



ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ
HELLENIC REPUBLIC



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Ανώτατης Εκπαίδευσης
Hellenic Authority
for Higher Education

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Accreditation Report

for the New Postgraduate Study Programme of:

Food and Nutrition

Department: Food Science and Human Nutrition

Institution: Agricultural University of Athens

Date: 26 October 2024



Με τη συγχρηματοδότηση
της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης



Πρόγραμμα
Ανθρώπινο Δυναμικό και
Κοινωνική Συνοχή

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Report of the Panel appointed by the HAHE to undertake the review of
the New Postgraduate Study Programme of **Food and Nutrition** 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 new postgraduate study programme of **MSc Food and Nutrition** of the **Agriculture University of Athens** comprised the following five (5) members, drawn from the HAHE Register, in accordance with Laws 4009/2011 & 4653/2020:

- 1. Assoc. Prof. Amalia Tsiami (Chair)**
University of West London, United Kingdom
- 2. Dr. Demetrios Kazantzis**
Del's Lemonade and Refreshments Inc., United States of America
- 3. Prof. George Manganaris**
Cyprus University of Technology, Cyprus
- 4. Assoc. Prof. Anastasios Papageorgiou**
University of Turku and Åbo Akademi University, Finland
- 5. Mr. Yannis Chatzieffraimidis**
PhD Candidate, University of Western Macedonia, Florina, Greece

II. Review Procedure and Documentation

The members of the External Evaluation and Accreditation Panel (EEAP) for the review of the new postgraduate study programme of MSc in Food and Nutrition of the Agricultural University of Athens were appointed by the Hellenic Authority for Higher Education (HAHE) of the Register of Independent Experts on 30 September 2024, in accordance with Laws 4009/2011 & 4653/2020. The EEAP reviewed all documents supplied (which we, as Panel's member, already pre-read and listed below in tabulated form) and agreed on key questions and issues to focus on during our evaluation.

- A0 Table of content of the documents
- A1 Proposal for the Academic Certification of the new postgraduate programme of study
- A2 Decision of the Senate on the establishment of the new postgraduate programme
- A3 MODIP report
- A4 Senate decision of Strategic planning of the Institute for the subject of new postgraduate programmes
- A5 The Institutional strategy for postgraduate studies Feasibility & viability study of the new postgraduate programme
- A6 Quality policy for the creation and development of the postgraduate study
- A7 Quality Targeting of the academic unit for the new postgraduate study
- A8 Course Study Guide
- A9 Course outline
- A10 List of names of teaching staff
- A11 Internal regulation of the new Programme of Studies
- A12 Regulation regarding studies, practical training, mobility, assignment writing.
- A13 Regulations for the operation of the students' complaints and objections management mechanism
- A14 Regulations for the operation of the institution of academic counsellor
- A15 Regulations of the ethics and research
- A16 Diploma Supplement Template in Greek and English language
- A17 Summarised information on the academic staff achievements
- A18 Specification of the online learning or distance learning
- A19 Plan on the way that the income from the Master's would be used.

The EEAP received adequate, in number and content, information to support its duties as evaluators and after reviewing all the content provided as well as all sectors of the MSc in Food and Nutrition s of the Agricultural University of Athens.

The first day of the online meeting started on Monday 30 September 2024 at 16.00 (all times refer to Greek time). The e-meetings dealt with all 4 PSPs under evaluation.

- The first meeting was with
 - the Vice-Rector/President of MODIP,
 - the Head of the Department,
 - the Directors of the 4 PSP EEAP under evaluation,

Prof. Emmanouil Flemetakis, Vice Rector/President of MODIP
Prof. Ioanna Mantala, Head of the Department
Prof. Petros Tarantilis, Director Study and Valorisation of Natural Products
Prof. Stamatina Kallithraka, Director Oenology-Technology of Alcoholic Beverage
Prof. Efstathios Panagou, Director Food Quality and Safety Managements Systems
Prof. Maria Kapsokefalou, Director Food and Nutrition

They presented a brief and comprehensive overview of the postgraduate programmes: academic profile, status, strengths and possible areas of concern. The degree of compliance of the programme to the Standards for Quality Accreditation was discussed.

The EEAP had individual meetings with the teaching members of staff, discussing professional development opportunities, mobility, competence and adequacy of the teaching staff to ensure learning outcomes, workload, evaluation by students, the link between teaching and research, the teaching staff involvement in applied research, projects and research activities directly related to the programme; possible areas of weakness

The Food and Nutrition teaching staff members were:

- Prof. Petros Tarantilis
- Ass. Prof. Vassiliki Evaggeliou
- Asst. Prof. Chrysavgi Gardeli
- Asst. Prof. Athanasios Mallouchos
- Dr. Katerina Kandiliari, Laboratory and Teaching Staff

On-line tour was provided including the classrooms, lecture hall, library and laboratory facilities, followed by discussion on the plans developing further the facilities.

The EEAP members had a brief meeting with employers, social partners associated with the activities of the specific master course as per previous postgraduate study.

- Mrs. Artemis Hatzigeorgiou, R&D and Packaging Development Director, Delta Foods SA
- Mr. Antonios Vlassopoulos, Vice President, Hellenic Association of Dietitians Nutritionists
- Mrs. Panagiota Diamantopoulou, Senior Researcher · Hellenic Agricultural Organisation ELGO
 - DEMETER

The EEAP had a private meeting to discuss the findings.

- Closure meeting with the Vice-Rector, the Director of the PSP1, the Head of the Department, MODIP Manager EEAP, Vice-Rector, Director of the PSP1, Head of the Department, MODIP Manager
- Prof. Emmanouil Flemetakis, Vice Rector/President of MODIP
- Prof. Ioanna Mantala, Head of the Department
- Prof. Kapsokefalou Maria, Director of Food and Nutrition
- Mrs. Alexandra Ntouka, MODIP Manager

The EEAP had a private meeting to discuss the main findings, followed by a Closure meeting with the Vice-Rector, the Head of the Department and the Directors of the four PSPs 1. Mrs. Alexandra Ntouka, MODIP Manager, has also attended the closure meeting and her contribution to provide in a timely fashion all additional material requested was acknowledged. The entire process was contacted in a great spirit of collaboration. The staff was helpful and honest of the issues of the programme, and they were very much willing to supplement information with whatever we had requested to access.

III. Postgraduate Study Programme Profile

The Agricultural University of Athens (AUA) is the third-oldest university in Greece. It was established in 1920 (Law 1844/1920) as an Independent Higher Education Institute with university status under the name of the Highest Agricultural School of Athens (H.A.S.A.). In 1989, the H.A.S.A. was renamed the Agricultural University of Athens and organized into seven independent academic departments (Presidential Decree 377/1989) and although its Greek title was modified in 1995 (Presidential Decree 226/1995). Currently, there are six Departments:

- School of Plant Sciences,
- School of Animal Biosciences,
- School of Environmental and Agricultural Engineering,
- School of Applied Biology and Biotechnology
- School of Applied Economics and Social Sciences
- School of Food and Nutritional Sciences

The Department of Food Science and Human Nutrition belongs to the School of Food and Nutritional Sciences, offers to the students the scientific background to scientific and technological issues in the food area. The department promotes the existing knowledge in Food Science and Human Nutrition through research and development programmes conducted in collaboration with other national and international Universities and Research institutions, as well as with research and development departments of small and large Greek food industries.

The department's objectives are as follows:

- Educate scientists to have a solid background in science, technology and economics that will enable them to progress professionally at food industry and stakeholders in the private or public sector.
- Contribute to the development of Food Science and Technology through scientific research and training of researchers.
- Share scientific knowledge with Food Industries by establishing collaboration projects between the University and the industries.

The Department is equipped with the following laboratories that are used in teaching and research:

- Laboratory of Dairy Research
- Laboratory of Oenology and Alcoholic Drinks
- Laboratory of Food Chemistry & Analysis
- Laboratory of Food Process Engineering
- Laboratory of Food Microbiology and Biotechnology
- Laboratory of Food Quality Control & Hygiene
- Laboratory of General Chemistry

The Department of Food Science and Human Nutrition currently offers three post-graduate programmes, namely:

- ☒ MSc in Food Science and Technology
- ☒ MSc in Current Food Technology, with two options
 - Dairy Science & Technology
 - Oenology
- ☒ MSc in Food, Nutrition and Health

The Department also offers two postgraduate studies in collaboration with other Universities.

- ☒ MSc in integrated Production Management of Milk and Dairy Products
- ☒ MBA in Food and Agriculture

The Department of Food Science and Human Nutrition of AUA is committed to provide high-quality education to its students in relevant scientific fields, as well as to developing a creative environment of research and work for its staff. It is a strategic choice of administration, and responsibility is achieved through the continual improvement of teaching and research work, with the cooperation of academic, research, teaching, technical, and administrative staff.

The vision of the Department is to continue advancing educational, research, cultural, and broader social objectives, with a commitment to scientific ethics, accountability, sustainable development, and social cohesion. The Department has implemented a quality assurance policy in alignment with the legal and regulatory framework governing AUA. Through the continuous review, redesign, and refinement of this policy, the Department strives for even higher levels of performance. This approach aims to achieve the highest standards, contributing to the University's pursuit of excellence in education and research and supporting the country's sustained path towards genuine development.

The quality assurance policy of the Department of Food Science and Human Nutrition is an integral component of the University's overall strategy. The development and application of this policy encompass not only established structures and procedures but also active engagement of all personnel. The policy and its implementation strategy are overseen and monitored by the Internal Evaluation Group, in close collaboration with the University's Quality Assurance Unit. To ensure and constantly improve the quality of its educational and research work, as well as the efficient and effective function of its services, the Department complies with the criteria defined in Article 72.2 of the 4009/2011 national law.

Those criteria mainly support:

- Organizing the internal system of quality assurance in the Department o Both head and staff of the Department taking responsibility and assuming their role regarding the quality assurance process
- Preserving academic principles and ethics, preventing discrimination and encouraging the involvement of external agencies with the quality assurance process
- Constantly ameliorating the learning and teaching process, constantly rewarding research and innovation

- Assuring the quality of the Undergraduate Study Programme and its compliance to the special standard of the Hellenic Quality Assurance and Accreditation Agency
- Efficiently organizing departmental services, developing and conserving departmental infrastructure. Effectively providing and managing necessary material and financial resources
- Developing and rational allocating human resources within the Department

The Department of Food Science and Human Nutrition has set three main strategic goals that refer to key quality objectives:

1. Assuring Excellence in Learning and Teaching through –
 - Increasing the number of active students i.e. their performance and efficiency
 - Reducing the average duration of studies until graduation
 - Improving the learning – teaching process
 - Enhancing student-centered learning
 - Continually improving the re-assessing the Undergraduate Study Programme
2. Assuring Excellence in Research through –
 - Increasing the research performance of the departmental academic staff
 - Increasing research recognition
 - Enhancing collaboration with both Greek and foreign universities aiming at the diffusion of research projects and wider synergies
 - Utilizing alternative financial resources (sponsorship/ donations, self-financed programmes of study, participation in international programmes) for research purposes
3. Assuring Internationalisation and Extroversion through –
 - Growing programmes of intra-national cooperation such as Erasmus and IAESTE, aiming at increasing the number of both incoming and outgoing students and academic staff members.
 - Developing synergies with other Departments of the University and other Greek Universities in terms of both undergraduate and postgraduate study programmes
 - Improving the connection of the Department to the labour market and the academic staff members and graduates' collaboration with research, scientific and cultural bodies

Moreover, the Department aims at:

- Continual improvement the working conditions for all staff, as well as resolving issues of infrastructure (buildings, laboratory spaces, scientific equipment etc.)
- Rationalizing and abbreviating procedures regarding administrative work
- Offering Life-long Learning Programmes in scientific fields that relate to Food Science and Human Nutrition
- Establishing a graduates' network with the help of which it will achieve its academic and social goals.
- Contributing to the University's effort to achieve a high position within the World University Ranking

- Reducing pollution and environmental burden caused by its operation, in cooperation with the University
- Organizing and implementing activities for direct and indirect support of socially vulnerable groups of people

The specific master's degree of **Food and Nutrition** was designed to:

- To promote scientific knowledge on issues related to food chemistry, food physical chemistry, food analysis, composition and nutritional quality of foods, food policies and nutrition as well as communication, promotion and entrepreneurship in food.
- To create specialized scientists capable of staffing public and private sector services and active in the production of high-quality competitive products and / or the provision of high-quality services.

The aim of the programme is to provide specialized and up-to-date knowledge and skills to scientists with previous experience in nutrition & food, as well as ensuring the necessary knowledge and skills for young scientists from other disciplines pursuing a professional or research career in the field of nutrition and food.

The graduates should be able to have:

- The ability to describe the basic principles of human nutrition and evaluate the role of foods in their coverage, as they are shaped from the modern way of life and global developments.
- The ability to explain and support the physicochemical properties of raw materials and food ingredients and their utilization in the production of new food or improving existing foods.
- The ability to examine and develop the physicochemical properties of hydrocolloids (proteins and polysaccharides) and their utilization as imitators fat but also in the formation of gels, emulsions, foams, edibles membranes and systems for the encapsulation and transport of bioactive substances, thus contributing to the structure, packaging and functionality of a food.
- The ability to design and develop functional foods and supplements with functional properties that help promote health and treatment of chronic diseases.
- The ability to reflect on the importance of food composition as an element of quality, and commercial value and communication of nutritional value.
- To be autonomous use of modern automated equipment and new improved analytical techniques in food chemistry and composition.
- To work autonomous development and utilization of composition and quality databases for food and their application in digital applications in food and human nutrition.
- Ability to understand, distinguish and utilize, according to the goal, the complexity of the quality elements of the country's traditional food, as well as the production of innovative quality products of the food industry and the bio-economy, from new, where possible, raw materials, and with the use, as far as possible, of sustainable and environmentally friendly processes.

There are five academics that are teaching at this master course, two at the level of Professor, one at the level of Associate Professor and two at the level of Lecturer.

PART B: COMPLIANCE WITH THE PRINCIPLES

Principle 1: Strategy, Quality Assurance Policy and Quality Goal Setting for the New Postgraduate Study Programmes

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD INCLUDE IN THEIR STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT THE DEVELOPMENT, ORGANISATION, AND IMPLEMENTATION OF NEW POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES (PSP) IN SPECIFIC SCIENTIFIC FIELDS AFTER INVESTIGATING THEIR FEASIBILITY AND SUSTAINABILITY.

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD APPLY A QUALITY ASSURANCE POLICY FOR THE NEW POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES AS PART OF THEIR STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT.

THIS POLICY SHOULD EXPAND AND BE AIMED (WITH THE COLLABORATION OF EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS) AT THE PSP OF THE INSTITUTION AND THE ACADEMIC UNIT. THIS POLICY SHOULD BE PUBLISHED AND IMPLEMENTED BY ALL INTERESTED PARTIES.

By decision/s of the Institutional Senate, the Institutions should adapt their strategy to allow for the provision of postgraduate study programmes, in addition to attending to the profile, vision, mission and strategic objectives of the Institution. In this strategy, the Institutions should anticipate the potential benefits, difficulties or risks from the implementation of new postgraduate study programmes and plan all the necessary actions to achieve their goals. The Institution's strategic choices should be documented through specific feasibility and sustainability studies, especially for new postgraduate study programmes.

In the case of PSP delivered by distance methods, the Institution prepares and applies an e-learning strategy. The Institution's e-learning strategy is integrated into its overall strategy and identifies educational goals while keeping up to the rapid technological changes and to the developments in pedagogical models. The Institution should include in its strategy the justification and feasibility as to why e-learning has been selected as the appropriate learning strategy for the particular programmes of study where it is applied.

In the context of e-learning, innovation strategies, the possibility of programme revision, the linking between learning and research (requiring knowledge of the latest innovations in order to select the most appropriate means to achieve the learning outcomes) should be taken into account.

The quality assurance policy of the academic unit for postgraduate study programmes should be in line with the Institution's strategy and must be formulated in the form of a public statement, which is implemented by all stakeholders. It focuses on the achievement of special goals related to the quality assurance of the postgraduate study programmes offered by the academic unit. Indicatively, the quality policy statement of the academic unit includes its commitment to implement a quality policy that will promote the academic profile and orientation of the postgraduate study programme (PSP), its purpose and field of study; it will realise the programme's goals and it will determine the means and ways for attaining them; it will implement appropriate quality procedures, aiming at the programme's continuous improvement.

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

- a. *the suitability of the structure and organisation of postgraduate study programmes*
- b. *the pursuit of learning outcomes and qualifications in accordance with the European and National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education - level 7*
- c. *the promotion of the quality and effectiveness of teaching at the PSP*

- d. *the appropriateness of the qualifications and the availability of the teaching staff for the PSP*
- e. *the drafting, implementation, and review of specific annual quality goals for the improvement of the PSP*
- f. *the level of demand for the graduates' qualifications in the labour market*
- g. *the quality of support services, such as administrative services, the libraries, and the student welfare office for the PSP*
- h. *the efficient utilisation of the financial resources of the PSP that may be drawn from tuition fees*
- i. *the conduct of an annual internal review and audit of the quality assurance system for the PSP through the cooperation of the Internal Evaluation Group (IEG) with the Institution's Quality Assurance Unit (QAU)*

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The Director and the Faculty involved into the PSP entitled “Food and Nutrition” presented a comprehensive postgraduate programme that includes two semesters with courses (30 ECTS each) while the 3rd semester is allocated for practical exercise (12 ECTS) and the preparation and defence of the MSc thesis (18 ECTS).

The facilities and the inventory, presented through an excellent and well-articulated video that is nicely describing the inventory and how it is being exploited. Such inventory is expected to offer to the MSc students a thorough hands-on practice in analyses linked to wines and other alcoholic beverages. Overall, the learning outcomes of the PSP are considered appropriate for level 7, according to the European and National Qualifications Framework.

The Quality Assurance Policy of the academic unit includes a commitment of the academic unit for its implementation and the efficient use of PSP financial resources.

The academic unit has set a number of specific and measurable goals regarding the postgraduate study programme, and especially in respect of teaching methods and student satisfaction paired with suitable key performance indicators. Specific goals towards learning outcomes and research outputs (i.e. publications in refereed journal or presentations in Conferences per MSc student) are missing. This is a shortcoming.

The graduates of this PSP are expected to enhance their competencies and seek a position of professional maturity, mainly into the private food sector by covering in an interdisciplinary manner the nutritional aspects.

All members of MODIP and Academic staff were particularly positive and passionate about working beyond the line of duty to achieve excellence.

The nature of the offered MSc programme provides incentives for fruitful collaboration with companies in the food and nutrition sector and other professional bodies and communities. This interaction is expected to additionally lead to enhanced AUA visibility and recognition within the national and international community.

II. Analysis

The graduates of this PSP are expected to enhance their competencies and seek a position of professional maturity, mainly into the private food sector by covering in an interdisciplinary manner the nutritional aspects.

All members of MODIP and Academic staff were particularly positive and passionate about working beyond the line of duty to achieve excellence.

III. Conclusions

The nature of the offered MSc programme provides incentives for fruitful collaboration with companies in the food and nutrition sector and other professional bodies and communities. This interaction is expected to additionally lead to enhanced AUA visibility and recognition within the national and international community.

Panel Judgement

Principle 1: Strategy, Quality Assurance Policy and Quality Goal Setting for the New Postgraduate Study Programmes	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

R1.1 Upon official accreditation of the PSP, the Quality Assurance Policy to be uploaded into the newly developed website and to be sufficiently communicated to all interested parties (BSc students, graduates, stakeholders, etc) through emails and social media (LinkedIn).

R1.2 The quality of the teaching to be monitored by the provision of electronic and anonymous questionnaire to the MSc students, in relation to the subject taught and the resources provided as well as the performance of the academic staff. Such results to be

evaluated in a yearly basis by the Director of the PSP together with the MOPDIP and the Vice Rector for Academic Affairs

R1.3 The PSP programme to include a number of specific and measurable goals towards learning outcomes and research outputs (i.e. publications in refereed journal or presentations in Conferences per MSc student) and means to inform the alumnae and other potential interested parties from other Academic Units for enrolment to the current programme.

Principle 2: Design and Approval of New Postgraduate Study Programmes

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

The academic units develop their postgraduate study programmes following a well-defined procedure. The academic profile and orientation of the programme, the research character, the scientific objectives, the specific subject areas, the specialisations, the expected learning outcomes, the structure, the courses, the teaching and assessment modes, the teaching staff and the necessary resources are described at this stage.

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

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

In addition, the design of PSP must consider:

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

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

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The new PSP on 'Food and Nutrition' has been approved by the University's senate (decision no. 9816/21.12.2023) following official procedures by the institution. It is a continuation of an earlier PSP (Food, Nutrition, and Health) at the Department of Food Science and Technology (FST) with three specializations I) Nutrition, Public Health, and Policies II) Food Chemistry and Nutrition and III) Study and Utilisation of Natural Products. The new PSP has an exclusive specialization in Food and Nutrition and aims to fill a learning gap for students who are interested in working as executives in the food industry in positions that will equally address food and human nutrition issues. It therefore provides a greater focus on human nutrition, food physical chemistry, food chemical analysis, food composition and quality data science with food design and nutrition communication as part of industry and state level food promotion strategies.

The PSP's further specialization with a new study guide is considered desirable and necessary to reflect the changes that have taken place within the department and to consider the needs-comments of the students as reflected in the evaluations during the operation of the previous PSP. At the same time, the new PSP has been designed to reflect the strategy of the AUA, the FST, and the LFCA to contribute to the development of the Greek economy and the scientific advancement of young scientists.

External stakeholders from the labour market and graduates contributed to the design of the new PSP.

The structure of the study programme is rational, coherent, and clearly articulated. The printed Student Guide is complete, concise, and appropriate and offers basic information about the Department and in particular the postgraduate programme. The courses are taught by a teaching staff of 5. The offered courses are well connected to the research interests and activities of the teaching staff.

The expected learning outcomes are in accordance with the European and National Qualifications Framework (EQF, NQF) and the Dublin Descriptors for level 7. The PSP consists of 3 semesters, totalling 90 ECTS. The first semester includes the attendance of 4 compulsory courses and one (1) cycle of seminars, which correspond to a total of thirty (30) ECTS. The second semester includes the attendance of four (4) compulsory courses, one (1) elective course, and one (1) cycle of seminars. The third semester of studies (30 ETCS) includes the preparation and writing of the master's Thesis (24 ECTS) and a two-month Practical Training (6 ECTS) that provides working experience to students.

II. Analysis

The proposed PSP in "Food and Nutrition" is a well-designed PSP serving the needs of an important, complicated, and increasingly demanding sector. From its conception to its final development, the PSP organizing committee, and its director followed a defined process involving social partners, external advisers, academics, and former graduates to create a mature and interesting study programme. The PSP should be open to incorporate more

content on topics with potential future growth and importance in the food sector and keep up to date with new developments and technologies.

Detailed course descriptions have been provided clearly stating detailed content, learning outcomes and skills expected to be acquired by students, the organization of the lectures and methods of delivery, the supporting structure of the learning processes, and the assessment methods. The language is Greek, and the thesis can be written either in Greek or English. Adopting the English language in some lectures and seminars could further enhance the PSP.

There is no clear framework for student assessment of teaching staff beyond vague descriptions of teaching assessment. It would have been informative for the external assessment committee to see a draft of the proposed teaching evaluation surveys that would be distributed to students and/or some evidence of peer review of teaching.

III. Conclusions

In the opinion of the Panel, this new PSP is substantially compliant with design and approval. The recommendations of the Panel are advisory in order to facilitate the continuous pursuit of improvement and excellence.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

R2.1 Introduce mid-term exams or other evaluation activities (quizzes etc.) that could count to the final grade of the courses and offer better engagement of the students.

R2.2 Introduce a mechanism/s to ensure high participation of students to the evaluation of the teaching staff (e.g., include it as one of the obligations of the students; couple it to the release of the course grade etc.).

R2.3 Ensure that there is continuous feedback from stakeholders and graduates. Establish a mechanism (e.g., an informal advisory board) of regular meetings and not ad hoc conversations that usually take place during invited talks.

R2.4 Implement an internal peer-review scheme of teaching between the teaching staff.

R2.5 Create a functional, detailed, and informative web site (in Greek and English). Links to detailed CVs of the teaching staff and quality indicators (Scopus, Google Scholar etc.).

R2.6 Introduce courses on innovation, business set-up,

R2.7 Consider offering teaching also in English in case of foreign students and include this possibility in the study guides.

Principle 3: Regulations for Student Admission, Progression, Recognition of Postgraduate Studies, and certification

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

The Institution should develop and publish the internal regulations prescribed by law which, among other things, should regulate all issues of postgraduate studies from the beginning to the end of the studies.

Indicatively:

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

In case that the PSP is offered through distance learning methods, the Institution should have in place a regulation for e-learning, including in particular the following issues:

- *Services of the Institution to support e-learning*
- *Methodology for the development and implementation of courses*
- *Ways of providing teaching and variety of teaching and assessment modes*
- *General standard of course structure*
- *Student support system*
- *Support of faculty/teachers with mandatory e-learning training for new staff members*
- *Technological infrastructures made available by the Institution*
- *Student identity confirmation system (student identity check, assignment and exam writing process, security and certification issues).*
- ❖ *The Institution should establish rules for the provision of appropriate access and for the assurance of the participation of students affected by disability, illness, and other special circumstances.*
- ❖ *Ethical issues, such as those concerning data protection, intellectual property rights and rules for protection against fraud are governed by the e-learning regulation.*

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

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The Agricultural University of Athens, School of Food and Nutrition Sciences and the newly proposed master's programme of food and nutrition in the Department of Food Science and Nutrition is based in Athens, Greece.

The proposed Postgraduate Department of Food Science and Nutrition has set objectives for the advanced education of scientists to provide the necessary tools of scientific knowledge through teaching and research laboratories in the respected courses and available laboratory equipment.

The learning qualifications of master's degree Graduates include but are not limited to understanding physiological properties of foods, design and development of functional foods in order to promote nutritional value, health benefits, quality, and innovation of new and improved product lines for local, national and international food consumption markets.

The MSc Food and Nutrition programme sets targets for quality assurance, carries out the annual internal evaluation of the proposed study curriculum, collects and analyses data, disseminates all related information, and implements its external evaluation procedures in accordance with required standards of the National Authority for Higher Education.

II. Analysis

The duration of full-time studies for the master's degree comprises of 3 academic semesters for a total of 90 (ECTS) that includes original research of a master's Thesis and also a mandatory two-month practical training internship. The students are required to attend all courses, including seminars. The language of instruction is Greek, and the language of master's Thesis is Greek or English. The proposed curriculum is adequate for a Post Graduate Degree. The duration of each academic semester is thirteen weeks.

The number of admitted students per year in the Department does not exceed six and the minimum grade for admission and graduation is six (6). The perspective applicant to the Postgraduate programme has to submit all required documents to a dedicated Committee for admissions for a proper selection process in order to meet all needed criteria.

A code of ethics is in place that all students must comply with to a list of rules for attending, researching and executing all the related requirements. Scholarships are awarded according to the needs of the incoming applicant or a proven exceptional previous or current academic record.

An academic advisor is available and monitors the progress, supports and guides the student for a successful completion of their degree.

A Liaison Office is in place to help Graduates with all necessary needs of the student for their educational progress, vocational guidance, connection with the labour market, networking activity and link with relevant bodies, institutions, organizations in Greece and abroad.

All mobility actions under the ERASMUS Programme are coordinated by the European Programmes office, with relevant mobility opportunities. The master's Programme is actively

engaged in all mobility activities especially for internship and/or help with master's Thesis. The website of the Programme is offered in both Greek and English language. The students submit their applications electronically through the website of the Education Ministry.

III. Conclusions

The above Principle 3 has fully met the requirements according to the specific guidelines and directions provided by HAHE.

Panel Judgement

Principle 3: Regulations for Student Admission, Progression, Recognition of Postgraduate Studies, and certification	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

R3.1 Establish more specific academic and experiential requirements for admission to better align student backgrounds with programme expectations.

Principle 4: Teaching Staff of New Postgraduate Study Programmes

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

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

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

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

Faculty use a variety of teaching tools and pedagogical methods. According to OMEA, all course teaching material (.ppt presentations) will be available online through the e-class platform.

Faculty average teaching load has been considered and all of them expressed high degree of commitment towards their additional teaching load for the new postgraduate programme, in a similar manner that the previous postgraduate study was operating. Faculty was satisfied with the previous workload.

Several DEP, for the stage of their career, have good quality of research activity for the stage of their career and in certain cases with international recognition, as reflected in the number of publications in refereed journals, citations, h-index.

The teaching faculty consists of 5 well qualified educators in their respective fields of specialization. However, the focus of their expertise is on Food Science, and it is one member of staff that the specific field is related to nutrition. It is very important to balance the teaching staff, and the subjects included with relevant nutritional knowledge.

II. Analysis

Faculty access to facilities and laboratory equipment and mobility programmes is adequate. The staff expressed their commitment and engagement with the students to support them and progress their professional development.

III. Conclusions

The teaching staff express its commitment towards the implementation of the new MSc programme. Their research profiles are decent and/or of high quality for some cases. There is evident lack of a critical mass of Faculty in the area of Food Nutrition.

Panel Judgement

Principle 4: Teaching Staff of New Postgraduate Study Programmes	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	X
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

R4.1 To employ and engage staff members with nutritional background and balance the course equally.

R4.2 Introduce additional courses focused on nutrition and related fields to diversify learning and better align with industry demands.

Principle 5: Learning Resources and Student Support

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD HAVE ADEQUATE FUNDING TO COVER THE TEACHING AND LEARNING NEEDS OF THE POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES. 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, CAREER AND SOCIAL POLICY SERVICES ETC.).

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

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

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

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The Postgraduate Study Programme (PSP) "Food & Nutrition" at the Agricultural University of Athens (AUA) offers a comprehensive curriculum aimed at providing both theoretical knowledge and practical experience. The programme is conducted entirely in-person, with attendance mandatory for all students, as there is no provision for distance learning. The courses are taught by faculty members from the Agricultural University of Athens (AUA). Weekly seminars are organized for each course, during which an expert, either an academic or a professional, from Greece or abroad, is invited to give a lecture. The PSP spans three semesters and comprises a total of 90 ECTS. In the first two semesters, students complete core courses alongside seminar series for a combined 60 ECTS. During the third semester, students focus on writing their master's Thesis (24 ECTS) and completing a two-month Practical Training (6 ECTS), designed to provide hands-on experience. A maximum of 30 students are accepted into the programme annually, and if fewer than seven students enrol, the Department Assembly reviews whether to proceed with the programme.

At the end of the first semester, a presentation is made to students by the laboratories to help them choose thesis topics based on the needs of each lab.

The PSP is supported by five faculty members (DEP), two Laboratory Teaching Staff (EDIP), and one member of the Special Technical Laboratory Staff (EXAT), all of whom are highly qualified and actively engaged in research. The programme's academic resources include two lecture rooms, each accommodating around 25 students, and access to state-of-the-art laboratories such as the Chemistry & Food Analysis Laboratory. Additionally, this laboratory provides a research and teaching space with a capacity for over 50 students, offering advanced facilities equipped with modern instruments like High- Performance Liquid Chromatography (HPLC), Gas Chromatography-Mass Spectrometry (GC-MS), and Fourier Transform Infrared Spectroscopy (FT-IR). These resources provide a strong foundation for both research and practical training, ensuring comprehensive learning for the students.

Administrative support for the PSP is provided by the programme's Secretariat, ensuring smooth operations, including course registration, grade management, and the handling of tuition fees. Additionally, the AUA provides access to its Central Library, which offers digital resources like electronic journals and academic databases and remains open daily until the afternoon. Students also benefit from the e-class, which enhances their learning experience through online course materials and resources. There are also support services for students with disabilities, career counselling through the Career Office which provides guidance on job placements and professional networking, while InnovinAgri promotes innovation and entrepreneurship. The university also provides psychological counselling and health services, contributing to student well-being. Although ERASMUS+ mobility opportunities are available for study and internships abroad, student participation remains low.

To further support students in their academic journey, the programme has recently introduced except from supervisor and academic advisors for each student, ensuring personalized guidance on academic matters. A Student Ombudsman is available to also help resolve disputes between students and university faculty or administration, while the Gender Equality Committee promotes inclusivity and works to combat discrimination within the university. Despite these strong support systems, it is important to note that there is no student dormitory associated with the programme. Nevertheless, students have access to recreational activities, including cultural and athletic programmes, to help enrich their student life.

The annual budget for operating the PSP, based on an intake of 30 students (noting that the minimum number for programme viability is 7), is estimated at 84.000 €, with 8,5 % allocated to faculty salaries. Up to 30% of the total number of enrolled students per academic year may be exempt from tuition fees. The tuition fee for the PSP is set at 4.000 €, payable in three instalments (as stated in the study regulations) The budget allocation covers personnel costs (lecturers and support staff), equipment, and programme-related consumables.

Scholarships will be available, funded by 1% of the PSP's net revenues, and will be awarded to students who demonstrate academic excellence. However, these scholarships do not offer tuition fee exemptions.

Currently, there is no dedicated website for this particular master's programme; only a brief mention exists on the general department website.

II. Analysis

The PSP offers a comprehensive academic curriculum, integrating theoretical knowledge with practical experience. The infrastructure and resources available to the PSP "Food & Nutrition" are well-equipped to meet the academic and practical needs of the students. The Chemistry & Food Analysis Laboratory, with its state-of-the-art equipment, offers substantial research opportunities and practical learning experiences, enhancing the students' educational outcomes. However, while the seminar series adds value to the programme by bringing in external expertise, further diversification in course offerings, particularly in nutrition, would strengthen the curriculum.

The support services provided by AUA, including the programme's Secretariat, the Central Library, InnovinAgri, and the Career Office, reflect a strong commitment to student welfare. However, the limited participation in mobility programmes such as ERASMUS+ indicates a potential need for better promotion and guidance to help students take full advantage of these opportunities. Furthermore, the lack of a dedicated dormitory may pose challenges for students from outside Athens, impacting their overall experience. Additionally, the absence of a dedicated website – under establishment PSP- for this PSP diminishes the programme's visibility, making it harder to attract prospective students and establish external collaborations.

While the tuition utilization plan is generally well-structured, the lack of significant financial incentives, such as industry-funded scholarships, may limit the programme's attractiveness to high-performing candidates from lower socioeconomic backgrounds.

III. Conclusions

The PSP "Food & Nutrition" at AUA provides a solid educational framework, supported by modern research facilities and essential student services. Its strengths lie in its specialized laboratories and practical training opportunities, which align well with the programme's academic objectives. However, improvements could be made in terms of expanding the curriculum, enhancing student mobility through the ERASMUS+ programme, and increasing the programme's visibility.

Panel Judgement

Principle 5: Learning Resources and Student Support	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

R5.1 Consider establishing a formal external Advisory Board comprised of external faculty, graduates, and social partners to actively assist and guide the continuous review, revision, and further development of the PSP curriculum, enhance the entire programme, as well as attract external resources.

R5.2 Enhance promotion and provide targeted guidance to encourage greater student participation in international mobility programmes.

R5.3 Explore opportunities for industry-funded scholarships or tuition fee waivers to attract high-achieving students from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds.

R5.4 Create an alumni association.

R5.5 Move the thesis presentation and selection process to the beginning of the academic year instead of the end of the first semester. This adjustment will allow students to make informed decisions about their thesis topics early on, giving them ample time to prepare and conduct research throughout the year. It will also facilitate better alignment of students' interests with available workshops and resources, ultimately enhancing the quality and relevance of their dissertations.

Principle 6: Initial Internal and External Evaluation and Monitoring of New Postgraduate Study Programmes

INSTITUTIONS AND ACADEMIC UNITS SHOULD HAVE IN PLACE AN INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM, FOR THE AUDIT, INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL EVALUATION OF THE NEW POSTGRADUATE PROGRAMMES, THUS ENSURING COMPLIANCE WITH THE PRINCIPLES OF THE PRESENT STANDARDS. ANY ACTIONS TAKEN IN THE ABOVE CONTEXT SHOULD BE COMMUNICATED TO ALL PARTIES CONCERNED.

The internal evaluation of the new PSP includes the assessment of the accreditation proposal, as well as the documentation in accordance with the Principles of the present Standards and the quality procedures of the Institution's Internal Quality Assurance System (IQAS). The internal evaluation of new postgraduate study programmes also aims at maintaining the level of educational provision and creating a supportive and effective learning environment for students. The Institution, through its Quality Assurance Unit (QAU) and the corresponding academic units, organise and support the external evaluation procedures of the new PSP, according to the specific guidelines and directions provided by HAHE.

The above comprise the assessment of:

- *the objectives, content, and structure of the curriculum, the knowledge offered and the level of science and technology in the given discipline, thus ensuring that the PSP is up to date, according to the relevant documentation listed in the decisions of the pertinent bodies*
- *the entailed students' workload for the progression and completion of postgraduate studies*
- *the satisfaction of the students' expectations and needs in relation to the programme*
- *the learning environment, support services, and their fitness for purpose for the PSP in question*

Postgraduate study programmes are designed and established in accordance with the provisions of the Institution's internal regulations, involving students and other stakeholders.

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The proposed master's Programme after a well prepared, lengthy, detailed, and well-presented plan in the shortest time met all necessary requirements of the standards for a quality accreditation. All objectives, content, and structure of the curriculum are adequately presented in conjunction with existing labs and equipment for food analysis and experimentation.

The workload is an agreement with international standards for a master's Programme with mandatory lecture and lab attendance, seminars, internship and available contacts for continued education and/or work.

II. Analysis

All faculty members work as a tight group and they well understand, as expressed, the importance of both internal and external evaluation and accreditation of the new Postgraduate Department. The faculty is open to suggestions for improvement and invite any constructive recommendations and proposals that can make them better in order to produce a new generation of well-prepared scientists, to meet the needs and demands of the ever developing Domestic and International Food Market.

All present stakeholders assured us that are participating in the internal and external evaluation of the Postgraduate Programme (PSP), and they offered their services and time for any upcoming events and needs.

The proposed programme has not undergone any external review previously.

The student load is according to National European and International requirements for a PSP including restrictions for duration of studies, minimum grades on entrance into the programme, minimum grades in graduation the programme, mandatory attendance of lectures and labs and for being awarded the Postgraduate degree.

The Postgraduate students' workload and level of knowledge through attending all required coursework, labs, seminars, internship and writing and defending a thesis in front of a faculty committee can prepare them in the area of Food and Nutrition.

The expectations of the students and their opinions about the programme has to be evaluated after the first graduating class complete their degrees.

III. Conclusions

The above principle 6 for a Master's degree in Food and Nutrition has fully met the requirements according to the specific guidelines and directions provided by HAHE.

Panel Judgement

Principle 6: Initial Internal and External Evaluation and Monitoring of New Postgraduate Study Programmes	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

R6.1 Establish an advisory board that includes industry partners, alumni, and academic representatives to provide an annual external review of programme quality and relevance.

PART C: CONCLUSIONS

I. Features of Good Practice

- Well-equipped labs that at certain cases include modern facilities with significant student hands-on experience.
- The facilities presented through an excellent and well-articulated video that is nicely describing the inventory and how it being exploited.
- Experienced PSP faculty with advanced degrees and experience.
- Well-designed programme covering important needs in the food sector.
- Involvement of stakeholders and past graduates in the design of the PSP.
- Established QAS to ensure evaluation and efficient revisions of the programme.
- Utilization of comprehensive facilities and established digital platforms to support both remote and in-person learning effectively.
- Availability of career guidance, psychosocial support, and the "student ombudsman" office to assist students in various aspects.

II. Areas of Weakness

- Food Nutrition element appears underrepresented in terms of modules and Faculty.
- There is a lack of a module in Statistics and cutting-edge technologies.
- No mechanism for periodic revision of the PSP.
- No details of the course and teaching evaluation by students and mechanisms to deal with low participation in the surveys (a well-known problem).
- Lack of a computerized food analysis and Nutrition Facts programme.

III. Recommendations for Follow-up Actions

- The two components of the new Programme (Food and Nutrition) need to have equal contribution.
- The outline of the modules needs to be amended and provide a more clear and coherent manner activities linked to hands on experience.
- Continuous and regular consultation with stakeholders.
- To incorporate a module in Statistics that can be offered horizontally for all PSPs of the Department
- The PSP should conduct interviews to ensure high quality of academic calibre among its students and set the number of 15 as a reasonable upper threshold provided that they fulfil specific qualitative criteria.
- All relevant files of the PSP have to be uploaded into the newly developed website once the programme will be officially accredited.
- To establish a risk analysis and mitigation strategy for the practical exercise of the MSc students regarding (i) identification of the host organization and (ii) satisfactory surveys

for both parts (MSc student and Host Organization) and mitigation measures where the results are not those that were expected.

- To establish a Board from the pool of stakeholders to offer consultancy in the curriculum and future Programme developments
- To develop an Alumni Association that track the employability and career paths of graduates.
- Annual evaluation results should be disseminated through the website and mailing lists to students, alumni and stakeholders.
- Clarify in more detail the student evaluation of the teaching staff.
- Consider changing the assessment methods for courses by including both team and individual assessed tasks as well as mid-term evaluations.
- Implement an internal peer-review scheme of teaching.
- Include courses on cutting-edge technologies.
- Develop detailed contingency plans for lower enrolment scenarios, including potential adjustments in lecturer compensation and exploring alternative funding sources.
- Establish provisions for studentships and awards to attract and support outstanding students, thereby enhancing the programme's appeal and competitiveness.
- Actively encourage student participation in ERASMUS+ and other exchange opportunities with targeted guidance and financial incentives.
- Promote a policy for the faculty's support and development concerning their teaching duties. Establish the "teacher of the year" concept.
- PSP faculty members are encouraged to adopt the English language in some lectures and seminars to promote PSP's visibility and create opportunities for international exchanges in the future.
- Support the creation of a PSP alumni that will help further development and improvement of the quality of the PSP.

IV. Summary & Overall Assessment

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

The Principles where substantial compliance has been achieved are: **2,4**

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

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

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

The members of the External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel

Name and Surname

- 1. Assoc. Prof. Amalia Tsiami (Chair)**
- 2. Dr. Demetrios Kazantzis**
- 3. Prof. George Manganaris**
- 4. Assoc. Prof. Anastasios Papageorgiou**
- 5. Mr. Yannis Chatzieffraimidis**