



ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ
HELLENIC REPUBLIC



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

Crop Science

Institution: Agricultural University of Athens

Date: 20 June 2020



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



Report of the Panel appointed by the HAHE to undertake the review of the Undergraduate Study Programme (Integrated Master) of **Crop Science** of the **Agricultural University of Athens** 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 Study Programme (Integrated Master) of **Crop Science** of the **Agricultural University of Athens** comprised the following five (5) members, drawn from the HAHE Register, in accordance with Laws 4009/2011 & 4653/2020:

1. Associate Professor **George Manganaris** (Chair), *Cyprus University of Technology, Cyprus*

2. Professor **Andronikos Mauromoustakos**, *University of Arkansas, USA*

3. Professor **Ioannis Tzanetakis**, *University of Arkansas, USA*

4. Professor Emeritus **Ioannis Vlahos**, *Hellenic Mediterranean University, Greece*

5. Mr. **Anestis Delepoglou**, *Representative of the Geotechnical Chamber of Greece, Greece*

II. Review Procedure and Documentation

Due to the current Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, and following the measures taken to limit its further spread, the **Hellenic Authority for Higher Education (HAHE)**,¹ decided to implement the accreditation review process of the undergraduate study programme of the **Department of Crop Science** of the **Agricultural University of Athens (AUA)** via teleconferences. All briefings and meetings were conducted efficiently and within the allotted time frame through the e-presence tool and Zoom platform. Replacing the on-site visits with virtual meetings was a challenge for all participating parties. The videoconferences proceeded without any technical problems. However, the lack of face to face contact and physical presence of the panel members at the premises of the Institution was a missing element.

On Thursday, 11 June, a two-hour orientation meeting was held with the HAHE's Director General Dr. Besta via Zoom. The members of the **External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel (EEAP)** George Manganaris, Ioannis Vlahos, Andronikos Mauromoustakos and Anestis Delepoglou joined the meeting; Ioannis Tzanetakis was unable to attend. Dr. Besta presented the Quality Assurance standards for Quality Accreditation of Undergraduate Programmes and Accreditation Guidelines and all members received useful information. The EEAP also received the final timetable for the teleconferences at this point. The Chair of the Panel acted as the host for all debriefing and private meetings among the EEAP members. Before the 'virtual' visit, the EEAP received the Proposal for Accreditation of the Department of Crop Science, the External Evaluation Report of 2011 and other relevant material. The EEAP discussed the strategy and issues to be considered during the visit and the Chair allocated the tasks to be undertaken by each panel member. Upon request of the EEAP, additional supporting documentation and presentations were provided promptly by the Crop Science Department staff after the teleconferences.

The accreditation review by electronic means was initiated on Monday, 15 June, according to the schedule provided by the HAHE at 3:00 pm so that panel members from the US could participate. The inaugural teleconference was held with Professor Spyridon Kintzios, Rector of AUA and Professor Maria Papafotiou, Head of the Department. Prof. Kintzios who additionally acts as president of the **Quality Assurance Unit (QAU/MODIP)** of the University provided a brief comprehensive presentation of the history and academic profile of AUA which celebrates its Centennial year in 2020. Prof. Papafotiou presented the Department's profile, its policy on quality assurance and other issues related to the study programme. The key issues focused on the suitability and structure of the curriculum, the pursuit of learning outcomes and qualifications, following the European and the National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education.

The teleconference meetings continued with [9] members of the **Internal Evaluation Group (IEG/OMEA)**, Prof. G. Zervakis as representative of the QAU, and Mrs. Alexandra Douka who acted as secretariat support. A variety of issues were discussed, focusing mainly on the compliance of the Undergraduate Programme to the standards for quality accreditation, the curriculum revisions, the students' progression, and assignments. The IEG expressed its support and commitment to implement a comprehensive quality policy that will further promote the academic profile and a more focused orientation of the programme. Concerns were expressed and ideas were put forward towards adopting structural changes, especially

¹Abbreviated terms: Hellenic Authority for Higher Education (HAHE), External Evaluation and Accreditation Panel (EEAP), Quality Assurance Unit (QAU/MODIP), Internal Evaluation Group (IEG/OMEA), Agricultural University of Athens (AUA), Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), Quality Assurance Policy (QAP)

in relation to the educational program more often than every five years. The teleconference continued with the participation of [10] members of the teaching staff who thoroughly discussed the undergraduate study programme, the interrelations between teaching and research activities, the professional development opportunities, the faculty workload, projects and research activities and the undergraduate students' questionnaire evaluations. Following this meeting, the EEAP met and discussed with a group of [10] students, most in their 5th year of study, about issues related to their studies, the Departmental/Institutional facilities, and the student life welfare. At the end of the first day, the EEAP held a private debriefing meeting to reflect on the impressions of the teleconferences and forwarded to the Chair of the Department a request list for supplementary material that was not included in the initial package the EEAP had received.

The teleconferences continued the following day with an additional [10] teaching staff members. The EEAP members were 'guided' virtually at the premises of the Department Laboratories, including Institutional facilities. The next teleconference meetings involved alumni graduates of the Department who expressed their opinions for the study programme, teaching and research, facilities, and the career paths they have followed. Overall, the student's views were positive about their relationship with the members of the teaching staff and were mostly content with their learning outcomes and teaching experience. Following this, a group of social partners and stakeholders from the private and public sectors joined the meeting. The EEAP discussed their contacts, links to the Department, and their experiences with graduates and Departmental staff. The second day of the review ended with a joint teleconference meeting of IEG and QAU representatives along with the Rector and the Department Head. During this meeting, the discussions focused on issues that needed further clarification. The Chair of the EEAP concluded the meeting presenting the key findings of the review, stressing the strong points of the curriculum and an array of issues that need to be considered by the Department, followed with further discussion and expression of views.

The EEAP acknowledges the spirit of cooperation shown from the majority of the Department's staff and their willingness to collaborate and work towards supporting the University's Quality Assurance policy at all levels and towards contributing to the upgrading of the quality standards of the Department. The process of accreditation review via teleconference was deemed sufficient and efficient. All individuals who participated in the e-meetings had the opportunity to voice their views.

From Wednesday, 17 June to Saturday, 20 June, the EEAP members worked both independently and as a team on their assigned tasks on the Accreditation Report. The teamwork was accomplished via teleconferences daily, as organized by the Chair.

III. Study Programme Profile

The Agricultural University of Athens was established by law in 1920 (Law 1844/1920) as an Independent Higher Education Institution with University status under the name of the Higher Agricultural School of Athens. In 1989, it was renamed Agricultural University of Athens (Presidential Decree 377/1989). The AUA provides education at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels covering all sectors of agricultural activities. It consists of six Schools, namely: 'Plant Sciences', 'Animal Biosciences', 'Environment & Agricultural Engineering', 'Food & Nutritional Sciences', 'Applied Biology & Biotechnology', 'Applied Economics & Social Sciences'.

The Department of Crop Science belongs to the School of Plant Sciences; it was founded in 1989 (Government Gazette No 16A'/16-6-1989) and is the oldest Crop Science Department at the University level in Greece. It was originally named as Department of Plant Production, evolved from the Phytotechny direction of the Higher Agricultural School of Athens, and later renamed as Department of Crop Science (Government Gazette No 192 A'/ 13-8-2007). Its mission is to provide high quality University level education in the field of plant sciences.

The number of incoming students is determined yearly by the Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs. The total number of registered undergraduate students today is 2054 (about 1000 are active students²), with 137 graduate students and 132 PhD candidates.

The programme offers an Integrated MSc degree (National and European Qualifications Framework 7) within 10 semesters (5 years), requiring a total of 300 ECTS. The curriculum is organized into three groups of courses (General/Basic; Agricultural and Specialization). Integral parts of the Curriculum are the Diploma Thesis (30 ECTS) and a 4-month Internship (10 ECTS). Based on the data received, 57% of the total courses offered are mandatory towards the degree and 43% are electives.

Today, the Department is comprised of fifty (50) Faculty members, twenty-four (24) Laboratory Teaching Staff, eleven (11) Special Technical Laboratory personnel, three (3) Administrative Staff, and contract teaching personnel under the P.D. 407/80.

The Department includes 16 Laboratories, under the following 5 Sections:

- Botany & Microbiology
- Agronomy, Plant Breeding, Biometry & Meteorology
- Arboriculture & Viticulture
- Vegetable Crops, Floriculture & Landscape Architecture
- Plant Protection & Environment

²Active student is considered the individual who has not exceeded the 7th year of his/her studies.

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 Quality Assurance Policy (QAP) of the Department is available on line in a downloadable format (pdf)³ declaring the principles mentioned above [a-h] as a mirror of the text issued as a guiding document by HAHE, without being further elaborated and adjusted to the needs of the current study program.
- No English version of the QAP is available.
- Interviewed students, alumni, and stakeholders of the Department seemed unaware of the existence of the QAP.
- We acknowledge that within one day after the end of the meeting, upon request of the EEAP, the Department took immediate action and placed the QAP in a more prominent area of the Departmental website.
- The EEAP realizes that the accreditation process and QAP is a newly introduced policy and the Department is encouraged to take practical steps towards its implementation.

Panel Judgement

Principle 1: Institution Policy for Quality Assurance	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	v
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

1. Amend the QAP, adjusted to the character and special requirements of the current study program, and depict in a measurable and attainable manner how it aims to meet the mentioned principles.
2. The English version of QAP should be developed, reflecting the content of the Greek version, outlining Department's strategic vision towards quality assurance procedures of its current study program.
3. The Department needs to explore further ways to disseminate and render most prominently available its revised QAP to the following target audiences:
 - AUA students
 - Alumni
 - Stakeholders and social partners
 - Policy makers and governmental bodies
 - Collaborating Universities
 - General public
4. The main outputs of the annual reviews and internal audits of the quality assurance system of the undergraduate programme needs to be made available on the Department's website.⁴

³<http://efp.aua.gr/sites/efp.aua.gr/files/%CE%922%20%CE%A0%CE%BF%CE%BB%CE%B9%CF%84%CE%B9%CE%BA%CE%AE%20%CE%A0%CE%BF%CE%B9%CF%8C%CF%84%CE%B7%CF%84%CE%B1%CF%82%20%CE%95%CE%A6%CE%A0-%CE%93%CE%A0%CE%91.pdf>

⁴Information classified as confidential should be distributed solely to Faculty.

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 revised curriculum was put in place during the 2015-2016 academic year as a result of measures undertaken in response suggestions put forward in the 2011 external evaluation report of the programme. The recommendations related to the undergraduate study program have been partially implemented into the revised version. Such information was provided as supplementary material to the Committee upon its request in a concise manner. Additional material relating to undergraduate study programs of peer institutions that were not initially included, were also provided upon request.
- The current curriculum offers six specializations that take place during the 9th semester. It is comprised of both mandatory and elective courses, a 4-month internship, and a thesis. Internships are typically conducted in two 2-month periods during the summer period of the 3rd and 4th year or during the 10th semester which is free from course modules.
- The undergraduate thesis is exclusively research-oriented unless otherwise documented. The research orientation and the quality of the theses is highly acknowledged. The EEAP deems the current curriculum to be at the level of Integrated Masters Tier 7 as specified by the National & European Qualifications Network.

- The Department encourages the publication of student research works, as has been documented from several written papers, mainly in Conference proceedings. The EEAP noticed a good number of Diploma Theses to result in respective scientific publications which is appraised.
- The Student Guide is well constructed and it was provided in the Greek language. Individual syllabi contain information about learning outcomes, general abilities, course outlines, teaching methods and structure, student assessment and recommended reference sources.
- The Departmental website includes links to downloadable syllabi (pdfs) in Greek.⁵ The EEAP received as additional material the syllabi of [9] courses in the English language that are offered to Erasmus students.
- Students expressed concerns about some courses, particularly those offered during the first semesters, that they are not tailored to their needs. They also felt that at least ¼ of the total offered courses were not attractive for physical attendance.
- No course prerequisites exist, thus allowing students to enrol in advanced courses without the necessary background.
- The EEAP is not aware of any current curriculum revision procedure that involves consultation of stakeholders, external experts, students, and graduates.

Panel Judgement

Principle 2: Design and Approval of Programmes	
Fully compliant	v
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
	v	

⁵<http://efp.aua.gr/el/node/760>

Panel Recommendations⁶

1. Curriculum:

- A. The curriculum must be periodically evaluated through a defined written process, including formal input from students, alumni, the Geotechnical chamber, and stakeholders.
- B. Incorporate syllabi of all courses in English in a standardized format, reflecting their content in Greek.
- C. Address the issue for the lack of prerequisites, particularly for the courses that are in sequences.
- D. The Department is advised during the next restructuring of curriculum to consider shifting courses that are directly linked to the plant science orientation from elective to mandatory and vice versa for less plant sciences-oriented courses unless otherwise their necessity is justified.⁷
- E. Increase the pool of elective courses from other Institutional Departments that are currently in demand (i.e. 'Precision Agriculture') and eliminate those with low in attendance, based on the annual audits.

2. Thesis:

- A. Featured research thesis [graded with distinction (10,0)] should be uploaded in a dedicated area on the Departmental website to serve as examples of best practices.
- B. Enhance participation of colleagues from other AUA Departments in Advisory committees, to allow interdisciplinary synergies among research units with complementary expertise.

3. Internship:

- A. The Departmental rules, procedures and list of employers should be uploaded to the dedicated link⁸ or re-directed to the AUA website where Institutional rules apply.
- B. A booklet that will contain all such relevant information should be developed.⁹
- C. The Faculty in charge to be aided by additional academic staff through the establishment of a Departmental Internship Committee. This Committee will be responsible to evaluate and analyse the individual internships notebooks and provide a summary of the main findings through quantitative/qualitative data analysis.

⁶Recommendations of the EAAP are provided in the following main elements of the study program: 1. Curriculum, 2. Thesis, 3. Internship

⁷See additionally the recommendations of external evaluation report of 2011.

⁸<http://efp.aua.gr/el/node/798>

⁹Εγχειρίδιο πρακτικής άσκησης

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.*
- *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 student-centred character of the undergraduate programme is satisfactorily expressed. Almost every course [ca. 90%] is linked with a reliable laboratory/experimental component. Students can select among 6 areas of specialization via an adequate number of elective courses, the range of which is extensive due to a large number of Laboratories [16] within the full facet of Agriculture-related expertise.
- The research-oriented thesis is a proof of evidence of the nature of the student-centred character of the program that leads to an integrated Master.
- Some students indicated that they were not selected in the preferred direction and this did not allow them to further develop their individual skills in the area they considered most appropriate for them. However, the Department describes the selection criteria for each

Direction that are based on the scoring of students in specific courses and their overall performance.

- Students and graduates were positive of the overall knowledge received and how this contributed to their professional development and careers. Due to lack of time, the EEAP did not have the opportunity to interview current students and inquire whether they serve as active partners in the teaching/learning process.
- The participation rate in the theoretical part of some courses is very low, as evidenced by the number of questionnaire surveys completed by the students. Nevertheless, participation improves in the higher division courses related to the degree specialization area.
- The vast majority of courses, according to the students, graduates, and the uploaded syllabi, are still assessed only by a single comprehensive final exam at the end of each semester.
- Course material is available to the students for all courses (each student is entitled to receive one book per course). However, ca. 60% of .pdf/.pptx presentations have been uploaded via the e-class platform.
- Students are required to complete evaluation questionnaires for all courses taught through well-articulated questionnaires. The modest and at certain cases deficient (<15%) participation in these surveys by the students may not accurately reflect upon the quality of the course or instruction.¹⁰
- Undergraduate students and alumni recommended elimination of overlapping information in some courses.
- The EEAP was informed about handling of complaints but is not aware of any formal appeal procedure.

Panel Judgement

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

¹⁰The EEAP was informed that from the next semester onwards the questionnaires will be completed on line and that student evaluations are considered during the voting for career advancements.

Panel Recommendations

1. Higher success graduation rates [**>70% for active students (v+2)**] to further enhance the standing of the Department.¹¹
2. Courses with high failure rates should be re-evaluated and revamped as needed and the teaching faculty, especially in those courses, should consider multiple tools for student assessment.¹²
3. The Department and the University should set as a prerequisite for participation to exams of a course the completion of the questionnaire with electronic means. **When students do not attend the theoretical part of the course, grading of the instructor(s) should remain null and provide a reason for poor or no attendance**
4. **Electronic** course material (**.pptx presentations in pdf format**) to be readily available for all modules via the e-class platform.
5. Enhance communication and feedback input with current and past students, utilizing social media platforms with an academic orientation.
6. We recommend the Department to offer online courses leading to relevant certification and contribute to the development of general skills, enhancing the curriculum. Such certifications will be incorporated in the Diploma Supplement.¹³
7. Eliminate overlapping information between courses and/or combine courses that significantly overlap.¹⁴

¹¹Recommended mitigation actions: increase student attendance in the theoretical part of the courses, consider indicating a minimum percentage attendance rate as a prerequisite for the student to participate in the exams.

¹²Recommended mitigation actions: mid-term examinations, homework leading to major unit examinations, online periodic computer graded assessment over reading assignments.

¹³Indicative online offerings: Computer skills, Statistic tools, Data visualization, Lab safety, Scientific writing, Ethics

¹⁴This approach is additionally recommended as a mitigation measure to reduce excessive teaching load of some academic staff.

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 Department organizes welcoming and orientation sessions for incoming students, informing them about the Department, the curriculum, the research laboratories, facilities, and other topics.
- Students are informed through the Departments' website about the courses offered, the learning outcomes, level, and content of studies.¹⁵
- Two members are assigned as academic advisors for incoming students and for every year of the studies to monitor student progression.
- The Diploma Supplement is a document explaining the qualification(s) gained, the learning outcomes, the content, and the status of the studies that were pursued and should be provided to graduating students in both Greek and English, as is required by law. This document has not been issued yet, however and is planned to materialize during the current academic year. A draft of the Greek version of Diploma Supplement was provided to EEAP upon request.
- The ECTS system is applied in all courses taught. The total ECTS for graduation, including Diploma thesis and Internship, should be in total exactly 300 ECTS and each semester to accounts for a total of 30 ECTS.
- Student mobility is promoted by the Department which has developed bilateral agreements with European Universities and others outside the EU through the International mobility of ERASMUS+. The outgoing mobility is substantially higher compared to similar undergraduate programs but there is further room for improvement, particularly for incoming students. The Department provides [9] courses in English for incoming

¹⁵Information focusing on the Diploma thesis and the internships to be further amended to the Departmental website [see additionally Principles #2, #8].

students. Specific KPIs for mobility have been set by the Department for the forthcoming years.

- Practical training (internship) is in place and the Department has developed an extensive list of collaborating external organizations and companies for student placement, to support this component throughout the country.
- The excellence of undergraduate students is rewarded through 4 awards that are provided on an annual basis. The EEAP felt that students were not aware of the existence of such awards.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

1. Issuing of the Diploma supplement to take place automatically upon graduation both in Greek and in the English language.
2. To enhance the role of Academic Advisor as a means to monitor student progression and increase graduation rates.¹⁶
3. The academic progress of students should be regularly monitored through dedicated on-line services that will automatically inform the Academic Advisors for students with poor performance and thereby appropriate mitigation measures to be undertaken.¹⁷ **Faculty staff members may additionally offer career orientation services, counselling and guidance about studentship issues.**
4. The total workload for receiving the degree must be exactly 300 ECTS units, equally distributed in all 10 semesters, as in all Integrated Master's programs. If a student chooses to take more courses and accumulates more than 300 ECTS units, the additional courses could be documented in the Diploma Supplement.¹⁸
5. The outstanding performance of undergraduate students to be further rewarded through sponsored scholarships as a means of student's performance recognition.¹⁹
6. Enhance incoming mobilities and develop a dedicated area in the Departmental website about Erasmus agreements, providing additional information about existing bilateral agreements, regulations and procedures and/or redirect to relevant Institutional website links.

¹⁶ EEAP recommendation: Allocation of an Academic personal advisor per student upon admission

¹⁷ IEG should inform about incidents of poor academic performance on an annual basis. To assure Personal Data Protection the information will be classified as confidential and will be provided only to the Academic Advisor.

¹⁸ ECTS of each course to reflect the actual work load, besides contact hours (theory and lab)

¹⁹ EEAP recommendation: Secure funding from stakeholders that are tightly associated with the Department

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 Departmental recruitment and promotion policies are consistent with the practices and the rules and regulations of both the University and the Ministry of Education.
- The EEAP is not aware of a plan for the professional development opportunities of the teaching staff (i.e. start-up grant, mentoring). This is understandable considering the limited Departmental budget.
- The Department's Accreditation proposal provides a strategy to enhance mobility opportunities through Erasmus⁺, whereas sabbatical leaves are difficult to undertake due to the limited staff in most laboratories.
- The students expressed satisfaction that the majority of the courses include laboratory exercises with hands-on practice.
- The average weekly teaching load of the Faculty is 8.3 h, well above the threshold of 6 h that is set by the law. We acknowledge that some Faculty might carry excessive teaching load, including personnel with heavy administrative load as the Head. This shows a commitment to provision of quality teaching.²⁰
- The average weekly teaching load of the supporting teaching staff (ΕΔΙΠ and ΕΤΕΠ) was 6.1 and 9.3 h, respectively.

²⁰The EEAP is fully aware that mandatory courses, offered to all students, have a significant overall work load for the instructor that is not reflected in the total teaching load as an absolute number.

- The research carried out by Departmental staff is being funded by both national and international entities. The EEAP received numerical values referring the total funded projects within the Department without further information regarding the overall budget and the allocation within the different laboratories.
- The performance of academic personnel regarding their publication record has been provided through the HAHE templates. A number of Faculty has respectful publication record and recognition (reflected in the number of publications in referred journals, citations, and h-index), yet in some other cases scores are lower than what was normally expected.
- Instructors use a variety of teaching tools and pedagogical methods, yet the majority of assessments are in one final exam at the end of the semester.
- Staff members are actively involved in participation and/or organization of training seminars, day-long events and symposia that help the outreach and increase visibility of the Department to the scientific community and wider.
- The EEAP is not aware of any apparent mechanisms for rewarding excellence in teaching.
- The EEAP is not aware of a Departmental research strategy focusing in specific scientific areas.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

1. The new faculty positions should be filled strategically and in disciplines that will maximize the potential for growth in research and teaching capacity. The Department should consider hiring candidates with qualifications that will ensure the seeding of new ideas and the introduction of innovative teaching methods.²¹ Hiring young staff members with diversified educational background (preferably graduates from other academic / research institutions) and research expertise will further enhance the research activities and promote the establishment of new research directions in the Department.
2. Develop an Action Plan that will encourage the professional development of the Academic staff with particular attention to Assistant/Associate Professors, as well as to Special Scientific Personnel [ΕΔΙΠ] with significant scientific outputs.

²¹Promotion rules are set by the Ministry of Education. It is at the description of the Department to consider establishing internal quality standards criteria for promotion with appropriate adjustments for the unique needs of each specialization and lab vs. field research productivity.

3. The current strategy for attracting lecturers/researchers from abroad for short, medium, and long-term visits (i.e. sabbaticals) and lecturing in the Department should be enhanced.
4. To adopt a policy of promoting and rewarding excellence in teaching across all teaching personnel (“Teacher of the Year”), based on the students’ questionnaire surveys and other related achievements and activities of the teaching staff.
5. We recommend academic staff that is off-campus for scientific purposes (i.e. Conference attendance) to exploit teaching virtually on the theoretical part of their courses.²²
6. Increase involvement of ΕΔΙΠ on laboratory exercises and proportionally reduce the teaching load of Faculty (ΔΕΠ).
7. The Department should adopt a research strategy focusing on specific scientific areas and research activities and this to be additionally reflected in the QAP.

²²This is a proposed mitigation measure to avoid missing courses due to other academic obligations in case there is no possibility to be replaced by other teaching staff and considering that on-line teaching has been widely adopted by the students after COVID pandemic.

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

- Based on the virtual tour, the Department is housed in a building complex on the main campus of AUA. The buildings include classrooms, teaching and research laboratories. We acknowledge the fact that the personnel managed to swiftly incorporate in the Departmental website PowerPoint™ presentations and short videos of all laboratories²³ within a restricted time frame (4 days prior to the interviews) upon notification by the HAHE.
- The Department's teaching facilities are comprised of quite a large number of lecture rooms, research laboratories and analytical equipment. There are five large lecture rooms (amphitheatres) and more dedicated ones, which are explicitly assigned to each laboratory unit.
- The Department has state-of-the-art equipment, obtained either through National research funding programs or through other funded projects (i.e. Confocal laser microscopy, oflactometry). Moreover, every laboratory has well-equipped rooms-offices and research facilities to cover the needs of both the academic and technical staff, along with the research students. Each laboratory, depending on the research field, has its own greenhouses and experimental fields. Facilities and equipment adequately cover each laboratory teaching and research needs.

²³<http://efp.aua.gr/el/node/832>

- The Administrative staff is comprised of three individuals with excessive work load, while concerns related to the speed and overall operation were raised both by students and the academic personnel. It is an ongoing request of the Department to enhance its secretariat support. The EEAP did not have the opportunity to discuss such issues with the Administration Office to further clarify the abovementioned reflections.
- AUA does not have dormitory facilities, but has established housing agreements with other Universities that allow a certain number of students to have access to dormitory accommodations.
- Exercise facilities, student clubs and amenities for extracurricular activities and other support services are located on campus and are easily accessible by the students.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

1. The PowerPoint™ presentations of laboratories to be reformatted in a standardized template.²⁴
2. An English version of such presentations should be prepared and uploaded to further enhance the visibility of the Department worldwide.
3. The videos referring to different laboratories should follow a standardized format.
4. Further digital organization of the Administration office should be encouraged.

²⁴EEAP recommended template: Personnel, Teaching classes, research facilities and equipment, pictures from the implementation of laboratory exercises. Good examples were the presentations delivered from the Laboratories of Vegetable Crops and Entomology.

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 analyzing information and planning follow-up activities.

Study Programme Compliance

- The Department has established and operates an information system for managing and monitoring data of students, teaching staff and course structure. These data were used to prepare the Department's accreditation proposal.
- The presentation of data in graphs would have assisted the EEAP in demonstrating trends and allowing direct interpretations and comparisons.
- It is not clear whether this information is communicated to all Faculty and staff.
- The Department is not having an active Alumni Association and this is planned to take place shortly. Such an Association would prove useful in tracking the career of graduates, finding jobs for new graduates, and securing support when needed.
- EEAP is not aware of regularly conducted staff satisfaction surveys and exploitation of data related to the availability and accessibility of resources (i.e. equipment, social services, website visits, other social services).

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

1. Establish an Alumni Association and track the employability and career paths of graduates.²⁵
2. Quality assurance data should be formatted in graphs to allow direct interpretations, demonstrate trends and when key performance indicators are not met, mitigation measures to be implemented.
3. The information generated needs to be communicated to all Faculty and Departmental staff in an integrated manner that will demonstrate trends and will allow direct interpretations and comparisons.
4. Regular implementation of student and staff satisfaction surveys must be carried out and communication of the main findings should be realized towards further improvement.

²⁵EEAP recommendation: The use of professional social media tools like LinkedIn may assist tracking the career paths of graduates.

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 communicates its teaching and academic activities mainly through its website.
- The website provides details about the structure, human resources, laboratories, and infrastructure. Announcements and press releases are available on the Home page without distinct separation mode.
- Education tab: Undergraduate Programme Guide as well as individual course outline is available on line in a downloadable format in Greek as elsewhere described.
- Research and collaboration tabs: Publications and programs are provided in Greek, while the collaborations tab does not provide an adequate description. The rich mesh of Departmental activities (meetings, conferences, and connectivity to various stakeholders) are not provided on the website.
- The students' professional prospects and relevant stakeholders' chambers and associations' involvement are described briefly.
- The QAP is available online (Greek version) and needs to be amended based on the recommendations provided in Principle 1.
- EEAP acknowledges the willingness and dedication of the assigned personnel to feed the Departmental website but feels that the restructuring and maintenance should be supported by the Institutional IT services.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

1. The Departmental website needs to be restructured and include additional information in compliance with Institutional rules, as reported herein and in the abovementioned Principles.
2. Data need to be updated and presented in an integrated and easily accessible manner.
3. The English version of the website should reflect the respective content depicted in the Greek version.
4. The Department is encouraged to take advantage of social media presence with academic nature to increase visibility of its research and teaching activities.
5. Professional prospects of graduates to be further elaborated, documenting the existence of the Representative professional Chamber that assures their professional rights.

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

- All participating parties (students, alumni, stakeholders) felt that the curriculum offers knowledge, skills, and competencies to secure a rewarding career in the field of Crop Science within the country or abroad.
- The alumni and stakeholder groups interviewed were not consulted on the curriculum reviews or revisions and no such provisions were identified in the Quality Assurance Target for 2019-2020. The EEAP feels that the curriculum content must be revised in the light of the latest research in any given discipline, thus ensuring that the programme is up-to-date. It is also uncertain whether the content is revised based on the changing needs of society, given that alumni and stakeholders are not involved in the process.
- The students' needs and satisfaction concerning the study programme are monitored, solely through the courses' questionnaires. The students' workload, progression and completion seem to be monitored but no detailed data was provided to this effect.
- Based on discussions with IEG, EEAP felt that the majority of tasks were undertaken by a few individuals. The amount of work is excessive and an efficient teamwork, both within IEG and broader, including all Faculty, should be implemented.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

1. The annual self-assessment reports of the study program should be publicly released through the Departmental website and via other dissemination and communication tools.
2. Establish an even task allocation within the IEG member, to move towards the full compliance of the study program following the criteria set by the HAHE.
3. Alumni and all the relevant stakeholders such as the representative chamber and the professional associations should be part of curriculum reviews.
4. Develop a well-articulated Action Plan and monitoring its progression on an annual basis.
5. Dissect additional avenues of self-assessment of the study program as a whole.²⁶

²⁶EEAP recommendation: Monitoring student expectations, degree of satisfaction, face to face exit interviews, social media text mining with sentiment analysis.

Principle 10: Regular External Evaluation of Undergraduate Programmes

PROGRAMMES SHOULD REGULARLY UNDERGO EVALUATION BY COMMITTEES OF EXTERNAL EXPERTS SET BY HAHE, IMING 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 is currently undergoing its first undergraduate programme accreditation review. To date, it has received an external evaluation report that is publicly available in the Departmental website.²⁷
- Based on the documentation provided, the Department has addressed 60% of the recommendations set by the external evaluation committee in 2011, without giving a point-by-point redress of the points raised by the Committee.
- EEAP is not aware of any recent external review of the Department study program by an Agency other than HAHE.
- The EEAP realized the willingness of the Departmental representatives to further work on study program compliance following the rules set by the HAHE.

²⁷<http://efp.aua.gr/sites/efp.aua.gr/files/%CE%88%CE%BA%CE%B8%CE%B5%CF%83%CE%B7%20%CE%B5%CE%B5%CF%89%CF%84.%20%CE%B1%CE%BE%CE%B9%CE%BF%CE%BB%CF%8C%CE%B3%CE%B7%CF%83%CE%B7%CF%82%202008-9%20%CF%84%CE%B5%CE%BB%CE%B9%CE%BA%CF%8C.pdf>

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

1. The Department should implement and/or carefully redress the relevant to the undergraduate study program recommendations of the 2011 External Evaluation Report as well as from the current 2020 Accreditation Report.
2. The Department should develop a strategic plan with detailed action plans and implementation timelines, providing a roadmap of activities for future accreditations/evaluations.
3. Annual self-evaluation reflection through faculty retreats and reflection by each track could be used to produce reports/audits.
4. The curriculum must be periodically evaluated based on the Institutional strategy and such information must be available for the forthcoming accreditation processes.

PART C: CONCLUSIONS

I. Features of Good Practice

- A highly esteemed, impactful undergraduate study program
- Exceptionally well-equipped labs and well-maintained greenhouses and experimental fields
- Significant hands-on experience for the students
- Staff commitment to assess and ensure the quality of the awarded degree
- Alumni satisfaction with the professional benefits offered by the programme
- Adequate student to teacher ratio, considering constraints in recruiting new personnel
- Student-centred teaching methods are being employed with links between research and teaching for some programs
- An increasing number of activities/events linking students to stakeholders
- Outgoing mobility of Faculty and student
- A large number of specializations [6]

II. Areas of Weakness

- Teaching material of several courses is not available online
- Modest research outputs from some Faculty members
- Department website requires improvements and uniformity
- Lack of annual self-evaluation audits
- Lack of enforced course prerequisites
- A large number of Laboratories [16] within the Department that at certain cases overlap or consisted by a single or very few Faculty members

III. Recommendations for Follow-up Actions²⁸

- Amend the quality assurance policy, adjusted to the character and special requirements of the current study program, and apply comprehensive tools for its dissemination to the scientific community and wider
- Main outputs of annual reviews and internal audits of the quality assurance system of the undergraduate programme to be monitored and made publicly available.
- Enhance success graduation rates to further improve the standing of the Department
- Amend Departmental website
- Enhance the role of Academic Advisor
- Track career paths of graduates for the benefit of the Department and its students through the development of an official departmental alumni association
- Encourage opportunities for thesis writing in English
- Increase incoming Erasmus students by offering upper division specialization courses in English
- Strengthen networking opportunities with academics and other stakeholders
- Fully adopt student centred-teaching methods
- Involve alumni and stakeholders in revisions of the study programme
- Access and implement approaches to recognize excellence in teaching and research
- Establish a strong presence in social media in line with current worldwide trends

²⁸A full list of recommendations is provided per Principle.

- Reward students excellent academic performance with sponsored scholarships
- Further implementation of still relevant recommendations of the 2011 external report

IV. Summary & Overall Assessment

The Principles where full compliance has been achieved are: 2, 6

The Principles where substantial compliance has been achieved are: 1, 3, 4, 5, 7, 9, 10

The Principles where partial compliance has been achieved are: 8

The Principles where failure of compliance was identified are: -

Overall Judgement	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	v
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
	v	

The members of the External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel for the UGP (Integrated Master)

Name and Surname

Signature

1. Associate Professor **George Manganaris** (Chair),
Cyprus University of Technology, Cyprus
2. Professor **Andronikos Mauromoustakos**, *University of
Arkansas, US*
3. Professor **Ioannis Tzanetakis**, *University of Arkansas,
US*
4. Professor Emeritus **Ioannis Vlahos**, *Hellenic
Mediterranean University, Greece*
5. Mr. **Anestis Delepoglou**, *Representative of the
Geotechnical Chamber of Greece*