



ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ
HELLENIC REPUBLIC



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Accreditation Report for the Distance Learning Postgraduate Study Programme (HEI):

Master of Science (MSc) in Digital Deep Tech Driven Circular Economy

Department: Cultural Technology and Communication

Institution: University of the Aegean

Date: June 2026



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 Distance Learning Postgraduate Study Programme of Master of Science (MSc) in **Digital Deep Tech Driven Circular Economy** 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 distance learning postgraduate study programme Master of Science (MSc) in Digital Deep Tech Driven Circular Economy of the University of the Aegean comprised the following five (5) members, drawn from the HAHE Register, in accordance with Law 4653/2020:

- 1. VONORTAS NICHOLAS (Chair)**
Institute for International Science and Technology Policy & Department of Economics, The George Washington University, USA
- 2. Angelaki Erasmia**
Hellenic Mediterranean University
- 3. Dagiuklas Tasos**
London South Bank University
- 4. TIROPANIS THANASSIS**
University of Southampton
- 5. Vasileiou Ismini**
De Montfort university Leicester, UK

II. Review Procedure and Documentation

This External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel (EEAP) carried out the accreditation review process for two new Postgraduate Study Programmes of the Department of Cultural Technology and Communication of the University of the Aegean: MScRes in Digital Deep Tech Driven Circular Economy (PSP1), and MSc in Digital Deep Tech Driven Circular Economy (PSP2). The interviews were held online (Zoom platform) during June 22-23, 2026. Our onsite visit started the first day of interaction with the representatives of the University, Department, and Programmes (see below). The extensive documentation received prior to our virtual meetings adequately described the current programmes and practices in place.

Furthermore, the EEAP asked for

and received a copy of the two power point presentations delivered during the first day of the meetings.

On Monday, 22 June 2026, the EEAP started with its own private meeting, followed by one online session with members of the Department of Cultural Technology and Communication:

Session 1. The Director of the two online PSPs, the Head of the Department, and the Vice Rector of the University and representative of MODIP:

- Prof. Stylianos Xanthopoulos, Vice Rector of Administrative and Academic Affairs, Head of MODIP
- Prof. Evangelia Kavakli, Head of the Department
- Prof. Christos Kalloniatis, Director of the PSP1 & PSP2 programmes

On Tuesday, 23 June 2026, the EEAP carried out six (6) online sessions relating to PSP1 & PSP2:

Session 2. Meeting with the Teaching Staff (PSP1):

- Assoc. Prof. Konstantinos Kotis, University of the Aegean
- Prof. Rebeka Kovačič Lukman, University of Maribor
- Dr. Giorgos Demetriou, Ecole de Ponts Business School
- Dr. Ioannis Basdekis, Circular Economy Foundation
- Assoc. Prof. Federica Acerbi, Politecnico di Milano
- Dr. Panagiotis Psomos, University of the Aegean
- Dr. Aikaterini-Georgia Mavroeidi, University of the Aegean

Session 3. Meeting with the Teaching Staff (PSP2):

- Assoc. Prof. Konstantinos Kotis, University of the Aegean
- Prof. Rebeka Kovačič Lukman, University of Maribor

- Dr. Giorgos Demetriou, Ecole de Ponts Business School
- Dr. Ioannis Basdekis, Circular Economy Foundation
- Assoc. Prof. Federica Acerbi, Politecnico di Milano
- Dr. Panagiotis Psomos, University of the Aegean
- Dr. Aikaterini-Georgia Mavroeidi, University of the Aegean

Session 4. Online tour of facilities related to the PSPs:

- Prof. Christos Kalloniatis, Director of the PSP1 & PSP2 programmes
- Ms. Antri Constantinou, Virtual Campus Presentation
- Mr. Panagiotis Kargas, Laboratory Technical Staff
- Dr. Stamatia Ladikou, Administrative Staff, PSP1
- Ms. Efstratia Mavrogeorgi, Administrative Staff, PSP2

Session 5. Employers, social partners:

- Mr. Karl Waedt, Project Manager, Framatome
- Ms. Athina Panagiotou, General Director, Cyprus Organisation for Standardisation
- Mr. Christian Wolff, Senior Researcher, ATB Institute
- Mr. Anastastios Manos, Director, Association of Hellenic Information Technology Enterprises
- Mr. Konstantinos Chatzifotis, Manager of European Affairs, Motor Oil Group
- Ms. Alexia Papadimitriou, Research and Innovation Manager, DIGITAL EUROPE

Session 6. The the Vice Rector of the University, Director of PSP1, the Head of the Department, and representative of MODIP;

- Prof. Stylianos Xanthopoulos, Vice Rector of Administrative and Academic Affairs, Head of MODIP
- Prof. Evangelia Kavakli, Head of the Department
- Prof. Christos Kalloniatis, Director of the PSP1
- Ms. Piyi Karavia, MODIP staff

Session 7. The the Vice Rector of the University, Director of PSP1, the Head of the Department, and representative of MODIP;

- Prof. Stylianos Xanthopoulos, Vice Rector of Administrative and Academic Affairs, Head of MODIP
- Prof. Evangelia Kavakli, Head of the Department
- Prof. Christos Kalloniatis, Director of the PSP2
- Ms. Piyi Karavia, MODIP staff

Sessions 2 & 3 and Sessions 6 & 7 were combined into single longer sessions as they involved the same people.

The EEAP members worked privately and collectively for several more days to draft this report.

III. Postgraduate Study Programme Profile

The Department of Cultural Technology & Communication was established in the year 2000. It is based in the campus of the University of the Aegean in Mytilini. The Department belongs to the School of Social Sciences. It has 21 regular full-time faculty members (DEP), 7 members EDIP and ETEP, 9 postdoctoral researchers, and 4 administrative staff. It manages an undergraduate programme with 635 students, 7 research laboratories, and 2 postgraduate programmes: Cultural Technology & Communication, and Smart Information Systems.

The two English-language online post-graduate programmes MSc in Digital Deep Tech Driven Circular Economy and MSc by Research in Digital Deep Tech Driven Circular Economy are being established within the framework of the European project 3D-CIRCULAR (Digital Deep tech Driven Circular Economy) which started in August 2025, has a duration of (4) four years and is funded by the European Health and Digital Executive (HADEA) Agency (Contract No. 101226256) (<https://3d-circular.eu/>). Specifically, the costs of organizing and operating the postgraduate programs, including tuition fees for students from EU countries, for the first three (3) cycles of operation of the postgraduate program are covered by the funding of this specific project as well as additional funding from national public sources. Students from countries beyond the EU will be charged €5,000 from the first cycle. EU country students will be charged this fee starting with the fourth cycle.

The project 3D-CIRCULAR is comprised of 32 partners including 10 higher education institutions, 9 research organizations and standardization bodies, 6 large industry partners, and 7 small and medium-sized enterprises. Its mission is to create the new generation of the educational ecosystem for the development of high-level interdisciplinary skills, in the context of promoting a European, digitally native and circular economy. The project aims to provide integrated specialized education and training services, through the development of innovative and modular curricula and certifications at postgraduate and doctoral levels. These programs integrate the principles of sustainability, circular economy, digitalization and innovation, while ensuring the effective, inclusive and accessible provision of educational services across the European Union.

The objective of the MSc in Digital Deep Tech Driven Circular Economy is to promote scientific knowledge in the fields of digital circular economy, deep tech technologies (AI, Blockchain, Digital Product Passports) and regulatory compliance in the context of green and digital transition. It aims to Prepare graduates for professional engagement in digital transformation, ESG & sustainability reporting and green innovation roles, in private and public sector businesses and organizations, as well as to produce new knowledge in the

context of relevant research initiatives. The content is delivered in three semesters and comprises of six compulsory and three elective courses in the first two semesters and the MSc thesis in the third semester for a total of 90 ECTS.

The objective of the MSc by Research in Digital Deep Tech Driven Circular Economy is to promote scientific knowledge and research excellence in the fields of the digital circular economy, deep innovation technologies (AI, Blockchain, Digital Product Passports, etc.) and regulatory compliance frameworks that support the green and digital transition. It aims to prepare researchers capable of designing and implementing original research, contributing to the development of innovative solutions and producing new knowledge through scientific publications, research projects and doctoral studies, strengthening the interface between academia, research organizations and industry. The content is delivered in three semesters and comprises of six compulsory and one elective courses in the first two semesters and the MSc thesis in the third semester for a total of 90 ECTS.

Here the EEAP would like to raise attention on some challenges:

1. Each of the two PSPs has an upper limit for newly enrolled students of 250. The EEAP considers such numbers excessive for a Department of this size. While the teaching and thesis supervision burden of the two PSPs is, at least in theory, to be distributed among the consortium partners, the bulk of the burden will inevitably fall on the Department of Cultural Technology & Communication since both PSPs are fully established there. For instance, one administrative person has been allocated to each programme, a totally inadequate resource. Who will do the selection of applicants, their orientation, the laboratories attached to the courses, follow-up of student progress, evaluation of courses through questionnaires, evaluation of professors, and most of all supervision of Masters theses!! Even if we assume that the MSc takes 100 students and the MScRES takes 30, we think that they will overwhelm the Department.
2. The distinction between the MSc and the MScRES is inadequately described in the documents and the presentations. How exactly will the courses which by and large share titles, be taught differently between the two programmes? Put simply, how is the RES going to be achieved?
3. What happens after the third cycle when the funding from 3D-CIRCULAR and the national public purse stops?

PART B: COMPLIANCE WITH THE PRINCIPLES

PRINCIPLE 1: STRATEGY, QUALITY ASSURANCE POLICY AND QUALITY GOAL SETTING FOR THE POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES (PSP) OF THE INSTITUTION AND THE ACADEMIC UNIT

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD APPLY A STRATEGY FOR DISTANCE LEARNING, AS PART OF THEIR STRATEGIC PLANNING. FURTHERMORE, EACH INSTITUTION APPLIES A QUALITY ASSURANCE POLICY REGARDING THE DISTANCE LEARNING POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES. THIS POLICY SHOULD EXPAND AND BE AIMED (WITH THE COLLABORATION OF EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS) AT THE DISTANCE LEARNING POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES OF THE INSTITUTION AND THE ACADEMIC UNIT. THIS POLICY SHOULD BE PUBLISHED AND IMPLEMENTED BY ALL STAKEHOLDERS.

Each Institution develops and implements a strategy for distance learning with the pedagogical utilisation of ICT (eLearning). This strategy is integrated into the overall strategy of the Institution and defines the pedagogical framework for the utilisation of the ICT, in both distance learning environments (eLearning), and blended learning environments. The strategy includes the feasibility of applying the distance learning and blended learning in particular PSP, and determines the innovations that aim at the linking of teaching with research, with emphasis on the production of new knowledge and the updating of the PSP.

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.

In particular, 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 distance learning Postgraduate Study Programme, 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 continuous improvement of the Programme.

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

As regards the distance learning PSP the academic unit commits itself to put into practice quality procedures that will demonstrate:

- a) the suitability of the structure and organisation of the distance learning 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 distance learning PSP*
- d) the appropriateness of the qualifications of the teaching staff for teaching in distance learning 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 distance learning PSP through the cooperation of the Internal Evaluation Group (IEG) with the Institution's Quality Assurance Unit (QAU).*

Documentation/Annexes

D1.1 Institutional strategy for distance learning, according to article 2 of the Ministerial Decision No 18137/Z1/2023

D1.2 Quality Policy of the Institution for the distance learning PSP

D1.3 Quality Policy of the academic unit for the development and the enhancement of the distance learning PSP

D1.4 Quality Targeting of the academic unit for the distance learning PSP, as per the attached template

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The educational process of both PSPs is implemented remotely, following responding to the growing needs for digital skills and international good practices in digital education and in accordance with the strategy of the University of the Aegean regarding online education (D1.1). The Programmes purport to enhance student-centered learning and the development of lifelong learning and digital collaboration skills. A comprehensive distance learning system will be available to support both PSPs. This system includes the Department's systems for synchronous (Microsoft Teams and Cisco Webex Platform) asynchronous education (LMS Open eClass) as well as the Virtual Campus. In addition to the distance learning infrastructure of the Foundation, the PSPs will utilize the pan-European digital and inter-university campus that has been developed within the framework of the 3D-CIRCULAR project. This Virtual Campus focuses on the development of advanced knowledge and skills for the circular economy and constitutes the central operational environment through which the educational activities and training activities associated with the Master's Degrees will be implemented.

The EEAP members had the chance to see a detailed video clip showing the capabilities of this system Virtual Campus.

Importantly, the Department understands that the effective operation of the postgraduate programs is based on the systematic preparation, guidance and support of students and teachers in distance education. Characteristically, both students and teachers are informed in a timely manner about the principles of distance education and the use of the distance learning platform through specialized

guides and support workshops ("train the trainers") before they start in the programme.

The objective of the MSc is to promote scientific knowledge in the fields of digital circular economy, deep tech technologies (AI, Blockchain, Digital Product Passports) and regulatory compliance in the context of green and digital transition. The PSP aims to prepare graduates for professional engagement in digital transformation, ESG & sustainability reporting and green innovation roles, in private and public sector businesses and organizations, as well as to produce new knowledge in the context of relevant research initiatives. Reportedly, the PSP focuses on the specialization of scientists and professionals in the interdisciplinary coupling of digital technologies - Artificial Intelligence, blockchain and data analytics - with the principles and applications of the circular economy. The professional orientation is in reskilling & upskilling of executives for digital transformation roles, ESG & sustainability reporting, and green innovation.

The University of the Aegean has an explicit policy assurance policy for online PSPs (D1.2). The specific Department and the two PSPs (D1.3) declared their commitment to implement quality procedures that ensure key aspects of the provision of distance graduate studies. More specifically:

- the appropriateness of the structure and organization of distance graduate studies
- the achievement of level 7 learning outcomes, as defined by national and European standards (European & National Qualifications Framework)
- the promotion of the quality and effectiveness of teaching
- the suitability of the teaching staff
- the connection of the qualifications of the graduates with the needs of the labor market
- the quality of the support services
- the rational and transparent utilization of financial resources
- the implementation of annual quality target setting and internal evaluation

The KPIs set for the programme (D1.4) are more or less appropriate.

II. Analysis

The EEAP read the provided materials and discussed online with various members of OMEA and MODIP as well as the representatives of the teaching staff. As a new complicated online programme of studies based in one Institution but depending for its delivery on several others, it raised several questions regarding the ability to enforce the quality assurance system of the University of the Aegean not only to its faculty but even more so on the academic faculty and teaching professionals of other organizations -- some of which as higher ranked and more well known internationally than the University of the Aegean. The EEAP at this point has no data one way or another to judge. We thus decide to err on the side of successful implementation.

III. Conclusions

The PSP has the correct quality objectives and follows the appropriate procedures to achieve them.

Panel Judgement

PRINCIPLE 1: STRATEGY, QUALITY ASSURANCE POLICY AND QUALITY GOAL SETTING FOR THE POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES (PSP) OF THE INSTITUTION AND THE ACADEMIC UNIT	
Compliant	X
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

R1.1. Be mindful of the organizational pitfalls of extensive consortia where the core organization does not have extensive leverage over bigger well established partners beyond a limited number of committed individuals.

PRINCIPLE 2: ORGANISATION, MANAGEMENT AND SUPPORT OF THE DISTANCE LEARNING POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES

THE DELIVERY OF DISTANCE LEARNING POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES REQUIRES SPECIAL PREPARATION, GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT TO STUDENTS, TEACHING STAFF AND ADMINISTRATION. THE INSTITUTIONAL AND LEGAL FRAMEWORK DETERMINES THE NECESSARY ICT INFRASTRUCTURE, THE TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT METHODS, AS WELL AS THE MODES OF COMMUNICATION BETWEEN THE INSTITUTION, THE TEACHING STAFF AND THE STUDENTS.

For the delivery of distance learning PSP, Institutions are required to have an integrated distance learning system to support the teaching process via synchronous and asynchronous distance learning methods, with the characteristics described in article 3 of the Ministerial Decision No 18137/Z1/2023.

The integrated distance learning system should be fully accessible to people with disabilities and special educational needs. In addition, for each distance learning PSP, one person (or more, if necessary) is nominated as Manager of the integrated distance learning system, (Ministerial Decision No 18137/Z1/2023, article 7). The Manager has the required expertise to support the teaching staff and the students of the PSP in using the system.

The terms and conditions regarding the organisation of the distance learning PSP are regulated by the Regulation of Postgraduate Study Programmes and Doctoral Studies of the Institution. In particular, the Regulation governs matters relating to the access to the integrated distance learning system, the maintenance and technical support of the system, the educational support of the students, the pedagogical framework of the educational activities, as well as the processes for: assessment and upgrading the digital skills of the PSP teaching staff, plagiarism check, personal data protection, system security, managing data confidentiality, and any other issue concerning the organisation of distance learning PSP.

The communication between students and the teaching staff, as well as between the HEI and students/teaching staff should be conducted smoothly by the use of the integrated distance learning system of the Institution, but also through other digital tools.

Communication among students is very important for the exchange of ideas, discussion on their progression and problem solving, and for this reason it should be supported and encouraged by the Institution. Similarly, communication among teaching staff members is particularly useful for the exchange of experience and good practices.

Students should regularly receive feedback by the teaching staff on their performance and progress.

According to the current institutional framework, part of the procedure (not exceeding 25% of the total ECTS of the PSP) may be organised through asynchronous distance learning methods. The practical training, where applicable, may be carried out remotely, provided that the host body in question supports teleworking, and that the supervision of the practical training is ensured.

Documentation/Annexes

D2.1 Brief description of the integrated distance learning system (Ministerial Decision No 18137/Z1/2023, article 3)

D2.2 Regulation of Postgraduate Study Programmes and Doctoral Studies of the Institution (concerning the distance learning PSP), as per article 4 of the Ministerial Decision No 18137/Z1/2023

D2.3 User Guide for the distance learning system (students)

D2.4 User Guide for the distance learning system (teaching staff)

D2.5 HEI Good Practice Guide for distance learning

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The educational process of the PSP is fully online. Teaching is in the English language.

The University of the Aegean operates an integrated videoconferencing and (synchronous) distance learning system, comprising the following subsystems and services:

1. Videoconferencing Software: To support videoconferencing, the University of the Aegean uses e:Presence and Zoom software.
2. Distance Learning Software: In addition to the Zoom platform, the BigBlueButton (BBB) service is also used.
3. Open e-class Asynchronous Distance Learning Platform: The Open eClass platform is an integrated Electronic Course Management System and is the proposal of the Academic Internet (GUnet) for the support of Asynchronous Distance Learning Services.
4. Virtual Campus: In addition to the distance learning infrastructure of the Institution, both PSPs will utilize the pan-European digital and inter-university campus that has been developed within the framework of the European project 3D-CIRCULAR. The Virtual Campus focuses on developing advanced knowledge and skills regarding the circular economy and serves as the central operational environment for the implementation of educational and training activities linked to the PSPs. The Virtual Campus is supported by the following specialized systems (D2.1):
 - DreamApply for admission and onboarding,
 - LearnWorlds for training delivery, assessment and certification,
 - Weglot for multilingual access,
 - accessiBe for accessibility and inclusion.

The members of the EEAP were informed repeatedly the students and lecturers in the PSPs are informed in a timely manner about the basic principles of distance learning. There are analytical documents that describe the electronic systems and user guides for teachers and students. Needless to say, such documents must be made available in English on the website.

II. Analysis

Our review of the available documents (D2.1-D2.5) and discussions with faculty and social partners indicate significant prospects for the effective organization, management, and support of the online PSP.

III. Conclusions

The prospective PSP is compliant with the specifications of criterion 2.

Panel Judgement

PRINCIPLE 2: ORGANISATION, MANAGEMENT AND SUPPORT OF THE DISTANCE LEARNING POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES	
Compliant	X
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

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

**In case of negative judgement, please justify*

Panel Recommendations

R2.1 The important documents presented in the Greek language to the members of the EEAP must be translated into English and provided on the website of the PSPs. These include especially documents D2.1, D2.3, D2.4, and D2.5.

PRINCIPLE 3: DESIGN, STRUCTURE, APPROVAL PROCEDURE AND IMPLEMENTATION OF DISTANCE LEARNING POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES

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

The academic units develop their distance learning 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 of the PSP 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 distance learning PSP must consider:

- *the Institutional strategy for distance learning*
- *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 with research*
- *the relevant regulatory framework and the official procedure for the approval of the PSP by the Institution*
- *the international experience in relevant scientific fields.*

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/Annexes

D3.1 Senate Decision for the establishment of the distance learning PSP according to article 80 of Law 4957/2022 and the accompanying analytical report as per the Ministerial Decision No 18137/Z1/2023, article 5, par. 4

D3.2 PSP Internal Regulation, updated, as provided by the Law 4957/2022 and the Ministerial Decision No 18137/Z1/2023, article 4

D3.3 PSP Student Guide, including: courses, course categories, in-person and distance learning methods (synchronous, asynchronous, blended), assessment methods, the total number of ECTS of the PSP, the percentage of ECTS that are offered through asynchronous distance learning methods and the expected learning outcomes of the PSP

D3.4 Course outlines and thesis outline (as per the specific HAHE template for distance learning PSP) for all PSP courses, in a pdf file, with page numbers. The file should have a Table of Contents of all courses per semester of studies, indicating the page number for each course outline.

D3.5 Schedule and timetable of the PSP

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The Panel reviewed the documentation provided for the MSc in Digital Deep Tech Driven Circular Economy, including the Study Guide, Programme structure, course descriptions, learning outcomes, ECTS allocation, assessment methods, distance learning arrangements, and relevant institutional approval documentation. The Panel also discussed the Programme with the Programme leadership, teaching staff and external stakeholders.

The Programme is positioned in an emerging and strategically important interdisciplinary area, combining circular economy, sustainability, digital technologies, innovation, policy and applied practice. The Panel noted that the Programme is designed to respond to the growing need for professionals who can understand circular economy principles and apply digital technologies to support sustainable business models, resource efficiency, material traceability, digital product passports and organisational transformation.

The Programme has been designed as a distance learning postgraduate programme at Level 7. The structure includes taught modules and a dissertation/project component. The documentation identifies the Programme's aims, learning outcomes, course structure, ECTS distribution and assessment methods. The Programme also makes use of synchronous and asynchronous learning activities through a virtual learning environment.

The Panel noted that the MSc and the MScRES are closely related in subject area and overall academic rationale. During the meetings, the Programme team explained that the MSc is more applied/professional in orientation, while the MScRES places greater emphasis on research methodology, literature review, research proposal development and independent research activity. The Panel considers this distinction valid, but recommends that it should be made more explicit in the written documentation and in the student-facing information.

The Panel also discussed the inclusion of digital technologies such as blockchain. The Programme team explained that blockchain is included in relation to digital product passports, material traceability, accountability and circular economy applications. The Panel considers this rationale appropriate, provided that the technology is taught critically and proportionately, including its benefits, limitations, environmental implications and relevance to circular economy practice.

II. Analysis

The Panel considers that the Programme is academically coherent and relevant to contemporary societal, economic and policy priorities. The interdisciplinary nature of the Programme is appropriate, as circular economy is not a single-discipline field but requires knowledge of sustainability, systems thinking, technology, business models, regulation, innovation and applied problem-solving.

The structure of the Programme is broadly appropriate for Level 7 study. The combination of taught content, applied digital technologies and dissertation/project work provides students with opportunities to develop advanced understanding and practical capability. The Programme has the potential to attract students from different academic and professional backgrounds, including engineering, environmental studies, business, policy, legal, technology and management backgrounds.

The Panel considers that the distance learning mode is suitable for this Programme, particularly because it can support participation by working professionals and geographically dispersed students. However, the success of the Programme will depend on ensuring that the online delivery model is pedagogically designed and not simply a digital transfer of conventional teaching. Asynchronous learning activities should be structured, interactive and clearly linked to the learning outcomes and student workload.

The Panel welcomes the Programme's attention to digital technologies, including blockchain and other enabling technologies. However, the Programme should ensure that digital technologies are not presented as isolated technical silos. They should be clearly connected to circular economy problems, such as traceability, transparency, resource flows, product lifecycle management, data sharing, accountability and sustainable innovation.

The Panel also considers that the Programme would benefit from a clearer written mapping between programme learning outcomes, course learning outcomes, assessment methods, assessment criteria, ECTS workload and Level 7 expectations. This would strengthen transparency for students, support consistency across the teaching team and provide clearer evidence that learning outcomes are achieved.

III. Conclusions

The Panel concludes that the Programme is appropriately designed and structured as a distance learning postgraduate programme. It has a clear and timely academic focus, a relevant interdisciplinary profile and an appropriate Level 7 orientation. The Programme responds to a clear need for postgraduate education at the intersection of circular economy and digital technologies.

The Panel also concludes that the Programme would benefit from further clarification of the distinction between the MSc and the MSc by Research, stronger curriculum mapping, clearer articulation of the distance learning pedagogy, and continued review of the balance between digital technology, circular economy theory, policy, business application and practical skills.

Panel Judgement

PRINCIPLE 3: DESIGN, STRUCTURE, APPROVAL PROCEDURE AND IMPLEMENTATION OF DISTANCE LEARNING POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES	
Compliant	X
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

R3.1. Make the distinction between the MSc and the MScRES more explicit in the written documentation, particularly in relation to aims, learning outcomes, assessment design, dissertation/project expectations and graduate destinations.

R3.2. Develop or strengthen a clear curriculum mapping document showing the relationship between programme learning outcomes, course learning outcomes, teaching methods, assessment methods, assessment criteria, ECTS workload and Level 7 expectations.

R3.3. Establish a systematic process for regular curriculum review, drawing on student feedback, staff reflection, external stakeholder input, current research, technological developments, policy changes and international practice.

PRINCIPLE 4: STUDENT-CENTRED LEARNING, TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT IN THE DISTANCE LEARNING POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD ENSURE THAT DISTANCE LEARNING PSP PROVIDE THE NECESSARY CONDITIONS TO ENCOURAGE STUDENTS TO TAKE AN ACTIVE ROLE IN THE LEARNING PROCESS. THE ASSESSMENT METHODS SHOULD REFLECT THIS APPROACH AND ATTEND TO THE SPECIAL PROVISIONS FOR THE REMOTE ONLINE EXAMS AND ASSESSMENT OF THE STUDENTS.

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 curriculum implementation and of 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*
- *investigates the students' background knowledge and adjusts teaching accordingly*
- *considers and uses different modes of teaching, where appropriate*
- *flexibly uses a variety of pedagogical methods that promote active learning*
- *regularly evaluates and adjusts the modes of teaching, learning and assessment through regulatory interventions, 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:

- *Assessment is implemented through written or oral examinations carried out either in person or remotely, or through alternative methods, such as submission of assignment or conduct of practical test. The Institution should ensure the credibility and the integrity of the assessment procedure.*
- *More specifically, the written or oral remote examination may be conducted using technological means and similar systems/applications for remote online exams, ensuring the participant's authentication, his/her personal identification and the proctoring of the exam process, where necessary.*
- *Where special technical equipment is required for the assessment process, this should be stated in the PSP call for applications.*
- *The academic staff members are familiar with the existing distance learning system and assessment 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/Annexes

D4.1 (N/A for the initial accreditation) Evaluation by the students: a) sample of fully completed questionnaire for the evaluation of the PSP courses / teaching staff by the students b) statistical results of all the questionnaires, per question, for two academic semesters. Commenting on results and proposals on how to address weaknesses

D4.2 Questionnaire of the evaluation of the courses/teaching staff by the students

D4.3 Regulation for students' complaints and appeals

D4.4 Regulation for academic advisors

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The distance-learning Postgraduate Study Programmes have been designed around a student-centered educational approach that promotes active participation, student autonomy, flexibility, accessibility and continuous academic support. The online mode of delivery enables participation by students who may face geographical, professional, social, or personal constraints and therefore contributes to equal access to postgraduate education.

Teaching is supported through an integrated digital learning environment. The University's Open e-Class platform is used for asynchronous learning, while Microsoft Teams and, where appropriate, Cisco Webex support synchronous teaching, communication, and collaborative activities. In addition, the programmes plan to use the 3D-CIRCULAR Virtual Campus, which integrates specialized systems for admission and onboarding, course delivery, assessment, certification, multilingual access, and accessibility. These digital infrastructures allow students to access learning materials, participate in synchronous sessions, communicate with teaching staff and peers, submit assignments, and receive academic support remotely.

The programme design encourages active and collaborative learning through different educational methods, including synchronous lectures, asynchronous study, assignments, applied activities, collaborative tasks, discussions, and research-oriented learning. The interdisciplinary nature of the programmes and their connection with the 3D-CIRCULAR project also support the integration of teaching with current research, technological developments, and practical applications in digital and circular economy fields.

A formal electronic procedure has been established for the evaluation of courses and

teaching staff by students. Before the end of each semester and prior to the examination period, students are invited to complete anonymous electronic questionnaires through the information system of the University's Quality Assurance Unit. The questionnaires include both closed and open-ended questions concerning course content, teaching methods, educational material, organization, workload, and the performance of teaching staff. The results are made available to the Programme Director and individually to the relevant teaching staff and are intended to support the continuous improvement of teaching and programme delivery.

The institution has also established a formal mechanism for submitting and managing complaints, comments, recommendations and appeals. Submissions may be made through the institutional complaints service, either by named or anonymous communication, subject to personal-data protection requirements. Complaints are registered, monitored, and referred to the competent bodies, while the Quality Assurance Unit prepares periodic reports on their management and resolution.

Academic guidance is supported through the institution of the Academic Advisor. The relevant regulation defines the role of academic advising in helping students understand programme requirements, organize their studies, address academic difficulties, and make informed decisions regarding their academic progress. This mechanism is particularly important in the distance-learning environment, where systematic communication and early identification of difficulties are essential.

Since the programmes are undergoing initial accreditation, completed student questionnaires and statistical results from successive semesters are not yet available. However, the relevant procedures, questionnaires, digital systems and institutional regulations are already established.

II. Analysis

The documentation reviewed, together with the discussions held during the meetings with representatives of the University of the Aegean on Tuesday, 23 June 2026, demonstrates that student-centred learning is embedded in both the pedagogical design and the organisational structure of the programmes. The combination of synchronous and asynchronous learning provides students with flexibility while maintaining regular interaction with teaching staff and fellow students. The use of varied learning activities is appropriate for postgraduate education and supports different learning needs, professional backgrounds and levels of prior experience.

The available digital infrastructure is adequate for the delivery of distance education. In particular, the combination of institutional learning platforms and the planned Virtual Campus provides a comprehensive environment covering the main stages of the student journey, from admission and orientation to learning, assessment and certification. The inclusion of multilingual and accessibility tools is a positive feature and supports the participation of a diverse and international student population.

The student evaluation procedure is clearly defined and protects anonymity. It also provides opportunities for students to express both quantitative evaluations and qualitative comments. The provision of results to the Programme Director and teaching staff creates an appropriate basis for reviewing teaching practices. Nevertheless, once the programmes begin operating, it will be important to demonstrate systematically how evaluation results lead to documented corrective or improvement actions.

The complaints and appeals mechanism is institutionally regulated and includes provisions for registration, monitoring and reporting. This supports transparency and protects students' rights. The programme should ensure that all students are informed from the beginning of their studies about the available procedure, the responsible bodies, expected response times and the distinction between an informal academic concern, a formal complaint and an appeal against an academic decision.

The Academic Advisor mechanism provides an additional layer of personalised support. Its effectiveness will depend on the timely assignment of advisors, regular communication with students and the maintenance of appropriate records while respecting confidentiality. The programme should also use learning-platform information, where legally and ethically appropriate, to identify students with limited participation or difficulties and offer early support.

The proposed assessment framework appears consistent with the intended learning outcomes and the requirements of distance education. The use of assignments, applied activities, examinations and other forms of assessment can provide multiple opportunities for students to demonstrate achievement. To ensure fairness and consistency, assessment criteria, grading methods, submission rules, academic-integrity requirements and procedures for feedback and appeals should be communicated clearly before assessment activities take place.

III. Conclusions

The distance-learning Postgraduate Study Programmes have established an appropriate framework for student-centred learning, teaching and assessment. Their design promotes flexibility, active participation, accessibility, student autonomy and interaction within a structured digital learning environment.

Formal procedures are in place for student evaluation of courses and teaching staff, academic advising, complaints and appeals. The assessment framework is supported by institutional regulations and digital systems designed for distance-learning provision.

As these are new programmes, the effectiveness of the procedures cannot yet be confirmed through operational data. During the first cycles of implementation, the programme will need to collect evidence concerning student participation, assessment performance, student satisfaction, complaints, academic advising and the improvement measures adopted in response to the findings.

Panel Judgement

PRINCIPLE 4: STUDENT-CENTRED LEARNING, TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT IN THE DISTANCE LEARNING POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES	
Compliant	X
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

R4.1. Detailed assessment criteria and rubrics should be published for research proposals, progress reports, presentations and the final research work.

R4.2. The student questionnaire should include specific questions concerning the usefulness of feedback and access to research resources.

R4.3. The programme should document the actions adopted in response to student evaluations and communicate significant improvements to the student body.

PRINCIPLE 5: STUDENT ADMISSION, PROGRESSION, RECOGNITION OF DISTANCE LEARNING POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES, 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*
- *policies and procedures for the recognition of students' background knowledge*
- *the terms and procedures 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/Annexes

D5.1 Institutional Research Ethics Regulation

D5.2 PSP Regulation of studies (including special section for the remote online examination and assessment of students as per the Ministerial Decision No 18137/Z1/2023, article 6), internship, mobility, and students assignments

D5.3 PSP Degree template

D5.4 PSP Diploma Supplement template

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The Panel reviewed the documentation relating to student admission, progression, recognition and certification for the MSc in Digital Deep Tech Driven Circular Economy. This included information on admission requirements, study stages, assessment and progression arrangements, dissertation/project procedures, recognition of studies, and certification.

The Programme is designed to attract students from diverse academic and professional backgrounds. During the discussions, the Programme team acknowledged that circular economy is an interdisciplinary field and that students

may come from different disciplines, including engineering, business, legal, policy, environmental, technological or other backgrounds. The Panel considers this breadth appropriate for the subject area, but notes that it requires clear admission expectations and appropriate academic support.

The Panel noted that the Programme team intends to support students through common foundational knowledge, structured learning materials, synchronous and asynchronous support, academic advising and interaction with teaching staff. The Programme team also referred to the use of academic advisors and to opportunities for students to communicate with instructors and peers through the virtual learning environment.

The Panel discussed dissertation/project arrangements with the Programme team. It was explained that dissertation/project topics may be proposed by teaching staff, while students may also suggest their own topics. These topics are expected to be considered in relation to Programme learning outcomes, the student's interests, feasibility and the availability of appropriate supervisory expertise.

The Panel also noted that students are expected to have access to relevant learning resources and academic support through the distance learning environment.

II. Analysis

The Panel considers that the arrangements for admission, progression, recognition and certification are broadly appropriate for a distance learning postgraduate programme. The interdisciplinary nature of the Programme means that broad entry routes can be justified. However, the Programme should ensure that applicants understand the academic level, technological content, workload, language requirements and expectations of distance learning before admission.

The Panel considers that student diversity can be a strength, as circular economy requires interdisciplinary perspectives. However, students from different backgrounds may have different levels of preparedness in relation to digital technologies, circular economy theory, research methods, academic writing, business models, policy and sustainability concepts. The Programme should therefore ensure that students are supported through induction, diagnostic activities, preparatory material or bridging support where needed.

The Panel welcomes the reference to academic advising and student support. This is particularly important in a distance learning programme, where students may be working professionals, international learners or individuals studying alongside other commitments. The role of the academic advisor should be clearly explained to students, including the nature of the support available, the expected frequency of contact and the relationship between academic advising and dissertation/project supervision.

The Panel considers that the dissertation/project process is appropriate in principle. Allowing students to select from proposed topics or suggest their own topics can support relevance, motivation and alignment with professional interests. However, the process would benefit from clearer written criteria for the approval of student-proposed topics. These criteria should include alignment with learning outcomes, feasibility, research ethics, methodological suitability, supervisory expertise and Level 7 expectations.

The Panel also considers that progression monitoring is especially important in distance learning. The Programme should monitor student engagement with synchronous and asynchronous activities, assessment submission patterns, academic performance and early signs of disengagement. This will be particularly important given the interdisciplinary student profile and the potential variation in prior knowledge.

III. Conclusions

The Panel concludes that the Programme has appropriate arrangements for student admission, progression, recognition and certification. The Programme is designed for an interdisciplinary student population and provides a basis for supporting students through distance learning, academic advising and structured learning activities.

The Panel also concludes that further enhancement would be achieved through clearer documentation of the expected student profile, admission expectations, bridging support, academic advisor role, dissertation/project approval criteria and progression monitoring mechanisms.

Panel Judgement

PRINCIPLE 5: STUDENT ADMISSION, PROGRESSION, RECOGNITION OF DISTANCE LEARNING POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES, AND CERTIFICATION	
Compliant	
Partially compliant	X
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

R5.1. Clarify the expected student profile and admission expectations, including the academic, technological, language and professional background expected of applicants.

R5.2. Clearly document the role of the academic advisor, including how students are allocated to advisors, how contact is maintained in the distance learning environment and how academic advising relates to dissertation/project supervision.

R5.3. Develop or strengthen written criteria for the approval of dissertation/project topics, including alignment with learning outcomes, feasibility, research ethics, methodological suitability, supervisory expertise and Level 7 expectations.

PRINCIPLE 6: TEACHING STAFF OF DISTANCE LEARNING 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 and their training in respect of good practices in distance learning; 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/Annexes

D6.1 Table of the teaching staff (name list including subject area, taught courses, employment relationship, teaching assignment, as well as other teaching commitments in hours, documented teaching record in distance learning programmes)

D6.2 Summary report of teaching staff performance in scientific-research and teaching work, based on internationally recognised research databases and research metrics (e.g. Google Scholar, Scopus etc.)

D6.3 Procedures and criteria for teaching staff recruitment and policies in place for the recruitment of highly qualified teaching staff

D6.4 Working rules or employment contracts, teaching staff duties

D6.5 Published policy and projects for the support and development of the teaching staff with regard to distance learning

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The Panel reviewed the documentation relating to the teaching staff of the MSc in Digital Deep Tech Driven Circular Economy, including staff profiles, areas of expertise, teaching roles, research interests and information provided about

distance learning delivery. The Panel also met with members of the teaching team and discussed staff expertise, professional development, teaching experience, research activity, workload, online delivery and student support.

The Programme benefits from an interdisciplinary teaching team with expertise relevant to circular economy, digital technologies, sustainability, innovation, business models, policy and applied research. The Panel noted that the teaching team includes staff with experience from different institutions and professional contexts, which is appropriate for a Programme that aims to connect circular economy theory with digital and applied practice.

During the discussions, members of the teaching team described prior experience in online, blended or distance education. Examples were provided of staff involvement in virtual teaching, online delivery at other universities, professional training environments and international teaching. The Programme team also referred to a train-the-trainers model intended to support consistency in online delivery and to ensure that staff are familiar with the virtual learning environment and the pedagogical expectations of the Programme.

The Panel also discussed how staff would support students from diverse backgrounds. The Programme team described the use of common foundational material, synchronous and asynchronous support, academic advising, student forums, knowledge checks and peer interaction. Staff also referred to the importance of linking teaching to real-world circular economy problems and to the professional interests of students.

The Panel noted that the Programme relies on a distributed and interdisciplinary teaching team. This can be a strength, but it also requires clear coordination, workload planning, consistency of assessment, and shared expectations for Level 7 teaching, feedback and supervision.

II. Analysis

The Panel considers that the teaching staff have appropriate academic and professional expertise to support the delivery of the Programme. The interdisciplinary composition of the teaching team is suitable for a Programme in digital deep tech driven circular economy, as the field requires knowledge across technology, sustainability, business, policy, innovation and applied problem-solving.

The Panel welcomes the evidence that teaching staff have experience in online or blended delivery and that the Programme team has considered training and coordination for distance learning. However, the Panel considers that this should be more systematically documented. In particular, the Programme would benefit from a clear record of staff experience, professional development and training in distance learning pedagogy, online interaction, digital assessment, student engagement monitoring and inclusive online teaching.

The Panel also considers that the Programme should ensure consistency across the teaching team. Where staff are drawn from different institutions or professional settings, it is important that they share common expectations about learning outcomes, Level 7 standards, student workload, assessment criteria, feedback quality and response times. This is especially important in a distance learning environment, where students need a coherent and predictable learning experience.

The Panel considers that staff workload and supervision capacity should be monitored carefully. Distance learning requires not only delivery of synchronous teaching, but also asynchronous support, preparation of digital materials, moderation of forums, assessment, feedback, student communication, academic advising and dissertation/project supervision. These activities should be recognised in workload planning.

The Panel also considers that the link between teaching and research/practice is appropriate but should remain visible throughout the Programme. Staff should continue to draw on current research, policy developments, applied projects, industry problems and international practice to ensure that the Programme remains current and relevant.

III. Conclusions

The Panel concludes that the Programme has a suitably qualified and interdisciplinary teaching team. The staff expertise is appropriate for the academic and applied orientation of the Programme, and the Panel was satisfied that the Programme has access to staff with relevant knowledge and experience.

The Panel also concludes that the Programme would be strengthened by more systematic documentation of distance learning CPD, clearer coordination of the distributed teaching team, explicit workload planning, and consistent processes for assessment, feedback and dissertation/project supervision.

Panel Judgement

PRINCIPLE 6: TEACHING STAFF OF DISTANCE LEARNING POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES	
Compliant	X
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

R6.1 Develop or strengthen a clear teaching staff matrix showing the relationship between staff expertise, course responsibilities, learning outcomes, assessment responsibilities and dissertation/project supervision areas.

R6.2. Maintain a systematic record of staff experience and professional development in distance learning, including online pedagogy, digital assessment, student engagement, accessibility and use of the virtual learning environment.

R6.3. Strengthen mechanisms for sharing good practice among teaching staff, including discussion of student feedback, assessment outcomes, online engagement and module enhancement.

PRINCIPLE 7: LEARNING RESOURCES AND STUDENT SUPPORT FOR DISTANCE LEARNING POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD HAVE ADEQUATE FUNDING TO COVER THE TEACHING AND LEARNING NEEDS OF THE DISTANCE LEARNING PSP. THEY SHOULD -ON THE ONE HAND- PROVIDE SATISFACTORY PHYSICAL, TECHNOLOGICAL AND DIGITAL 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. PHYSICAL OR DIGITAL LECTURE ROOMS, PHYSICAL OR VIRTUAL LABORATORIES, PHYSICAL AND ONLINE LIBRARIES, NETWORKS, CAREER AND SOCIAL 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 online libraries with the possibility of access to electronic databases, digital study rooms, educational and scientific equipment, information 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 or international 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 and evaluate the effectiveness of the support they receive.

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/Annexes

D7.1 Detailed description of the infrastructure and services made available by the Institution to the department for the PSP, for the support of learning and of the academic activities (human resources, facilities, services, etc.), and the corresponding firm commitment of the Institution to financially cover these infrastructure and services from state or other resources

D7.2 Information material on the services available to the students

D7.3 Feasibility Study for the PSP operation, including tuition fees utilization, where they exist

D7.4 Name list of the PSP administrative staff (posts, qualifications, duties, training in distance learning)

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The documentation reviewed, together with the information and clarifications provided during the meetings with representatives of the University of the Aegean on Tuesday, 23 June 2026, demonstrates that the distance-learning Postgraduate Study Programmes are supported by a broad range of physical, technological, digital,

administrative and student-welfare resources.

The University and the Department make available the existing institutional infrastructure required for the operation of the programmes. This includes appropriately equipped teaching and videoconferencing rooms, computer facilities, specialised research laboratories, the University Library and access to electronic information resources. Although the programmes are delivered at a distance, students may also benefit from the physical facilities and academic resources of the University when required. The institution has formally committed itself to financing and maintaining the relevant human resources, infrastructure and services through public or other available resources.

The Department's teaching rooms are equipped with computers, projection and audio systems, while a fully equipped videoconferencing room is also available. Specialised computer and laboratory spaces support teaching, project work and research activity. Technical support at Department level is provided by specialised staff responsible for maintaining electronic equipment, supporting the institutional website and facilitating students' access to electronic services.

A comprehensive range of digital services is available to distance-learning students. These include institutional email, the electronic student registry, VPN access, Microsoft 365, Microsoft Azure, electronic announcements and institutional web services. Through the VPN service, students and staff can remotely access the University network and use services normally available within the University's premises. Students also have access to cloud storage and Microsoft software and services.

The infrastructure for distance education includes eClass, Microsoft Teams, BigBlueButton, Moodle, Zoom and e-Presence, in addition to the specialised Virtual Campus developed in the context of the 3D-CIRCULAR project. These systems support access to educational material, communication, videoconferencing, collaborative work and other academic activities. The Virtual Campus is designed to support the wider student journey, including application, onboarding, learning, assessment and certification. Multilingual and accessibility tools are also foreseen to facilitate participation by international students and students with different accessibility needs.

The University provides a wide range of student-support services. These include the Student Welfare Office, accommodation and catering-related services, healthcare information, housing allowances, scholarships, psychological counselling, the Career

Office, Erasmus+ support, the Internship Office, the Academic Advisor, the Student Ombudsman, the complaints service and the Teaching and Learning Support Office. These services are described in the infrastructure documentation and in the information material prepared specifically for students.

Students will be informed about the available infrastructure and support services through dedicated information material and an orientation event organised at the beginning of each academic cycle or semester. The orientation is planned to cover the academic calendar, important deadlines, timetables, electronic platforms, academic procedures and the available support structures. This represents an appropriate mechanism for ensuring that students are aware of the resources to which they are entitled and understand how to access them.

The programme is supported by identified administrative, secretarial, communication and technical personnel. The submitted staff list includes a head of administrative and secretarial support with substantial experience in university administration and in the support of postgraduate programmes delivered both conventionally and through synchronous distance education. Additional staff are assigned to postgraduate student support, general and financial administration, communication and social-media management, and technical support for teaching staff and students. The documented qualifications and prior experience of the personnel are relevant to their respective responsibilities.

The programme is accompanied by a detailed sustainability study and tuition-utilisation plan. For the first three cycles of operation, organisational and operating costs, including tuition fees for students from Greece and other European Union countries, are covered through the 3D-CIRCULAR project. For subsequent cycles, the financial plan anticipates income from registration and tuition fees. The expenditure plan includes teaching costs, student travel for educational purposes, administrative and technical support, educational material, communication and dissemination activities, conferences and other academic expenses. In the submitted annual budget, €69,500 is allocated to administrative and technical support and €49,000 to other expenses, including educational material and related activities.

Since the programmes are undergoing initial accreditation, evidence concerning the actual use of services, response times, student satisfaction, technical-support requests and the adequacy of staffing during full operation is not yet available.

II. Analysis

The available evidence addresses the central requirements of Principle 7: the provision of appropriate learning facilities, access to digital resources, availability of student-support services, competence of administrative personnel and the existence of an explicit financing and tuition-utilisation plan.

The physical and digital infrastructure appears adequate for the delivery of the programmes. The combination of institutional platforms and the 3D-CIRCULAR Virtual Campus provides a sufficiently broad technological environment for distance-learning provision. The availability of VPN access, cloud services, electronic administration, videoconferencing systems and online learning platforms is particularly important because students may be located outside Mytilene or outside Greece.

The physical infrastructure, although less central to an exclusively distance-learning programme, provides an additional academic resource. The availability of computer facilities, research laboratories, videoconferencing rooms and library resources supports project work, research collaboration and any activities that may require access to specialised institutional facilities.

The range of student services is comprehensive and extends beyond academic advising. It includes welfare, psychological, administrative, career, mobility and complaints-related services. The dedicated student-information document and the planned orientation event are positive features, as the mere existence of services is insufficient unless distance students are clearly informed about them and can access them remotely.

Particular importance should be placed on ensuring that services originally developed for campus-based students are also fully functional for distance and international students. Contact information, online application procedures, service hours, response times and the availability of support in English should therefore be clearly published.

The administrative-support structure is clearly identified and includes personnel with relevant academic qualifications and prior experience in supporting postgraduate and distance-learning provision. Nevertheless, the adequacy of staffing will need to be assessed in relation to actual enrolment numbers, the expected international composition of the student body and the volume of administrative and technical requests generated during programme operation.

The sustainability study provides evidence of planned and adequate financing during the initial period. European project funding reduces the financial burden on students from Greece and other EU countries during the first three cycles. The subsequent financial model, however, will depend more heavily on projected registration and tuition income. The programme should therefore review the sustainability plan annually and consider alternative scenarios in case actual enrolment differs from initial projections.

The documentation establishes an adequate framework at the design stage. Since the programmes have not yet completed an operational cycle, their practical

effectiveness should subsequently be evaluated through evidence such as system availability, technical-support response times, student use of library resources, demand for counselling and advisory services, administrative workload and student satisfaction.

III. Conclusions

The University of the Aegean and the Department provide an extensive range of physical, technological and digital resources for the operation of the distance-learning Postgraduate Study Programmes. These resources include teaching and videoconferencing facilities, computer and research laboratories, library services, electronic databases, remote network access, learning-management systems and a specialised Virtual Campus.

A comprehensive range of student-support services is also available, covering administrative assistance, student welfare, psychological counselling, academic advising, career support, mobility, complaints and teaching and learning support. Students will be informed about these services through dedicated information material and orientation activities.

The programmes are supported by identified and appropriately qualified administrative and technical personnel. A detailed sustainability and tuition-utilisation plan has been submitted, while the institution has committed itself to maintaining the necessary infrastructure and services.

At the initial-accreditation stage, the resources and support arrangements appear sufficient and appropriate. Their effectiveness should be confirmed after programme implementation through systematic monitoring of accessibility, service use, staffing adequacy, response times and student satisfaction.

Panel Judgement

PRINCIPLE 7: LEARNING RESOURCES AND STUDENT SUPPORT FOR DISTANCE LEARNING POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES	
Compliant	X
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

R7.1. The programme should define measurable standards for support services, including response times, system availability, resolution of technical problems and student satisfaction.

R7.2. The programme must publish transparent criteria for allocating financial support for research publications, conferences, summer schools, fieldwork and awards for student research.

PRINCIPLE 8: INFORMATION MANAGEMENT FOR THE DISTANCE LEARNING POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES

INSTITUTIONS BEAR FULL RESPONSIBILITY FOR COLLECTING, ANALYSING AND USING INFORMATION, AIMED AT THE EFFICIENT MANAGEMENT OF DISTANCE LEARNING 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 PSP 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 postgraduate study 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 in planning follow-up activities.

Documentation/Annexes

D8.1 (N/A for the initial accreditation) Reports from the National Information System for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (NISQA) for the operation of the programme to date (export in pdf format. Section: PSP)

D8.2 (N/A for the initial accreditation) Assessment of the NISQA quality data report (section PSP) of the last 5 years by the QAU and suggestions for improvement

D8.3 Operation of information system for the collection of administrative data of the PSP (student records), as well as other tools and procedures designed for the collection of data related to the academic and administrative operation of the academic unit and the PSP

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The PSP is supported by a comprehensive institutional information management system based on the UniverSIS student information system. The system enables the

management of student records, academic programmes, courses, examinations, grades, and graduation requirements. Detailed student data are collected throughout the entire student lifecycle, including enrolment, progression, suspension, and graduation.

The system facilitates monitoring of student academic performance and progression. Programme structures, course specifications, and teaching assignments are managed centrally and can be continuously updated. Academic staff can access student information, attendance records, assessment data, and performance statistics. Administrative staff can generate reports, monitor student status, and manage programme operations efficiently. Within the context of LMS system, communication tools have been integrated to support real-time interaction between students and academic staff, and administrative personnel.

Course and teaching staff are evaluated by student and are supported through dedicated quality assurance mechanisms. The University Quality Assurance Information System (MODIP) consolidates data from multiple institutional information systems. MODIP enables the production of indicators, statistical reports, and quality assurance analyses. The system supports student tracking and monitoring of academic progression over time.

Data are automatically transferred to the OPESP quality assurance platform. The infrastructure supports evidence-based decision-making and institutional strategic planning. Additional information systems such as Nautilus, Octopus, Rescom and Turnitin provide complementary services related to data on admissions, dissertations plagiarism, finances, research activities, and academic integrity. The information systems comply with interoperability, accessibility, and data protection requirements.

The programme demonstrates strong preparedness for systematic monitoring and continuous quality enhancement. Since this is a new programme, there are no available historical KPI data, progression rates, completion rates, and satisfaction results. Overall, the institution has established a robust framework capable of collecting, analysing, and utilizing reliable information to support the effective management and continuous improvement of the PSP.

II. Analysis

The evidence demonstrates that the University of the Aegean has developed an institutionally embedded information management system that provides a strong foundation for the effective administration, monitoring, and continuous improvement of the PSP programme in Digital Circular Economy. Although the programme is newly established and therefore lacks historical performance data, the infrastructure described in the application is operational and capable of supporting

the collection and analysis of all key information required by quality assurance standards.

A major strength is the integration between the UniverSIS student information system and the MODIP Quality Assurance Information System. This integration enables automated collection, processing, and reporting of data relating to students, academic staff, programmes, assessments, and institutional performance indicators. The existence of interoperable systems reduces the risk of fragmented data collection and improves the reliability and consistency of information used for decision-making.

The system provides comprehensive coverage of the student lifecycle, from admission and enrolment through progression, assessment, dissertation supervision, graduation, and alumni records. This creates the conditions for systematic monitoring of student progression, completion, and potential drop-out patterns once the programme becomes operational. The ability to track student status changes and academic performance in real time represents a significant advantage for early identification of students requiring additional support.

Another positive aspect is the strong emphasis on quality assurance. The MODIP platform supports course evaluations, teaching evaluations, service evaluations, student tracking, indicator generation, and production of analytical reports. This demonstrates that the institution views data not merely as an administrative requirement but as a strategic resource for enhancement and evidence-based management.

The availability of statistical reporting functions and quality indicators provides the institutional capacity to monitor key performance indicators, student satisfaction, programme effectiveness, and resource utilisation. The direct connection with OPESP further strengthens accountability and alignment with national quality assurance requirements.

The institution has also implemented supplementary systems such as Nautilus, Octopus, Rescom, and Turnitin, which broaden the scope of data collection to include admissions management, dissertation supervision, financial monitoring, research activity, and academic integrity. This demonstrates a holistic approach to information management across both academic and administrative functions.

Furthermore, while the infrastructure clearly supports data collection and reporting, the documentation provides limited information regarding programme-specific performance targets, benchmarking arrangements, and formal mechanisms through which analytical findings are translated into improvement actions. As the programme develops, the establishment of measurable KPIs and systematic review procedures will further strengthen the quality assurance framework.

III. Conclusions

The information management infrastructure is comprehensive and well aligned with quality assurance requirements. The primary priority for the programme should be the transition from data collection capability to systematic use of data for monitoring performance, evaluating outcomes, and driving continuous improvement once operational data become available. This will ensure that the programme fully realises the potential of its robust digital infrastructure and develops a strong culture of evidence-based quality enhancement.

Panel Judgement

PRINCIPLE 8: INFORMATION MANAGEMENT FOR THE DISTANCE LEARNING POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES	
Compliant	X
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

R8.1. Implement early warning and student retention mechanisms.

R8.2. Benchmark performance against similar programmes with suitably defined KPIs.

PRINCIPLE 9: PUBLIC INFORMATION CONCERNING THE DISTANCE LEARNING POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD PUBLISH INFORMATION ABOUT THEIR TEACHING AND ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES RELATED TO THE DISTANCE LEARNING PSP 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 distance learning 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/Annexes

D9.1 Means and channels of communication for the publication of information and the promotion of the PSP

D9.2 List of special personalised web applications for the students

D9.3 Special segment on the Department's website for the promotion of the PSP (link). Bilingual (Greek and English) version of the webpage of the PSP, accessible to people with disabilities, with complete, clear and objective information

D9.4 Procedure for the maintenance and update of the Programme's webpage

D9.5 **(N/A for the initial accreditation)** Results of the assessment of the functionality and the content, as well as of the maintenance and update of the PSP webpage

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The PSP is promoted through a dedicated programme website, the University website, the Department website, and the European 3D-CIRCULAR project website and social media, providing multiple official sources of information for prospective students, current students, graduates, employers, and other stakeholders. The PSP website provides detailed information on the programme objectives, curriculum, study structure, admission procedures, teaching staff, announcements, and student services, supporting informed decision-making by prospective applicants.

The programme website is available both in Greek and English and provides accessibility features for users with disabilities, including interface customisation, improved readability, structured navigation, and accessible content presentation.

Public information includes numerous digital services and learning resources such as Webmail, Universis, VPN, Office 365, Microsoft Azure, Zoom, Moodle, Open eClass, Turnitin, Career Office, Erasmus+, Student Advocate, Complaints Service, and

Teaching and Learning Support Office, demonstrating a well-developed digital learning environment. The PSP has established documented communication procedures defining dissemination channels, communication responsibilities, approval workflows, and the types of information published through official websites and social media, ensuring consistency and reliability of public information.

Integration with the University's communication channels and the European 3D-CIRCULAR project significantly enhances national and international visibility and promotes collaboration with academic and industrial partners.

II. Analysis

The documentation demonstrates that the Distance Learning PSP has established a comprehensive public information strategy centred on transparency, accessibility, and stakeholder engagement. The programme disseminates information through multiple official channels, including the dedicated PSP website, the University's website, the Department website, the 3D-CIRCULAR project website, and social media channels (Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, YouTube, TikTok, and X), ensuring broad visibility among prospective students, current students, graduates, employers, and the wider public.

The dedicated PSP website functions as the primary source of official information. It provides comprehensive information regarding the programme objectives, curriculum, course structure, teaching staff, admission procedures, announcements, and student services. Furthermore, the website is available in both Greek and English, increasing international accessibility and supporting the programme's internationalisation strategy.

The programme also provides extensive information regarding digital learning infrastructure and personalised online services available to students. Publicly accessible information describes institutional systems such as Webmail, Universis, Zoom Education, Moodle, Open eClass, VPN, Microsoft Azure, Office 365, Turnitin, student support offices, career services, Erasmus+, complaints procedures, and learning support services. These resources clearly communicate the learning opportunities and support mechanisms available to distance learners.

The communication strategy is well organised and identifies clear responsibilities, dissemination workflows, communication channels, and different categories of published information, including academic announcements, research activities, collaborations, outreach activities, and programme achievements. This systematic approach contributes to the consistency and reliability of published information.

The programme provides good practice of using bilingual content and incorporating accessibility features for users with disabilities allowing users to adjust font size, colour contrast, readability settings, and other interface characteristics, while maintaining clear navigation and structured presentation of information.

The documentation also highlights the programme's strong links with the European Digital Deep Tech Driven Circular Economy (3D-CIRCULAR) project, enhancing international visibility, collaboration opportunities, and dissemination of research and educational activities.

III. Conclusions

The programme is aligned with the HAHE requirements regarding the accessibility, transparency, and dissemination of public information. It provides comprehensive information on the programme, digital learning environment, student services, and communication channels through multiple official platforms. The bilingual and accessible website represents good practice for distance learning provision. Therefore, this criterion is considered as with compliance. Nevertheless, compliance would be strengthened by publishing additional evidence-based information on intended learning outcomes, the awarded qualification, student performance indicators (pass and completion rates), and graduate employability outcomes.

Panel Judgement

PRINCIPLE 9: PUBLIC INFORMATION CONCERNING THE DISTANCE LEARNING POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES	
Compliant	X
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

R9.1. The institution must provide graduate employment perspectives in terms of graduate employment statistics, alumni destinations must be provided, when the programme starts.

PRINCIPLE 10: ON-GOING MONITORING AND PERIODIC INTERNAL EVALUATION OF DISTANCE LEARNING 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 DISTANCE LEARNING 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 distance learning 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:

- *the content of the curriculum in the light of the latest research in the given discipline, thus ensuring that the PSP is up to date*
- *the changing needs of society*
- *the students' workload, progression and completion of the postgraduate studies*
- *the effectiveness of the procedures for the assessment of students*
- *the students' expectations, needs and satisfaction in relation to the programme*
- *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/Annexes

D10.1 (N/A for the initial accreditation) Results of the annual internal evaluation of the PSP by the Quality Assurance Unit (QAU) (QAU minutes including findings and potential proposed preventive/corrective actions), along with the relevant correspondence with the academic unit

D10.2 Procedure for the review, adjustment and update of the curriculum and the determination of the degree of achievement of the expected learning outcomes, conducted by the academic unit, in cooperation with the QAU

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The new postgraduate study programme (PSP) for MSc in Digital Deep Tech Driven Circular Economy will be evaluated and reviewed regularly by an established process documented in "D10.2_new Διαδικασία αναθεώρησης και επικαιροποίησης

The review process involves the unit of internal assessment (OMEA) that processes the output of the evaluation process and feedback from the community and external stakeholders, the director of the PSP who makes proposals to the coordinating committee of the PSP, the coordinating committee of the PSP who obtains and integrates additional data from the department and other stakeholders into proposals for review, and the board of the department who engages in decision making.

Review on the level of individual modules is performed by the teaching team of each module based on data that include student engagement and performance, module evaluation, the job market, and developments on the taught topic.

Review on the level of the PSP is performed by OMEA, who assess the extent that the learning outcomes are achieved, that quality standards are observed, and that the PSP remains relevant in the academic, professional and societal context. This involves a number of steps: (1) evaluation of the PSP by OMEA, (2) collection of feedback from the coordinating committee of the PSP, (3) formulation of review proposal, (4) approval of review, and (5) implementation.

II. Analysis

On the level of module review, there is a list of considerations that the teaching team takes into account in the review process. If radical changes become necessary based on the assessment, a proposal will be put forward to the coordinating committee of the PSP and will be discussed widely. If there are more minor adjustments, it appears that those are discussed and decided within the teaching team of the module. The process of communicating and discussing any non-radical changes across all involved in the teaching of the PSP could be discussed and documented.

On the level of PSP review, this is coordinated by OMEA who triggers the process of review taking into consideration feedback from external parties including alumni. It appears that the list of parties involved in the external consultation is indicative and non-exhaustive. A more comprehensive list of external parties providing feedback and the process by which they will be engaged could be documented. Parties and types of academic conferences who could inform the research side reviews could also be identified.

III. Conclusions

The PSP for MSc in Digital Deep Tech Driven Circular Economy is compliant with principle 10 but could be further improved with better documentation of some aspects of the review process.

The members of teaching staff are aware of the importance of the monitoring, evaluation and review process and of its significance.

Panel Judgement

PRINCIPLE 10: ON-GOING MONITORING AND PERIODIC INTERNAL EVALUATION OF DISTANCE LEARNING POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES	
Compliant	X
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

R10.1. Document the process of annually communicating and discussing any radical and non-radical changes across the teaching team of the PSP to foster discussion, exchange on best practice and further ensure alignment across modules with the PSP learning outcomes.

R10.2. Document a more comprehensive list of external stakeholders who can provide feedback on the PSP and document the process by which they will be engaged; e.g., annual Industrial Advisory Board, external council, alumni networks, communities of conferences in relevant research areas.

PRINCIPLE 11: REGULAR EXTERNAL EVALUATION OF DISTANCE LEARNING POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES

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

The HAHE is responsible for administering the distance learning PSP accreditation process which is realised as an external evaluation procedure, and implemented by panels of independent experts. The 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 distance learning PSP acts as a means for the determination of the degree of compliance of the Postgraduate Study Programme to the current 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 consider the conclusions and the recommendations submitted by the panels of experts for the continuous improvement of the Programme.

Documentation/Annexes

D11.1 (N/A for the initial accreditation) Progress report of the academic unit, on the response to the recommendations included in the last Accreditation Report of the PSP, and on the achievement of the relevant targets towards the improvement of the PSP

D11.2 Procedure for the external evaluation of the Programme

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The new postgraduate study programme (PSP) for MSc in Digital Deep Tech Driven Circular Economy will be evaluated externally by an established process documented in “D11.2 Διαδ. εξωτ. αξιολόγησης ΠΜΣ.pdf” (D11.2).

To a large extent this process is driven by HAHE (ETHAAE) and MODIP (unit of quality assessment) of the University. MODIP communicates with ETHAAE and coordinate the processes for the data collection and the portfolio that needs to be submitted for the external evaluation process.

Coordination between ETHAAE and MODIP for visits, implementation of any adjustments and of completion of the process of certification is envisaged and documented.

There is commitment by the University to employ this process as a substantial mechanism for improvement of the programmes and alignment with European ESG standards.

II. Analysis

The process of external evaluation is largely informed by regulation and formalised in how MODIP coordinates and liaises with the University and with ETHAAEE for the process. The part concerning the internal collection of data described in step 4 and of the quality assurance process described in step 5 must be better detailed or explained. This could have already been covered in the document “Εσωτερικού Συστήματος Διασφάλισης Ποιότητας (ΕΣΠΔ) του Πανεπιστημίου Αιγαίου” that is cited in the the document D11.2. However, the provided link (https://modip.aegean.gr/system/files/%CE%95%CE%A3%CE%94%CE%A0_%CE%95%CE%B3%CF%87%CE%B5%CE%B9%CF%81%CE%AF%CE%B4%CE%B9%CE%BF%202024.pdf) appears to be invalid.

III. Conclusions

The documentation cited for steps 4 and 5 of the process is unavailable.

The members of the team are were of the importance of the external evaluation and accreditation and how it contributes to the improvement and continued relevance of the programme.

Panel Judgement

PRINCIPLE 11: REGULAR EXTERNAL EVALUATION OF DISTANCE LEARNING POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES	
Compliant	
Partially compliant	X
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

R11.1. Provide the work flow of how MODIP collects data and the steps of the quality assurance process that are followed for the engagement in external evaluation (steps 4 and 5) in document

D11.2. ensuring access to the cited documentation and including a summary of the process.

PART C: CONCLUSIONS

I. Features of Good Practice

Innovative thematic area combining principles of sustainability, circular economy, digitalization and innovation.

Teaching fully in English making both online PSPs also accessible to foreign students.

Use of an innovative extensive, inclusive digital platform (Virtual Campus) to facilitate all functions of the Programme.

Exposure of the students to different lecturers from various organizations across several countries.

Access to industrial labs of partners.

Attraction of external funding to cover the expenses of the PSPs for the first three cycles.

Cohesion, passion, enthusiasm of the leaders for the programme.

II. Areas of Weakness

Potentially big numbers of students will affect the workload of the core team primarily in the Department (which has the overall responsibility for the programme of studies and issues the degrees).

Student profiles, especially for the MScRES, are inadequately defined. No indication of the level of English proficiency required for study.

The admission criteria of the two programmes are inadequately differentiated.

The differentiation in the teaching methods between the two PSPs is inadequately defined.

The evaluation processes of the PSPs is not fully should defined. This is especially important due to the reliance on a number of international partners to deliver the programme.

The documentation of distance learning continuing professional development (CPD) must be improved, explicit mapping of staff expertise to research supervision areas, clearer supervision workload planning, and consistent processes for assessment, feedback, research ethics and dissertation/research project supervision.

III. Recommendations for Follow-up Actions

R1. Be mindful of the organizational pitfalls of extensive consortia where the core organization does not have extensive leverage over bigger well established partners beyond a limited number of committed individuals.

R2. Create a risk mitigation plan for the potential impact of the end of the 3D-CIRCULAR project on commitment of the external teaching staff, platform availability, industrial lab access, and student recruitment.

R3. The defined upper limits of students in the two new PSPs are excessive for a Department of this size.

R4. Better articulate the distinction in teaching approaches between the MSc and the MScRES.

R5. Create an Advisory Board for both PSPs engaging the external stakeholders in regular reviewing of the teaching programmes.

R6. Engage in regular benchmarking of programme performance against similar programmes with suitably defined KPIs.

IV. Summary & Overall Assessment

The Principles where compliance has been achieved are:

1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10

The Principles where partial compliance has been achieved are:

5, 11

The Principles where failure of compliance was identified are:

NONE

Overall Judgement	
Compliant	X
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

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

The members of the External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel

Name and Surname

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Angelaki Erasmia

Dagiuklas Tasos

TIROPANIS THANASSIS

Vasileiou Ismini

Signature

Signed by VONORTAS NICHOLAS

Signed by Angelaki Erasmia

Signed by Dagiuklas Tasos

Signed by TIROPANIS THANASSIS

Signed by Vasileiou Ismini