



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 of:**

Italian Language and Literature
Institution: Aristotle University of Thessaloniki
Date: 2 April 2022

Report of the Panel appointed by the HAHE to undertake the review of the Undergraduate Study Programme of **Italian Language and Literature** of the **Aristotle University of Thessaloniki** for the purposes of granting accreditation

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Part A: Background and Context of the Review.....	4
I. The External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel.....	4
II. Review Procedure and Documentation	5
III. Study Programme Profile	7
Part B: Compliance with the Principles	8
Principle 1: Academic Unit Policy for Quality Assurance	8
Principle 2: Design and Approval of Programmes	11
Principle 3: Student- centred Learning, Teaching and Assessment.....	14
Principle 4: Student Admission, Progression, Recognition and Certification	16
Principle 5: Teaching Staff	19
Principle 6: Learning Resources and Student Support	22
Principle 7: Information Management	26
Principle 8: Public Information	28
Principle 9: On-going Monitoring and Periodic Internal Review of Programmes	30
Principle 10: Regular External Evaluation of Undergraduate Programmes.....	32
Part C: Conclusions	34
I. Features of Good Practice	34
II. Areas of Weakness	34
III. Recommendations for Follow-up Actions	34
IV. Summary & Overall Assessment	36

PART A: BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT OF THE REVIEW

I. The External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel

The Panel responsible for the Accreditation Review of the Undergraduate Study Programme of **Italian Language and Literature** of the **Aristotle University of Thessaloniki** comprised the following four (4) members, drawn from the HAHE Register, in accordance with Laws 4009/2011 & 4653/2020:

1. Assistant Professor Caterina Papatheu (Chair)

University of Catania, Italy

2. Professor Alicia Morales Ortiz

Universidad de Murcia, Spain

3. Associate Professor Gina Ioannitou-Valavanidou

Le Mans Université, France

4. Associate Professor Francesco Camia

University “La Sapienza”, Rome, Italy

II. Review Procedure and Documentation

In preparation for the online visit, the members of the External Evaluation and Accreditation Panel (EEAP) could examine a wide variety of documents provided in advance by HAHE, including the Department's Proposal for Accreditation of the Italian Language and Literature Undergraduate Programme, the Guide of Studies (Οδηγός σπουδών) of the Department, the description of courses (Περιγράμματα μαθημάτων), the HAHE Guidelines and other relevant information about the Department (statistical data, quality indicators, student questionnaires, strategic goals, etc.). The EEAP also consulted the Website of the Department (and of AUTH) and the 2014 External Evaluation Report of the Undergraduate Programme.

During the online visit, the EEAP received further presentations and material by the Department and the MODIP (University Quality Assurance Unit).

Members of the EEAP had previously participated in the orientation meeting with HAHE's General Director, Dr. Christina Besta, which was held on Wednesday, 23 March 2022 at 15:00 via Zoom and consisted in the presentation of general standards and guidelines for the accreditation process.

The online visit took place on Tuesday, 29 and Wednesday, 30 March 2022. It was preceded by a private meeting of the EEAP on Monday, 28 March at 15:00 (via Zoom), and was followed by further private meetings of the EEAP on the following days in order to finalize the report.

During the online visit the EEAP had the following online meetings:

Tuesday, 29 March 2022

- a) 15.30 – 16.00: Teleconference with the Vice-Rector/President of MODIP, Prof. D. Koveos, and with the Head of the Department of Italian Language and Literature Prof. E. Leontaridi. Prof. Koveos gave a short overview of the current situation of the University and provided the EEAP with information about its Quality Assurance Procedures. Prof. Leontaridi offered an overview of the Undergraduate Programme;
- b) 16.15 – 18.15: Teleconference with OMEA and MODIP representatives, who discussed with EEAP members the degree of compliance of the Undergraduate Programme to the Quality Standards for Accreditation;
- c) 19.00 – 19.45: Teleconference with teaching staff members, who discussed with EEAP members several related aspects such as professional development opportunities, international mobility (both for professors and students), link between teaching and research, student evaluation, etc.;
- d) 20.00 – 20.45: Teleconference with some current undergraduate students, who shared with EEAP members their opinion about the main features of the Programme under review as well as their satisfaction degree from their study experience.

Wednesday, 30 March 2022

- a) 15.00-16.00: Online site tour and discussion with teaching and administrative staff about the facilities of the Department of Italian Language (and of AUTH) that had been presented in two dedicated videos previously provided to EEAP members;

- b) 16.00 – 16.45: Teleconference with Programme graduates, who discussed with EEAP members their experience of studying at the Department and their career path;
- c) 17.00 – 17.45: Teleconference with external private and public stakeholders (employers, social partners), who discussed with EEAP members various forms and opportunities of collaborative interaction between graduates of the Department and public and private job market in the sectors of language teaching, translation and interpretation, literary production, publishing;
- d) 19.30 – 20.00: Teleconference with OMEA and MODIP representatives. During this meeting a few final points which needed further clarification were discussed;
- e) 20.00 – 20.15: Closure meeting with the Vice-Rector/President of MODIP, Prof. D. Koveos, the Head of Department, Prof. E. Leontaridi, and OMEA and MODIP representatives. In this final meeting the EEAP provided a general view of some of the conclusions reached.

The EEAP members want to underline that all the above meetings were held in a very constructive atmosphere. All members of the Department were ready and eager to answer the questions by the EEAP, and this facilitated the latter's task in the evaluation and accreditation process.

III. Study Programme Profile

The Department of Italian Language and Literature (Τμήμα Ιταλικής Γλώσσας και Φιλολογίας) is one of the eight independent departments of the Faculty of Philosophy (Φιλοσοφική Σχολή) of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. It was created as a sub-section of the Department of Foreign Languages of the Faculty of Philosophy of AUTH in the academic year 1960/61 and started to admit students in AY 1961/62. In 1983, following the Higher Education Act of 1982, it was upgraded to the status of independent department, although it finally attained full self-government only in 1990.

At the time of the external accreditation review, the Italian language Department – whose premises are located in downtown Thessaloniki campus – numbers 14 (full time) faculty members (ΔΕΠ) plus 4 teaching assistants, 1 native (Italian) speaker language teacher, 1 librarian, and 5 administrative staff. Currently, it counts ca. 1060 enrolled undergraduate students plus 67 postgraduate students (53 PhD candidates and 14 postdoctoral researches).

The Department participates in the Semiotics Laboratory (SemioLab) of the School of Philosophy, which serves educational, research and teaching needs in the areas of basic and applied research in the sphere of Semiotics.

The undergraduate Study Programme under accreditation awards its own BA degree in Italian Language and Literature (Πτυχίο Ιταλικής Γλώσσας και Φιλολογίας). It is a four-year degree that comprises 8 semesters (Winter-Spring) and requires successful completion of a minimum total of 240 ECTS. These are divided in mandatory, required elective, and optional courses; more precisely, the 240 ECTS needed for graduation are divided as follows: a) 4 mandatory Italian language courses (24 ECTS) plus 11 further mandatory courses (66 ECTS); b) 14 required-elective courses (84 ECTS); 11 optional courses (66 ECTS).

Admission to the Programme takes place according to the general procedures and regulations of the Greek Ministry of Education. Students that have already obtained a first academic degree can be admitted after an entry exam (κατατακτήριες εξετάσεις), which is administered by the Department.

According to its mission statement, the Undergraduate Programme in Italian Language and Literature aims at developing proficiency in Italian language combined with a basic knowledge of Italian literature and culture. It also provides students with a firm grounding in linguistic matters, pedagogic approaches and methods (with a specific focus on the teaching of foreign languages), as well as in linguistic mediation. It is worth mentioning that the Programme offers specific courses of Spanish language and literature as well. More extensively, the Programme aims at providing to its students' intellectual cultivation, broad education, methodical development of scientific and critical thought, so as to contribute to developing in them a fully European identity and conscience.

This broad training in Linguistics, Literary studies, Didactics, Semiotics, and History enables the Department's graduates to follow professional careers in the fields of Education, Translation and Interpretation, Publishing, Culture, and Research. It must be noted that all graduates of the Programme acquire the Certificate of Pedagogical and Didactic Proficiency (ΠΠΔΕ).

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 organisation 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

Findings

The Department has an appropriate Quality Assurance Policy in line with the institutional policy on quality. The broad outline of this policy is based on five areas: a) High quality of the training provided in the Undergraduate Programme of Studies; b) Improving the performance of

students; c) Development of high-level research; d) Enhancing the extroversion and the international presence of the Department; e) Improvement of the infrastructure, functions and services of the Department.

This policy has been discussed and approved by the Departmental Council and is communicated on the Department's website in Greek and English.

In accordance with this Policy the Department has set strategic and specific goals regarding its Study Programme (cf. Στοχοθεσία ποιότητας). These goals are paired with the suitable KPIs and duly monitored. The OMEA (Internal Evaluation Committee) of the Department, in collaboration with MODIP, analyses on an annual basis the collected data (about student satisfaction, learning outcomes, mobility, publications and research production of teaching staff, etc.). This information is recorded in an annual self-evaluation report and is discussed in the Departmental Council, which decides on any improvement actions.

Analysis of judgement

The participation of students in the evaluation process is high considering the standards of Greek Universities. In this regard it is worth noting that student participation has risen sharply in recent years (from 16.8% in academic year 2016/2017 to 34.6% in 2020/2021). The AP expects this growing trend to continue in the future, given the department's efforts to encourage student participation. In this area it would also be desirable to strengthen student involvement in the Departmental Council and in other Departmental Committees, because at present time it is very low (partly due to the special circumstances imposed by Covid).

The degree of satisfaction of the students with the courses and with the teaching staff is very high, as can be deduced from the satisfaction questionnaires and from the interviews held with students and graduates during the AP online visit. On the other hand, students' learning outcomes are quite satisfactory, with an average score of 7.38.

In the analysis of other indicators, it should be noted that the Department presents high figures in the areas of teaching staff's international mobility and in the production of doctoral theses (among the highest in the whole university).

Finally, in the meeting held with external institutions and social partners the AP has verified their very positive opinion on their collaboration with the Department, both as institutions involved in Student's internships (πρακτική άσκηση) and in the organization of congresses, conferences and other cultural and research activities.

Conclusions

The Department of Italian Language and Literature -and, in general, the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki- has implemented an appropriate Quality Assurance Policy with clear objectives and in accordance with the European and the National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education. The Department is well aware of the importance of such a policy and promotes continuous improvement.

The Department has succeeded in creating a pleasant working atmosphere and an effective and productive relationship with both students and external stakeholders.

The Department of Italian Language and Literature is doing a serious work to encourage Department extroversion and internationalization and to promote research.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

The Department should continue its efforts to achieve greater student participation and to involve students' representatives in the Department Council and in other decision-making bodies.

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

Findings

The Department follows a well-defined procedure for implementing the University's mission. The features that are incorporated in the curriculum study guide (2019-2020) include the information of the institution, the administrative procedures, the organization of the undergraduate program, the professional development program with special reference to the Programme of Pedagogic and Teaching Efficiency, as well as student orientation. A clear path for student progression is also presented in the above document and the Undergraduate studies regulation of the Department, that incorporate the philosophy and delivery methods of the curriculum, including assessment methods and alignment with the European Course Credits System (ECTS). The study program includes 240 ECTS and is divided into 8 semesters.

The Department's curriculum applies since 2010, with "reshaping" in order to include in it more courses, which offer to the students of the Department the required pedagogical and didactic competence. The practicum has been added in 2013-14, as optional. Following the Accreditation Committee's suggestions, the Department has also added more courses of the Spanish language

and electives like teaching with the new technologies. The Department has also reduced the number of mandatory courses and enriched the number of compulsory courses (15 compulsory, 14 elective compulsory and 11 elective courses).

The Department has no Research Laboratories. The linking between teaching and research is achieved by integrating the findings of recent research into the courses taught by the faculty members, and by integrating the students into assignments, within the framework of the subjects taught. The “Ptyxiaki Ergasia” is therefore not sufficiently developed and not offered to the students.

Analysis of judgement

The Department has designed a course of study that is appropriate and meets universally accepted standards for Italian language teachers’ and/or translators’ preparation.

This curriculum provides flexibility for the students’ choices and the design of their academic profile. During our discussions with the stakeholders, students and graduates, it seems that their input is not being taken into account when the course curriculum is revised. The students do not participate actively and at an institutional level in the processes of the Department, - at least they do not respond to the desired extent – and in recent years they do not even participate in the meetings of the Department.

Conclusions

The Department develops an undergraduate program following a well-defined process which involves the approval committees the objectives and the intended professional qualifications. The participation in this procedure of the students and external stakeholders from the labour market is limited.

The Department considers both the needs of the students and the realities of the labour market. It also identifies practicum Department sites where students have the best opportunities to develop the capabilities that will make them employable in the future. The practicum, due to financial difficulties, is not as well attended as it should be.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

The Department should devote more effort in finding additional ways to encourage stronger representation of students in the design process of the Undergraduate Programme as well as their participation in the meetings of the Department.

The panel recommends the creation of Research laboratories, so the faculty together with students can conduct research, and, in this way, develop the Ptyxiaki Ergasia, at least for the students that wish to continue to postgraduate studies, e.g., the option for students to prepare a thesis based on critical investigation and analysis of a topic within a scientific area, which will replace two courses.

The Panel suggests that the Department should consider adding courses following the latest trends in the field of Educational Sciences. The Department, with the help of the State, should be able to include options such as: Minor/Major in Spanish, multilingual approaches including Awakening to Languages, Intercultural Education, and Inter-comprehension among Latin languages.

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 plays 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

Findings

The Department's faculty's personal work, together with a consulting committee "Κεντρική Επιτροπή Κοινωνικής Μέριμνας" assist students with special learning difficulties, or other health issues and/or disabilities, by providing them, among others, with alternative methods of evaluation. Students have also the possibility to use Braille printers installed in some libraries of the University. It is also provided a bus "Λεωφορείο ΑμεΑ" for people with disabilities.

The student evaluations are a major part of the quality monitoring procedure. For the last two years, students seem to be familiar with the electronic method of completing these questionnaires; the percentage of the students answering the surveys has doubled (from 16.6% in 2018-19 to 34.6% in 2021).

The assessment methods and evaluations vary (e.g., final and midterm exams, individual and group projects). During interviews, the students praised several aspects of the quality of both the delivery and instruction of courses they had to take. It is impressive how effectively the faculty adapted their courses and evaluations methods for online teaching, because of the pandemic. The quality indicators of the courses (88,1%) and the teachers (91,4,1%) are high.

There is a formal procedure in place to address situations where students want to contest a grade or file a complaint: to the Study Advisor (see ed. 4.1.2) and to the President or the Assembly of the Department (through the Secretariat). The University has an institution of advocate for the student, provided for from Law 4009/2011.

Analysis of judgement

The Department's leadership and faculty have delivered a student-centered program of study. The course objectives and activities are consistent with a student-centred approach. Students are given opportunities and support to develop personal as well as academic skills.

The educational process is evaluated through questionnaires completed each academic semester. By comparing progress over time, these questionnaires provide significant data, that contribute to the improvement of the offered courses. The relative high student participation ensures result quality and guarantees that student opinion is represented.

Conclusion

The Department respects and attends to the diversity of students and their needs, considers and uses different modes of delivery, where appropriate. The Department regularly evaluates and adjusts the modes of delivery and the quality and effectiveness of teaching, as documented especially through student surveys.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

No Panel recommendations

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

Findings

The ECTS system is applied across the curriculum and students must complete a minimum of 240 ECTS to get the Degree.

To support incoming students and facilitate their transition from High School to University the Department organizes at the beginning of each academic year a Welcome Day where new students are informed about the services offered by the University in general and, in particular, about the organization of the Study Programme and the functioning of the Department.

The figure of the Study Advisor is also legally regulated: two members of the teaching staff to whom students can turn if they need advice or help. In addition, faculty members are very willing to help students, as students themselves confirmed in the interviews held.

The Department publishes every year a complete Study Guide and the syllabus of all courses offered, which are available on the web in Greek and English.

Moreover, in order to facilitate a smooth progression of the students the Study Programme foresees in the first-year introductory courses (μαθήματα υποβάθρου) to consolidate basic knowledge in the field of studies.

Students have the possibility to participate in a traineeship programme (πρακτική άσκηση), which is not compulsory. The Department has established a wide network of collaboration with a variety of external institution and social partners.

The Study Programme does not include the completion of a degree thesis (πτυχιακή εργασία). However, in some courses written assignments are required and the Department occasionally organizes small seminars to introduce students to research.

Finally, the Department has a very large number of mobility agreements to promote the mobility of students and faculty members.

Analysis of judgement

A specific issue that was discussed during the visit was the need for more native teachers for language teaching in the early years. During interviews with students many of them asked for one native teacher of Italian language to help them in a greater instrumental learning of the language in the first years and would contribute to homogenizing the level of the students.

The Department is making every effort to establish agreements with Spanish and Italian institutions in order to receive language assistants. In addition, the last vacancy has been filled with a native Spanish teacher.

On the other hand, to partly fill this gap, the Department is very active in organizing complementary non-formal activities: conversation groups with Erasmus students, cultural activities in Italian or Spanish, lectures of visiting professors, etc.

Despite the fact that, as mentioned above, the Department shows a special effort towards internationalization and has a large number of agreements with foreign universities, the number of outgoing students is not very high. It may be due to financial difficulties and, as far as the figures of the last years are concerned, to the obvious difficulties due to the Covid.

Conclusions

All procedures concerning student's admission, progression, recognition and certification are based on the institutional study regulations. The ETCS system is applied across the Study Programme and the Diploma supplement is issued in Greek and English for all graduates.

The Department promotes student and teaching staff mobility and has an impressive number of Erasmus agreements with foreign universities. It also encourages student participation in practical internships that allow students to develop skills for their future career.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

- Perhaps, funding permitting, the Department should expand the number of practical internships offered.
- Currently does not exist in the Study Programme a final degree project (πτυχιακή εργασία). It would be recommended to introduce it gradually, perhaps as an elective course for those students more interested in research.
- The Department should continue its efforts to increase student participation in mobility programmes.
- The Panel thinks the State should open paths to increase the number of native language teachers or language assistants, so that students can achieve a greater instrumental learning of Italian and Spanish language.

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

Study Programme Compliance

Findings

The Department includes 14 faculty members belonging to the Teaching Research Staff (DEP), but only 5 of them are full professors, while the remaining members are 4 associate professors and 5 assistant professors. The Laboratory Teaching Staff (EDIP) is made up of 3 members, whereas the Special Technical Laboratory Staff (ETEP) has got 1 member, there is 1 Tutor, belonging to the Greek and Foreign Language Teaching Staff, while the Associate Teaching Staff consists of 5 members. Sabbatical leaves and other types of leaves (for up to 6 months) are offered every three years.

As regards discipline and research interest, the Department covers largely the fields consistent with the content of the undergraduate, postgraduate and doctoral studies.

The points related to transparency, openness, flexibility is greatly perceived as fundamental by the Department Management and the Teaching Staff, in order to improve their competitiveness, extroversion, quality and innovative features.

The Teaching Staff offers substantial supplementary time in order to accomplish what they perceive as the appropriate fulfilment of their teaching responsibilities and duties.

There is a large number of Erasmus agreements for teaching mobility currently in place. The international mobility of the Teaching Staff is highly encouraged by both the Department Management and the highest authorities of AUTH and the staff mobility of the Department of Italian language and Literature is the second highest in the entire University.

The average weekly workload of the Teaching Staff, based on the 2 subjects of four-hour teaching load per lesson, is judged to be well related to their research workload.

The practice of student evaluations of the Department and the Teaching Staff through surveys on teaching effectiveness and performance for each module are appreciated as high-quality instrument for unceasing improvement.

Analysis of judgement

The Department, in addition to providing substantial support to improve flexible and transparent methods and contributing to the development and internationalization of teaching / research practice, has enabled the dissemination of their results at the level of excellent practice, which aim to facilitate the mobility of students as well in all learning and training contexts and their inclusion to the labour market.

The scientific production is measured and evaluated based on publications impact indexes in order to guarantee a steady and inclusive metric. Yet, the Department does have a clear research strategy which leads to a wide contribution to international seminars/congresses and to high-quality publications, which produces strong impact in a broader sense than merely measuring academic impact through CiteScore methodology. The number of publications received and reviewed by the EEAP has been wide-ranging and rich, both in quantity and quality, attesting to a vigorous and strenuous level of research activity. It includes a wide number of books, contributions to congress proceedings and peer-reviewed scientific journals, along with scientific initiatives, receiving national and international acknowledgement and projects as part of both the theoretical and practicum features of their courses.

The Teaching Staff proves to well integrate teaching with research workload in a high-degree. Undergraduate students are offered significant and extensive opportunity through internship, and they are stimulated to partake in research proposals. Teaching and research workload subsidizes students greatly in building and retaining a dynamic and welcoming atmosphere for learning.

Notwithstanding the difficulties arising from a lack of funds, the Teaching Staff proves to be motivated by a strong sense of their *ethos* to their teaching and research duties to be active in seminars, congresses and other types of scientific meetings, outside and within Greece with the purpose of the endorsement and dissemination of the results of their research work.

Internal data evaluation through surveys proves to be a very important step in observing possible actions aimed at improving and organizing curricula more effectively.

There has been limited recruitment of personnel in recent years.

Conclusions

The Teaching and Research Strategy is predominantly effective and manages to develop a constructive and confident impact on the national territory as well as to scientific standards of excellence.

The Department of Italian Language and Literature is fully compliant with Principle 5 and proves to be a centre of excellence in the national territory in each one of its features. Yet, both the existing number of the Department's personnel and their professional advance seem to be

rather low, and this may create a high student staff ratio which in the next years might will be not sustainable and hamper the student's learning practice and involvement.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

Even if the Teaching Staff is regularly evaluated by students through student surveys, the questionnaires should be mandatorily filled by each student.

The EEAP recommends that the Teaching staff gets more suitable financial funds to handle research work and improve even further their international presence.

Despite the fact there is a well-organized and transparent approach to recruitment, based on merit and teaching experience, exclusively dependent on the Ministry, considering the increasing number of students enrolled in the Department, professional development opportunities, as well as recruitment, of more Department members (DEP) should be much more supported by the Ministry through increased financial funds for competition notices. The lack of financial funds might decline this centre of excellence in the next years unless action is taken.

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

Findings

The Department has the necessary facilities to ensure an appropriate teaching and learning environment, as well as an adequate range of support services for students. The Learning Resources and Student Support services, which are easily available to the students, essentially comprise four categories: Classrooms, Study Room, Library, Computer hubs located in two rooms, and are supported by administrative services and social, psychological and other advisory services also for special educational needs.

Furthermore, the Department publishes a peer-reviewed e-Scientific Journal (Polyfilos) which is an essential tool which contributes as a further incentive to the interdisciplinary dialogue and improves the study programme compliance.

Physical Facilities

Student-related activity is focused on the main university campus which is located in the centre of the city of Thessaloniki and covers an area of about 33.4 hectares. Some educational and administrative facilities are situated off campus, while others are placed outside the city.

The accreditation panel virtual tour of the Department's physical facilities has been widely showed through exhaustive videos and related informative material. There is a Study Room with 25 places fully equipped with electronic equipment; and a Library which comprehends around

14.000 volumes and offers access to several databases, along with electronic access to videos, books, academic journals and digital optical disc data storage formats. Each facility offers free wi-fi access and provides students with opportunities for research and practice. In addition, facilities have been adapted for disabled students and visitors, and provide elevators for handicap access.

Academic and Administrative Services

The administrative bodies consist of the Assembly, the Administrative Board, the President and the Vice-president, while the administrative staff, including 1 Librarian, is composed of 6 members.

Special technical laboratory staff, Academic and Administrative staff, ECTS Coordinators accomplish all services related to student and Department support, also sustained by suitable computer platforms, even if their number seems not adequate to the high number of students.

Further types of meaningful learning resources and student support which have had great relevance to improve quality of academic life and better student's participation are easily accessible online. There is a digital Student Information System which supports direct communication between students, and teaching and administrative staff; a Centre for Electronic Governance which enables the electronic submission of grades using remote electronic signature via IP telephony; digital helpdesks both for promoting the integration of students with special educational needs or coming from the most socially disadvantaged groups, and for providing necessary information for European and educational programmes.

Besides, there is since 2016 a Semiotics Laboratory (semioLAB) which serves educational, research and teaching needs in areas of basic research and applications of the subject of Semiotics with reference to a wide range of subjects, such as literature, translation, cinema, theatre, advertising and educational legislation. The innovative service for the direct and integrated provision of the textbooks of undergraduate student "Evdoxos" has been highly appreciated, along with the initiative of creating the project MOU.SAI, aimed at encouraging the students' sense of belonging and collaboration, as well as at enhancing the oral production of the Italian language and a deeper knowledge of Italian culture; and along with the project ESPA, intended to prevent and identify cognitive impairments and interdisciplinary networks for scientific intervention via translation prototypes for the domestication of foreign language tools.

Social and Other Advisory Services

They are: Student Health Services/ Insurance/ Special needs service for advisory and psychological support for health and personal problems; the Career Services Office offering a range of services for the placement of graduates, the ERASMUS+ Office; the Scholarships' Office which are offered each academic year; the Centre for Foreign Language Teaching which also offers courses in Languages for Specific Purposes (LSP); the University Gym with a wide choice of sports activities; the Day Care Unit; the Kalandra University Camp which provides recreational, educational and cultural activities; and the University Forest Reserves.

Moreover, the independent authority of the Student Advocate has been successfully established. The significant purpose of the institution is to mediate between students (undergraduate, postgraduate, doctoral) and the Academic and Administrative Services.

Most of these services are run and managed by the University, while support services comprise dining facilities and opportunity for student residence placement.

Analysis of Judgement

The available services prove to be functional and easily accessible to students, thanks both to the Department's central geographical location, which makes them easy to access them, and to the new website in four languages. The EEAP spotlights also the fact that the physical facilities have been enhanced significantly from previous years, as well as the continuous improvement of learning and teaching, research and innovation. Modernization and improvement of the building infrastructure and digital services offered to students and staff are widely developed in order to involve their active participation in activities.

Developing partnerships and academic activities is highly perceived in order to support and improve the high quality of the members of the Department and the active participation of students in its activities.

A considerable effort has also been made both to clarify to the students the learning objectives of the courses, how they are to be achieved and the expected results, and to establish open and transparent relations with students to resolve any problems harmoniously. It has been very appreciated the clearness of Student's Guide which offers well-defined information about curricula, learning resources and student support, access to infrastructure and services, and where courses have been coloured on the basis of the indicative curriculum of the Department.

It has been very much valued the establishment of the role of the Student Advocate to solve any kind of problem that may arise, and thus to safeguard academic ethics and to prevent discrimination.

The existence of an Alumni Association which is also present in social media is very meaningful. It proves a worthwhile common space for effectively sharing opinions and information, strengthening the relations between Department and students, and it constitutes a useful tool for improving chances on the labour market.

The administrative staff proves to be very competent and willing to overcome any possible difficulties with flexibility. The staff effectively organises services and enhances the development and maintenance of resources and facilities, and steadily aims at the continuous self-assessment and the redefinition of objectives, planning of actions.

Conclusions

The Department of Italian Language and Literature is fully compliant with Principle 6 and has achieved excellent results even during the conversion to online learning through the COVID-19 period, thanks to a high degree of flexibility and student-centred teaching, administrative support and advance IT technology.

The Department has carried out effectively the implementation of learning resources and student support through advanced electronic platforms, and through sports and cultural activities. The teaching, administrative and technical services are reinforced by dedicated staff, and it appears to exist a positive professional collaborative relationship between staff, students, alumni and external stakeholders coming from the labour market. Special attention is also given

to the overcoming of arising problems between staff and students, and to students with special needs.

Students are widely informed about the services available to them, including educational and scientific equipment support or counselling services, and they are strongly supported by academic and administrative staff. Guiding students towards studies in the Department and careers, as well as adopting student-centred learning and flexible modes of learning and teaching, developing appropriate competences to enter the labour market are highly perceived as fundamental and constantly improved. In this regard it has been appreciated the creation of an alumni professional integration network which facilitates the following-up on the job status of graduates.

Curricula and their compliance with the specific HQA standard which are assured with steady effort comply with quality assurance system, according to the criteria of modernisation, flexibility, extroversion and internationalisation.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

The limited places (4) fully equipped with electronic equipment and located in Study Room implies that most students should have their own laptop. The Ministry should consider increasing the rather limited number of places, proportionate to the large student body.

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 organisation, 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 analysing 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

Findings

The Information management in the Department of Italian Language and Literature is conducted in accordance with the existing EU regulation on the protection of personal data (GDPR) and in close collaboration with the MODIP team of AUTH. The latter has created and handles a quality management information system, which collects all relevant data useful for the implementation of the quality assurance system. It is connected to several databases within the university administration and constantly updated by the teaching and administrative staff.

In addition, an internal system of data and archive management for the basic needs of the Department administration is used (handling of administrative documents and student enrolments, etc.), whose relevant information is accessible both by students and academic staff through a dedicated application (<https://sis.auth.gr/>).

Another important tool consists in the student satisfaction questionnaires, which are 'advertised' in various ways and regularly conducted, and whose results are accessible to the teaching body after the end of the teaching semester.

Analysis of judgement

The Department follows adequate procedures for the collection and management of data regarding student population profile, student progression, success and drop-out rates, student satisfaction, availability of learning resources.

The data collected from the information system for the quality management and those drawn by the student questionnaires are periodically analysed by the OMEA as a tool for monitoring teaching, research and administrative practices in the Department. Through the extraction and analysis of the collected data (which are presented in graphs and reports), strengths and weaknesses are identified, and decisions made against a background of reliable information.

Conclusions

The EEAP values very positively the large amount of data and documentation provided during the online meetings, as well as those further accessible through the online services.

A point which could be improved is the data concerning the career paths of graduates. As stated by the Head of the Department, data on graduates are collected only partially (due also to practical difficulties in keeping contacts with the alumni after their graduation so as to track their career paths). It is worth noting, however, that AUTH has a career office (<https://career.auth.gr/>). Furthermore, as stated by the Head of the Department (and confirmed to the EEAP by some of its alumni), the Department has created an alumni association/network with the final aim to survey the employment path of their graduates and highlighting their main needs in the difficult process of professional stabilization (there is also a Facebook private group of alumni of the Department - <https://www.facebook.com/groups/728438717710729/>).

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

- Further (and more analytic) data could be collected on the career paths of the graduates so as to help prospective and current students to make choices and exploit employment possibilities.
- The current submission rate of student satisfaction questionnaires (ca. 35%) could be further increased, for example by making it compulsory in order to take the exams.

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

Findings

The diffusion and publication of information about the teaching and academic activities of the Department is largely achieved through its recently renovated website (www.itl.auth.gr), which provides all basic information on the structure of the Department and its academic and administrative staff, the study programme (with all the relevant information for prospective and current students), the research activities and perspectives, the international exchange programmes (Erasmus+) as well as the main events such as lectures, conferences, and so on.

A very useful student app (<https://itl.auth.gr/el/myAuth>) provides information about courses, grades, classrooms etc.

The Department has also its official Facebook page (<https://m.facebook.com/profile.php?id=445261125657087>).

Analysis of judgement

In its new form, the website appears to be noticeably more user-friendly than in its older one, even though it could be still more coherent in the presentation of some of its contents. The effort to make available all the main information about the Department and its teaching and academic activities in four different languages (Greek, Italian, English, and Spanish) is certainly highly commendable. It can be noted, however, that there isn't always a perfect correspondence between the information provided in different languages (when switching from one language to another). This aspect could be ameliorated by keeping the website fully updated in all four languages.

Conclusions

The EEAP was very favourably impressed by the thorough range of useful information and documents made available through the pages of the Department website (and, more generally, of the AUTH website) as well as by the digital tools that are available both to students and teaching staff. With regard to students in particular, outlines of the programme courses are fully available on the website, and the e-learning platform is systematically used to manage courses.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

- Every effort should be made to make available on the website of the Department the same (updated) information in all the four languages (Greek, Italian, English, Spanish).
- A greater uniformity in the display of some of the contents of the website could be pursued.

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

Findings

The quality of the undergraduate program of the Department is monitored and evaluated by OMEA in order to ensure its compliance with the applicable legislation, and its currency in accordance with the developments in the discipline. Starting with the academic year 2013/2014, the self-assessment reports of the Department are prepared annually on the platform of the MODIP. These are discussed and items are identified and agreed upon for improvement.

At the end of each spring semester the Department starts the planning of the courses that will be offered in the next academic year. When the process is completed, the list is approved (together with the teaching assignments) by the Assembly.

Analysis of judgement

For the past four years the Department has made improvements in their organization and curriculum following the recommendations of the External evaluation report of 2014. For example, they hired faculty specializing in Spanish, which now has a significant presence in the program. Improvement of learning conditions has also been achieved, by renovating classrooms and technical equipment.

It should be emphasized that the Department's action plan includes attempts to provide even better international presence, and research collaborations with universities abroad. These attempts include the continuous efforts to upgrade educational and research work carried out

by faculty, the support of students and faculty staff, the upgrading of technical and operational services, and finally the improvement of its community/social character.

Conclusion

There is a regular monitoring, review and revision of study programme from the Department which aims to maintain the level of educational provision and to create a supportive and effective learning environment for students and to meet the students' expectations, needs and satisfaction in relation to the programme. The information collected is analysed and the programme is adapted to ensure that it is up-to-date. Revised programme specifications are published. The Programme is reviewed and revised regularly but students and other stakeholders are not involved in the procedure.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

After 10 years of implementation of the current Undergraduate Programme, with its revisions, the Panel recommends that the Department should revise the Programme as following:

- Encourage stronger representation of students and professional bodies in the design process of the Undergraduate Programme as well as their participation in the meetings of the Department.
- Develop the Ptyxiaki Ergasia, at least for the students that wish to continue to postgraduate studies, e.g., the option for students to prepare a thesis based on critical investigation and analysis of a topic within a scientific area, which will replace two courses.
- Strengthen the Italian-speaking knowledge of students.
- Add courses following the latest trends in the field of Educational Sciences. The Department, with the help of the State, should be able to include options such as: Minor/Major in Spanish, multilingual approaches including Awakening to Languages, Intercultural Education, and Inter-comprehension among Latin languages.
- Expand the number of practical internships offered.

Continue its efforts to increase student participation in mobility programmes.

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

Findings

The Department as a whole (not only the Undergraduate Study Programme) has undergone an external evaluation in February 2014. Since then, it has implemented actions, within its power, in response to recommendations made by the External Evaluation Committee and to improve all the relevant areas. Without a doubt the Department has maintained all these years its leading role in the field of Italian (and Spanish) Studies, both in Greece and internationally.

As mentioned above, the Department has implemented improvements in several areas. For example, a) introducing more innovative teaching methodologies; b) increasing the non-formal activities and cultural events, with special attention to those favouring the linguistic training of students in Spanish and Italian Languages (e.g. contact with native speakers in conversation groups with Erasmus students, cultural activities); c) The teaching staff has recently been reinforced with two new posts, one for Spanish and one for a specialist in Romance languages; d) Administrative and technical services have been improved and e-secretariat has been implemented; e) In terms of infrastructure, classrooms and offices have been renovated and equipment has been updated.

Analysis of judgement

Some aspects have not been completely solved, although some of them do not directly depend on the Department. For instance, the opening hours of the Department's Library have been increased and the Department has recently received a new librarian, who at the time of the AP's visit was undergoing training. Despite this, the opening hours still seem insufficient, even if it

doesn't depend on the Department. Perhaps the definitive solution is the creation of a centralized Faculty Library, which the University envisages in the near future.

As already mentioned above (cf. Principle 4), the Department is making great efforts to find native teachers of Spanish and Italian through agreements with institutions in Spain and Italy, but at the moment it does not have Language Assistants because of the current legislation.

Finally, in the 2014 external evaluation it was recommended to upgrade the Spanish language with its recognition as Lingua Minor and its further strengthening by the Department in the field of translation. This has not been achieved, but the Department maintains it as a strategic objective for the near future as soon as the necessary legal changes are implemented by the ministry. It would be advisable for the competent authorities to take seriously this possibility, which would strengthen the Department and open up new options for the future. It would also offer Department's students new career paths.

Conclusions

The Department is well aware of the importance of external evaluations and has taken steps to improve in all the relevant areas.

During our online visit the whole Department were actively engaged in the evaluation. All meetings were conducted in a very constructive atmosphere, with interesting discussions and reflections. All Department's members showed a readiness to collaborate with the accreditation process, to answer all questions and to provide all information required.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

- It would be desirable to increase the number of language teachers or language assistants. The reinforcement of the Erasmus internship programme could also help in this respect.
- It would be recommended to create a centralized Faculty Library.
- It would be advisable for the authorities to introduce the necessary legal changes to reinforce the area of Spanish.

PART C: CONCLUSIONS

I. Features of Good Practice

- Appropriate Quality Assurance Policy with clear objectives and in accordance with the European and the National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education;
- Positive and collaborative relationship between staff, students, alumni and external stakeholders;
- Attention to both the needs of the students and the realities of the labour market;
- Respect to the diversity of students and their needs;
- Differentiation of modes of delivery, where appropriate;
- Regular evaluation and adjustment of the modes of delivery and the quality and effectiveness of teaching;
- Student's admission, progression, recognition and certification are based on the institutional study regulations;
- Application of the ETCs system is applied across the Study Programme;
- Issue of the Diploma supplement in Greek and English for all graduates;
- Promotion of student and teaching staff mobility, and impressive number of Erasmus agreements with foreign universities;
- Constructive and confident impact on the national territory as well as to scientific standards of excellence;
- High degree of flexibility and student-centred teaching, administrative support and advance IT technology;
- Implementation of learning resources and student support through advanced electronic platforms;
- Regular monitoring, review and revision of study programme.

II. Areas of Weakness

- Low number of practical internships offered, due to financial difficulties;
- Lack of a final degree project (πτυχιακή εργασία) in the Study Programme;
- Low number of places fully equipped with electronic equipment;
- Not sufficient data concerning the career paths of graduates;
- Students and other stakeholders are not involved in the procedure of reviewing and revising the study programme.

III. Recommendations for Follow-up Actions

- The achievement of greater student participation in the Department Council and in other decision-making bodies, as well as the encouragement of stronger representation of students and stakeholders in the design process of the Undergraduate Programme;
- The creation of Research laboratories in order to reinforce the linking between research and teaching;

- Adding courses following the latest trends in the field of Educational Sciences, including options such as: Minor/Major in Spanish, multilingual approaches including Awakening to Languages, Intercultural Education, and Inter-comprehension among Latin languages;
- Expansion of the number of practical internships with greater funding, if possible;
- Gradual introduction of final degree project (πτυχιακή εργασία), perhaps as an elective course for those students more interested in research;
- Increase of the number of language teachers or language assistants;
- Collection of further data concerning the career paths of graduates, so as to help prospective and current students to make choices and exploit employment possibilities;
- Necessary legal changes to reinforce the area of Spanish.

IV. Summary & Overall Assessment

The Principles where full compliance has been achieved are: **1, 3, 5, 6, 7, and 8.**

The Principles where substantial compliance has been achieved are: **2, 4, 9, and 10.**

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

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

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

The members of the External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel

Name and Surname

Signature

1. Assistant Professor Caterina Papatheu (Chair)

University of Catania, Italy

2. Professor Alicia Morales Ortiz

Universidad de Murcia, Spain

3. Associate Professor Gina Ioannitou-Valavanidou

Le Mans Université, France

4. Associate Professor Francesco Camia

University “La Sapienza”, Rome, Italy