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ΑΡΧΗ ΔΙΑΣΦΑΛΙΣΗΣ ΚΑΙ ΠΙΣΤΟΠΟΙΗΣΗΣ
ΤΗΣ ΠΟΙΟΤΗΤΑΣ ΣΤΗΝ ΑΝΩΤΑΤΗ ΕΚΠΑΙΔΕΥΣΗ

HELLENIC REPUBLIC

H Q A

HELLENIC QUALITY ASSURANCE
AND ACCREDITATION AGENCY

Accreditation Report for the Internal Quality Assurance System (IQAS)

Institution Name: University of the Aegean
Date: 18.11.2018

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Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση
Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινωνικό Ταμείο

**Επιχειρησιακό Πρόγραμμα
Ανάπτυξη Ανθρώπινου Δυναμικού,
Εκπαίδευση και Διά Βίου Μάθηση**
Με τη συγχρηματοδότηση της Ελλάδας και της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης



EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION
FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE
IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Report of the Panel appointed by the HQA to undertake the review of the Internal Quality Assurance System (IQAS) of the **University of the Aegean** for the purposes of granting accreditation

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Part A: Background and Context of the Review	4
I. The Accreditation Panel.....	4
II. Review Procedure and Documentation.....	5
III. Institution Profile	7
Part B: Compliance with the Principles	8
Principle 1: Institution Policy for Quality Assurance	8
Principle 2: Provision and Management of the Necessary Resources.....	10
Principle 3: Establishing Goals for Quality Assurance	13
Principle 4: Structure, Organisation and Operation of the IQAS	15
Principle 5: Self-Assessment.....	18
Principle 6: Collection of Quality Data: Measuring, Analysis and Improvement	21
Principle 7: Public Information	24
Principle 8: External Evaluation and Accreditation of the IQAS.....	26
Part C: Conclusions	28
I. Features of Good Practice	28
II. Areas of Weakness.....	28
III. Recommendations for Follow-up Actions	28
IV. Summary & Overall Assessment.....	28

PART A: BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT OF THE REVIEW

I. The Accreditation Panel

The Panel responsible for the Accreditation Review of the Internal Quality Assurance System (IQAS) of the Higher Education Institution named: University of the Aegean comprised the following five (5) members, drawn from the HQA Register, in accordance with the Law 4009/2011:

1. Prof Anthimos Georgiadis (Chair)
Leuphana Universität Lüneburg, Germany

2. Prof Thomas Panagopoulos
Universidade do Algarve, Portugal

3. Assoc. Prof Petros Gougoulakis
Stockholm University, Sweden

4. Prof Eleni Hadjiconstantinou
Frederick University, Cyprus

5. Assoc. Prof Michael Kokkolaras
McGill University, Canada

II. Review Procedure and Documentation

Please refer briefly to the Panel preparation for the IQAS review, as well as to the documentation provided and considered by the Panel. State the dates and of the site visit and describe the visit schedule and the meetings held. Feel free to mention any additional information regarding the procedure, as appropriate.

The Panel reviewed the material provided by ADIP in advance of its arrival and briefing. The briefing by ADIP took place on 13/11/2018. Additional information and further documentation were provided regarding the HQA mission, standards and guidelines of HQA accreditation process, and national framework of HEIs including the Quality Measure Metrics (ΟΠΕΣΠ) for 2015-16 and 2016-17. In the afternoon, the Panel met in private to discuss the accreditation report for IQAS, allocate tasks and list of issues for the site visit. The Panel arrived at Mytilene, the University of the Aegean (UoA) site, on the late evening of 13/11/2018.

On 14/11/2018 the meetings took place at the administration building of the campus. The first meeting was with the Rector Prof. Chryssi Vitsilaki for a short overview of the institution regarding its history, vision, mission and academic profile. Further presentations provided useful information about UoA's current status, Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), strengths, and possible areas of concern. In the meeting with the Quality Assurance Unit (QAU/MOΔΙΠ) – the Rector (Head of QAU) the Vice-Rectors and QAU members – the Panel investigated the degree of compliance of the Internal Quality Assurance System (IQAS) to the Standards for Quality Accreditation. The Panel received further documentation and supporting material related to the presentations given by QAU/MOΔΙΠ to facilitate their decision for UoA Quality Accreditation. The Panel had lunch at the University restaurant in order to visit the facilities provided to students. After lunch, the Panel met in private to reflect upon impressions of first meetings.

In the afternoon, the Panel met with Faculty members and representatives of Internal Evaluation Groups (IEGs/OMEA), Deans, and Heads of Departments to discuss adequacy of resources and possible areas of weaknesses. In addition, discussions took place about the formulation of relationships among the IEGs with the QAU. The Panel received additional supporting material from Schools, administrative, financial, IT, and procurement services, ELKE, Estate & Buildings, Library, External Relations and Affairs.

Finally, the Panel had meetings with Undergraduate (UGT) and Postgraduate (PGT and PGR) students to gain an insight of their study experience and campus facilities, and their input related to quality control and decision making; discuss their priority issues concerning student life, welfare, grants, mobility, research and career opportunities, and their views on recruitment, learning, progression, and assessment. At the end of the day, the Panel met in private to reflect on the discussions and prepare for the second day of the visit.

On 15/11/2018, the agenda included meetings with the following actions stakeholders and bodies associated with the UoA's QAU:

- Postgraduate students to discuss their priority issues concerning student life, welfare, grants, mobility, research and career opportunities, and their views on quality control and (strategic) decision making, recruitment, learning, progression, and assessment.

- Graduates and Alumni to discuss their learning experiences at UoA and their career paths.

- External stakeholders to better understand their relations with the Institution.

- Additional meeting with QAU members to review several points and findings. The Panel received further clarifications and visited some laboratories, classrooms, and facilities for student accommodation.

A final meeting with the senior leadership of the UoA took place where the Panel presented their key findings briefly. The Panel returned to Athens to prepare the report of the Internal Quality Assurance System (IQAS) of UoA following the procedures provided by ADIP.

III. Institution Profile

Please provide a brief overview of the Institution, with reference to the following: history, academic remit, student population, campus, orientation challenges or any other key background information.

The University of the Aegean (UoA) was founded in 1984 aiming to introduce new approaches in higher education in Greece and worldwide and to promote regional development. Situated in 6 islands in the Aegean Archipelago, the UoA offers a unique natural, cultural and human environment for modern studies in the ancient cradle of knowledge. The UoA has evolved into an international research oriented University offering 18 undergraduate (BA or BSc) and 43 postgraduate (MA or MSc) programmes in modern interdisciplinary thematic areas such as environment, communication systems, cultural informatics, product design, food and nutritional sciences, education design and Mediterranean studies. The University consists of 6 Schools and occupies a large area in the Aegean with six campuses. The administration is composed by the Rector, 4 Vice-Rectors, the Senate, the Deans of the Schools and the Heads of Departments. It has 687 members of staff, 316+15 engaging with academic/teaching, 74 facilitating laboratory activities and 282 for administrative duties. It has also 17,574 students, (15,253 undergraduate students, 1,702 postgraduate students and 619 PhD candidates). In addition, the UoA has established joint international postgraduate programmes (i.e., in Biodiversity, Environmental Policy and Management, European Integration) as well as joint PhD degree programmes in a wide range of thematic areas. The UoA has created a strong international academic and research profile, having been partner in many academic and research networks and participant in more than 210 bilateral and LLP Erasmus academic agreements.

PART B: COMPLIANCE WITH THE PRINCIPLES

Principle 1: Institution Policy for Quality Assurance

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD APPLY A QUALITY ASSURANCE POLICY AS PART OF THEIR STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT. THIS POLICY SHOULD BE DEVELOPED AND ADJUSTED ACCORDING TO THE INSTITUTIONS' AREAS OF ACTIVITY. IT SHOULD ALSO BE MADE PUBLIC AND IMPLEMENTED BY ALL PARTIES INVOLVED.

The quality assurance policy is the guiding document which sets the operating principles of the Internal Quality Assurance System (IQAS), the principles for the continuous improvement of the Institution, as well as the Institution's obligation for public accountability. It supports the development of quality culture, according to which, all internal stakeholders assume responsibility for quality and engage in quality assurance. This policy has a formal status and is publicly available.

The policy for quality is implemented through:

- *the commitment for compliance with the laws and regulations that govern the Institution;*
- *the establishment, review, redesign and redefinition of quality assurance objectives, that are fully in line with the institutional strategy.*

This policy mainly supports:

- *the organisation of the internal quality assurance system;*
- *the Institution's leadership, departments and other organisational units, individual staff members and students to take on their responsibilities in quality assurance;*
- *the integrity of academic principles and ethics, guarding against discriminations, and encouragement of external stakeholders to be involved in quality assurance;*
- *the continuous improvement of learning and teaching, research and innovation;*
- *the quality assurance of the programmes and their alignment with the relevant HQA Standards;*
- *the effective organisation of services and the development and maintenance of infrastructure;*
- *the allocation and effective management of the necessary resources for the operation of the Institution;*
- *the development and rational allocation of human resources.*

The way in which this policy is designed, approved, implemented, monitored and revised constitutes one of the processes of the internal quality assurance system.

Institution compliance

Please comment on the compliance with the Principle.

The University of the Aegean (UoA) has established a well-defined Quality Assurance (QA) policy that is appropriate for the institution's mission and activities, and whose purpose and goals are communicated clearly to students, faculty, and staff. The QA policy is based on straightforward and transparent processes for reviewing KPIs and objectives so that they can be improved continuously. Commitments to continuous improvement and to satisfy applicable requirements are part of the UoA's QA policy. These commitments are also evidenced by the fact that the UoA had been operating a "Quality Control Office" since 2007.

The UoA has implemented an Internal Quality Assurance System (IQAS), generated a manual that defines and describes all associated processes and procedures, and created an extensive and informative website devoted exclusively to its QA policy and processes. All relevant information is thus easily and publicly accessible to all stakeholders. Both students and staff are not only actively encouraged to participate in the QA procedures, but also invited to serve on committees such as the various departmental OMEAs and the MODIP. Their role is defined in the IQAS manual.

Continuous improvement is promoted in several ways, including

- Questionnaires regarding undergraduate and graduate course evaluations and surveys regarding postgraduate and doctoral programmes.
- Several systems that monitor use of facilities and services in order to optimize them.
- A web-based platform where students, faculty, and staff can submit (anonymously, if they so wish) complaints, remarks, suggestions, and comments related to all aspects of university life, ranging from education and research to administration, accommodation, food, and transportation services.

Besides the publicly-available rich information on the dedicated website (including all internal documents and general assembly decisions, relevant “FEKs,” and external evaluation and accreditation reports), the QA policy and its implementation are communicated and discussed in several fora such as committee meetings, general assemblies, student activities, etc.

In conclusion, the UoA has not only all necessary standardized QA procedures and processes in place, but also a well-developed culture of QA embedded in its organization.

Panel judgement

Please tick one of the following:

Principle 1: Institution policy for Quality Assurance	
Fully compliant	x
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

Please provide your recommendations with regard to issues that need to be addressed, as appropriate.

The QA policy statement needs to state explicitly the consequences of not conforming to quality requirements.

Principle 2: Provision and Management of the Necessary Resources

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD ENSURE APPROPRIATE FUNDING FOR LEARNING AND TEACHING ACTIVITIES, RESEARCH, AND ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES IN GENERAL. RELEVANT REGULATIONS SHOULD BE IN PLACE TO ASSURE THAT ADEQUATE INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES FOR TEACHING AND RESEARCH ARE AVAILABLE AND READILY ACCESSIBLE (E.G. CLASSROOMS, LABORATORIES, LIBRARIES, IT INFRASTRUCTURE, PROVISION OF FREE MEALS, DORMITORIES, CAREER GUIDANCE AND SOCIAL WELFARE SERVICES, ETC.).

Funding

The Institution ensures adequate funding to cover not only the overhead and operational costs (regular budget and public investment budget) but also costs related to research, innovation and development (Special Account for Research Funds, Property Development and Management Company). The financial planning and the operation of an effective financial management system constitute necessary tools for the full exploitation of the resources.

Infrastructure

Based on the requirements and needs arising during its operation, the Institution has determined ways to define, allocate and maintain all the necessary resources to ensure its smooth and proper functioning, i.e. teaching, research and auxiliary facilities, equipment and software, support facilities (cleaning, transportation, communication) etc. The scope of the IQAS should include a suitable managing and monitoring system to safeguard the infrastructure. Compliance to the internal regulations is also necessary.

Working environment

The Institution ensures -as far as possible- that the working environment has a positive effect on the performance of all members of the academic community (students and staff). Factors that are taken into consideration towards the creation of such a favorable environment are, among others, the sanitary facilities, the lighting/heating/ventilation system, the cleanliness and the overall appearance of the premises, etc. The scope of the IQAS should include an appropriate managing and monitoring system to promote a favorable working environment and to ensure compliance with the existing provisions.

Human resources

The Institution and the academic units are responsible for the human resources development. The subject areas, as well as the competences and tasks of the staff members are defined by the corresponding job descriptions that are established within the operation scope of each academic or administrative unit. These posts are filled following the requirements set by the law, on the basis of transparent, fair and published processes. The continuous training and evaluation of the staff is considered necessary for the enhancement of the performance, which is recorded and monitored as provided in the context of the IQAS.

The Institution should acknowledge and provide the necessary resources for the implementation of the IQAS, its enhancement and the provision of services that assist the satisfaction of the quality assurance requirements. Moreover, the Institution (Quality Assurance Unit-QAU) should properly organise the administrative structure and staffing of the IQAS, with a clear allocation of competences and tasks to its staff members.

Institution compliance

Please comment on the compliance with the Principle.

The Institution (UoA) makes a lot of effort under very difficult economic circumstances to provide sufficient funding to meet its ordinary operational needs, financed by the regular state budget, as well as its needs related to research, innovation, and development through the

Special Account for Research Grants (ELKE), the Property Development and Management Company and the Public Investment Programme. The University of the Aegean was successful in establishing effective routines to ensure sufficient funding to maintain its educational and other academic tasks (R&D, innovation and cooperation with the surrounding society).

ELKE is well structured and works effectively to support the University's research and development policy. An efficient financial management of the research, development and innovation programmes system is in place, based on standardized and supported procedures, through ELKE's Information System of the Unit of Finance and Administrative Services (MODY). This Information System has been developed by the staff of MODY and ensures proper alignment with current rules regarding funding from both donors and the central government.

The University of the Aegean has designed and set up an efficient financial management system to exploit its resources fully. Based on its economic policy, the UoA prepares separate annual budgets for ordinary operations and for ELKE. This process also includes the developing of budgets based on the needs of University Units located at several islands, and the accurate assessment of the costs that take into account the balanced development of all island university units of the UoA.

The UoA disposes a complete infrastructure management and monitoring system, as well as a set of relevant internal regulations associated with resource allocation and management systems concerning: design, building of new or restoration of existing infrastructure, maintenance procedures for existing facilities, provision of necessary resources, e.g., teaching, ICT-infrastructure, research, and also provision for other support facilities, such as more dormitories, free meals to students, cleaning, management and monitoring of the fire safety of building facilities etc.

The UoA supports the development of its human resources, emphasizing transparency in processes of announcement, selection, and career/professional development of academic positions and administrative and research staff in full compliance with the legislation, principles of meritocracy, and ethics.

The UoA, has developed a culture of quality assurance and has established a properly staffed Quality Assurance Unit (QAU), with clear assignment of responsibilities and tasks through the previously existing "Quality Control Office." The available structures and associated personnel are available in the home page of the QAU.

The continuous training and evaluation of the staff is safeguarded through the quality assurance process. The selection of permanent administrative staff is based on existing legislation.

The training provisions for the officials of the administration is aiming at strengthening their knowledge and skills and includes educational and training activities at various levels. The training is carried out in cooperation with the National Center for Public Administration and Local Government (EKDDA).

The UoA operates a well-developed management monitoring system in order to create optimal conditions to maintain a suitable working, learning, and research environment. This monitoring system consists of several subsystems outlined in detail in the UoA's IQAS accreditation proposal.

Panel judgement

Principle 2: Provision & Management of the Necessary Resources	
2.1 Funding	
Fully compliant	x
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	
2.2 Infrastructure	
Fully compliant	x
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	
2.3 Working Environment	
Fully compliant	x
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	
2.4 Human Resources	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	x
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Principle 2: Provision & Management of the Necessary Resources (overall)	
Fully compliant	x
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

Please provide your recommendations with regard to issues that need to be addressed, as appropriate.

Given the financial restrictions and limiting legal framework, the teaching activities are conducted satisfactorily. However, the student to faculty ratio is large relative to international averages.

Principle 3: Establishing Goals for Quality Assurance

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD HAVE CLEAR AND EXPLICIT GOALS REGARDING THE ASSURANCE AND CONTINUOUS UPGRADE OF THE QUALITY OF THE OFFERED PROGRAMMES, THE RESEARCH AND INNOVATION ACTIVITIES, AS WELL AS THE SCIENTIFIC AND ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES. THESE GOALS MAY BE QUALITATIVE OR QUANTITATIVE AND REFLECT THE INSTITUTIONAL STRATEGY.

The Institution's strategy on quality assurance should be translated into time-specific, qualitative and quantitative goals which are regularly monitored, measured and reviewed in the context of the IQAS operation, and following an appropriate procedure.

Examples of quality goals:

- *rise of the average annual graduation rate of the Institution's Undergraduate Programmes to x%;*
- *upgrade of the learning environment through the introduction of digital applications on*;
- *improvement of the ratio of scientific publications to teaching staff members to*;
- *rise of the total research funding to y%*

The goals are accompanied by a specific action plan for their achievement, and entail the participation of all stakeholders.

Institution compliance

Please comment on the compliance with the Principle.

As part of their institutional strategy on quality assurance, the UoA has developed an internal system (IQAS) which defines specific, realistic, measurable and timely goals, both qualitative and quantitative, in order to monitor and improve the quality of its study-programmes, research activities and administrative services. The proposed system of quality assurance employs Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) that contribute to the achievement of the various goals, which are monitored and reviewed following appropriate procedures. This system has been developed and refined following an iterative process having input from the various internal and external evaluation procedures of the individual University Departments carried out by ADIP over the recent years. The whole process is overseen by the University's Quality Assurance Unit (QAU) in collaboration with the Internal Evaluation Groups (IEGs/OMEAs) at the Departmental level, and was introduced in June 2018. The last review and update of goals took place on 31st August 2018.

The institution clearly defines the goals and suitable KPIs in their Quality Document and Document for Quality Goals, referring to all aspects of relevant academic activity, namely, study programmes and educational activities, research and innovation, administrative and resources. For example, goals relating to academic matters include continuous improvement of teaching quality, promotion of research activity and increasing the institution's external visibility. The IQAS proposes a specific action plan for the implementation of the quality goals and appropriate procedures for measuring and monitoring them on a regular basis. The KPIs exist for 2015-16 and 2016-17 in electronic form and are subject to processing and updating. The time-frame for setting target values mainly refers to 2018/19. In the context of the IQAS operation, the action

plan is communicated to all stakeholders involved. This will contribute to creating a culture of quality among stakeholders.

Panel judgement

Principle 3: Establishing Goals for Quality Assurance	
3.1 Study Programmes/ education activities	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	
3.2 Research & Innovation	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	
3.3 Administration (funding, human resources, infrastructure management)	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	
3.4 Resources (funding, human resources, infrastructure)	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Principle 3: Establishing Goals for Quality Assurance (overall)	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

Please provide your recommendations with regard to issues that need to be addressed, as appropriate.

Principle 4: Structure, Organisation and Operation of the IQAS

INSTITUTIONS SET UP AND ESTABLISH AN INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM, WHICH INCLUDES PROCESSES AND PROCEDURES COVERING ALL AREAS OF ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES AND FUNCTIONS. SPECIAL FOCUS IS GIVEN ON THE QUALITY OF TEACHING AND LEARNING, INCLUDING THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT, RESEARCH, INNOVATION AND GOVERNANCE.

The key goal of the internal quality assurance system (IQAS) is the development, effective operation and continuous improvement of the whole range of the Institution's activities, and particularly, of teaching, research, innovation, governance and relevant services, according to the international practices - especially those of the European Higher Education Area - and the HQA principles and guidelines described in these Standards.

Structure and organisation

In each Institution, the Quality Assurance Unit (QAU) holds the responsibility for the administration and management of the IQAS. The QAU is set up according to the existing legislative framework and is responsible for:

- *the development of specialised policy, strategy and relevant processes towards the continuous improvement of the quality of the Institution's work and provisions;*
- *the organisation, operation and continuous improvement of the Institution's internal quality assurance system;*
- *the coordination and support of the evaluation process of the Institution's academic units and other services, and;*
- *the support of the external evaluation and accreditation process of the Institution's programmes and internal quality assurance system in the context of the HQA principles and guidelines.*

The Institution's IQAS and its implementation processes are determined by the decisions of the competent bodies, as provided by the law, and are published in the Government Gazette, as well as on the Institution's website. The above are reviewed every six years, at the latest.

To achieve the above goals, the QAU collaborates with HQA, develops and maintains a management information system to store the evaluation data, which are periodically submitted to HQA, according to the latter's instructions. The QAU is responsible for the systematic monitoring of the evaluation process and for the publication of evaluation-related procedures and their results on the Institution's website.

The QAU structure has been approved by the Institution's competent bodies, as provided by the law, while all competences and tasks accruing from this structure are clearly defined.

Operation

The Institution takes action for the design, establishment, implementation, audit and maintenance of the Internal Quality Assurance System (IQAS), taking into account the Standards' requirements, while making any necessary amendments to ensure fitness to achieve its aims.

The above actions include:

- *provision of all necessary processes and procedures for the successful operation of the IQAS, as well as implementation of the above processes and procedures on all of the Institution's parties involved ;the Institution's areas of activity can constitute the IQAS processes, e.g. teaching, research and innovation, governance, services etc. An IQAS process is an area of activity including data input, data processing and outputs. A procedure defines the way an action is implemented and includes a course of stages or steps, e.g. the curriculum design procedure;*
- *determination of how the IQAS procedures / processes are audited, measured and assessed, and how they interact;*
- *provision of all necessary resources to enable the IQAS function.*

Documentation

The IQAS documentation includes, among other things, a series of key documents demonstrating its structure and organisation, such as the Quality Manual, which describes how the Standards' requirements are met.

The Annexes of the Quality Manual include:

- *the Quality Policy and the Quality Assurance Objectives;*
- *the necessary written Procedures, along with the entailed forms;*
- *the necessary Guides, External Documents (e.g. pertinent legislation), as well as any other supporting data;*
- *the standing organisational structure of the QAU, with a detailed description of the competences, the required qualifications and the goals for each post. The organisational chart is structured in a manner that ensures that the IQAS organisational requirements are fully and properly met.*

Institution compliance

Please comment on the compliance with the Principle.

The Quality Assurance Unit (QAU) of UoA is fully in agreement with the existing legislative framework. The Institution's IQAS and its implementation processes are determined by the decisions of the competent bodies, as provided by the law, and are published on the Institution's website, which provides a clear description on the structure, membership and operation of MODIP. The University has developed and maintained a management information system that facilitates the proper operation of the internal quality assurance system, for example, the results of the internal evaluation are available on the university's website.

The QAU of the institution collaborates closely with HQA, towards the development and maintenance of the management information system for storing the evaluation data, which is periodically submitted to HQA, according to the instructions of the latter. Furthermore, the QAU has successfully fulfilled up to now its responsibilities as follows:

- the development of the policy, strategy and relevant processes towards the continuous improvement of the quality of the Institution's work and provisions;
- the organisation, operation and continuous improvement of the Institution's internal quality assurance system;
- the coordination and support of the evaluation process of the Institution's academic units and other services, and;
- the support of the external evaluation and accreditation process of the Institution's programmes and internal quality assurance system.

The quality manual includes all the appropriate actions to ensure effective planning, implementation and control of UoA processes. The quality manual provides a clear description of inputs and outputs for each process, as well as, the associated procedures including the steps that should be followed.

The quality manual includes all the methods to achieve the quality objectives set out in the quality policy and describes how the requirements are met. It provides the necessary guides, pertinent legislation, and other supporting data. The organizational chart as presented to the

panel and appears on the website, is structured in a manner that ensures that the IQAS organizational requirements are properly met. Overall, the quality manual is appropriate.

The institution has defined information documenting that the processes are being carried out as planned. The UoA provides adequate human resources and infrastructure to the QAU.

Panel judgement

Principle 4: Structure, Organization and Operation of the IQAS	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

Please provide your recommendations with regard to issues that need to be addressed, as appropriate.

Principle 5: Self-Assessment

THE INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM COMPRISES PROCEDURES PROVIDING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ANNUAL SELF-ASSESSMENT OF THE INSTITUTION'S ACADEMIC AND ADMINISTRATIVE UNITS, ADDRESSING AREAS OF OVERSIGHTS OR SHORTCOMINGS, AND DEFINING REMEDIAL ACTIONS TOWARDS THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE SET GOALS, AND EVENTUAL IMPROVEMENT.

The QAU conducts, on an annual basis, a self-assessment of the IQAS, following the written procedure provided for each area of activity, which is implemented by a certain academic or administrative unit, as appropriate. The procedure determines the timing, the participants, the data under consideration, and the expected outcomes. The self-assessment aims at a final estimation of the suitability of the IQAS in force, as well as at basing decisions concerning the necessary remedial or precautionary actions for improvement.

The data considered in the context of the self-assessment of a programme may, for example, include:

- *students performance;*
- *feedback from students / teaching staff;*
- *assessment of learning outcomes;*
- *graduation rates;*
- *feedback from the evaluation of the facilities / learning environment;*
- *report of any remedial or precautionary actions undertaken;*
- *suggestions for improvement.*

The outcomes of the self-assessment are recorded in internal reports drawn up by the QAU. The reports identify any areas of deviation or non-compliance with the Standards, and are communicated to the interested parties (if appropriate). The Institution's resolutions concerning any modification, compliance, or enhancement of the IQAS operation might include actions related to:

- *the upgrade of the IQAS and the pertinent processes;*
- *the upgrade of the services offered to the students;*
- *the reallocation of resources;*
- *the introduction of new quality goals, etc.*

The outcomes of the self-assessment are recorded and, along with the source data, are archived as quality files.

A special procedure is followed for the compliance check of newly launched programmes (of all three cycles), or programmes that are to be reviewed shortly, prior to the institutional approval of the programme.

Institution compliance

Please comment on the compliance with the Principle.

The QAU of the UoA is well established and demonstrates clear self-assessment practices among all six islands and all different departments. The procedures are described in the IQAS manual for each area of activity, which is implemented and assessed on an annual basis by the specified

(in the IQAS manual) appropriate academic or administrative unit. The self-assessment practices determine the timing, the participants, the data under consideration, and the expected outcomes. The university leadership (rector and vice-rectors) was recently changed following regular elections, which leads to a new vice rector responsible for QA as head of the QAU. However, all regulations, practices and documents, as well as the members of the QAU remain the same. The self-assessment contains the way for making decisions concerning the necessary remedial or precautionary actions for improvement. Some of these actions for improvements related to teaching quality are obtained from the internal teaching quality assurance process initiated from the students' feedback on comments and recommendations. Student participation has been declining after the introduction of web-based only questionnaires; however, the obtained feedback keeps contributing to the continuous improvement of the courses and the curricula. A very well established digital platform enables computerized evaluation forms in all courses offered at the UoA.

The obligatory annual course review, discussed at the general assembly for all courses, considers the assessment of each course and any suggestions/recommendations for changes made by the QAU. This includes discussions about students' performance and data from student questionnaires, graduation rates, the condition and management of teaching facilities, and other learning tools. Furthermore, the internal evaluation unit (OMEA) of every department and the corresponding general assembly takes into account efficiency indicators that include primarily quantitative but also qualitative ones to provide valuable and reliable information and draw measures for both control and evaluation.

The outcomes of the self-assessment are minuted in internal reports prepared by the QAU. These are communicated to academics and other administrative and supporting entities.

The Institution's resolutions concerning any modification, compliance, or enhancement of the IQAS operation are reported on an annual basis within the frame of the general assembly of faculties and university to ensure that the areas of deviation or non-compliance, as well as, tasks implemented (or to be implemented) are reported and communicated to the interested parties.

The UoA QAU engages with all internal parties and allows for the updating of the IQAS and its processes and services. The same process ensures the feedback on the University's strategy and quality policy of UoA allowing the introduction of new quality goals and improved University strategy.

The UoA checks the compliance of newly launched programmes (of all three cycles), or programmes that are to be reviewed shortly, prior to the institutional approval of the programme.

Panel judgement

Principle 5: Self-Assessment	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	x
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

Please provide your recommendations with regard to issues that need to be addressed, as appropriate.

- To introduce additional measures (and/or procedures) for improving student participation in the IQAS.
- To improve further the impact of the KPIs on the quality assurance strategy of the QAU and the UoA, including the setting of milestones.
- The establishment of an approach and procedure for engaging internal and external stakeholders in the OMEAs.

Principle 6: Collection of Quality Data: Measuring, Analysis and Improvement

INSTITUTIONS ARE FULLY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE COLLECTION, ANALYSIS AND USE OF INFORMATION IN AN INTEGRATED, FUNCTIONAL AND READILY ACCESSIBLE MANNER, AIMING AT THE EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT OF THE QUALITY DATA RELATED TO TEACHING, RESEARCH AND OTHER ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES, AS WELL AS OF THOSE RELATED TO THE ADMINISTRATION.

The QAU should establish and operate an information system to manage the data required for the implementation of the Internal Quality Assurance System.

The QAU measures and monitors the performance of the various activities of the Institution, through appropriate procedures established in the context of the IQAS structure, and assesses their level of effectiveness. The measuring and monitoring is conducted on a basis of indices and data provided by HQA in the pertinent guidelines and forms, which are part of the National Information System for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (NISQA). These measurements may concern: the size of the student body, the size of the teaching and administrative staff, the infrastructure, the structural components of the curricula, students' performance, research activity performance, financial data, feedback on student and faculty satisfaction surveys, data related to the teaching and research activity, services, infrastructure, etc.

The QAU makes use of the figures and presents the results for consideration using statistical analysis. Outcomes are displayed through histograms and charts. This sort of information is used by the Institution for decision making, at all levels, pursuing improvement, as well as for setting, monitoring, assessing and reviewing the Institution's strategic and operational goals.

Institution compliance

Please comment on the compliance with the Principle.

The QAU has established and operates an information system for collecting and managing the data required for the implementation of the Internal Quality Assurance System within the frame of the Integrated National Information Quality System (Ολοκληρωμένο Πληροφοριακό Εθνικό Σύστημα Ποιότητας -- ΟΠΕΣΠ). The regularly collected data cover all relevant areas (students, administrative staff, teaching, research & innovation, infrastructure, and finance). The satisfaction surveys are collected twice per year, and are systematically analysed at the end of the year (every May) in order to discuss at the Department level possible improvements or restructuring of study programmes, teaching methods, or other issues. However, the response rate was low, which decreases the reliability of the data.

The institution has developed the information system, using internal resources and expertise, according to the requirements of the HQA. The students complete the questionnaire digitally. Their access to the information system is protected centrally whilst accuracy is verified effectively through existing control mechanisms. Other information is collected from sub-systems of information used by the Institution such as the student registry, accounting office, ELKE, library and others and from external sources like web of science, Mendeley, Greek Statistics Agency (ELSTAT), etc. The QAU measures and monitors the performance of the various activities of the Institution through appropriate procedures established in the context of the IQAS structure and assesses their level of effectiveness.

The measuring and monitoring are conducted on a basis of indices and data provided by HQA in the pertinent guidelines and forms, which are part of the National Information System for

Quality Assurance in Higher Education (NISQA). The UoA maintains an adequate amount of data to perform its analysis and evaluation. Through the established IQAS mechanisms, the institution monitors effectively and efficiently the collected data and the performance metrics. The results from the internal and external reviews are diligently considered and implemented as part of the continuous improvement process.

The collected data are presented in an informative way, both for public and internal use, guiding the formation and review of strategic and operational goals. For example, the Greek Universities network (<https://www.gunet.gr>) and some examples from the Business Intelligence (BI) statistics system for Higher Education in Greece were presented. Other graphs and tables allowing direct interpretation and comparisons were also presented.

Meanwhile, the information presented in reports and during the site visit was from only two time periods (2015/2016 and 2016/2017 scholar years), not permitting creation of trends and simulations in order to assist in strategic objectives and decision making. Also, the data about research outputs was outdated.

Panel judgement

Principle 6: Collection of Data: Measuring, Analysis & Improvement	
6.1 Study Programmes / education activities	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	x
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	
6.2 Research & Innovation	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	x
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	
6.3 Activities related to the administration (funding, human resources, infrastructure management)	
Fully compliant	x
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	
6.4 Human Resources	
Fully compliant	x
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Principle 6: Collection of Data: Measuring, Analysis & Improvement (overall)	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	x
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

Please provide your recommendations with regard to issues that need to be addressed, as appropriate.

- Course evaluation response rates should increase to adequate levels for statistical significance.
- The effectiveness and efficiency of the IQAS system highly depend on the availability and quality of data required for measuring KPIs. Hence, data collection and measurement are fundamental in improving the quality goals and identifying trends. This requires efficient IT systems capable to collect and process data that is timely, accurate, consistent and up-to-date.
- Research output data should be updated annually.

Principle 7: Public Information

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD PUBLISH INFORMATION ABOUT THEIR TEACHING AND ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES IN A DIRECT AND ACCESSIBLE MANNER. ALL PERTINENT INFORMATION SHOULD BE UP-TO-DATE, CLEAR AND OBJECTIVE.

The QAU publishes data related to IQAS structure, organisation and operation. Furthermore, the QAU publishes data pertinent to the institutional quality policy and objectives, as well as information and data relevant to the Institution's internal and external evaluation. In the context of the self-assessment process, the QAU verifies that adequate information regarding the teaching activities and, particularly, the programmes' profile and the overall institutional activity is publicly available. QAU makes recommendations for improvement, where appropriate.

Institution compliance

Please comment on the compliance with the Principle.

The UoA has an informative, well-organized, easy-to-navigate, and up-to-date website that includes all necessary information pertinent to its activities.

Information is not only easy to locate, but it is relevant, quantitative whenever possible, and presented in a manner that is appealing especially to younger audiences (i.e., current and prospective students). It includes useful material on why the UoA would be a fitting choice, guides for first-year students, comments from alumni on their experiences and career paths, and informative multimedia-based reports on the university's activities and accomplishments.

Information is effectively classified into structure (schools, departments, libraries), education (undergraduate, postgraduate, doctoral, summer schools, life-long learning, scholarships, awards, etc.), research (programmes, projects, funding, publications, etc.), student life (consulting services, student activities, events, intramural sports, etc.), and the university's mission, vision, history, statistics and administration.

The curriculum structure of all study programmes (undergraduate and graduate) is publicly available and easily accessible. A general university study guide is available, accompanied by very detailed departmental study and programme guides (oftentimes available for download in PDF files). All key information (course outlines, streams, means of assessment, degrees, and faculty CVs) is easily accessible to website visitors. In addition, a very useful webpage allows "quick" searches related to the courses, perspectives, and topics of each department.

As mentioned in Principle 1, a very extensive and informative website is dedicated to the QA policy and the IQAS. Besides the structure and operation of the IQAS (outlined in detailed in its manual), it includes history and background information, QA policy statement, legal framework and requirements, external and internal evaluation reports, announcements, and a link to the web-based data acquisition system (which is accessible only to authorized users).

In general, the UoA website offers a pleasant example of how a vast amount of information from several sources can be kept up to date and presented in a very well-organized matter.

Panel judgement

Principle 7: Public Information	
Fully compliant	x
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

Please provide your recommendations with regard to issues that need to be addressed, as appropriate.

A number of webpages are available in English. The website indicates availability also on several other languages (French, Chinese, Russian, and Arabic); however, these webpages are not yet available, and they all lead to the English webpage. The other language links should be removed until the translated webpages are in place.

Principle 8: External Evaluation and Accreditation of the IQAS

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD BE PERIODICALLY EVALUATED BY COMMITTEES OF EXTERNAL EXPERTS SET BY HQA, FOR THE PURPOSE OF ACCREDITATION OF THEIR INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEMS (IQAS). THE PERIODICITY OF THE EXTERNAL EVALUATION IS DETERMINED BY HQA.

External quality assurance, in the case in point external evaluation aiming at accreditation, may act as a means of verification of the effectiveness of the Institution's internal quality assurance, and as a catalyst for improvement, while opening new perspectives. Additionally, it can provide information with a view to public acknowledgement of the positive course of the Institution's activities.

The Higher Education Institutions engage in periodic external quality assurance which is conducted taking into consideration any special requirements set by the legislation governing the operation of the Institutions and their academic units.

Quality assurance, in this case accreditation, is an on-going process that does not end with the external feedback, or report or its follow-up process within the Institution. Therefore, Institutions ensure that the progress made since the last external quality assurance activity is taken into consideration when preparing for the next one.

Institution compliance

Please comment on the compliance with the Principle.

The UoA has undergone an institutional evaluation in 2015/16; in addition, all departments previously underwent successfully through an external evaluation. All staff members are well aware of the importance of the IQAS external review, its role, and its contribution towards improvement of the overall quality. For example, student feedback about the new dormitories is positive. The stakeholders of UoA were actively engaged during the accreditation procedure and they continue their engagement with any follow-up actions and new initiatives in the field of resources acquisition. The UoA has drafted and submitted a follow-up report in direct response to the last institution evaluation by the HQA. The report mentions that the institution has addressed all the recommendations for improvement. The UoA has already fulfilled a part of them successfully but the progress of the other tasks was not reported in detail.

Panel judgement

Principle 8: External Evaluation & Accreditation of the IQAS	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	x
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

Please provide your recommendations with regard to issues that need to be addressed, as appropriate.

- Consider revising the time plan for task 4.5, feedback from the IQAS to the curricula, in terms of shortening the time for the envisaged milestone (currently being 2024).
- Establishment of a more detailed approach for addressing tasks 4.5 and 4.6 -5.1 a).

PART C: CONCLUSIONS

I. Features of Good Practice

Please state aspects of good practice identified, with regard to the IQAS.

- The UoA has implemented an Internal Quality Assurance System (IQAS), generated a manual that defines and describes all associated processes and procedures, and created an extensive and informative website devoted exclusively to its QA policy and processes.
- The UoA has an informative, well-organized, easy-to-navigate, and up-to-date website that includes all necessary information pertinent to its activities.
- Communication (implemented through a state-of-the-art teleconferencing system) among campuses and islands is very effective and efficient.

II. Areas of Weakness

Please state weak areas identified, with regard to the IQAS.

- Students' active participation in QA procedures, such as OMEAs and MODIP, is low.

III. Recommendations for Follow-up Actions

Please make any specific recommendations for development.

- The development of a platform/ procedures where key external stakeholders, operating in the area of the Aegean or more widely (Greece, Europe or globally), are given the opportunity to contribute to the sustainable development of the UoA in a more constructive and formalised manner. The continuous engagement of stakeholders can potentially result in providing alternative sources and/or additional funding for the University, improved building infrastructure, more competitive and innovative study programmes in terms of course content and practical relevance, even exploring new scientific and research opportunities.
- To introduce additional measures (and/or procedures) for improving student's participation in the IQAS.
- Ensure that the quality and quantity of all collected data is sufficient for analysis and interpretation.

IV. Summary & Overall Assessment

The Principles where full compliance has been achieved are:

- 1) Institution Policy for Quality Assurance

- 2) Provision and management of the necessary resources
- 3) Establishing goals for their Quality Assurance
- 4) Structure, Organization and Operation of the IQAS
- 7) Public information

The Principles where substantial compliance has been achieved are:

- 5) Self-assessment
- 6) Collection of Quality Data: measuring, analysis and improvement
- 8) External evaluation and accreditation of the IQAS

The Principles where partial compliance has been achieved are: None

The Principles where failure of compliance was identified are: None

Overall Judgement	
Fully compliant	x
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

The members of the Accreditation Panel

Name and Surname

Signature

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____