



ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ
HELLENIC REPUBLIC



**Εθνική Αρχή
Ανώτατης Εκπαίδευσης**
Hellenic Authority
for Higher Education

Αριστείδου 1 & Ευριπίδου 2 • 10559 Αθήνα | 1 Aristidou str. & 2 Evripidou str. • 10559 Athens, Greece
T. +30 210 9220 944 • **F.** +30 210 9220 143 • **E.** secretariat@ethaae.gr • www.ethaae.gr

**Accreditation Report
for the Undergraduate Study Programme
(Integrated Master) of:**

Music Studies

Institution: Aristotle University of Thessaloniki

Date: 20 March 2021

Report of the Panel appointed by the HAHE to undertake the review of the Undergraduate Study Programme (Integrated Master) of **Music Studies** of the **Aristotle University of Thessaloniki** for the purposes of granting accreditation.

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PART A: BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT OF THE REVIEW

I. The External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel

The Panel responsible for the Accreditation Review of the Undergraduate Programme (Integrated Master) of **Music Studies** of the **Aristotle University of Thessaloniki** was comprised of the following five (5) members, drawn from the HAHE Register, in accordance with Laws 4009/2011 & 4653/2020:

- 1. Prof. Erich (Errico) Fريس (Chair)**
Universität der Künste Berlin, Berlin, Germany
- 2. Prof. Konstantinos Karathanasis**
University of Oklahoma, Oklahoma, USA
- 3. Prof. Panagiotis Kokoras**
University of North Texas, Denton, Texas, USA
- 4. Prof. Alexander Lingas**
City, University of London, London, United Kingdom
- 5. Associate Prof. Eftychia Papanikolaou**
Bowling Green State University, Bowling Green, Ohio, USA

II. Review Procedure and Documentation

Due to the ongoing pandemic restrictions the accreditation review took place via the Zoom online video conferencing platform as provided and regulated by the Hellenic Authority for Higher Education (HAHE).

The HAHE provided the External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel (EEAP) early enough with rich documentation about the procedure, presenting it also extensively in the frame of an orientation meeting via videoconference on 1 March 2021. The Department of Music provided all documentation and material needed for the preparation, including the Quality Assurance Policy, the outline of the undergraduate studies programme, KPI strategic mapping, internal evaluation reports, information regarding the Integrated Masters documentation and the External Evaluation Report of February 2014.

After the orientation meeting of March 1st, the Panel discussed the procedure, allocated the tasks and cleared its strategy during a private meeting on 15 March.

The next day began with a teleconference of the Panel with Vice-Rector for Academic Affairs and President of the MODIP and the Head of the Department informing about the history, the academic profile, the current status and discussing about strengths and areas of concern. The meeting was followed by a conference with OMEA and MODIP representatives (including MODIP staff) examining the degree of compliance of the UP to the Quality Standards for Accreditation and reviewing student assignments, theses and examination material. A meeting with the teaching staff followed, discussing issues regarding workload, mobility, evaluation and professional development; the link between theory and praxis, teaching and research; the involvement of the teaching staff in applied research, projects and research activities related to the programme; and more topics under the purview of the Panel. The next conference with several students allowed the Panel a clear impression of their view on the studies, the facilities, the quality and its assurance, as well as further priority issues of student life. The day finished with a debriefing of the Panel reflecting on the impressions and exchanging opinions.

On March 16, the second and last day of the virtual visit, the Panel took an online tour of the facilities. As the Department had already provided a detailed and professional video, the Panel decided to concentrate on the discussion instead of repeating the view of the file. Related teaching and administrative staff contributed to the evaluation of the facilities, resources, learning materials and equipment. The next meeting was dedicated to the EEAP and graduates of the Department discussing their experience studying at the Department and their career paths. The variety of the invited graduates covered the range from the very first to the youngest period of the Department. The next conference with employers and social partners gave an impression about the relations of the Department with external stakeholders from private and public sectors. The virtual visit was completed with a final exchange about the impressions of the Panel with the MODIP and OMEA joined by the Vice-Rector and President of the MODIP and the Head of the Department.

All participants collaborated perfectly with the Panel and, thanks to the outstanding organization, the Panel was successful at conducting a thorough and extensive review of the Department.

III. Study Programme Profile

The Department of Music Studies is part of the School of Arts of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. Established in 1984, it was the first Department of Music established at the Higher Education level in the country. The first students were accepted in 1985, and in 2002 the Department became a new and independent home in a decentralized part of the city. To the major Musicology / Pedagogy of Music a new one was added in 2003: Composition. The curriculum of the Department underwent a general restructure in 2017. Four research labs (Contemporary Music, Music Iconography, Folk and Byzantine Music, Sound and Music Technologies) support the education and develop research activities. The Labs generate several research groups of the most diverse directions.

There are 19 regular faculty members (5 Professors, 7 Associate Professors and 7 Assistant Professors), 3 Special education staff (EEP) members, 4 Laboratory teaching staff (EDIP) members and 2 Special technical laboratory staff (ETEP) members. The administrative staff consists of 5 members. There are 2 emeriti and 5 doctors honoris causa.

The curriculum offers a 5-year programme of studies equivalent to Bachelor and (integrated) Master degrees as well as a PhD degree. Every year about 75-83 new students are accepted, and about 55% of them are female.

The graduates are qualified in a broad spectrum of the labour market, working in primary and secondary education, cultural and musical organizations, media and music production, music libraries, etc.

The internal evaluations have exponentially increased.

PART B: COMPLIANCE WITH THE PRINCIPLES

Principle 1: Academic Unit Policy for Quality Assurance

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD APPLY A QUALITY ASSURANCE POLICY AS PART OF THEIR STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT. THIS POLICY SHOULD EXPAND AND BE AIMED (WITH THE COLLABORATION OF EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS) AT ALL INSTITUTION'S AREAS OF ACTIVITY, AND PARTICULARLY AT THE FULFILMENT OF QUALITY REQUIREMENTS OF UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMMES. THIS POLICY SHOULD BE PUBLISHED AND IMPLEMENTED BY ALL STAKEHOLDERS.

The quality assurance policy of the academic unit is in line with the Institutional policy on quality, and is included in a published statement that is implemented by all stakeholders. It focuses on the achievement of special objectives related to the quality assurance of study programmes offered by the academic unit.

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 programme, its purpose and field of study; it will realise the programme's strategic goals and it will determine the means and ways for attaining them; it will implement the appropriate quality procedures, aiming at the programme's continuous improvement.

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

- a) the suitability of the structure and organization of the curriculum;*
- b) the pursuit of learning outcomes and qualifications in accordance with the European and the National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education;*
- c) the promotion of the quality and effectiveness of teaching;*
- d) the appropriateness of the qualifications of the teaching staff;*
- e) the enhancement of the quality and quantity of the research output among faculty members of the academic unit;*
- f) ways for linking teaching and research;*
- g) the level of demand for qualifications acquired by graduates, in the labour market;*
- h) the quality of support services such as the administrative services, the Library, and the student welfare office;*
- i) the conduct of an annual review and an internal audit of the quality assurance system of the undergraduate programme(s) offered, as well as the collaboration of the Internal Evaluation Group (IEG) with the Institution's Quality Assurance Unit (QAU).*

Study Programme Compliance

The Academic Unit has established a Quality Assurance Policy complying with the guidelines and internal policies established by the Aristotelian University of Thessaloniki Quality Assurance Unit (QAU/ΜΟΔΙΠ). The Quality Assurance Unit, established in 2007, and its Internal Quality Assurance System (IQAS/ΕΣΔΠ) of the Aristotelian University of Thessaloniki (AUTH) are fully accredited since 2019 (ΦΕΚ 962/2019).

The Quality Assurance Policy of the School of Music Studies is appropriate for the programme and includes a clear commitment of the Unit to satisfy all applicable requirements. The Policy aims toward the constant assessment and improvement of the educational, research and

administrative activities of the Unit, according to universally accepted standards and practices. The objectives of the Policy are divided into several subgoals, which are suitable with Key Performance Indicators. The subgoals are specific, measurable, achievable and timely, especially in regard to the improvement of the programme, teaching methods, student satisfaction, learning and research outcomes, resources and facilities.

The Academic Unit provided the members of the Panel with evidence of annual internal evaluations of the objectives and related subgoals collected by the Quality Assurance Unit (QAU/MOΔΙΠ) and the Internal Evaluation Group (OMEA). The numerical data are processed and evaluated by the QAU and the findings communicated with all stakeholders of the Academic Unit, along with recommendations for timely actions. Finally, the entire Faculty of the Unit reviews the findings and votes on the course of action during a special meeting.

The Panel is impressed by the complete Faculty participation in the interviews and the unanimous support to the Unit Policy for Quality Assurance. It is important to note that the Faculty supports not just the process per se, but it enthusiastically endorses its implementation as a meaningful tool to achieve excellence and international recognition.

Panel Judgement

Principle 1: Academic Unit Policy for Quality Assurance	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

The Panel congratulates the School of Music Studies of AUTH for its commitment to excellence, as it manifests by its Policy for Quality Assurance, and recommends continuing the frequent reviewing and improving process.

Principle 2: Design and Approval of Programmes

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

Academic units develop their programmes following a well-defined procedure. The academic profile and orientation of the programme, the objectives, the subject areas, the structure and organisation, the expected learning outcomes and the intended professional qualifications according to the National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education are described at this stage. The approval or revision process for programmes includes a check of compliance with the basic requirements described in the Standards, on behalf of the Institution's Quality Assurance Unit (QAU).

Furthermore, the programme design should take into consideration the following:

- *the Institutional strategy*
- *the active participation of students*
- *the experience of external stakeholders from the labour market*
- *the smooth progression of students throughout the stages of the programme*
- *the anticipated student workload according to the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System*
- *the option to provide work experience to the students*
- *the linking of teaching and research*
- *the relevant regulatory framework and the official procedure for the approval of the programme by the Institution*

Study Programme Compliance

The current 5-year programme of undergraduate study in Music with integrated Masters has been thoughtfully designed based on standards that both conform to best practice at an international level and take into account local circumstances. It should be noted at the outset that this curriculum was implemented in 2017–18 as the result of an extensive process of internal and external consultation, with the latter including the findings of the Department's previous Accreditation Report. The aims of the programme as a whole are both rational and clearly articulated. This extends to the level of individual module specifications, each of which lays out in generally fine detail the topics, aims, pre-requisites, learning outcomes, methods of instruction, and means of assessment.

The Department is to be strongly commended for the process by which this curriculum was developed, its final contents, and the extra care taken to ensure a smooth transition for students who began their studies under the old curriculum (which in its essentials was that adopted at the time of the Department's founding). Evidence provided in the accreditation documentation of repeated consultation with students during the design and implementation process was strongly supported by current students and recent graduates, who emphatically and

unanimously expressed their support for the revisions. There is an abundance of research-led teaching, as well as further opportunities for collaboration on research with academic staff and postgraduate researchers. External experts and stakeholders maintain close relationships with the Department, with their consultation and continued support clearly witnessed both in the documentation and in the meetings held by this Panel.

Viewed from an international perspective, the Department of Music Studies of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki now offers a curriculum that offers its entering students a solid and up-to-date foundation not only in the full range of contemporary musical studies, but also in the local traditions of folk and ecclesiastical music. This is embodied in a list of required subjects to be taken in the first two years with academic modules covering traditional aspects of the history and craft of Western art music, as well as practical skills of musicianship, ethnomusicology, acoustics, music technology. The sequences of required modules prerequisites are logical. The percentage of the programme allotted to this core content (98 ECTS) is well matched to its aims of broadening the horizons of students from diverse background and then preparing them to undertake with knowledge and confidence the selection of elective modules and pathways beginning in their second year.

A somewhat unusual feature of the programme, made possible in part by its constitution as a 5-year course of studies with integrated Masters, is its compulsory incorporation of a Certificate of Pedagogical and Teaching Competency (36 ECTS). International practice varies in this regard, with some universities incorporating this training into specialised undergraduate or Master's degrees in music education, and others offering such certification only as a separate qualification (this, for example, is the case with the PGCE certification obtained by Music graduates in England). The arguments made by the Department of Music Studies for embedding this certification as a compulsory element are well considered and convincing. Foremost is to ensure that all Music graduates are prepared immediately to exercise the role of teacher in a variety of contexts, thereby accurately reflecting their most common opportunities for employment in Greece.

Through their choice of electives, students are able to develop according to their interests and needs a range of specialisations within one of two pathways. The more regulated of these pathways is Composition, having a number of entry points based on clearly specified and appropriate standards and prerequisites. The other pathway is called 'Musicology and Music Education', a title that does not adequately represent the richness of module offerings it encompasses in the areas of History/Culture, Theory/Analysis, Ethnomusicology, Byzantine Musicology, Education, Psychology, Music Therapy, Acoustics, Technology, Informatics, and Composition. Academic offerings in these research-led areas are complemented by a healthy range of musical ensembles, workshops, and study groups that are officially sponsored by the department. Students are encouraged and supported in the formation of their own ad hoc ensembles. There are also opportunities to take a certain number of electives outside of Music, from foreign languages listed in the Music Student Guide to a wealth of other options provided by departments elsewhere in the university.

Both pathways culminate in a substantial Diploma Thesis submission, a 30-ECTS capstone module undertaken at postgraduate level. Here too there is clear evidence of careful design and implementation. The process begins with the selection of a proposed supervisor and the

submission of a preliminary proposal. The Regulation and online guide to the Diploma Thesis lay out in considerable detail its permissible formats, as well as the expectations for its final submission and examination. The Department is to be commended for offering students options for its structure that suitably reflect the breadth of study areas: a traditional dissertation of 20–30,000 words and a portfolio plus commentary that is flexible in its structure and contents. Curiously, no reference to learning and teaching hours in the module specification, the Regulation, or the online Guide for the Diploma Thesis. Although it is unrealistic to expect that individual study supported by one-to-one supervision would conform exactly to a specified number of hours, it would seem prudent for both to set at least minimum expectations for supervisory provision. This could not only clarify what students and supervisors can reasonably expect of each other (and thus forestall complaints), but also assist in the creation of realistic workload models for staff.

In addition to undertaking the process of self-study required to produce its Accreditation Report for the present cycle, the Department has in place staff committees to monitor regularly the contents and operation of this programme. In addition to being prepared to make necessary minor adjustments to the programme and its curriculum, the Department has also identified a series of goals for future development in its Strategic Plan. These are wide-ranging, embracing further development of ties with external organisations (notably the State Conservatory), broadening the range of Work Experience (Practical Experience) opportunities (a notable and laudable feature of the new curriculum), and the creation of a Music Technology pathway (something that would require investment to upgrade the Department's facilities).

As noted above, documents provided to the Panel regarding the introduction of the new curriculum in 2017–18 and conversations with various stakeholders – current and former students, staff, and external parties – witness to a healthy practice of consultation for the running and revision of programmes. What is missing from the documentation, is any indication of a formal mechanism beyond the centralised student module evaluations (with their relatively low, by international standards, rate of return) by which students may offer feedback on the curriculum. The Programme Regulation speaks only in vague terms (1.17.81) of the possibility of holding open meetings or conversations involving students and staff at regular intervals (for example, each semester). Given that the Department has explicitly made increased student involvement in its evaluation and improvement a strategic goal (A2.3), it is encouraged to create appropriate local mechanisms for its realisation. One possibility would be to complement regularly scheduled open fora with the creation of a Student Staff Liaison Committee of the sort that is common in UK universities.

The Student Guide and its related online resources are generally excellent in their provision of information regarding the design, content, and flow of the 5-year curriculum. That being said, it omits some information that would be valuable to students and help to ensure smooth running of the Department. At present the Department does in fact, as witnessed by staff and students in conversation with this Panel, run exceptionally well. Much of this, however, seems to rely on the atmosphere of care and trust cultivated by staff and deeply appreciated by students. Nevertheless, it would seem prudent to add to the Student Guide information on:

- Processes for Student-Staff consultation (beyond the termly completion of centralised module evaluation surveys)

- Academic integrity. There are currently some brief remarks about this in the Guide regarding the conduct of examinations, but one must look to the Diploma Thesis guide for basic information and (broken) links to advice on plagiarism from the university library.
- 'When Things Go Wrong': The procedures for student complaints and appeals, as well as for the declaration and recognition of extraordinary mitigating circumstances (e.g., the onset of an illness or a bereavement) affecting participation in learning and assessments. To begin with, the procedures outlined in section 3.6 of the Accreditation Proposal (B1) should be incorporated into the Student Guide.
- Research Ethics: Since the Department offers modules with formative or summative assessments that may potentially involve human subjects (notably ethnomusicology, music psychology, and music therapy), students need to be informed of appropriate ethical guidelines as well as the procedures obtaining approval of individual projects.

Panel Judgement

Principle 2: Design and Approval of Programmes	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	X
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

As noted above, the Panel recommends that the Department consider adding to the Student Guide information regarding and/or instituting mechanisms for:

- Processes for Student-Staff consultation (beyond the termly completion of centralised module evaluation surveys)
- Academic integrity
- 'When Things Go Wrong': The procedures for student complaints and appeals, as well as the declaration of extraordinary mitigating circumstances
- Research Ethics

Principle 3: Student- centred Learning, Teaching and Assessment

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

Student-centred learning and teaching play an important role in stimulating students' motivation, self-reflection and engagement in the learning process. The above entail continuous consideration of the programme's delivery and the assessment of the related outcomes.

The student-centred learning and teaching process

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

In addition:

- *the academic staff are familiar with the existing examination system and methods and are supported in developing their own skills in this field;*
- *the assessment criteria and methods are published in advance;*
- *the assessment allows students to demonstrate the extent to which the intended learning outcomes have been achieved. Students are given feedback, which, if necessary is linked to advice on the learning process;*
- *student assessment is conducted by more than one examiner, where possible;*
- *the regulations for assessment take into account mitigating circumstances;*
- *assessment is consistent, fairly applied to all students and carried out in accordance with the stated procedures;*
- *a formal procedure for student appeals is in place.*

Study Programme Compliance

The Department of Music Studies has unquestionably cultivated with great care a programme distinguished for its student-centred learning environment. Resting on the firm foundations of the revised curriculum of 2017–18, it is made a living reality by a highly devoted team of academic, technical, administrative and support staff working under conditions of financial hardship. A particularly striking feature of Panel meetings with stakeholders was the repeated expression of the deep mutual respect that exists between students and teachers.

As noted in the preceding section, the new curriculum is very well designed to encourage students to develop individual skills, as well as to make students active partners in teaching and

learning processes. The foundation of knowledge provided in the compulsory core curriculum equips students to follow with considerable flexibility the broad range of learning paths facilitated by elective choice, especially within the Musicology/Education pathway. Departmental ensembles and the incorporation of practical music-making into academic modules promote a collegial atmosphere, with students and teachers often engaged side-by-side in musical performance. There are also frequent opportunities for students of all levels to engage with faculty research.

Academic staff, through documentation and conversation with the Panel, demonstrated fluency in the existing system of assessment and of international standards within their respective fields. The Department provided an online-portfolio with works of the students, examples of examinations, a selection of Master and PhD Thesis.

On the basis of the comprehensive pack of module specifications, however, it appears that the impressive breadth of the compulsory and elective offerings is matched by an appropriate range of methods of delivery and assessment. In addition to written essays and examinations, students are able to exercise and demonstrate technical skills, artistic creativity, and critical thought in forms of formative and summative work appropriate to each module. The Student Guide and programme Regulation details the resit procedures to be followed in the event of failures on assessments.

Confirmation of this positive impression was provided to this Panel by the generally positive results of module evaluations conducted centrally by the university (with the caveat, as noted above, that response rates are relatively low by international standards). More impressive indicators of the effectiveness of student-centred learning were the personal testimonies offered to the Panel by current and former students. Equally effusive in their praise were representatives of external organisations, many of whom had encountered current students or graduates as musical performers, work experience interns, or employees.

Historically low rates for the completion of module evaluation and enrolment in examinations indicate that not all students are equally engaged in the wonderful work of the Department. The creation of a centrally regulated online system for module evaluation is evidently one factor in the recent increase in the rates of module evaluation by newly entered students, another being that the Department has set increased student participation in the evaluation process as a strategic goal. Given current GDPR restrictions on monitoring student performance and engagement, reaching disengaged students is a difficult task for academic and administrative staff.

Panel Judgement

Principle 3: Student- centred Learning, Teaching and Assessment	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

- To publish a set of departmental assessment criteria matched to grade descriptors covering the different method of assessment: written work, oral presentations, musical performances, creative work, demonstration of technical skills.
- To consider instituting a system of personal tutors/advisors for all students.

Principle 4: Student Admission, Progression, Recognition and Certification

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

Institutions and academic units need to put in place both processes and tools to collect, manage and act on information regarding student progression.

Procedures concerning the award and recognition of higher education degrees, the duration of studies, rules ensuring students progression, terms and conditions for student mobility should be based on the institutional study regulations. Appropriate recognition procedures rely on institutional practice for recognition of credits among various European academic departments and Institutions, in line with the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention.

Graduation represents the culmination of the students' study period. Students need to receive documentation explaining the qualification gained, including achieved learning outcomes and the context, level, content and status of the studies that were pursued and successfully completed (Diploma Supplement).

Study Programme Compliance

The system of admissions to the Department is through a combination of national-level exams and two subject-specific examinations (in the areas of music harmony and aural skills). Students who are graduates of other Departments may also be accepted after passing qualifying exams at the national level. Incoming students are well supported in experiencing a smooth transition from high school to higher education. In the beginning of the academic year the University conducts an orientation ceremony for all incoming students to welcome them and discuss matters pertaining to their studies. The students are welcomed by the president of the Department, take a tour of the facilities and the music library, meet the staff, and are shown a video presentation that includes an overview of the curriculum. This event, as well as others that take place in the beginning of each semester, emphasize the importance and the role of academic advisors who monitor the students' progress. Student also receive information about the importance of participating in the student evaluation process administered by MODIP. Extensive information is available on the Department's website (<http://www.mus.auth.gr>); communication is implemented via group emails to students' university accounts; through the Department's Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/mousikonspoudon>); and via direct communication with professors and academic advisors. The Department's course catalogue (available online) includes detailed information about coursework and degree requirements and is updated regularly. Schedules of exams are available online on the university's Class Schedule site, grades are accessed online anonymously, and E-Learning has proven successful at facilitating the teaching and learning process during the pandemic. Student progress is monitored by academic advisors who guide and support students during the course of their studies. The Department is also to be commended for being proactive toward advocating for an atmosphere of inclusivity and diversity, and for making the student population aware of the University's Counselling centre.

Course of studies: During the first two years of study, students are required to take a number of mandatory core courses. Starting in the third year, students are free to shape the direction of their studies by choosing electives that will help them specialize in an area of interest to them. The Department offers two concentrations: one in music composition, and one in musicology/music education. Graduation requirements include a Diploma Thesis project (supervised by a three-member committee); it may take the form of 1) a traditional, written thesis, or 2) a portfolio that is relevant to the student's specific concentration: either an original composition (for music composition students), or an original music- and education-centred project that may include audio-visual material and a written document (for musicology/music education students). All submitted work includes review of relevant literature, formulation of specific methodological questions, and a bibliography. Detailed guidelines and quality requirements are outlined in the Student Handbook (B11.4). The Panel was delighted to hear that, due to a tremendous effort by students and faculty, all previous theses and final projects have been digitized, and these materials are now available online.

Student mobility is highly promoted and encouraged and is a strategic priority of the Department. There exist ongoing student transfer agreements through the ERASMUS+ and Erasmus+ International programmes with at least 25 other European institutions. In addition, there are agreements in place for student and faculty exchanges with other institutions, including Stony Brook University and University of Alabama in the United States, York University in Canada, and Lucerne University in Switzerland. It is noteworthy that, between 2013 and 2018, the number of outgoing students through transfer programmes doubled (from 15 to 30) and the number of incoming students tripled (from 3 to 9). During the same period the transfer agreements increased from 16 to 25, and 21 of them are in place to be renewed for 2022-2027. All information and guidelines are available on the university's website (<https://eurep.auth.gr>).

The Department implements its course offerings using the European ECTS credit system, facilitating the recognition of courses and transfer of students in other European institutions of higher education. A diploma supplement is issued automatically (free of charge) to all graduating students, written in both Greek and English. It clearly describes the skills, education standards, and degree structure of the programme, courses taken, grades, as well as other aspects of the student's education such as participation in the Erasmus+ programme. This facilitates the understanding and recognition of their studies internationally.

Practical training is an important component of the students' music studies. It provides the opportunity for many students to train in public or private institutions, both at home and abroad. Practical training positions are funded through either 1) the "Higher Education Practical Training" of the University of Thessaloniki, or 2) through the mobility programme Erasmus+ for students. Since 2016, at least 12 students have had the opportunity to complete paid internships with collaborating institutions (such as ERT3 TV station, Greek Parliament TV Station, the Thessaloniki Megaron Concert Hall, the Greek National Opera, the Montessori School, and others), and 6 students received paid practical training in Greek companies for the production and organization of events through the Erasmus+ Traineeships. All other students receive mandatory practical training (unpaid) in the context of acquiring Pedagogical Competence through their studies (36 ECTS), through public or private institutions of pre-school, primary or secondary education, or other music education organizations.

The Department is extremely active in community outreach and has an extensive network of collaborations with local, national and international music, cultural, production, educational and social organizations. During our virtual visit the Panel met with employers and heads of major educational and cultural institutions who have ongoing collaborations with the Music Department (ranging from the directors of the State Conservatory of Thessaloniki and the Centre of Greek Music to the artistic directors of the Thessaloniki State Orchestra and the Greek National Opera in Athens). All representatives offered high praise for the excellent level of education and skills the students they worked with exhibited, and they applauded the tremendously effective collaboration they have established with professors from the Department. The Panel also met with graduates of the Department who also praised the valuable skills and experience they gained through these internship opportunities. All stakeholders consider these partnerships to be of high value to either side and to the community at large, are eager to continue with these initiatives, and are in the process of spearheading further activities for the future.

Panel Judgement

Principle 4: Student Admission, Progression, Recognition and Certification	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

The Panel was truly impressed with the high standards the faculty uphold—both for themselves and for the students. We recommend that the faculty continue the tremendous work with the students in the Department and the continued partnerships with stakeholders outside the University. Even though the Greek administrative system makes these collaborations cumbersome (and difficult to sustain in a formal and systematic manner), universities and cultural institutions mutually benefit from current and future collaborative activities. It may be possible for the Department to act as the mediator to help facilitate these partnerships not only individually (Department and one institution at a time), but also collaboratively (with the Department involving more than one partner in a single project).

Principle 5: Teaching Staff

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

The Institutions and their academic units have a major responsibility as to the standard of their teaching staff providing them with a supportive environment that promotes the advancement of their scientific work. In particular, the academic unit should:

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

Study Programme Compliance

The Department of Music Studies has highly qualified teaching staff with impressive academic achievements. The members cover a wide range of specialization areas from musicology, composition, and Byzantine music to music education, music acoustics, music technology, and music therapy, among others. This thoughtful and careful selection of teaching staff allows the programme to offer various topics from introductory to in-depth level and offers a comprehensive curriculum. While they constantly observe and re-evaluate their needs within the Department, they also closely follow the developments in their fields of expertise which inform their planning and decisions for new faculty openings and teaching subjects.

The teaching staff has produced 537 scholarly and artistic research projects during the review period. This is a remarkable number indicating the academic rigor, commitment, and drive of the teaching staff.

Through their new curriculum and additional newly formed ensembles, the Department achieved a balanced and functional interaction among teaching, research and practice. This has pedagogical merit that requires a multifaceted profile from the teaching staff as it combines academic excellence with practice and innovative teaching methods.

They are also encouraged to partake in Erasmus+ exchange programmes and actively participate in national and international conferences, boards of international music associations, and societies. At the same time, the Department itself has hosted many successful conferences at the international level. Most notably, the Department of Music Studies is co-organizing (together with the Department of Music Studies of the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens) the 21st Quinquennial Congress of the International Musicological Society (Athens, August 2022). This conference will attract more than a thousand scholars from around the world and it will present another great opportunity for the Department to highlight its contributions.

The 25 competitive research programmes currently active, 4 research labs, 7 research groups, and 8 music ensembles encourage the production of scholarly and creative work through collaborations and mentorship among its members and beyond.

Panel Judgement

Principle 5: Teaching Staff	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

Interdisciplinarity could be further strengthened both at research and teaching level. The department could explore possibilities to offer classes in collaboration with other departments. For example, a collaboration with the Department of Economics to offer a class in Music Administration/Music Entrepreneurship; another example is an interdepartmental class between the Department of Film Studies and/or Theatre and the Department of Music Studies to offer a class in New Media Music Composition. These examples could also be considered in the form of an Interdepartmental / Interdisciplinary Master's programme.

The Department's academic rigor and research excellence require many hours of extra work for the teaching staff. The 703 undergraduate students and subsequently the supervision of their theses, the 68 doctoral students, and the rest of the administrative duties potentially could create a stressful working environment that is not sustainable. Although this is a complex problem, one way to mitigate the excessive amount of work currently handled efficiently by the faculty is to hire more special teaching and laboratory staff (EP, EDIP, and ETEP) to teach a part of the practical classes; and teaching research staff members (DEP) who need to supervise BMus Theses, Ph.D. Dissertations and conduct research among others. It is also essential that new teaching research staff members should replace the retired and new positions should be opened to keep up with recent advancements in various music areas.

Given the encouraging results of the recent student evaluations for lessons and teaching staff, the students raised a wish for a more transparent presentation/explanation of the evaluation process, clear explanation of the mechanics of such questionnaires with regards to privacy, inclusion, and bias, and a systematic effort to encourage students in the class to participate in this very important process.

Principle 6: Learning Resources and Student Support

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

Institutions and their academic units must have sufficient funding and means to support learning and academic activity in general, so that they can offer to students the best possible level of studies. The above means could include facilities such as libraries, study rooms, educational and scientific equipment, information and communications services, support or 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) and 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 ensures that all resources are appropriate, adequate, and accessible, and that students are informed about the services available to them.

In delivering support services the role of support and administrative staff is crucial and therefore they need to be qualified and have opportunities to develop their competences.

Study Programme Compliance

Student support is provided at the university level and departmental level. The university offers a number of services to help students, including scholarships, loans, accommodation, catering, medical and physiological support, among others. Infrastructure and support at the departmental level are offered to 799 active students, including undergraduate, master, and doctoral students. Given the distance of the Thermi campus from the main campus, daily catering is provided to all campus students in Thermi. Faculty and staff make a special effort to inform and disseminate students' various resources by email, the student handbook, and the Department's website.

The Panel watched a well-produced video virtual walk instead of an onsite walk due to the pandemic restrictions. The Department in Thermi offers 9 teaching classes, a music library, music technology studio, cafeteria, foyer, computer room, and 9 offices for teaching staff. The classrooms have audio/video capabilities, and several instruments are available for practice and performances. The facilities allow the students to participate in graduations, organize various events, practice, and learn.

In addition to the Music building in Thermi, the Department uses other prominent concert halls, exhibition or conference rooms across the city of Thessaloniki, which provide the opportunity to share their work with local communities.

The labs, ensembles, and research groups are equipped with the necessary technologies, audio hardware, software, and instruments. The library has a very important archive of various collections and maintains subscriptions with major online digital services.

The areas of teaching, research, and music practice meet the basic principles of safety and hygiene, and all the premises of the Department are accessible for the disabled.

Panel Judgement

Principle 6: Learning Resources and Student Support	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	X
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

The music building in Thermi seems spacious with well-designed and functional spaces. However, a proper performance space will enhance the student experience and allow students to practice, rehearse and perform daily. Perhaps a dedicated performance space on the main campus or in the city centre could help mitigate this problem too. Alternatively, a renovation project to improve the Foyer could also provide a better experience.

The Department has 9 offices for 19 Teaching Research Staff members (DEP) and 6 Special teaching and Laboratory Staff (EP, EDIP and ETEP), which means that each office supports 2-3 teaching members. This seems to be a known issue; however, expanding the office space for faculty and staff will improve both teaching experience and research quality.

To maintain and improve the Department's current infrastructure and services, the university administration and the ministry of education should work together to increase and utilize all the available resources, institutional or external, including other subsidies and ESPA. Data on the Department of Music Studies' annual funding shows that the budget for 2016 was as low as 15.638.71€ and continued to decline to 10.403,00€ in 2020. This is a very low budget for a music department of the size, academic rigor, and research excellence with international recognition like the Department of Music Studies at Aristotle University. Together with the University and the Ministry of Education, the Department should create a strategic road map to increase the annual budget. Also, the Department should maintain or increase its already successful track of achievements in attracting funded research projects through participation in competitive research programmes, donations, sponsorships, trusts, and funded commercial or research projects.

Principle 7: Information Management

INSTITUTIONS BEAR FULL RESPONSIBILITY FOR COLLECTING, ANALYSING AND USING INFORMATION, AIMED AT THE EFFICIENT MANAGEMENT OF UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMMES OF STUDY 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 organization, teaching and provision of services to students as well as to the academic community.

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

The information gathered 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 programme(s)*
- *availability of learning resources and student support*
- *career paths of graduates*

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

Study Programme Compliance

The Department is integrated into the University's high developed system of Information Management. With a detailed electronic Study Guide, a clearly organized Internet Site of the Department, Course evaluation questionnaires, inventory cards, a Database of the educational, research, administrative and social work of the members of AUTH. - which can be used as their personal page, mailing lists and presence in the popular social networks, e-Learning platforms und e-Calendar for lessons and exams, clearly defined quality indicators and the disposal of evaluation and statistic reports, leave no wish unfulfilled.

In accordance with the laws protecting the individual privacy only authorized persons have access to the personalized data and only under particular conditions and reasons. From the other side the University and respectively the Department and its members benefit from the anonymized data to improve the quality of the studies.

Staff and students are involved in frequent internal evaluations that give the opportunity to improve the programmes.

Panel Judgement

Principle 7: Information Management	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

None.

Principle 8: Public Information

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

Information on Institution's activities is useful for prospective and current students, graduates, other stakeholders and the public. Therefore, institutions and their academic units provide information about their activities, including the programmes they offer, the intended learning outcomes, the qualifications awarded, the teaching, learning and assessment procedures used, the pass rates and the learning opportunities available to their students, as well as graduate employment information.

Study Programme Compliance

The Department has instituted various strategies for internal and external communication:

- a) Digital: The bilingual and well-structured website of the Department provides information about activities, studies programme, research, venues, exchange, contact persons, presence in social media and other necessary aspects in a transparent and easily accessible way.
- b) Contacts with future and potential employers: The Panel had the opportunity to discuss opportunities with various external partners: the Greek Parliament TV-Channel, the State Opera, the State Orchestra of Thessaloniki, the Thessaloniki Hall of Music, the Music Village, the National Conservatory and the Nakas Conservatory. In all cases the high estimation of the Department was apparent unanimous. They affirmed that the students are of a high education level with a wide range of disciplines allowing employment in manifold domains: as pedagogues, dramaturgs, assistants, musicians, producers, etc.
- c) Presence in central Venues of the Town: As the Department is situated in the town periphery, many activities in central venues assure the presence of the Department and augment the awareness of the public about it.
- d) Open Department: On several occasions the Department opens its doors for the public of all ages, also for the young, even very young ones. The personal contact and the direct presence connect the public in a very individual and reliable way.

Panel Judgement

Principle 8: Public Information	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

The Panel recommends that there be continued talks and efforts to establish fixed venues for the activities in the centre of the town.

Principle 9: On-going Monitoring and Periodic Internal Review of Programmes

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

Regular monitoring, review and revision of study programmes aim to maintain the level of educational provision and to create a supportive and effective learning environment for students.

The above comprise the evaluation of:

- *the content of the programme in the light of the latest research in the given discipline, thus ensuring that the programme is up to date;*
- *the changing needs of society;*
- *the students' workload, progression and completion;*
- *the effectiveness of the procedures for the assessment of students;*
- *the students' expectations, needs and satisfaction in relation to the programme;*
- *the learning environment, support services and their fitness for purpose for the programme*

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. Revised programme specifications are published.

Study Programme Compliance

The Quality Assurance Policy of the Academic Unit fully complies with the Quality Assurance Policy and the Internal Quality Assurance System (IQAS/ΕΣΔΠ) of the host University. It is annually monitored, evaluated and adjusted jointly by the Internal Evaluation Group (IEG/ΟΜΕΑ), the AUTH Quality Assurance Unit (QAU/ΜΟΔΙΠ), with the approval and implementation of the Unit Faculty. All Faculty, Administrative and Technical Staff annually contribute data on 10 Key Performance Indicators and specific subgoals, related to the content, structure and strategic planning of the Programme, students' expectations, needs and satisfaction, learning outcomes, teaching qualifications of faculty, research outcomes, and quality of supporting services.

The Academic Unit /HAHE provided the following evidence of this annual self-assessment process:

1. Quality Indicators of the Programme issued by HAHE for the academic years 2015-2019.
2. Data reports uploaded to the National Information System for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (NISQA/ΟΠΕΣΠ) pertaining the academic years 2015-2019.
3. Results and recommendations of the AUTH QAU (ΜΟΔΙΠ) based on the Internal Assessment of academic year 2019-2020.
4. Analytical plan of action on all Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and their subgoals, distributing responsibilities to related stakeholders, aiming to the improvement of the strengths and correction of the Programme weaknesses with a target date on the end of 2021.

The above documents provide evidence of a regular internal self-assessment process that resembles a feedback loop of improvement: data collected by the Unit IEG/OMEA is communicated with the QAU (ΜΟΔΙΠ) and ΗΑΗΕ (ΕΘΑΑΕ), resulting in analysis, evaluation and recommendations by the QAU (ΜΟΔΙΠ), findings of the processes shared broadly within the Academic Unit, leading to the development of clearly stated and documented plans of action that are adjusted, approved and implemented by the Unit Faculty and Staff.

The positive results of this process include among others the development and implementation of the new Undergraduate Programme (since 2017), the significant improvement of most KPIs, and the overall satisfaction on the educational experience by the overwhelming majority of the students and alumni interviewed by the Panel.

Panel Judgement

Principle 9: On-going Monitoring and Periodic Internal Review of Programmes	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

The Panel appreciates the efforts of IEG/OMEA and QAU/ΜΟΔΙΠ on the annual self-assessment process and the development of clear and timely plans of action. The Panel wishes to congratulate the Faculty and Staff of the Academic Unit for their participation, effort and faith to the self-evaluation process as a valuable tool of improvement.

Principle 10: Regular External Evaluation of Undergraduate Programmes

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

HAHE is responsible for administrating the programme accreditation process which is realised as an external evaluation procedure, and implemented by a committee of independent experts. HAHE grants accreditation of programmes, with a specific term of validity, following to which revision is required. The accreditation of the quality of the programmes acts as a means of verification of the compliance of the programme with the template's requirements, and as a catalyst for improvement, while opening new perspectives towards the international standing of the awarded degrees.

Both academic units and institutions participate in the regular external quality assurance process, while respecting the requirements of the legislative framework in which they operate.

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

Study Programme Compliance

The Department of Music Studies underwent an external evaluation process in February 2014, administered by the Hellenic Quality Assurance and Accreditation Agency. In response to the recommendations made by the external evaluation Committee, the Department has implemented successfully the majority of these recommendations.

In relation to teaching: they restructured the undergraduate curriculum (now requiring core courses during the first two years) and simplified the order of course offerings; they created the integrated master's programme (5 years); they continue to ensure the professional rights of the Department's graduates through ongoing discussions at the state (government) and local levels, with other Departments, alumni organization, internal data gathering, interdisciplinary collaborations through teaching, etc.; and they expanded collaborations with other universities and institutions at home and abroad (including course offerings in other languages, and student and faculty mobility). During this period of complete overhaul of the undergraduate curriculum, herculean efforts were made to work with students who were going to be affected most by this transition. Through further meetings and constant communication with the student population, faculty and students worked together to integrate their ongoing studies into the new programmes. Without exception, all students who were affected by this transition spoke highly of the level of collaboration that took place and praised the faculty who ensured the smooth continuation of their studies.

During our visit faculty engaged actively in the external review, contributed painstakingly detailed documentation, offered additional material, explained the implementation of several recommendations made since the last evaluation, and showed willingness to read our recommendations in their continuing effort toward progress and improvement. They showed

keen awareness of the importance of the external review and its contribution to improvement of the Department. They acknowledged the tremendous improvement they have seen in terms of student satisfaction, retention, and graduation levels after the implementation of these changes. The Panel commends the faculty on their continued efforts to maintain high standards of teaching, international recognition, high level of research and creativity, and close ties to graduates and the community.

Finally, in response to the recommendations to expand the research and performance activities, including hiring additional faculty and administrative staff, the Department was able to fill five faculty positions (one DEP and four EEDIP); and they were able to buy new instruments and audio-visual equipment. Lack of substantial funding, however, remains one of the persistent problems for the Department, and one of the major hindrances for the continued implementation of previous recommendations—especially in regard to much-needed additional faculty and staff hiring, as well as extensive upgrades to equipment and facilities.

Panel Judgement

Principle 10: Regular External Evaluation of Undergraduate Programmes	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

It is commendable that faculty and staff have shown tremendous responsiveness to the feedback they received from the previous evaluation. Although substantial changes have been made that have clearly benefited the Department and the University, the Department is in need of substantial state sponsorship in order to continue to maintain its standing as one of the outstanding Music Departments in Greece.

PART C: CONCLUSIONS

I. Features of Good Practice

- Academic rigour and research excellence of the Department.
- Strong connections between faculty, students, alumni and external institutions.
- Impressive number of partnerships with international institutions.
- Strong student and faculty mobility through Erasmus+/Erasmus+ International.
- Strong online presence, bilingual website updated regularly, including current faculty profiles.
- The Department has established a number of notable partnerships and an extensive network of collaborations with music, cultural, production, educational and social organizations.
- Practical training programmes are embedded in the cultural life of the city of Thessaloniki and help maintain important connections.
- The Department was tremendously responsive to the previous external evaluation report, which resulted in substantial changes to its undergraduate programme with proven success.
- The Department is willing to engage with external feedback and is committed to continuous improvement and frequent evaluation of its programme.
- The Department has a well-designed 5-year programme of studies that balances the development of core skills in required modules with electives in the students' chosen areas of concentration, thus enabling them to explore their interests.
- Detailed module specifications with clearly defined learning outcomes.
- Employment of a diverse range of pedagogical methods with corresponding methods of assessment.

II. Areas of Weakness

- The Panel concludes that the Department lacks important facilities (practice rooms, faculty offices and performance spaces).
- The funding of the Department is significantly inadequate.
- Lack of student engagement, as reflected in completions of module evaluations, rates of enrolment in examinations, and duration of studies.
- The absence of student-facing information regarding criteria for assessment and how they can deal with difficulties, including procedures for complaints, appeals, mitigating circumstances, academic integrity and research ethics.
- Lack of a cohesive system of alumni-tracking and involvement.

III. Recommendations for Follow-up Actions

- Consider adding to the Student Guide information regarding and/or instituting mechanisms for:

- Processes for Student-Staff consultation (beyond the termly completion of centralised module evaluation surveys)
- Academic integrity
- 'When Things Go Wrong': The procedures for student complaints and appeals, as well as the declaration of extraordinary mitigating circumstances
- Research Ethics
- Departmental assessment criteria matched to grade descriptors covering the different methods of assessment
- Consider the feasibility of instituting a system of personal tutors/advisors for all students.
- Interdisciplinarity could be further strengthened both at research and teaching level. The department could explore possibilities to offer classes in collaboration with other departments. Interdisciplinarity could also be considered in the form of an Interdepartmental / Interdisciplinary Master's programme.
- Mitigate the excessive amount of work currently handled efficiently by the faculty by hiring additional special teaching and laboratory staff (EP, EDIP, and ETEP) to teach appropriate portions of practical classes. Additionally, research-active staff members (DEP) are needed to supervise Diploma Theses and administer more advanced postgraduate research programmes up to the Ph.D. level.
- Teaching research staff members should be replaced upon retirement with new positions opened to keep up with recent advances and plans for strategic growth.
- Implement a more transparent presentation/explanation of the evaluation process, clearer explanation of the mechanics of such questionnaires with regards to privacy, inclusion, and bias. Encourage students to participate in this very important process.
- Proper performance space and practice rooms will enhance the student experience and allow students to practice, rehearse and perform daily. A dedicated performance space on the main campus or in the city centre would help mitigate this problem too. A renovation project to improve the Foyer could help as an interim measure.
- Expanding the office space for faculty and staff is necessary to improve both teaching experience and research quality.
- Maintain and improve the Department's current infrastructure and services. The university administration and the ministry of education should work together to increase and utilize all available resources, institutional or external, including other subsidies as well as ESPA. Data on the Department of Music Studies' annual funding shows that the budget for 2016 was as low as 15.638.71€ and continued to decline to 10.403,00€ in 2020. This is an unacceptably low budget for a music department of the size, academic rigor, and research excellence with international recognition like the Department of Music Studies at the Aristotle University. Together with the University and the Ministry of Education, the Department should create a strategic road map to increase the annual budget. Also, the Department should maintain or increase its already successful track of achievements in attracting funded research projects through participation in competitive research programmes, donations, sponsorships, trusts, and funded commercial or research projects.
- The Administration of the University is kindly asked to help establish shuttle services between Themi and the city-centre, as student commute is very difficult by public transportation.

IV. Summary & Overall Assessment

The Principles where full compliance has been achieved are: **1, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9 and 10.**

The Principles where substantial compliance has been achieved are: **2, and 6.**

The Principles where partial compliance has been achieved are: **None.**

The Principles where failure of compliance was identified are: **None.**

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

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

The members of the External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel

Name and Surname

Signature

1. **Prof. Erich (Errico) Fresis (Chair)**
Universität der Künste Berlin, Berlin, Germany
2. **Prof. Konstantinos Karathanasis**
University of Oklahoma, Oklahoma, USA
3. **Prof. Panagiotis Kokoras**
University of North Texas, Denton, Texas, USA
4. **Prof. Alexander Lingas**
City, University of London, London, United Kingdom
5. **Associate Prof. Eftychia Papanikolaou**
Bowling Green State University, Bowling Green, Ohio, USA