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HELLENIC REPUBLIC



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Accreditation Report **for the Postgraduate Study Programme of:**

Gender, Culture, and Society

Department: Department of Social Anthropology and History

Institution: University of the Aegean

Date: 31 May 2024



Με τη συγχρηματοδότηση
της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης



Πρόγραμμα
Ανθρώπινο Δυναμικό και
Κοινωνική Συνοχή



Report of the Panel appointed by the HAHE to undertake the review of the Postgraduate Study Programme of **Gender, Culture, and Society** of the **University of the Aegean** for the purposes of granting accreditation

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PART A: BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT OF THE REVIEW

I. The External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel

The Panel responsible for the Accreditation Review of the postgraduate study programme of **Gender, Culture, and Society** of the **University of the Aegean** comprised the following five (5) members, drawn from the HAHE Register, in accordance with Laws 4009/2011 & 4653/2020:

1. Professor, Apostolis Papakostas (Chair)

Institution of Social Sciences, Södertörn University, Sweden

2. Professor, Dimitris Michailakis

Department of Culture and Society, University of Linköping

3. Professor, Elisabeth Kirtsoglou

Department of Anthropology, Durham University, UK

4. Associate Professor, Victor Roudometof

Department of Sociology, University of Cyprus.

5. PhD candidate, Alexandra Kozamani,

Hellenic Open University, Patra, Greece

II. Review Procedure and Documentation

In reviewing the Postgraduate Study Programme of “Gender, Culture and Society” of the Social Anthropology and History of the University of the Aegean comprised of five (5) members, drawn from the HAHE Register, in accordance with Laws 4009/2011 & 4653/2020 The objectives of the Panel, as described in the Guidelines for the Members of EEAP, are:

- to establish whether the data provided from the various resources is consistent among one another and reflect the actual situation.
- identify strengths and areas of weakness.
- engage in a constructive dialogue with the Institution, leading to reflection and continuous enhancement of the study programme.

Following a well-prepared schedule provided by HAHE, the Panel held several separate interactive virtual (by electronic means, ZOOM) meetings and visits for two days as follows:

On Monday, 27/5/2024, the following virtual meetings took place:

- with the Head of the Department
- with the Director of the Programme
- with MODIP members and staff, and Steering Committees/OMEA members
- an online tour of virtual classrooms, online platforms, and other facilities related to the Programme. The online tour was followed by a discussion about the facilities in which teaching and administrative staff participated.

On Wednesday, 29/5/2024, the following virtual meetings took place:

- with teaching staff of the Programme
- with current students of the Programme
- with Programme graduates
- with employers and social partners of the private and public sector
- meeting with the Vice President/President of MODIP, the Head of the School, the Director of the Programme, members and staff of MODIP, and members of Steering Committees/OMEA members.

During the above virtual meetings, the Panel had the opportunity to meet, talk, and interact with all the participants of all meetings. All the participants were encouraged to express their views and talk freely about their overall learning experience. They welcomed the opportunity to talk to the Panel and to voice their views. The discussions were very constructive and fruitful and were conducted in a cooperative manner and attitude. All the meetings included presentations, discussions, and question-and-answer sessions. During the last meeting, some clarifications were provided, and the Panel made an informal presentation of some initial key findings.

The internal evaluation report and other extensive material were made available to the Panel electronically in advance through HAHE. More information and materials were made available during the meetings.

The Department worked diligently in preparing the internal evaluation report and other relevant materials and organizing and hosting the virtual meetings. It is the

feeling of the Panel that the Department has performed an excellent job throughout the internal evaluation process and that the objectives of the process have been fully met. The efficiency and eagerness of the Department to answer questions and provide additional information and clarifications during the meetings are worth noting. The Panel wishes to express its thanks and appreciation to the Department and the University administration for their co-operation and professionalism.

This Accreditation Report is based on information collected and views expressed during the virtual meetings and on information contained in the internal evaluation report and other documents submitted before and during the virtual meetings.

III. Postgraduate Study Programme Profile

The Postgraduate Study Programme “Gender, Culture and Society” started in 2003-2004 in its previous format. At this year a new Postgraduate Studies Program lasting one academic year and entitled “Women and Gender: Anthropological and Historical Approaches” was launched. Ever since the Department was founded, the study of the social constitution of gender has received particular attention at both the undergraduate and the postgraduate level. In 2014 the PSP was renamed as “Gender, Culture and Society” and extended to one and a half year.

Specifically, the Postgraduate Programme aims to:

- Update knowledge and skills in field of gendered social relations.
- Provide the students with an understanding of the role of gender relations in all fields of society.
- Provide students with knowledge in how gender policy is produced in different fields of society.
- Position the provided knowledge into the international field of gender studies in related disciplines, research traditions and specializations.

Programme completion requires 90 ECTS. During the two first semesters the programme is structured in six courses, compulsory for all students. A mandatory thesis (30 ECTS) will be authored and defended during the third semester.

The fee for the whole programme is 500 Euros annually. 13 student positions are offered annually.

The Programme is supported by academic staff from the Departments. All teaching staff are Ph.D. holders who are active scholars and researchers in diverse areas gender studies.

PART B: COMPLIANCE WITH THE PRINCIPLES

PRINCIPLE 1: QUALITY ASSURANCE POLICY AND QUALITY GOAL SETTING FOR THE POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES OF THE INSTITUTION AND THE ACADEMIC UNIT

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD APPLY A QUALITY ASSURANCE POLICY AS PART OF THEIR STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT. THIS POLICY SHOULD EXPAND AND BE AIMED (WITH THE COLLABORATION OF EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS) AT THE POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES OF THE INSTITUTION AND THE ACADEMIC UNIT. THIS POLICY SHOULD BE PUBLISHED AND IMPLEMENTED BY ALL STAKEHOLDERS.

The quality assurance policy of the academic unit should be in line with the quality assurance policy of the Institution and must be formulated in the form of a public statement, which is implemented by all stakeholders. It focuses on the achievement of special goals related to the quality assurance of the study programmes offered by the academic unit.

Indicatively, the quality policy statement of the academic unit includes its commitment to implement a quality policy that will promote the academic profile and orientation of the postgraduate study programme (PSP), its purpose and field of study; it will realise the programme's goals and it will determine the means and ways for attaining them; it will implement appropriate quality procedures, aiming at the programme's improvement.

In particular, in order to implement this policy, the academic unit commits itself to put into practice quality procedures that will demonstrate:

- a) the suitability of the structure and organisation of postgraduate study programmes*
- b) the pursuit of learning outcomes and qualifications in accordance with the European and National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education - level 7*
- c) the promotion of the quality and effectiveness of teaching at the PSP*
- d) the appropriateness of the qualifications of the teaching staff for the PSP*
- e) the drafting, implementation, and review of specific annual quality goals for the improvement of the PSP*
- f) the level of demand for the graduates' qualifications in the labour market*
- g) the quality of support services, such as the administrative services, the libraries and the student welfare office for the PSP*
- h) the efficient utilisation of the financial resources of the PSP that may be drawn from tuition fees*
- i) the conduct of an annual review and audit of the quality assurance system of the PSP through the cooperation of the Internal Evaluation Group (IEG) with the Institution's Quality Assurance Unit (QAU)*

Documentation

- Quality Assurance Policy of the PSP
- Quality goal setting of the PSP

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The QAP of the academic unit is in line with the QAP of the institution, it is clear, appropriate, and publicly available. It focuses on the achievement of specific goals, and more specifically:

On delivering high quality education and on producing new knowledge in a free, equal, safe and transparent academic context.

On offering students at postgraduate level high quality education in the field of Gender Studies and on endowing them with appropriate skills to apply this knowledge in the field.

The QAP has been approved by the Assembly of the Department and aims to develop and improve the Programme in line with the overall Quality Assurance Policy of the University of the Aegean. The quality assurance procedures of the Programme are coordinated and carried out under the supervision of the Department's Internal Evaluation Team.

In the development of the QAP of the Unit, the department has taken into consideration recent developments in wider, Greek, European and international academic standards, as well as the conditions of employment markets. It is important that the department acknowledges that Quality Assurance Policies should be treated as 'live documents' and become appropriately adapted to new developments and standards.

II. Analysis

The Curriculum of Studies aims and objectives are defined by the relevant disciplines that contribute to the course, namely, Anthropology, History, Economics and Linguistics.

The pursuit of learning outcomes and qualifications was found to be in accordance with the European and National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education at level 7.

Teaching staff was found to be appropriately qualified and research active in the field of Gender Studies and the subfields taught.

The teaching delivered is demonstrably research-led.

The PSP in question remains up to date with current developments in the field of Gender Studies and prepares students for the pursuit of independent research at PhD level, should they wish to continue on the academic route.

The PSP is evaluated internally on an annual basis and compared frequently with other similar programmes at European and national levels. Staff seem aware of the educational and research landscapes of their field internationally.

Students evaluate their courses through a modern and appropriate system of MEQs (Module Evaluation Questionnaires). Answers are appropriately analysed by the teaching team.

III. Conclusions

The structure and organisation of the PSP are suitable, and the pursue of learning outcomes is in accordance with the European and National Qualifications Framework – Level 7

Teaching staff are appropriately qualified and produce high quality teaching outcomes. The PSP is evaluated annually, and students have the opportunity to evaluate it through modern and appropriate MEQs. The quality of the support services is very good, especially IT services and the use of new technologies facilitates teaching and learning, as well as research connectivity.

Panel Judgement

Principle 1: Quality assurance policy and quality goal setting for the postgraduate study programmes of the institution and the academic unit	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

- In order to strengthen the demand of the graduates' qualifications in the labour market, we recommend that the team develop a policy-oriented component – especially on gender inequalities as these can be documented in the workplace, or in political participation – that would enhance graduate employment opportunities in the policy sector.
- To facilitate research and research related mobility, we recommend that part of the tuition fees is used to subsidise staff research budget (especially for participation in conferences). This is an important matter that will help staff internationalise the important research they do.

PRINCIPLE 2: DESIGN AND APPROVAL OF POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES

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

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

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

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

In addition, the design of PSP must consider:

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

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

Documentation

- *Senate decision for the establishment of the PSP*
- *PSP curriculum structure: courses, course categories, ECTS awarded, expected learning outcomes according to the EQF, internship, mobility opportunities*
- *Labour market data regarding the employment of graduates, international experience in a relevant scientific field*
- *PSP Student Guide*
- *Course and thesis outlines*
- *Teaching staff (name list including of areas of specialisation, its relation to the courses taught, employment relationship, and teaching assignment in hours as well as other teaching commitments in hours)*

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The PSP "Gender, Culture and Society" has been operating since the academic year 2014-15. It is a three-semester programme that awards an MSc and for the completion of which 90 ECTS are required. Two semesters are devoted to elective courses and one semester for the thesis. The courses start in October, the first week of the winter semester, and end in the last week of the spring semester. The educational process continues for an additional semester, during which the thesis is written. In the winter semester (first semester) three specialised background courses are offered and in the spring semester (second semester) three specialised background courses are also offered. All courses are compulsory. Each course corresponds to 10 credit points (ECTS), while the specialisation thesis, which has a research character and a maximum length of 25,000 words, corresponds to 30 ECTS. Each course has a workload of between 250 and 284 hours. Each lecturer calculates for his/her course a rough allocation of these hours which corresponds to the requirements of the course and helps the students to complete the planned learning activities (indicatively: attending lectures/seminars, preparing oral presentations, bibliographic research, bibliographic study, preparation of a final written paper). The PSP admits up to 13 students per year and operates in accordance with the PSP Regulations.

II. Analysis

The PSP follows closely the strategy of the Department of Social Anthropology and History, specializing in the interdisciplinary study of gender. The curriculum focuses on active participation of students, alignment with institutional strategies and European standards, engagement of guest speakers and external stakeholders. Additionally, there is evidence on intertwining teaching and research, providing work experience opportunities, and continuous assessment of learning outcomes.

The structure, content and organisation of the course has clear and defined objectives that aim to deepen student knowledge on theoretical and analytical approaches to the study of Gender and how these intersect with other bodies of literature and dimensions of socio-cultural theory and analysis, especially in the context of Greece, but also more broadly. These objectives and learning outcomes are achieved by the PSP in practice.

More specifically, students have the opportunity to apply knowledge through research-based dissertations that are closely and competently supervised by appropriate members of staff who are research active on their specialisations.

Students benefit from a well-established research-seminar series that brings them in contact with new, exciting research conducted in the field and provides a nurturing context for the development of their critical thinking.

External stakeholders have a stable co-operation with the department that is delineated in relevant, official co-operation agreements. Students benefit from such links when they carry out research for their dissertations.

Students appeared to be active members of the academic community of the department. Student participation and involvement and the excellent quality of teaching and supervision offered are reflected on the high rates of student completion and the levels of satisfaction with the course reported by student representatives that we met during the accreditation process.

The combination of high-quality, research-led teaching, the opportunity to apply knowledge through conducting original ethnographic research towards a dissertation (often in co-operation with local stakeholders), and the existence of a lively academic community around this PSP (and the department more generally), have established the PSP in question as a leader and a national pick of excellence in its field.

The committee recommends that methodology is added explicitly to the curriculum. Currently, students receive methodological training via all the other courses. The specific character of gender studies –feminist methodologies being an irreducible part of the theory – notwithstanding, we recommend that methods’ training becomes an identifiable aspect of the programme. This can be achieved through a separate module taught in the first term (alongside the introduction and history), or through a component that becomes part of the dissertation credits.

Such a structure would also resolve another issue we identified with the clarity of progression of knowledge during the first two semesters.

III. Conclusions

The popularity of the PSP is undeniable as it has successfully managed to attract excellent students. It is an ambitious and resource-demanding programme including many elective courses.

The goals set for improvement of the PSP are relevant, specific, realistic, and measurable within a clearly stated time frame. The policy includes sufficient and appropriate structures and procedures for maintaining quality standards and for paving further improvement.

Overall, the programme meets the objectives and learning outcomes. It exposes students to high-quality research-based teaching and training that is relevant to the field and endows them with the appropriate skills and opportunities to apply their knowledge. The programme design, structure and quality correspond to what is expected by a PSP in the field of Gender Studies internationally.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

- A methodology component must be added as an explicit part of the course (either in the form of a module, or in the form of a separately examined component within the dissertation credits).
- Move the migration module to the second term and add the methods' course to the first term, so that the first term comprises of 'history', 'theory', 'methodology', before students then go on to specialize on different aspects.

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

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

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

The student-centred learning and teaching process

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

In addition

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

Documentation

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

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

Student-centred learning and teaching play an important role in stimulating students' motivation, self-reflection and engagement in the learning process. The PSP follows the principles of student-centred learning and teaching, to achieve the learning goals underlined

by the Study Program. It also presents real-world problems of the kind the students will face in the real world outside of the university. Using problem-based context to connect everyday experiences and build on what students already know helps them learn in more real contexts and improves students' ability to understand how concepts are used and why they are useful. Compulsory and elective courses are chosen by the postgraduates' students according to their interests. The teaching methods consist of professors' lectures, assignments and guest lecturers from other institutions. The student assessment is conducted by the teaching staff, is written and oral, and mitigating circumstances are taken into consideration. A formal procedure for student appeals is in place. Skill development helps build a solid foundation for students at the PSP. This helps develop self-esteem, confidence and leadership skills, develops problem-solving and cooperative skills. This encourages students to think independently and plan for their future.

II. Analysis

The relationship between students and teaching staff is quite close. All the interviewed students confirm that the teaching staff was readily available and accessible. Classes take place in relatively small groups as the total number of students is 13. Interviewed students report that the quality of instruction is very high, and the teaching staff stimulates their interests. The assessment methods and evaluations vary, including formal ways at the end of each semester with written or oral exams for students with special educational needs and with assignments throughout the academic year. There are also intermediate forms during the academic year. The PSP has undertaken initiatives to strengthen student participation in the assessment process so that its results allow safer conclusions to be drawn and more fully fuel decision-making to improve the operation of the PSP. The educational process is evaluated through questionnaires completed at the end of each academic year. Students are encouraged to take part in the assessment process. Moreover, interviewed students' reports that were not aware of reported instances/appeals.

III. Conclusions

Overall, the PSP follows the principle 3 of student-centred learning, teaching and assessment. The teaching methods and the accessibility of the teaching staff stimulate the students' interest for more extensive research

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

It is recommended to inform the students about the complaint's procedure.

PRINCIPLE 4: STUDENT ADMISSION, PROGRESSION, RECOGNITION OF POSTGRADUATE STUDIES, AND CERTIFICATION.

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD DEVELOP AND APPLY PUBLISHED REGULATIONS COVERING ALL ASPECTS AND PHASES OF STUDIES (ADMISSION, PROGRESSION, THESIS DRAFTING, RECOGNITION AND CERTIFICATION).

All the issues from the beginning to the end of studies should be governed by the internal regulations of the academic units. Indicatively:

- *the student admission procedures and the required supporting documents*
- *student rights and obligations, and monitoring of student progression*
- *internship issues, if applicable, and granting of scholarships*
- *the procedures and terms for the drafting of assignments and the thesis*
- *the procedure of award and recognition of degrees, the duration of studies, the conditions for progression and for the assurance of the progress of students in their studies*
- *the terms and conditions for enhancing student mobility*

All the above must be made public in the context of the Student Guide.

Documentation

- *Internal regulation for the operation of the Postgraduate Study Programme*
- *Research Ethics Regulation*
- *Regulation of studies, internship, mobility, and student assignments*
- *Degree certificate template*

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The Dept. through the PSP delivered the required documentation (study guide & regulations) provided to students for their postgraduate studies. The documents address in detail admission requirements, duration of the MA, thesis guidelines, course descriptions & students' duties. The information covers the steps students need to take from their entering the MA up until graduation.

II. Analysis

PSP's study guide and related regulations of studies provide a comprehensive framework that spells out both the faculty's as well as the students' rights and obligations. Accordingly, coursework takes two semesters while the Thesis is written subsequently. There is no option for part-time study. The PSP has implemented the position of a supervisor assigned to each student. Thesis examination is undertaken by a three-person committee – and not solely by the supervisor. The ECTS system has been implemented throughout the program. Students can take advantage of mobility opportunities through the program Erasmus+ program.

During interviews three people mentioned their successful participation in Erasmus+ mobility programs either for studies or internship. The diploma supplement is issued both in English and Greek enabling graduates of the PSP to submit it abroad if needed.

III. Conclusions

The PSP has successfully developed and implemented a regulatory framework that addresses the entire duration of post-graduate studies. Accordingly, there is evidence of having in place detailed regulations and human resources to attend to student needs, thus facilitating a well-defined framework for both students and faculty.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

None.

PRINCIPLE 5: TEACHING STAFF OF POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD ASSURE THEMSELVES OF THE LEVEL OF KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS OF THEIR TEACHING STAFF, AND APPLY FAIR AND TRANSPARENT PROCESSES FOR THEIR RECRUITMENT, TRAINING AND FURTHER DEVELOPMENT.

The Institution should attend to the adequacy of the teaching staff of the academic unit teaching at the PSP, the appropriate staff-student ratio, the appropriate staff categories, the appropriate subject areas, the fair and objective recruitment process, the high research performance, the training- development, the staff development policy (including participation in mobility schemes, conferences, and educational leaves-as mandated by law).

More specifically, the academic unit should set up and follow clear, transparent and fair processes for the recruitment of properly qualified staff for the PSP and offer them conditions of employment that recognise the importance of teaching and research; offer opportunities and promote the professional development of the teaching staff; encourage scholarly activity to strengthen the link between education and research; encourage innovation in teaching methods and the use of new technologies; promote the increase of the volume and quality of the research output within the academic unit; follow quality assurance processes for all staff (with respect to attendance requirements, performance, self-assessment, training, etc.); develop policies to attract highly qualified academic staff.

Documentation

- *Procedures and criteria for teaching staff recruitment*
- *Employment regulations or contracts, and obligations of the teaching staff*
- *Policy for staff support and development*
- *Individual performance of the teaching staff in scientific-research and teaching work, based on internationally recognised systems of scientific evaluation (e.g. Google Scholar, Scopus, etc.)*
- *List of teaching staff including subject areas, employment relationship, Institution of origin, Department of origin*

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The PSP is taught by six members of staff, there is a dedicated programme coordinator and a steering committee. The staff-student ratio is appropriate, all staff are research-active in the field of gender studies and staff research profiles closely match the modules offered. Recruitment processes follow national regulations and there was no irregularity in terms of clarity and transparency spotted on that front. Contract types have markedly improved in recent years (since the time when many staff were initially recruited in teaching-intensive contracts), and all new hires are fully academic (teaching and research) at the level of assistant professor/lecturer.

The ratio of women and men on the teaching team is equal (three women and three men) and although the overall programme leader is a male professor, the steering committee is composed of two women and two men of similar seniority (3 out of 4 associated professors/senior lecturers).

As mentioned above, all staff remain research active. Even though the available funding for participating in international conferences is skint, staff take advantage of mobility

opportunities available to them. Research leave (sabbatical) is instituted in the department. The accreditation team has received all relevant, required and useful information on staff composition, their research activities and research esteem indicators.

II. Analysis

This is a teaching team that appears to be functioning well and, despite the fact that staff sometimes work over and above their contracted hours to meet student learning needs, their career development opportunities do not seem to be seriously impeded by the structure of the degree, the department, or hidden hierarchies in the local academic community. Staff reported that their career development is greatly facilitated by the academic department and by a 'democratic' (in their own words) departmental culture, which is guided by the values of collegiality and equality.

Academic workloads remain high across the academic sector, in Greece and internationally, and the PSP in question is no exception. This particular teaching team attends to high standards of teaching outputs and, as a result, staff reported providing extra-curricular teaching to support less knowledgeable students (especially at the undergraduate level). Although this is not directly related to the structure and design of the PSP, since the same staff teaches on the undergraduate programmes, the existence of high workloads needs to be documented. Having said that, we were not given the impression that these workloads are unmanageable, or that they seriously interfere with career progression.

All staff are qualified, and their research matches closely the programme structure. They are familiar with new technologies. The processes and criteria for recruitment and development are clear and staff appeared to be knowledgeable on these.

In terms of the quality of research outputs, as mentioned above, the accreditation team were provided with metrics. Such indicators do not apply directly on social sciences and much less to qualitative research fields like anthropology, ethnography, or gender studies, that are notoriously difficult to be metricized. Staff metrics were not high, but nevertheless remain satisfactory and comparable to other academic staff in Greek and European Universities in the field, especially those who conduct research in non-anglophone institutions. The PSP, and the department in general, have a good overall reputation and attract highly qualified, research active staff who are leaders in their field at a national level.

The unit has demonstrable participation to funded research projects, but also conducts unfunded research that gets cited nationally and internationally.

III. Conclusions

Procedures and criteria for teaching staff recruitment are clear and in line with national regulations and there is a clear policy for staff support and development. All staff are research active and produce research outputs of considerable quality and excellence at national level. Based on international systems and standards of scientific evaluation, research outputs are of demonstrable value, although more work should be done towards being communicated to

international fora. Modules on the PSP correspond to staff research interests and specialisation.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

We recommend that the PSP attempts to initiate informal links with other programmes and departments in Europe to internationalise their research outputs. The easiest way to do this, is virtually. A virtual seminar series between three departments for instance can set up a network that will allow research outputs to be communicated and thus recognised more widely in the field.

We also recommend that staff explore the opportunity of (virtual) participation in at least one emblematic conference in the field per year where they would have the opportunity to showcase their work and strengthen links with other colleagues outside Greece.

We invite the department to take the necessary steps to ensure the increase of the research budget of individual staff. During the accreditation process, we were informed that research budgets are unequal between departments and universities. Since this PSP charges fees, at least a part of these fees can presumably facilitate research mobility of the teaching staff.

PRINCIPLE 6: LEARNING RESOURCES AND STUDENT SUPPORT

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD HAVE ADEQUATE FUNDING TO COVER THE TEACHING AND LEARNING NEEDS OF THE POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMME. THEY SHOULD –ON THE ONE HAND- PROVIDE SATISFACTORY INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES FOR LEARNING AND STUDENT SUPPORT, AND – ON THE OTHER HAND- FACILITATE DIRECT ACCESS TO THEM BY ESTABLISHING INTERNAL RULES TO THIS END (E.G. LECTURE ROOMS, LABORATORIES, LIBRARIES, NETWORKS, NETWORKS, CAREER AND SOCIAL POLICY SERVICES ETC.).

Institutions and their academic units must have sufficient resources and means, on a planned and long-term basis, to support learning and academic activity in general, so as to offer PSP students the best possible level of studies. The above means include facilities such as the necessary general and more specialised libraries and possibilities for access to electronic databases, study rooms, educational and scientific equipment, IT and communication services, support and counselling services.

When allocating the available resources, the needs of all students must be taken into consideration (e.g. whether they are full-time or part-time students, employed students, students with disabilities), in addition to the shift towards student-centred learning and the adoption of flexible modes of learning and teaching. Support activities and facilities may be organised in various ways, depending on the institutional context. However, the internal quality assurance proves -on the one hand- the quantity and quality of the available facilities and services, and -on the other hand- that students are aware of all available services.

In delivering support services, the role of support and administration staff is crucial and therefore this segment of staff needs to be qualified and have opportunities to develop its competences.

Documentation

- Detailed description of the infrastructure and services made available by the Institution to the academic unit for the PSP, to support learning and academic activity (human resources, infrastructure, services, etc.) and the corresponding firm commitment of the Institution to financially cover these infrastructure-services from state or other resources
- Administrative support staff of the PSP (job descriptions, qualifications and responsibilities)
- Informative / promotional material given to students with reference to the available services
- Tuition utilisation plan (if applicable)

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

Existing resources pertaining to classrooms and student support services are adequate. The University of the Aegean maintains laboratories that can be used by students for research-related purposes. Study rooms and access to e- services pertaining to library enabled resources are appropriate and in line with the PSP's declared goals. Students have direct access to a range of support services offered by the University, par example the Student Counsellor. The PSP sends newsletters containing announcements and messages from the teachers through the education platform and provides information to freshmen by discussing and solving problems and provide support consultancy. Students are aware of available services and these services are functional and easily accessible to students using the educational platform. There is also support for cultural events and athletics. The annual tuition fees for the PSP. Program amount

to 500€ and appropriate policies are in place, in line with current legal provisions, to facilitate tuition fee discounts or waivers for students in need

II. Analysis

Both the human and material resources are adequate, and the library offers a substantial amount of printed and online resources to all students. Furthermore, students have access to databases that offers a valuable study guide and links to a range of available resources. Student testimonies point to the high degree of support offered to them by professor and administrative staff, the readiness of which to answer questions and facilitate administrative procedures is praiseworthy. IT equipment for faculty is in existence, but not always adequate to facilitate research. Moreover, the library, which is stationed in the centre of the nearby town, is not fully exploited, since all the students are in class during the working hours of the library. Students complained that only when the library is open in the afternoon, they can use it, which is twice a week

III. Conclusions

Student support is multi-faceted and adequate for the program. Prioritizing electronic resources in the library system caters to the evolving needs of modern learners. Students are generally aware of the resources available to them, and content with the level of support offered to them by both Faculty and administrative staff.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

Extend the working hours of the library so that more students can use it.

PRINCIPLE 7: INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

INSTITUTIONS BEAR FULL RESPONSIBILITY FOR COLLECTING, ANALYSING AND USING INFORMATION, AIMED AT THE EFFICIENT MANAGEMENT OF POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES AND RELATED ACTIVITIES, IN AN INTEGRATED, EFFECTIVE AND EASILY ACCESSIBLE WAY.

Institutions are expected to establish and operate an information system for the management and monitoring of data concerning students, teaching staff, course structure and organisation, teaching and provision of services to students.

Reliable data is essential for accurate information and decision-making, as well as for identifying areas of smooth operation and areas for improvement. Effective procedures for collecting and analysing information on postgraduate study programmes and other activities feed data into the internal system of quality assurance.

The information collected depends, to some extent, on the type and mission of the Institution. The following are of interest:

- *key performance indicators*
- *student population profile*
- *student progression, success, and drop-out rates*
- *student satisfaction with their programmes*
- *availability of learning resources and student support*

A number of methods may be used to collect information. It is important that students and staff are involved in providing and analysing information and planning follow-up activities.

Documentation

- *Report from the National Information System for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (NISQA) at the level of the Institution, the department, and the PSP*
- *Operation of an information management system for the collection of administrative data for the implementation of the PSP (Students' Record)*
- *Other tools and procedures designed to collect data on the academic and administrative functions of the academic unit and the PSP*

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The Department uses modern information systems to gather, analyse and spread information. A key role in the collection, analysis and use of information for the effective management of the PSP is played by the integrated management system of the Secretariat, i.e. the Electronic application "Student Register", the Open eClass platform for asynchronous e-learning, the University's website, the Department's website, the information system of the MAI of the PA, the Integrated National Quality Information System of the ADIP.

An annual Internal Evaluation Report is produced which contains extensive information on the progress of the PSP, on the teaching and research activities of the faculty members, on the administrative staff and infrastructure of the Department, on the results of the evaluation of the teaching and support structures by the students and graduates of the Department, as well as proposals for issues that need improvement and ways to implement it. These data are collected from the Student Questionnaire, while faculty members fill in the Census and the

Faculty Questionnaire and the Secretariat updates the data. This process is done electronically. The Department's Internal Evaluation Team is responsible for the coordination of the internal evaluation and the preparation of the Internal Evaluation Report. In addition, the Internal Evaluation Team shall process, analyse and publish the results of the annual evaluation of the Department in the Assembly. After studying and discussing the results of the evaluation, it shall propose actions for improvement, where necessary and, if deemed necessary, review/update the strategic plan and the corresponding policy of the Department.

Through an online application students can make course registrations per semester; they can also receive a detailed list of their grades. The Student Registry enables the collection of an extensive amount of statistical information concerning the structure of the PSP, the staff and students. In addition, information from the students themselves is obtained through the relevant course evaluation questionnaires, which they complete each semester. The rate of student participation in evaluations can be improved.

The data resulting from the information flows described above are considered in the formulation of the Annual Internal Evaluation of the PSP. The website of the Department includes updated information about the teaching, administrative, laboratory and research staff.

The analyses of the selected information and the resulting conclusions are used, depending on their subject matter, by the competent committees and bodies of the Department (the Department Assembly, the OMEA, etc.). The committees are obliged to take these reports explicitly into account in order to substantiate their recommendations.

II. Analysis

The department's data collection and analysis methodologies appear comprehensive, potentially offering valuable insights for decision-making. The practice of involving students and staff in the process adds a layer of authenticity to the collected data, promoting transparency. Using various data sources contributes to an overarching understanding of the Programme's performance. These practices likely assist in highlighting both strengths and areas needing improvement. Meanwhile, student participation in evaluations is not satisfactory, which may distort the quality of the feedback that is mediated through the information systems.

Students and lecturers are provided with all the information on the operation and activities of the PSP, including the Study Guide, regulations, announcements, information on the administration of the Department, the structure of the PSP, information on the assessments and accreditations, the units and services, the history, mission and operation of the Department, research that is conducted, etc.

III. Conclusions

The Department's adherence to "Information management" is evident. The dedication towards collecting, analysing, and utilizing data for the continuous improvement of the PSP is very good. The PSP appears to use information management as a critical part of its strategy to maintain standards and support student success. Thus, the comprehensive and inclusive information management system assures quality and informs decisions.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

The low rate of student participation in evaluation of the PSP needs to be addressed by the department.

PRINCIPLE 8: PUBLIC INFORMATION CONCERNING THE POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD PUBLISH INFORMATION ABOUT THEIR TEACHING AND ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES RELATED TO THE POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES IN A DIRECT AND READILY ACCESSIBLE WAY. THE RELEVANT INFORMATION SHOULD BE UP-TO-DATE, OBJECTIVE AND CLEAR.

Information on the Institutions' activities is useful for prospective and current students, graduates, other stakeholders, and the public.

Therefore, Institutions and their academic units must provide information about their activities, including the PSP they offer, the intended learning outcomes, the degrees awarded, the teaching, learning and assessment procedures applied, the pass rates, and the learning opportunities available to their students. Information is also provided on the employment perspectives of PSP graduates.

Documentation

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

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The MA program maintains a website in both Greek and English. This website provides information about the Programme, inclusive of the structure of the Programme and the courses offered. While there is more information on the Greek version, the information provided in the English version does help exchange students who might want to participate in Erasmus. The program also has a Facebook page which most likely is more popular among graduates and students.

II. Analysis

The MA program fulfils the requirements set forth by this particular principle. The website contains the MA's general overview, thus facilitating the dissemination of the necessary information among a diverse audience (inclusive of both current or prospective students, graduates, and third parties). The bilingual content is welcome.

III. Conclusions

The MA program's relevant website section addresses the requirements. It provides information about the overarching structure of the program and the courses offered.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

None.

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

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

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

The above comprise the evaluation of:

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

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

Documentation

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

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

Since 2011, the Department has initiated a system of on-going evaluation of its programs. The OMEA has the responsibility of conducting annual evaluations of the MA program. There are clearly defined criteria for the review process in place. Subsequently, the Departmental council approves of the various programs and their revisions. To ensure quality information is

drawn from various sources, inclusive of the Department's and the Program's internal evaluation reports, student evaluations, the external evaluation, MODIP indicators, and consultation with committees. There is a process in place that allows the transformation of self-assessment reports into recommendations and action plans.

II. Analysis

Procedures are in place to ensure the continuing efforts of the MA Programme to update it. The process of revision implementation also aims to maintain international standards and to conform with best practices. Societal needs and student expectations are also incorporated.

III. Conclusions

The processes of ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the post-graduate program are trustworthy, of high quality and pursued with clear objectives in mind. The internal quality assurance system operates efficiently in monitoring, updating and promoting the MA

Panel Judgement

Principle 9: On-going monitoring and periodic internal evaluation of postgraduate study programmes	
Fully compliant	x
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

None.

PRINCIPLE 10: REGULAR EXTERNAL EVALUATION OF POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES

THE POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES SHOULD REGULARLY UNDERGO EVALUATION BY PANELS OF EXTERNAL EXPERTS SET BY HAHE, AIMING AT ACCREDITATION. THE TERM OF VALIDITY OF THE ACCREDITATION IS DETERMINED BY HAHE.

HAHE is responsible for administrating the PSP accreditation process which is realised as an external evaluation procedure, and implemented by panels of independent experts. HAHE grants accreditation of programmes, based on the Reports delivered by the panels of external experts, with a specific term of validity, following to which, revision is required. The quality accreditation of the PSP acts as a means for the determination of the degree of compliance of the programme to the Standards, and as a catalyst for improvement, while opening new perspectives towards the international standing of the awarded degrees. Both academic units and Institutions must consistently consider the conclusions and the recommendations submitted by the panels of experts for the continuous improvement of the programme.

Documentation

- *Progress report of the PSP in question, on the results from the utilisation of possible recommendations included in the External Evaluation Report of the Institution, and in the IQAS Accreditation Report, with relation to the postgraduate study programmes*

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

This Programme has not been externally evaluated in the past. During the current external review, all stakeholders were actively engaged. The Department and the University worked diligently in preparing materials, and presentations and organising and hosting virtual meetings with the Panel. All the meetings included presentations, discussions, and question-and-answer sessions. The Panel had the opportunity to meet, talk, and interact with all the participants of all meetings. The discussions were very constructive and fruitful and were conducted in a cooperative manner and attitude. The efficiency and eagerness of the Department to answer questions and provide additional information and clarifications during the meetings are worth noting.

II. Analysis

Based on the materials submitted and the information gathered during the online presentations and discussions, it appears that all members of staff (teaching and administrative), as well as students, alumni and other stakeholders, are aware of the importance of external review, its usefulness and the contribution it can make in improving the Programme. The current external evaluation process showed that the University and the Department are committed to the letter, spirit and process of quality assurance and external review. There is already in place a step-by-step action plan for utilizing the findings and recommendations of the external evaluation. As they pointed out during the meetings, it will help them improve by enabling them to identify problematic areas and find suitable solutions.

III. Conclusions

The panel's impression is that the Department and the University are committed to external evaluation as a vital component of a quality assurance system. They worked diligently to facilitate the current review and meet its objectives. Overall, their positive approach toward quality assurance and external review is expected to impact the Programme and contribute to its continuous improvement positively. However, more tangible results and a more meaningful assessment regarding this Principle will be possible when a second external evaluation is carried out.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

None.

PART C: CONCLUSIONS

I. Features of Good Practice

The PSP is one of the few Postgraduate Programmes in Greece, dealing with gender issues. It is stated that it was designed based on the up-to-date international standards and combines academic knowledge and experience (though without implementing practical training) from the disciplines of History and Anthropology.

All teaching staff should be praised for their firm commitment, concentrated effort, and enthusiasm to reach this point despite the obstacles and difficulties created by limited resources and other external factors. It is pointed out that the academic environment of the Programme is characterized by a cooperative atmosphere, mutual respect and collegial spirit that have made this possible.

The teaching staff have the appropriate qualifications, which are continuously cultivated by development activities in their home institution. The curriculum is organized according to the latest trends in the scientific field. The Programme was praised by the social partners, students and alumni, and it is supported by the leadership of the University.

The Programme delivers a student-centred education that cultivates diverse perspectives and academic independence and prepares students for important roles in social life. It prioritizes transparent student selection and a full-time attendance model. The Regulation of Studies document provides comprehensive guidance.

The Programme actively encourages and values regular student course evaluations to drive continuous improvement.

II. Areas of Weakness

The Panel feels that the progression of knowledge should be demonstrated more clearly from semester one to semester two. We also felt that a clearly delineated methodological component would boost this programme and perhaps offer the opportunity for the teaching of mixed methodologies. These two slight weaknesses could be counteracted in combination if a methods' module is added in the first term.

III. Recommendations for Follow-up Actions

- In order to strengthen the demand of the graduates' qualifications in the labour market, we recommend that the team develop a policy-oriented component – especially on gender inequalities as these can be documented in the workplace, or in political participation – that would enhance graduate employment opportunities in the policy sector.
- To facilitate research and research related mobility, we recommend that part of the tuition fees is used to subsidise staff research budget (especially for participation in conferences).

This is an important matter that will help staff internationalise the important research they do.

- The progression of knowledge in relation to courses during the first two semesters must be demonstrated more clearly.
- A methodology component must be added as an explicit part of the course (either in the form of a module, or in the form of a separately examined component within the dissertation credits).
- It is recommended to inform the students about the complaint's procedure.
- We recommend that the PSP attempts to initiate informal links with other programmes and departments in Europe to internationalise their research outputs. The easiest way to do this, is virtually. A virtual seminar series between three departments for instance can set up a network that will allow research outputs to be communicated and thus recognised more widely in the field.
- We also recommend that staff explore the opportunity of (virtual) participation in at least one emblematic conference in the field per year where they would have the opportunity to showcase their work and strengthen links with other colleagues outside Greece.
- We invite the department to take the necessary steps to ensure the increase of the research budget of individual staff. During the accreditation process, we were informed that research budgets are unequal between departments and universities. Since this PSP charges fees, at least a part of these fees can presumably facilitate research mobility of the teaching staff.
- The low rate of student participation in evaluation of the PSP needs to be addressed by the department.
- Extend the working hours of the library so that more students can use it

IV. Summary & Overall Assessment

The Principles where full compliance has been achieved are:

1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10.

The Principles where substantial compliance has been achieved are:

None.

The Principles where partial compliance has been achieved are:

None.

The Principles where failure of compliance was identified are:

None.

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

The members of the External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel

Name and Surname

Signature

1. **Professor, Apostolis Papakostas (Chair)**
Institution of Social Sciences, Södertörn University, Sweden
2. **Professor, Dimitris Michailakis**
Department of Culture and Society, University of Linköping
3. **Professor, Elisabeth Kirtsoglou**
Department of Anthropology, Durham University, UK
4. **Associate Professor, Victor Roudometof**
Department of Sociology, University of Cyprus.
5. **PhD candidate, Alexandra Kozamani,**
Hellenic Open University, Patra, Greece