FLP is adapted to ensure that it is up to date.

Relevant documentation

- *Procedure for the re-evaluation, redefinition, and updating of the curriculum*
- *Procedure for mitigating weaknesses and upgrading the structure of the FLP, and the learning process*
- *Feedback processes on strategy implementation and quality targeting of the FLP, and relevant decision-making processes (students, external stakeholders)*

Foreign Language Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The FLP will be subject to a formally established and well-implemented internal evaluation process, in accordance with standard AUTh procedures and with the support of the AUTh Quality Assurance Unit (MODIP).

The evaluation process will cover all core dimensions of the FLP, including its design and learning outcomes, teaching and assessment, student-centred learning, learning resources, student support services, information management, and availability.

Findings are expected to be communicated within the academic units and to include a structured identification of strengths, weaknesses, and proposed preventive or corrective actions. These will identify good practice, such as the link between teaching and research, the operation of the academic advisor system, and engagement with stakeholders and alumni, as well as areas requiring further attention, including infrastructure constraints, support staffing, student participation in evaluations, and outgoing student mobility.

II. Analysis

The evidence demonstrates that the FLP has all the prerequisites for an effective and systematic mechanism for monitoring and periodic internal evaluation, fully consistent with the expectations of Principle 10. The annual self-assessment is expected to be comprehensive in scope and methodologically sound, drawing on institutional data sources, student evaluations, programme documentation, and, in principle, structured

feedback from multiple stakeholders, although with varying levels of detail.
The internal evaluation process is based on a comprehensive set of KPIs and measurable targets, including feedback from an external advisory board.
Action plans and improvement directions are defined, with emphasis on strengthening feedback mechanisms in order to increase student participation in evaluations.

III. Conclusions

The FLP fully meets the requirements of Principle 10. Regular internal monitoring and annual internal evaluation are firmly embedded in the programme's quality assurance processes. Evaluation outcomes will be documented, communicated within the academic unit, and used to improve planning, providing a solid foundation for continuous enhancement.

Panel Judgement

Principle 10: Periodic Internal Review of Foreign Language Programmes	
Fully compliant	**X**
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

None

Principle 11: Regular External Evaluation and Accreditation of Foreign Language Programmes Periodic Internal Review of Foreign Language Programmes

FOREIGN LANGUAGE PROGRAMMES SHOULD REGULARLY UNDERGO EVALUATION BY COMMITTEES OF EXTERNAL EXPERTS SET BY THE HAHE, AIMING AT ACCREDITATION. THE TERM OF VALIDITY OF THE ACCREDITATION IS DETERMINED BY THE HAHE.

The HAHE is responsible for administrating the FLP accreditation process which is realised as an external evaluation procedure, and implemented by a committee of independent experts. The HAHE grants accreditation of these programmes, with a specific term of validity, following to which revision is required.

The accreditation of the quality of the FLP acts as a means of verification of the compliance of the programme with 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 recommendations submitted by the committee of experts for the continuous improvement of the FLP.

Relevant documentation

- *Utilisation of the recommendations of the external evaluation of the academic unit and / or the Institution for the establishment and the continuous improvement of the operation of the FLP (reference to the action plan)*

Foreign Language Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The FLP is new and, therefore, has not yet been subject to any external evaluation. The FLP management has provided concise documentation on previous accreditation exercises involving all three collaborating Departments and their compliance with the recommendations arising from those external accreditation processes.

II. Analysis

Evidence from the documentation provided suggests that the collaborating Departments have taken previous external evaluations and accreditations into account to a satisfactory degree. The Department reports 50%–70% compliance with external recommendations well before the next scheduled accreditation exercise. All documentation provided is concise and well written.

III. Conclusions

The FLP fully meets the requirements of Principle 11.

Panel Judgement

Principle 11: Regular External Evaluation and Accreditation of Foreign Language Programmes Periodic Internal Review of Foreign Language Programmes	
Fully compliant	**X**
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

None

PART C: CONCLUSIONS

I. Features of Good Practice

The Programme demonstrates a strong interdisciplinary academic identity, drawing on the complementary expertise of Chemistry, Physics, and Mechanical Engineering. This provides a coherent platform for an English-taught integrated master's programme in Materials Science and Engineering, aligned with areas of international relevance such as advanced materials, sustainability, energy, digital technologies, circular economy, and industrial innovation.

The Programme is supported by a clear institutional and academic-unit strategy, a Senate decision, feasibility and sustainability documentation, internal regulations, and a defined financial model. The documentation shows careful preparation and a structured approach to the establishment of the FLP.

The Quality Assurance framework is well developed. The Programme has an institutionally aligned QA policy, measurable quality objectives, KPIs, responsibilities, timelines, and support from MODIP/QAU. Internal monitoring and periodic review are embedded in the planned operation of the Programme.

The teaching staff are highly qualified and research active. The strong link between teaching and research is a notable strength, particularly through the diploma thesis, which may allow students to engage with research activity and potentially contribute to publications or conference outputs.

The Programme benefits from substantial institutional learning resources, including laboratories, libraries, student services, digital tools, and international student support. The Foreign Student Support Unit/International Studies Office provides an important structure for supporting incoming international students.

The Programme has developed a dedicated website and social media presence, with substantial public information for prospective students, including programme description, curriculum, admission information, student services, and promotional material.

The Programme is committed to establishing an External Advisory Board and has introduced a relevant target in its formal QA process.

II. Areas of Weakness

As the Programme is new, there is not yet evidence of implementation, student recruitment outcomes, student progression, student satisfaction, graduate employability, or the practical effectiveness of support and quality-assurance processes.

The most significant weakness concerns Principle 3. Although the Programme fits within AUTH's strategy, the Panel notes that AUTh has not adequately explained or

quantified the specific reasons, needs, and expected benefits of undergraduate FLPs beyond the general aims of internationalisation, extroversion, and complementary income.

Some documentation has not been fully updated and still refers to a previous version of the Programme that included both a four-year Bachelor route and a five-year Integrated Master route. The current Programme under accreditation offers only the Integrated Master route.

The possible legal risk associated with excluding Greek nationals/residents from enrolment has not been sufficiently analysed. The Panel notes that it cannot provide a legal opinion, but this remains a risk that should be examined by the Institution's legal services and included in Programme planning.

Course descriptions and assessment criteria are incomplete for several courses. The Programme is also relatively lecture-heavy, with limited elective and laboratory components, especially in the earlier years of study.

The student evaluation questionnaire is generic and may not capture the specific academic, social, and integration needs of foreign students. It also requires further development to assess course-specific learning outcomes more effectively.

There is limited evidence of systematic mentoring, seed funding, teaching allowances, or sabbatical support for early-career faculty. The report also notes limited documentation of teaching experience in English-speaking undergraduate programmes.

The Programme depends on administrative and technical support that may need strengthening as student numbers grow. A particular concern is the absence of dedicated technical staff with specialised laboratory expertise, which may increase the workload of teaching staff.

Some public information requires refinement, particularly links leading to Greek-language material, inconsistent terminology for Schools/Departments and administrative roles, and the need for clearer information on potential student projects and thesis topics.

III. Recommendations for Follow-up Actions

The Institution should develop and adequately document the need for undergraduate FLPs and their expected benefits for the academic community, the public, and the country. This should be undertaken at AUTh level, possibly through a dedicated study, workshop, or conference involving the Region of Northern Greece, industry, and other relevant societal groups.

The Programme should include in its planning and risk-management framework an analysis of the potential legal risk associated with the exclusion of Greek nationals/residents from enrolment.

The Programme should prepare a detailed operational implementation plan for its first

three years, including recruitment targets, marketing actions, international partnerships, support-service milestones, annual review points, and contingency scenarios if recruitment is lower than expected.

Assessment criteria, assessment methods, and complete course descriptions should be published for all courses before the Programme begins operation.

The Programme should review its lecture-heavy structure and ensure that teaching methods are creative, modern, flexible, and student-centred, particularly in the early years of study. Co-teaching should be carefully coordinated so that each course retains a coherent identity and structure.

The student evaluation questionnaire should be expanded to address the specific needs and experiences of foreign students, including social and societal integration, support services, and course-specific learning outcomes.

The Programme should consider introducing practical training as an elective course and should actively encourage student mobility.

The Institution should introduce a formal mentoring process for early-career faculty and teaching staff, supported where possible by seed funding, teaching allowances, mobility opportunities, and excellence-in-teaching awards.

The Programme should encourage and support sabbatical leave, especially where this can reinforce teaching quality in English and strengthen international academic experience.

The Programme should monitor and strengthen administrative support, international student support, and specialised technical laboratory staffing as student numbers grow.

The Programme website should ensure that all linked information is available in English, that titles for Departments and administrators conform to international standards, and that potential student projects and thesis topics are clearly described.

IV. Summary & Overall Assessment

The Principles where full compliance has been achieved are:

1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11

The Principles where substantial compliance has been achieved are:

3

The Principles where partial compliance has been achieved are:

None

The Principles where failure of compliance was identified are:

None

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

The External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel agrees that this Programme leads to a Level 7 Qualification according to the National & European Qualifications Framework (Integrated Master)	**YES**	**NO**
	X	

The members of the External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel

Name and Surname	Signature
KONTIS KONSTANTINOS	Signed by KONTIS KONSTANTINOS
ANANIADIS EVANGELOS	Signed by ANANIADIS EVANGELOS
ANDRITSOS FIVOS	Signed by ANDRITSOS FIVOS
KATOPODES NIKOLAOS	Signed by KATOPODES NIKOLAOS