



ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ
HELLENIC REPUBLIC



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Accreditation Report
for the New Undergraduate Study Programme in
operation of:

Music Technology and Acoustics

Institution: Hellenic Mediterranean University

Date: 18 November 2022



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 New Undergraduate Study Programme in operation of **Music Technology and Acoustics** of the **Hellenic Mediterranean University** for the purposes of granting accreditation.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Part A: Background and Context of the Review	4
I. The External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel.....	4
II. Review Procedure and Documentation	5
III. New Undergraduate Study Programme in operation Profile.....	6
Part B: Compliance with the Principles	7
Principle 1: Strategic Planning, Feasibility and Sustainability of the Academic Unit.....	7
Principle 2: Quality Assurance Policy of the Institution and the Academic Unit.....	14
Principle 3: Design, Approval and Monitoring of the Quality of the New Undergraduate Programmes	19
Principle 4: Student-centred Approach in Learning, Teaching and Assessment of Students.....	23
Principle 5: Student Admission, Progression, Recognition of Academic Qualifications and Award of Degrees and Certificates of Competence of the New Study Programmes.....	26
Principle 6: Ensuring the Competence and High Quality of the Teaching Staff of the New Undergraduate Study Programmes	29
Principle 7: Learning Resources and Student Support of the New Undergraduate Programmes...	33
Principle 8: Collection, Analysis and Use of Information for the Organisation and Operation of New Undergraduate Programmes	36
Principle 9: Public Information Concerning the New Undergraduate Programmes	39
Principle 10: Periodic Internal Review of the New Study Programmes.....	41
Principle 11: Regular External Evaluation and Accreditation of the New Undergraduate Programmes.....	44
Principle 12: Monitoring the Transition from Previous Undergraduate Study Programmes to the New Ones.....	46
Part C: Conclusions	49
I. Features of Good Practice	49
II. Areas of Weakness	49
III. Recommendations for Follow-up Actions	50
IV. Summary & Overall Assessment	51

PART A: BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT OF THE REVIEW

I. The External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel

The Panel responsible for the Accreditation Review of the new undergraduate study programme in operation of **Music Technology and Acoustics** of the **Hellenic Mediterranean University** comprised the following three (3) members, drawn from the HAHE Register, in accordance with Laws 4009/2011 & 4653/2020:

1. Professor George Tzanetakis (Chair)

Department of Computer Science, University of Victoria, Canada

2. Associate Professor Evis Sammoutis (Committee Member)

School of Music, Theatre and Dance, Ithaca College, NY, USA

3. Mrs. Ioanna Kerefiadou

Student of the Department of Visual Arts, Athens School of Fine Arts, Greece

II. Review Procedure and Documentation

The accreditation visit took place over the course of two days (Nov 14-Nov 15, 2022). Originally, the plan was for two of the committee members to conduct an on-site visit and the two other members to participate remotely. Due to an unforeseen accident with one of the committee members, one member conducted the visit on-site, and the remaining three members participated remotely. During the visit the accreditation panel had the chance to interact with several stakeholders through attending presentations, asking questions, and discussing issues pertinent to the department. The stakeholders consulted consisted of the senior management of the department and the university, faculty members, students, alumni, and collaborating organisations). The meetings were conducted in a hybrid fashion with some of the participants attending in person and some of the participants attending online using video conferencing software.

The accreditation panel was provided with documentation and information from both Hellenic Authority for Higher Education (HAHE) (the template for the accreditation report, mapping grid, guidelines) as well as extensive documentation supporting the accreditation review from the Department of Music Technology and Acoustics. The provided documents covered all aspects required for the accreditation such as accreditation report, measured performance indicators, undergraduate study programme guide, and quality assurance policy.

The panel consulted all the provided documentation, as well as examined publicly available resources such as the website of the department both before and after the site visit. During the site visit, the panel was able to ask clarification questions, engage in dialog with the various stakeholders, and obtain a thorough picture of the undergraduate study programme. Decisions regarding compliance and the writing of the accreditation report were made with equal participation from each panel member and were unanimously agreed upon through a consensus-building process. The academic unit fully collaborated with the panel during the accreditation process and provided any additional information and clarifications that were requested in a timely and professional manner.

III. New Undergraduate Study Programme in operation Profile

The Department was established in 1999 as part of the Technical Educational Institute (TEI) of Crete. In 2019 transitioned from a technical educational institution (TEI) to a University department, and it is now part of the newly formed Hellenic Mediterranean University (HMU). HMU consists of several academic units that were previously part of the TEI of Crete. The department and corresponding undergraduate study programme are unique in terms of scope among Greek Universities and addresses the increasing need for highly qualified personnel in the areas of Music Technology and Acoustics. In contrast to other music-related programs in Greece that study music from an arts and humanities perspective, this programme has a clear engineering/science focus in the areas of Music Technology and Acoustics. It is part of the School of Music and Audio-Visual Technologies of the Hellenic Mediterranean University. The School at the moment has a single department but there is a planned Department of Music Studies that has been officially approved but has not started operations. The duration of the Bachelor studies is 4 years and requires to complete at least 240 ECTS (European Credit Transfer and Accumulation Systems) in order to graduate. The department also offers graduate degrees at the Masters level (MSc in Sound and Music Technologies) and since 2019 has also been offering PhD studies.

The approximately 500 existing graduates of the department are employed in areas related to their field of study in the private and public sector. There are several possible relevant jobs. Examples include acoustic consultants, audio developers, sound engineers, audio-visual specialists, film and radio engineers, and educators specialised in music technology in music middle schools and high schools as well as conservatories. There is a growing demand for people with skills in music technology and acoustics both nationally and internationally.

The department is located in the city of Rethymnon on the island of Crete and currently has approximately 600 students (corresponding to 4 years + 2) with the latest number of incoming students being 67. The department has 16 permanent faculty members and 11 temporary faculty members. Rethymnon is also home to several units of the University of Crete with a total student population of approximately 8000 students. The Hellenic Mediterranean University consists of six schools, with more than 12000 undergraduate and graduate students and approximately 400 faculty and researchers.

PART B: COMPLIANCE WITH THE PRINCIPLES

Principle 1: Strategic Planning, Feasibility and Sustainability of the Academic Unit

Institutions must have developed an appropriate strategy for the establishment and operation of new academic units and the provision of new undergraduate study programmes. This strategy should be documented by specific feasibility and sustainability studies.

By decision of the institutional Senate, the Institutions should address in their strategy issues related to their academic structure in academic units and study programmes, which support the profile, the vision, the mission, and the strategic goal setting of the Institution, within a specific time frame. The strategy of the Institution should articulate the potential benefits, weaknesses, opportunities or risks from the operation of new academic units and study programmes, and plan all the necessary actions towards the achievement of their goals.

The strategy of their academic structure should be documented by specific feasibility and sustainability studies, especially for new academic units and new study programmes.

More specifically, the feasibility study of the new undergraduate study programmes should be accompanied by a four-year business plan to meet specific needs in infrastructure, services, human resources, procedures, financial resources, and management systems.

During the evaluation of the Institutions and their individual academic units in terms of meeting the criteria for the organisation of undergraduate study programmes, particular attention must be placed upon:

a. The academic profile and the mission of the academic unit

The profile and mission of the department should be specified. The scientific field of the department should be included in the internationally established scientific fields of Higher Education, as they are designated by the international categorisation of scientific fields in education, by UNESCO (ISCED 2013).

b. The strategy of the Institution for its academic development

The academic development strategy for the operation of the department and the new study programme should be set out. This strategy should result from the investigation of the factors that influence the studies and the research in the scientific field, the investigation of the institutional, economic, developmental, and social parameters that apply in the external environment of the Institution, as well as the possibilities and capabilities that exist within the internal environment (as reflected in a SWOT Analysis: strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats). This specific analysis should demonstrate the reason for selecting the scientific field of the new department.

c. The documentation of the feasibility of the operation of the department and the study programme

The feasibility of the operation of the new department should be justified based on:

- *the needs of the national and regional economy (economic sectors, employment, supply-demand, expected academic and professional qualifications)*
- *comparison with other national and international study programmes of the same scientific field*
- *the state-of-the-art developments*

- *the existing academic map; the differentiation of the proposed department from the already existing ones needs to be analysed, in addition to the implications of the current image of the academic map in the specific scientific field.*

d. The documentation of the sustainability of the new department

Mention must be made to the infrastructure, human resources, funding perspective, services, and all other available resources in terms of:

- *educational and research facilities (buildings, rooms, laboratories, equipment, etc.)*
- *staff (existing and new, by category, specialty, rank and laboratory). A distinct five-year plan is required, documenting the commitment of the School and of the Institution for filling in the necessary faculty positions to cover at least the entire pre-defined core curriculum*
- *funding (funding possibility from public or non-public sources)*
- *services (central, departmental / student support, digital, administrative, etc.)*

e. The structure of studies

The structure of the studies should be briefly presented, namely:

- **The organisation of studies:** *The courses and the categories to which they belong; the distribution of the courses into semesters; the alignment of the courses with the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS).*
- **Learning process:** *Documentation must be provided as to how the student-centered approach is ensured (modes of teaching and evaluation of students beyond the traditional methods).*
- **Learning outcomes:** *Knowledge, skills and competences acquired by graduates, as well as the professional rights awarded must be mentioned.*

f. The number of admitted students

- *The proposed number of admitted students over a five-year period should be specified.*
- *Any similar departments in other HEIs with the possibility of student transfers from / to the proposed department should be mentioned.*

g. Postgraduate studies and research

- *It is necessary to indicate research priorities in the scientific field, the opportunities for interdisciplinary research, the challenges towards new knowledge, possible research collaborations, etc.*
- *In addition, the postgraduate and doctoral programmes offered by the academic unit, the research projects performed, and the research performance of the faculty members should be mentioned.*

Relevant documentation

- *Introductory Report by the Quality Assurance Unit (QAU) addressing the above points with the necessary documentation*
- *Updated Strategic Plan of the Institution that will include its proposed academic reconstruction, in view of the planned operation of new department(s) (incl. updated SWOT analysis at institutional level)*
- *Feasibility and sustainability studies for the establishment and operation of the new academic unit and the new study programme*
- *Four-year business plan*

Study Programme Compliance

The academic unit has been well planned considering strategy, feasibility, and sustainability. This process has clearly benefited from the existence of the academic unit as a technical education institution from 1999 compared to a completely newly established programme of study. For example, there is a clearly documented market demand for graduates of the program as evidenced by the analysis of employment of alumni. To prepare this section the accreditation panel consulted the following documents in addition to the presentations by the department: introductory report, strategic plan (SWOT analysis at the institution level), feasibility and sustainability studies, new study programme, and the 4-year business plan.

Findings

1a) Academic Profile and Mission

The profile and mission of the department is clear and focused on the two areas of Music Technology and Acoustics. These two areas are well understood fields internationally and the developed undergraduate programme has been informed by corresponding programmes from institutions around the world. They are also categorised as scientific fields in education, by UNESCO (ISCED 2013). In addition, the focus of the Department is unique is Greece.

1b) Strategy for development

The Hellenic Mediterranean University has engaged in strategic planning for the operation of the department and the study programme and conducted a comprehensive SWOT (Strength, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threads) analysis. The strategic planning document for HMU is thorough and comprehensive. Some of the key findings for the Department of Music Technology and Acoustics include: 1) the number of faculty is small and needs to increase, 2) there is a clear need for new facilities and improvement and maintenance of the existing facilities 3) the faculty have a strong track research of engaging with research in terms of publications and grants despite their small number - this is expected to increase with the increase in graduate students after the transition to being a University department, 4) increasing interactions with other academic units in Crete both at the University of Crete and the Hellenic Mediterranean University. There is a clear need for the graduates of the department which has a unique scope both within the HMU and across Greece.

1c) Feasibility of the department

The department clearly has an established and necessary role at the national level. There are only two other departments in Greece that focus on the engineering/technology aspects of the arts. The two other departments are the Department of Audio/Visual Arts at the Ionian University, and the Department of Cultural Technology and Communication of the Aegean University. Neither of these departments provide the focus on audio and music processing that the Music Technology and Acoustics program provides making it unique in Greece. Both music technology and acoustics are fields that are well established and growing around the world. The programme under review has been informed by state-of-the-art programs in similar knowledge areas from around the world. The curriculum is well designed and provides cutting edge instruction similar to that provided by corresponding academic units internationally. There is a clear and well-defined market for graduates as evidenced not only by the documentation provided by the department but also by the very positive feedback provided

to the accreditation panel by the external organisations and stakeholders as well as alumni of the Department.

1d) Sustainability of the department and programme

In terms of sustainability the educational and research facilities are adequate in terms of buildings, rooms, and laboratories and excellent in terms of equipment thanks to the strong performance of the department in obtaining grant funds. There is a clear need for new buildings. The department and the institutions are working hard to make this happen. The existing staff in terms of numbers is barely adequate for the number of students and needs to be expanded. The department has a clear plan for filling necessary faculty positions. The services are adequate with some difficulties observed by the spreading of the HMU across different locations. The increasing use of remote work technologies has mitigated to some extent this challenge.

1e) The structure of the studies

The study programme is clearly structured and organised. The first two years provide a solid foundation in physics, mathematics, programming, and sound engineering. The last two years provide more flexibility in terms of electives and specialisations. The curriculum is well balanced and thought out. It has clearly been informed by best practices of leading academic institutions in relevant areas. The courses are clearly aligned with the European Credit Transfer System. A student-centred approach to learning is followed. The instructors did an excellent job of transitioning to online learning during COVID-19. Several of the students commented on the effort that was put into this transition. It is clear that the faculty are approachable and care about the students' wellbeing. For example, every student is assigned a faculty member as an academic advisor and many of the students the accreditation panel talked to commented on how helpful their interactions with their advisor were. There is also a strong legacy of experiential learning from the past of the Department as part of a Technical Educational Institution. This is reflected through the use of laboratories and equipment as part of the teaching process as well as the now optional practical internship and senior thesis project. The graduates of the program receive a thorough education in the physics and mathematics required for working in acoustics as well as the knowledge and skills required in music technology. There are also codified professional rights for the graduate of the program for teaching in middle school and high school as well as working in video, sound, and film. The legal framework around these rights keeps evolving but the department has been good at pursuing these rights and is expected to continue to do so.

1f) Number of admitted students

The number of incoming students is projected to be between 70 and 100 over the next five years. This is a pretty accurate projection based on both the number of students entering the program prior to the transition into a University in 2019 as well as the numbers since 2019. The accreditation panel believes this is a good target number given the market needs of the field, and the existing number of faculty. Additional faculty and buildings are required for providing optimal education and the department is actively pursuing these goals as part of their academic planning. One of the advantages of the transition to a University is that the department has more control over specifying the incoming student requirements in terms of performance at the national level exam allowing them to better control the number of

students. Faculty also commented that they have observed that the quality of students entering the program has improved since transitioning to a University degree. There are various mechanisms of transferring from other higher education institutions in Greece to the department although there is no direct equivalent unit.

1g) Postgraduate studies

Since 2018 the department offers a Masters degree in Sound and Music Technologies. This program is centred on the study of sound as a carrier of information, culture, and entertainment. It provides state-of-the art training in technical studies related to acoustics, the development of intelligent systems for human-computer interaction in the context of music, music information retrieval, and research in optical acoustics. There are no fees associated with the program, but the graduate students are required to work as teaching assistants between 6-8 hours per week. There are 23 enrolled students in the graduate Masters programme. In addition, the department offers a PhD degree and currently has 3 PhD candidates. The number of graduate students is expected to increase with the transition to University and the graduation of the first class of students under the new system. The faculty are engaged with research and have strong publication output both in terms of quantity and quality especially when taking into account the recent establishment of postgraduate studies and the transition to being a University. As an indication of the research activity (more thorough data are provided by the Department) the faculty of the department have approximately 600 peer-reviewed publications and have received approximately 7500 citations based on Google Scholar.

Analysis of Judgement

Based on the above considerations, the accreditation panel finds that the academic unit is fully compliant with all aspects related to Principle 1 (Strategic planning, feasibility, and sustainability). The corresponding documentation is thorough and clearly describes the significant effort that the department has put into preparing for this accreditation review and planning for the future of the programme. We would also like to comment on the additional challenge of having to prepare all this material right after the disruptions caused by the pandemic as well as the recent transition of the unit to being a University.

Conclusion

The department has a clear and well thought plan for strategy, feasibility, and sustainability. They have clearly identified areas of improvement mainly the need to hire additional faculty and to move to new buildings. These are reasonable requests and the accreditation panel fully agrees with the department that they are important and acknowledges that their implementation is to a large extent dependent on the host institution and the Greek Ministry of Education.

Panel Judgement

Principle 1: Strategic planning, feasibility and sustainability of the academic unit	
a. The academic profile and the mission of the academic unit	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	
b. The strategy of the Institution for its academic development	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	
c. The documentation of the feasibility of the operation of the department and the study programme	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	
d. The documentation of the sustainability of the new department	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	
e. The structure of studies	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	
f. The number of admitted students	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	
g. Postgraduate studies	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Principle 1: Strategic planning, feasibility and sustainability of the academic unit (overall)	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

Overall, the accreditation panel found that the department has done an excellent job of planning for the future, articulating what is needed and documenting the feasibility and sustainability of the proposed undergraduate program.

There is strong evidence from the past experience of the department prior to transitioning into a University in 2019 that there is a need for graduates and the experiences obtained over the years of operations have clearly informed the plan of the department.

There are no issues that need to be addressed beyond the needs identified by the department which are reasonable and important for the further evolution of the unit.

We hope that the efforts the department has made will be recognized and their requests supported by the Hellenic Mediterranean University and the Ministry of Education so that the program can continue to evolve and thrive.

Principle 2: Quality Assurance Policy of the Institution and the Academic Unit

The Institution should have in place an accredited Internal Quality Assurance System, and should formulate and apply a Quality Assurance Policy, which is part of its strategy, specialises in the operation of the new academic units and the new study programmes, and is accompanied by annual quality assurance goals for the continuous development and improvement of the academic units and the study programmes.

The quality assurance policy of the Institution must be formulated in the form of a published statement, which is implemented by all stakeholders. It focuses on the achievement of special annual quality goals related to the quality assurance of the new study programme offered by the academic unit. In order to implement this policy, the Institution, among others, commits itself to put into practice quality procedures that will demonstrate: the adequacy and quality of the academic unit's resources; the suitability of the structure and organisation of the curriculum; the appropriateness of the qualifications of the teaching staff; the quality of support services of the academic unit and its staffing with appropriate administrative personnel. The Institution also commits itself to conduct an annual internal evaluation of the new undergraduate programme (UGP), realised by the Internal Evaluation Group (IEG) in collaboration with the Quality Assurance Unit (QAU) of the Institution.

The quality assurance policy of the academic unit includes its commitment to implement quality procedures that will demonstrate: a) the adequacy of the structure and organisation of the curriculum, b) the pursuit of learning outcomes and qualifications in accordance with the European and National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education, c) the promotion of the quality and effectiveness of the teaching work, d) the adequacy of the qualifications of the teaching staff, e) the promotion of the quality and quantity of the research work of the members of the academic unit, f) the ways of linking teaching with research, g) the level of demand for graduates' qualifications in the labour market, h) the quality of support services, such as administration, libraries and student care, i) the implementation of an annual review and audit of the quality assurance system of the UGP through the cooperation of the Internal Evaluation Group (IEG) with the Quality Assurance Unit (QAU) of the Institution.

Relevant documentation

- Revised Quality Assurance Policy of the Institution
- Quality Assurance Policy of the academic unit
- Quality target setting of the Institution and the academic unit (utilising the S.M.A.R.T. methodology)

Study Programme Compliance

Findings

The university has successfully established an Internal Quality Assurance policy, which is enriched and updated annually. The university is recognizing that such a policy not only helps promote an ambitious and fair framework, but that is of paramount importance for reaching national and international recognition. The annual Internal quality assurance policy is combined with institutional reforms that are perfectly aligned with the institution's strategic planning.

The main purpose of the Hellenic Mediterranean University's Internal Quality Assurance policy is to develop a culture of excellence within the academic community, helping establish the University as a top tier Educational Institution for providing high quality education focused on research and innovation. Furthermore, the university aims to promote the academic and

professional ethos of its graduates, to disseminate its scientific outputs and to benefit the community through its scientific and technological discoveries.

The main strategic goals of this policy are to establish the Hellenic Mediterranean University as an attractive destination for students and faculty. Continuous reforms and revisions help improve its offered study programs. As a result, the university connects its graduates with the market and responds dynamically to the economic and scientific needs of the country. This annual evaluation also helps secure the necessary resources needed for the modernization of the Institution's infrastructure and improvement of its administrative services.

The Institution's Quality Assurance Unit helps promote and safeguard a culture of excellence. Its basic operational principles assure the successful implementation of all quality procedures, the coordination of all systems of evaluation and certification and support to the Department towards the documentation and systematic evaluation of the work by all academic stakeholders. This is a collective work, where all institutional bodies and individuals actively take part to ensure a continuous growth both on a personal and a collective level. This ethos of collaboration combined with structural institutional mechanisms have proven effective, and as a result the University has made great strides in all aspects of operation. The implementation of an annual review and audit of the quality assurance system of the UGP through the cooperation of the Internal Evaluation Group (IEG) with the Quality Assurance Unit (QAU) of the Institution is up and running very smoothly and all above mentioned parties work together collaboratively.

The University has established policies and committees that continuously evaluate and improve policies of internal quality assurance. This aim is implemented through various strategies. Most notably through

- Close statistical monitoring of student records (per semester and year) and transcripts (organised by student, teacher, advisor, so as to collect data on multiple levels)
- Statistical data collection of study duration per student, demonstrating how long it takes students to graduate (4 years, 5 years, 6 years and ≥ 7 years)
- Creation of a Curriculum Committee, responsible for monitoring, analysing and evaluating the internal mechanisms, making revisions and changes where needed, in harmony with national and international socio-economic and political tendencies. Here, we found that the pursuit of learning outcomes and qualifications are in perfect alignment and in accordance with the European and National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education
- Publication, distribution and dissemination of all course materials, including weekly teaching hours and location, credits, type of course, pre-requisite courses, online course materials, student learning outcomes, evaluation methods, grading scales and suggested bibliography, among others
- Student Evaluations of faculty through anonymous questionnaires, which are completed by all students during Week 8 of the semester. The questions include important topics such as review of teaching strategies, assignments, degree of course difficulty and learning outcomes. The questionnaires also allow for space for students

to post any other general comment, suggestions and / or criticisms. It was clear during the meeting the External Evaluation Committee had with students, that this process is one of the many ways that the students give feedback to their teachers.

- Emphasis on student-centred teaching through active learning methods that are highly democratic, as well as through emphasis on the quality of learning outcomes.

The institutional Quality Assurance policy helps the transference of new knowledge and research findings (as a result of faculty research) directly into the classroom. This essential process is a result of the following strategies and methods:

- Comparison of research results with student learning outcomes for each course so as to effectively transfer new research into the appropriate courses
- Evaluation of published research for all tenured or tenured track faculty to ensure compatibility with teaching goals (including high impact research outlets and databases, such as Scopus and Google Scholar). It is noted that the qualifications of all teaching staff are more than adequate. The promotion of the quality and quantity of the research work of the members of the academic unit is an essential component here and we have found that the University has taken strong steps to ensure this.
- Effective use of online teaching resources and platforms (in this case, e-class) and study of “best practices” from comparable institutions worldwide.

These strategies help create a dynamic and flexible Quality Assurance program that is enriched persistently and is accredited internally each year by the department’s governing bodies. This process extends to the administrative staff and services as well (library, advising centre, etc.), which further guarantees that students are always in the centre of each policy. The quality of support services, such as administration, libraries and student care play a central part in the everyday life of the institution and students have commented favourably on these.

The following actions that took place during the 2021-22 academic year (small selection), help demonstrate the process:

- Report by the internal Quality Assurance Committee specifically pertaining to the quality of infrastructure
- Report by the same committee with their findings as to the matching of faculty research interests and the institutional teaching needs
- Publication of statistical findings of student records
- Special publication articulating faculty research and highlights

Analysis of judgement

Because of the above-mentioned actions, the Institutional goals for improving faculty teaching and research, student centred policies, service to the scientific and broad community and accountability have all been met. The policy in place is in perfect alignment with the legal and educational charter of the institution.

It is worth mentioning that the University has taken special action to communicate this policy in a transparent and effective manner to multiple outlets, both online and in printed formats, internally and externally. We found the process to be decisive and multifaceted.

The effectiveness of the University's Quality Assurance Policy in terms of communication can be authenticated by checking the number of visits to its websites, the search engine ranking order of its websites, the number of references by third parties, the number of support staff and the number of languages in which information is published. For the evaluation of information dissemination, we took into consideration an analysis of process efficiency indicators and the internal evaluation. The improvement of the communication process is undertaken by a comparative study of websites of other Institutions and user suggestions. As a result, the student graduates are always in high demand and the reputation of their earned degrees is well regarded in the labour market.

Conclusions

In conclusion, the committee is convinced that the University is not only fully compliant with Principle No. 2, but has taken steps beyond that, by establishing structural mechanisms that safeguard and continuously improve this process. The process itself includes all University partners, students (Undergraduate, Postgraduate and Postdoctoral), full-time and part-time faculty, administrative staff and support staff.

The Quality Assurance Policy of the academic unit includes special and adequate reference to the delivery of new undergraduate programmes that includes a strong commitment of the academic unit to satisfy applicable requirements and a commitment to continuous improvement. A continuous improvement is promoted at all levels (students, faculty, and staff) through the methodology and implementation of quality assurance internal policies. The Quality Assurance Policy is clearly and sufficiently communicated to all parties involved (including entailed benefits of improved quality and implications of not conforming to the quality requirements).

We were pleased to see that these guidelines were not imposed, but rather embraced by the university's stakeholders. The academic unit sets specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and timely goals regarding the new undergraduate programme and monitors these accordingly. Evaluation of Teaching methods, student satisfaction, Learning Outcomes and research output are essential parts of this process and are reviewed following student evaluations of these areas. The goals are duly monitored, updated and communicated and are paired with suitable KPIs.

The processes are very clearly laid out and the hierarchical order is transparent. Between the establishment of the Committee for Undergraduate Studies, the Internal Evaluation Committee, the annual Internal Review and finally through an External Evaluation, the institution has created feedback loop mechanisms that have been paramount towards its successful operation. We found this process to be fair, democratic and up to date and comparable to international standards by other major institutions.

Panel Judgement

Principle 2: Quality assurance policy of the Institution and the academic unit	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

We congratulate the University for its meticulous and decisive actions taken in this regard.

We encourage the University to continue on this path that will guarantee internal and external success and even more distinctions.

All structural mechanisms are in place, roles are clearly laid out and students are placed in the epicentre of the entire process.

Principle 3: Design, Approval and Monitoring of the Quality of the New Undergraduate Programmes

Institutions should design the new 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.

The Institutions develop their new undergraduate study programmes, following a well-defined procedure. The academic profile, the identity 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 European and National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education are described at this stage. An important new element in the structure of the programmes is the introduction of courses for the acquisition of digital skills. The above components should be taken into consideration and constitute the subject of the programme design, which, among other things, should include: elements of the Institution's strategy, labour market data and employment prospects of graduates, smooth progression of students throughout the stages of the programme, the anticipated student workload according to the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS), the option of providing work experience to the students, the linking of teaching and research, the international experience in study programmes of similar disciplines, the relevant regulatory framework, and the official procedure for the approval of the programme by the Institution.

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

Relevant documentation

- *Senate decision for the establishment of the UGP*
- *Curriculum structure: courses, course categories (including courses for the acquisition of digital skills), ECTS awarded, expected learning outcomes according to the EQF, internship, mobility opportunities.*
- *Labour market data regarding the employment of graduates, international experience in a related scientific field.*
- *Student Guide*
- *Course outlines*
- *Teaching staff (list of areas of specialisation, its relation to the courses taught, employment relationship)*
- *QAU minutes for the internal evaluation of the new study programme and its compliance with the Standards*

Study Programme Compliance

Findings

The Hellenic Mediterranean University is the only institution of its kind in Greece in terms of its study programs and scientific fields of expertise. Its graduates are well sought after in the fields of Music Technology and Acoustics. The institution is in a strong place to deliver its compelling undergraduate program of study. The main goals of the program are to equip students with both the technological and musical knowhow, with a fundamental and all-round analytical fluency of technology and sciences (physics, mathematics, programming), and to cultivate a collaborative, professional ethos that will help students connect with the labour market effectively.

In terms of its resources, the department has 16 permanent members. Its graduates are placed in competitive programs across a wide array of professions (instrument builders, sound engineers and technicians in theatres, concert halls, radio stations, etc.). This wide breadth of pre-existing strong links with the professional community has been further reinforced with the institution's transition to full university status.

The program is guided by the triptych of scientific expertise, educational activities and professional placements, with each one supporting and informing the other. For example, through the institution's up to date knowledge of market sought skills, appropriate steps are taken in the classroom to match these professional needs with appropriate educational strategies that can only be implemented thanks to the scientific and research profile of its pedagogical team. Frequent external partnerships support this process, by helping faculty members and students stay informed with recent technological, educational and professional breakthroughs in their respective fields.

Students spend the first three years of their studies acquiring and perfecting fundamental skills, competences and knowledge, whilst their final year of study helps connect all these learning "dots" through more specialised courses. This is a good model of acquiring, developing and applying new skills, helping students form concrete plans for Graduate studies or for direct professional placements.

The course structure includes core courses (27), core electives (29) and free electives (9). The courses provide all essential skills and knowledge a student working in the field of music technology and acoustics should have (physics, acoustics, mathematics, computer science and music). Students, as mentioned earlier, choose their more specific areas of specialisation during their final year of studies. The degree requires 240 ECTS and it is fully harmonised with the European system, so as to provide flexibility for incoming and outgoing students (Erasmus Programs), as well as transfer students. Students develop applied knowledge of software and hardware, can conduct studies in the field of acoustics, acquire recording, editing and sound productions skills and acoustical modelling simulations among other marketable skills.

Staying up to date with recent trends is crucial and this is achieved through constant revisions of bibliography, software and hardware, participation at international conferences and

symposiums, active participation at ERASMUS + programs and through innovative educational applied methods.

An important palindromic strategy that works well in this context is the core course of research methodology, a class where students apply research effectively. Developing research skills is crucial, especially in the area of music technology, which requires an entrepreneurial mindset as well. Furthermore, students have the opportunity to undertake a research dissertation, under the supervision of a faculty member. Finally, the students have several opportunities to develop digital skills, as the very nature of their chosen studies makes these skills a prerequisite for most courses, and it is completely embedded into their study programs.

Analysis of judgement

As mentioned in the previous section, this department is unique on a national level and delivers Principle No.3 compellingly. When analysing our findings, we also considered other national models. There are two other programs (also in the periphery) that have certain similarities with this program: the Ionian University has a department of Audio and Visual Arts and the University of the Aegean has a Department of Cultural Technology and Communication. The fundamental distinction of this program with the other two is that it focuses more on creative technology (whereas the former places more emphasis on artistic applications, and the latter on cultural applications of technology). The field of music technology is an area of international growth, and it is important that the University maintains and even furthers its “niche” market. As a result of both the breadth and excellence of this program, its graduates undertake Postgraduate studies in renowned European Universities, or are placed in highly competitive and selective labour markets.

Conclusions

The programme has been designed based on appropriate standards, with a new undergraduate programme feasibility study that sufficiently addresses the related objectives, input and expected output. The student study Guide is concise, informative and appropriate for the size of the student body and institution. Students have academic advisors supporting them and this is an additional student service in place that helps students make informed academic decisions. The structure of the programme is rational and clearly articulated, encouraging students to develop digital skills. In comparison with appropriate, universally accepted standards for the specific area of study, we have found the curriculum not only to be on par, but in fact of a competitive international scope. This is strongly supported through procedures and regulations that ensure crucial and timely periodic revisions of the programme curriculum. This process is a collective effort that takes into consideration all academic units (students, faculty and staff). The curriculum revision procedures, therefore, are the outcome of meaningful consultation with internal stakeholders as well as external experts. We are convinced that the University is implementing the design, approval and monitoring of the quality of the new undergraduate programmes effectively, in full compliance.

Panel Judgement

Principle 3: Design, approval and monitoring of the quality of the new undergraduate programmes	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

One of the most important aspects of this degree is the opportunity for an internship. This used to be a core course, which in the new program was changed to a free, optional elective. The feedback we received from both alumni and labour market representatives was that this internship was the most crucial step for professional placement. The market representatives stressed the high level of skills, expertise, and competencies that students were bringing with them and as a result, many students were later recruited by the same companies that hosted their internships. We therefore commend the University for this initiative, and we encourage an even more strengthening of this program, even its internationalisation, if possible. This is one of the strongest proofs of demonstrable student skills, showcasing the great work that takes place within the academic walls and its potential for successful employment of students.

Principle 4: Student-centred Approach in Learning, Teaching and Assessment of Students

The academic unit should ensure that the new 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.

In the implementation of student-centred learning and teaching, the academic unit:

- ✓ *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 application of 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*

Relevant documentation

- *Questionnaires for assessment by the students*
- *Regulation for dealing with students' complaints and appeals*
- *Regulation for the function of the academic advisor*
- *Reference to the planned teaching modes and assessment methods*

Study Programme Compliance

Findings

Regarding the possibility of designing a flexible student-centered curriculum, the curriculum is structured to include courses from different relevant disciplines as well as from their individual combinations so that in this way, different students develop greater interest and skills in different fields. In addition, each student can choose elective courses based on their interests and skills, from the 4th semester onwards. Eight optional courses are also offered, which students can choose if they fall into their area of interest and which, although they do not count toward the degree, are listed with their credits and grade in the Diploma Supplement.

Due to the variety of teaching methods and pedagogical methods, the teaching of all courses in the Department is carried out both with modern methods (lectures, laboratory and tutoring exercises, seminar courses, etc.), as well as with educational methods of asynchronous online learning that was fully developed during the pandemic years. Each course in the undergraduate curriculum has a page in the Institution's Learning Management System: e-class. There, students can find announcements about the time and place of lectures, laboratory exercises and, in general, all the material available to the students for study and personal

practice. Assessing student performance in a variety of ways allows students with increased analytical or synthetic thinking skills to respond as closely as possible to all courses in the undergraduate curriculum.

The evaluation of the educational project by the students is based on the anonymous completion of a questionnaire for each course taught, in each semester of the academic year. The coordination and monitoring of all actions related to the implementation of the evaluation, as well as the entire process of distribution and processing of the questionnaire, is done under the general supervision of the Chair of the Department.

The Department makes an effort to deal with learning challenges and exclude behaviours that may offend the diversity of students. In collaboration with the "Counselling and Psychosocial Support Centre" (KESYPSY), it supports a smoother and more efficient adaptation to the educational process. For example, in cases of learning difficulties, students are given the opportunity to choose an oral or mixed exam after consultation with the teacher. In addition, special care is taken to examine and evaluate students with special needs. More specifically, use of other alternative methods of examination, such as written assignments and participation in research projects, timely information to students with special needs about the material and requirements of the course, and use of alternative methods of examination.

To promote mutual respect in the student-professor relationship, there is the role of the Student Academic Adviser (ASS). The ASS facilitates first-year students in their transition from secondary to higher education, guiding students in their search for electives that best match their personal interest and skills. It encourages students to make use of laboratory and other infrastructures offered by the Department.

In order to resolve any complaints or objections of the students regarding the services provided by the Department, the "Regulation of the mechanism for managing student complaints and objections" has been established. In the regulation, among other things, it is defined that each complaint is examined as a matter of priority by the student's Academic Adviser, the Chair of the Department and the Assembly of the Department. If the problem cannot be resolved internally by the Department, the student is referred to the Student Advocate office.

Analysis of Judgement

The Department's student-centred approach to learning is evident, as there is the possibility of designing a personalised curriculum, and a variety of teaching methods and pedagogical methods are used. Practices such as program evaluation by students and corrective interventions, strengthening autonomy and promoting mutual respect in the student-professor relationship and finally, procedures for the management of student objections and complaints are essential in achieving the goal of student-centred learning.

Conclusions

The undergraduate study programme fully complies with Principle 4 as there is strong support for a student-centred approach in learning, teaching, and assessment of students.

Panel Judgement

Principle 4: Student-centred approach in learning, teaching and assessment of students	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

The department has excellent support for the students and follows a student-centred approach in learning, teaching, and assessment of students. The department has identified the need for new buildings including student housing as an important goal. This is particularly needed for students with mobility issues as there are serious accessibility issues with the current buildings. The accreditation panel fully supports the department's need for better facilities and encourages the department to continue engaging with students to continue providing an excellent education experience.

Principle 5: Student Admission, Progression, Recognition of Academic Qualifications and Award of Degrees and Certificates of Competence of the New Study Programmes

Academic units should develop and apply published regulations addressing all aspects and phases of studies of the programme (admission, progression, recognition and degree award).

All the issues from the beginning to the end of studies should be governed by the internal regulations of the academic units. Indicatively:

- ✓ *the registration procedure of the admitted students and the necessary documents - according to the law - and the support of the newly admitted students*
- ✓ *student rights and obligations, and monitoring of student progression*
- ✓ *internship issues, granting of scholarships*
- ✓ *the procedures and terms for writing the thesis (diploma or degree)*
- ✓ *the procedure of award and recognition of degrees, the duration of studies, the conditions for progression and assurance of the progress of students in their studies*

as well as

- ✓ *the terms and conditions for enhancing student mobility*

Appropriate recognition procedures rely on relevant academic practice for recognition of credits among various European academic departments and Institutions in line with the principles of the Lisbon Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region. 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).

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

Relevant documentation

- *Internal regulation for the operation of the new study programme*
- *Regulation of studies, internship, mobility and student assignments*
- *Printed Diploma Supplement*

Certificate from the President of the academic unit that the diploma supplement is awarded to all graduates without exception together with the degree or the certificate of completion of studies

Study Programme Compliance

Findings

At the beginning of each academic year, clear instructions are given regarding the procedure by which first-year students can enrol in the department. For their convenience, the declaration of 1st semester courses is done automatically by the Department Secretariat. In addition, instructions are posted for the guidance of students regarding the declarations of

writings as well as for matters related to feeding, housing, the means of transportation that serve the movements to and from the Department, etc. To facilitate the students in finding the locations of the courses there are floor plans of the Department buildings with named areas both in the Study Guide and on the notice board outside the Department Secretariat. At the beginning of each academic year, the Department organises a welcome event for first-year students in the Department's Auditorium where students are informed by the President of the Department and other lecturers about studying in the department, the curriculum, the infrastructure of the Department and the possibilities of professional rehabilitation. In addition, they are informed about the services offered by the Liaison Office, about the mobility possibilities through the ERASMUS+ program, as well as about the sports or artistic activities that they can get involved in during their studies.

The administrative officers of the Department inform the students about the secretarial support services provided in the department and the institution of the academic advisor is applied, based on which each student can address the corresponding faculty member designated for him, so that he can give appropriate information and guidance. The successful completion of the PPS is concluded with the awarding of the Degree, along with which the Diploma Supplement is provided.

Regarding the monitoring of the students' progress, this is done as mentioned by the respective academic advisor. The assessment methods followed are related to the specificity of each course, theoretical or laboratory, and are found in adequate attendance, laboratory work, public presentation, solving weekly exercises, written work, case study, written semester exam and oral exam semester. Students' final semester grade is entered by the Secretariat's staff into the Secretariat's information system, which has the ability to automatically provide statistical data for further study and analysis.

For the mobility of students, the Department supports and encourages their international movements to carry out internships in institutions abroad and to study in foreign universities. It has active collaborations with foreign institutions, both within the Erasmus+ program and through the European University ATHENA (Advanced Technology Higher Education Network Alliance). There is a complete list of international collaborations listed on the department's website.

More generally, students participate in tasks and practical tasks and other activities in order to assimilate, based on their experience and their active participation, practices, methodologies and procedures related to the subjects of their studies. This fact is directly linked to their subsequent professional path and career as based on the knowledge and skills they acquire during their studies they can satisfy the requirements of specialised subjects in the labour market, covering important and real needs of Greek society and not only. Students can carry out an internship both in Greece and abroad under conditions set by the department for 6 ECTS credits. At least 240 credits are required to obtain a degree. Students undertake diploma work within business premises, and utilise real data and processes, able to work immediately in highly demanding jobs, a fact verified by the graduate absorption study.

Analysis of Judgement

In the specific University they develop and implement published regulations concerning all aspects and phases of the program studies (admission, progression, recognition and awarding of degree). All matters from the beginning to the end of the studies are governed by the internal regulations of the academic unit. The students have the feeling of support and acceptance from the beginning of their studies throughout the course and development of their student life. The discussions held with the students had this feeling of support and security evident.

Conclusions

All procedures concerning the admission, development, recognition and certification of the student are based on the regulation of institutional studies. The ETCS system is implemented throughout the Study. The Department promotes the mobility of students and teaching staff and has an impressive number of Erasmus agreements with foreign universities. It also encourages students to participate in internships that allow students to develop skills for the future.

Panel Judgement

Principle 5: Student admission, progression, recognition of academic qualifications, and award of degrees and certificates of competence of the new study programmes	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

The accreditation panel found that the department has very clear information in the study guide about student admission, progression, recognition of academic qualifications, and award of degrees. They have followed all the current guidelines and best practices for higher education used in the European Union. There are no panel recommendations for this principle.

Principle 6: Ensuring the Competence and High Quality of the Teaching Staff of the New Undergraduate Study Programmes

Institutions should assure themselves of the competence, the level of knowledge and skills of the teaching staff of the academic units, and apply fair and transparent processes for their recruitment, training and further development.

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

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

Relevant documentation

- *Procedures and criteria for teaching staff recruitment*
- *Regulations or employment contracts, and obligations of the teaching staff*
- *Policy for staff recruitment, support and development*
- *Performance of the teaching staff in scientific-research and teaching work, also based on internationally recognised systems of scientific evaluation (e.g., Google Scholar, Scopus, etc.)*

Study Programme Compliance

Findings

The department has several processes in place to ensure the high quality of its teaching staff and follows clear, transparent, and objective procedures for the hiring of new members, and the continuous education of existing members. It aims to provide a supportive environment for all its members that can help them continuously improve their teaching and research activities in order to deliver a high standard of studies to the undergraduate and graduate students in the department. The department is comprised of the following faculty members:

1. Two full professors
2. Three associate professors
3. Three assistant professors
4. Two lecturers
5. Two specialised teaching staff (ΕΔΙΠ)
6. Four specialised technical staff (ΕΤΕΠ)

For a department with a mostly engineering orientation, there is a good male/female balance in the faculty. The numbers are barely adequate for the numbers accepted and the department would function more effectively with the hiring of more faculty members. The department has clearly identified strategic areas of growth and are actively trying to get funding approved for more hiring. There are also some sessional positions, and five PhD students that also have teaching duties, and 7 Postdoctoral Fellows.

For hiring and recruiting the academic unit follows established procedures and common practices to ensure the high quality of their faculty and staff. The procedures for promotion and tenure are clearly described and are in line with common international practices at universities in terms of transparency and fairness. There is a database of external evaluators compiled and regularly updated by the department. This database is approved by the institution that can be called upon to participate as committee members in hiring and promotion decisions. As is the case with most academic institutions in Greece, the ΑΠΕΛΛΑ platform is used for this purpose. The areas of new hiring are decided collectively by the members of the department following current research trends and practices at similar departments internationally. Positions are announced publicly and all applications are considered by the hiring committee which consists of department members as well as external experts. Both formal qualifications and research/teaching expertise and potential are considered. Similar procedures also take place during the process of promotion and tenure. In all cases, the academic unit follows well established criteria and regulations that exist in Greece for the hiring of higher education personnel.

The department supports the professional development of its members in various ways. Study leaves, assistance with funding opportunities, and equitable distribution of teaching load help to ensure that the members remain active and engage in high quality research activities. The use of PhD candidates and Postdoctoral Fellows in the teaching of courses assists with the integration of research and teaching which is an important characteristic of the curriculum especially of the upper year courses. The members of the department are active in the wider international scientific community through the publication of research in conferences and journals, collaborations in grants, attending national and international conferences and workshops, and by reviewing. The research facilities of the department such the Laboratory of Acoustics and the music interaction laboratory are also being used by visiting researchers and during the organisation of local conferences and events.

The department follows established procedures for the allocation of teaching hours and office hours set by the higher education regulations of Greece. These obligations are relatively heavy in terms of teaching hours compared to other similar institutions outside of Greece. Obviously, this is not something that the department has any way of controlling but it is important to take into account when considering the research output of the department which becomes more impressive when one takes into account the significant teaching load.

As part of the regular internal evaluation of the department, the teaching staff are evaluated every term. Regular anonymised questionnaires and surveys are administered and help inform the department about how they can improve the courses and study programme. Statistics about all the courses and instructors over time help the department evolve and adapt their undergraduate curriculum and ensure good quality of teaching. These teaching evaluation activities are in line with standard practices in academic institutions from around the world.

The department encourages the professional and scientific development of its members. One of the ways this support is provided is through the provision of both long study (year) or short (3 month) leaves either in Greece or internationally as well as participation in conferences, seminars, and short-term teaching engagements. The allocation of these leaves is based on completing a certain number of years of service as outlined by the Greek higher education regulations. The department also participates in a number of student and research exchange programs such as Erasmus and the European University ATHENA (<https://athena.uni.eu>). Information about these exchange programs and opportunities is provided through the department website.

Analysis of Judgement

The committee found that the department follows established practices to ensure the high quality in terms of both research and teaching of its faculty and staff. The processes for hiring, promotion, and career advancement are transparent, clear, and all members of the department can provide input. The department also supports the professional development of its members.

Conclusions

The procedures for hiring, promotion, and tenure in Greek universities are well established and regulated. The department follows them to ensure a high standard of research and teaching quality for its members. It also provides a supportive environment for helping faculty with their research through the provision of short- and long-term study leaves. The committee encourages the department to continue these processes and supports. Given the unique nature of the topic, study leaves are a great opportunity for the faculty to engage with other researchers from around the world and we hope to see more activity on this front in the future.

Panel Judgement

Principle 6: Ensuring the competence and high quality of the teaching staff of the new undergraduate study programmes	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

The department ensures the competence and high quality of the teaching staff through fair, and comprehensive processes for hiring, promotion, and tenure following the regulations governing Greek Universities. Mobility of faculty is critical to continue improving the profile of the department and to attract more students, especially at the graduate level, from other institutions and outside of Greece.

Principle 7: Learning Resources and Student Support of the New Undergraduate Programmes

Institutions should have adequate funding to meet the needs for the operation of the academic unit and the new study programme as well as the means to cover all their 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 resources, on a planned and long-term basis, to support learning and academic activity in general, in order to offer students the best possible level of studies. The above means include facilities such as, the necessary general and specific libraries and possibilities for access to electronic databases, study rooms, educational and scientific equipment, information and communication services, support and counselling services. When allocating the available resources, the needs of all students must be taken into consideration (e.g. whether they are full-time or part-time students, employed students, students with disabilities), in addition to the shift towards student-centred learning and the adoption of flexible modes of learning and teaching. Support activities and facilities may be organised in various ways, depending on the institutional context. Students should be informed about 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.

Relevant documentation

- *Detailed description of the infrastructure and services made available by the Institution to the academic unit to support learning and academic activity (human resources, infrastructure, services, etc.) and the corresponding specific commitment of the Institution to financially cover these infrastructure-services from state or other resources*
- *Administrative support staff of the new undergraduate programme (job descriptions, qualifications and responsibilities)*
- *Informative / promotional material given to students with reference to the available services*

Study Programme Compliance

Findings

To support learning and academic activity, the Department has infrastructures such as a specialised library, reading room, computer room, laboratory spaces, educational and scientific equipment, classrooms, auditorium, restaurant, as well as services such as secretarial, IT and communications, supporting and advisory services (social care, international relations office, internship, academic advisor, liaison office, student advocate, counselling psychosocial support). Support services and infrastructure are easily accessible, and students are informed about available resources (infrastructure and services) and ways to access them through events, announcements, guides, and operating regulations. With reference to the above, ten (10) faculty members currently serve in the Department of Music Technology and Acoustics, while the immediate filling of two (2) more positions at the rank of Associate Professor is imminent within the academic year 2021-2022. Additionally, two (2) EDIP members and four (4) ETP members serve in the Department.

The Department has infrastructure that is fully equipped with modern and necessary technologies, which are divided into four adjacent buildings. They include classrooms fully equipped for lectures, laboratory spaces, professional recording studio, multi-purpose auditorium, library/reading room, meeting and teleconference room, restaurant, and machine shop. The Department has ten specialised laboratory spaces that are used by the academic community in educational and research activities.

The department provides online Education Services. There is also a Liaison and Career Office that functions as a support mechanism for students and graduates to plan their educational and professional careers and as a communication channel of the University Community with other training and -mainly- employment agencies. In addition, the Student Advocate mediates between students and professors or administrative services of the Institution for any issue concerning the observance of legality in student matters, except for those concerning your exams and grades. Finally, there is Counselling Psychosocial Support available to all members of the Academic community, students, faculty members, and administrative staff.

Analysis of Judgement

In terms of general services and university infrastructure, the most serious lack is that the department does not have student residences and there are some building infrastructure problems, but actions have been planned to solve them immediately. In general, they provide satisfactory infrastructure and services for student learning and support and it is clear that they offer students the best possible level of study with a proper allocation of available resources, taking into account the needs of all students.

Conclusions

In general, it fully complies with principle 7. The lack of student accommodation and some existing building problems have been set in motion to be resolved in the future.

Panel Judgement

Principle 7: Learning resources and student support of the new undergraduate programmes	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

The department provides good learning resources and student support. We particularly note the availability of a faculty member as an academic advisor to every undergraduate student. There are some challenges with respect to the current buildings used by the department which are older, not designed for the needs of the department, and have accessibility issues. Because the department is the only department of the Hellenic Mediterranean University located in Rethymnon, students don't have access to the same facilities such as housing, libraries, and eating that their counterparts do in Heraklion. The department is actively engaged in lobbying for new facilities and is aware of these issues. The accreditation panel agrees that this is an important issue that needs to be addressed in order to provide the optimal learning resources and student support for this programme.

Principle 8: Collection, Analysis and Use of Information for the Organisation and Operation of New Undergraduate Programmes

The Institutions and their academic units 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.

Effective procedures for collecting and analysing information on the operation of Institutions, academic units and study programmes feed data into the internal quality assurance system. The following data is of interest: key performance indicators for the student body profile, student progression, success and drop-out rates, student satisfaction with the programme, availability of learning resources and student support. The completion of the fields of National Information System for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (NISQA) should be correct and complete with the exception of the fields that concern graduates in which a null value is registered.

Relevant documentation

- *Report from the National Information System for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (NISQA) at the level of the Institution, the department and the new UGP*
- *Operation of an information management system for the collection of administrative data for the implementation of the programme (Students' Record)*
- *Other tools and procedures designed to collect data on the academic and administrative functions of the academic unit and the study programme*

Study Programme Compliance

Findings

The new undergraduate programme has clear procedures in place for the collection, analysis, and use of information for its organisation and operations. The accreditation panel found that the information collected is thorough, well-maintained, and organised. This process has been coordinated with the quality assurance structures at the level of the institution (HMU) which are also thorough. By reading through the internal evaluation process it is evident that the department has taken into account guidance from the institution to fix issues with data collection and is now in a good place regarding this aspect. The procedures used follow the guidelines provided by the Hellenic quality assurance agency and include various key performance indicators about various aspects of the department. More importantly, it is evident that there is a plethora of data collected that was actually used to inform the design of the new undergraduate programme and not just collected because it was required. The accreditation panel applauds the department for the efforts they have made in this direction. The data collected includes information about the students, the student progression through the programme, and employability and career paths of the graduates. Student and staff satisfaction surveys are regularly conducted. The exception was during COVID-19 as classes transitioned into online some of the surveys and data collection was not performed. This is understandable and the department acknowledges that issue in the internal evaluation. The resulting data especially in terms of teaching satisfaction was clearly analysed and used to adapt course delivery and learning outcomes. Course experience surveys are conducted the last three weeks of classes for all classes every time they are offered. There are faculty

members responsible for the operation of the surveys as well as the statistical analysis of the acquired data. There are also procedures in place for how to react and adapt course teaching and content based on the analysis of the data collected. It is clear from the documentation that the department is engaged with this process and is continuously reflecting on how courses are taught and how they can be improved. The academic unit has clearly analysed their needs in terms of resources. The equipment, social services, and IT facilities are adequate but the building infrastructure is old and not sufficient. A particularly important challenge is that the current buildings are not accessible to students with mobility challenges. The institution and the department are aware of this need and are actively working to move into new facilities. The accreditation panel fully supports this effort as it is critical to improve the student experience and especially accessibility.

Analysis of judgement

The academic unit is fully compliant with respect to the collection, analysis, and use of information for the organisation and operation of the new undergraduate programs. The data collected is thorough using the procedures outlined by the Hellenic Quality Assurance Agency as well as the Hellenic Mediterranean University. More importantly the data has been used to inform and guide the evolution of the program.

Conclusions

The department has clear procedures in place for collecting data about all relevant aspects. They follow the guidelines and procedures provided by the institution and at the national level. These procedures are in line with the current best practices regarding data collection in academic institutions from around the world. The data indicates that students are satisfied with the quality of teaching and that their voices are heard when they have issues or feedback to the faculty. There is a clear need for better buildings that has been supported by detailed data collection and analysis by the academic unit.

Panel Judgement

Principle 8: Collection, analysis and use of information for the organisation and operation of new undergraduate programmes	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

Overall, the accreditation panel found that the data collection regarding all aspects of operation of the new undergraduate programme is excellent. Once the first cohort of students has graduated there will be additional information to guide the evolution of the programme. In terms of recommendations, the panel encourages the academic unit to continue to engage with data collection and more importantly use the information analysed to continuously adapt and improve the programme. The need for new buildings has been clearly documented with data and we hope that in the future the academic unit will be successful in obtaining new facilities that are modernised, can better accommodate the students, and are designed with accessibility in mind.

Principle 9: Public Information Concerning the New Undergraduate Programmes

Institutions and academic units should publish information about their teaching and academic activities in a direct and readily accessible way. The relevant information should be up-to-date, clear and objective.

Information on the Institutions' activities is useful for prospective and current students, graduates, other stakeholders and the public. Therefore, Institutions and their academic units must provide information about their activities, including the new undergraduate programmes they offer, the intended learning outcomes, the degrees awarded, the teaching, learning and assessment procedures used, the pass rates and the learning opportunities available to their students. Information is also provided, to the extent possible, on graduate employment perspectives.

Relevant documentation

- *Dedicated segment on the website of the department for the promotion of the new study programme*
- *Bilingual version of the website of the academic unit with complete, clear and objective information*
- *Provision for website maintenance and updating*

Study Programme Compliance

Findings

The website of the undergraduate programme is comprehensive, clear, and organised. It is also provided both in English and Greek. The website makes it easy to find information about different aspects of the programme such as the degrees offered, the learning opportunities available to the students, the student services, and the buildings. There is also information about the research activities, publications, and news of the department. Links to electronic documents and other sites are provided when needed for more detailed information. There is also clear and consistent information about every member of the department including their contact info, CV, short bio, and representative publications. In addition to the website, the department makes extensive use of a learning management system (e-class) and electronic mailing list for regular and effective communication between the faculty, the administration, and the students. The study guide is well organised and course description and learning outcomes are well written and consistent.

There are several mechanisms in place for ensuring that the website is regularly updated. Daily updates provide information about the teaching process. More important announcements such as events and new regulations are posted weekly. Information about the faculty is regularly updated and provided both in English and Greek.

The department is actively engaged with the local community and organises on a regular basis festivals, seminars, and conferences both at the national and international level. These events are also free and open to the community. Members of the department are also involved in community outreach and are regularly featured on local news, radio, and TV. The department also participates together with other departments of the Hellenic Mediterranean University in online events targeting prospective undergraduate students.

Analysis of Judgement

The department is fully compliant in providing public information concerning the new undergraduate programmes mostly through the comprehensive bilingual website but also through other means such as organising festivals and events.

Conclusions

Overall, the department has done a great job collecting all the necessary information, organising it, and providing it to the students through various means.

Panel Judgement

Principle 9: Public information concerning the new undergraduate programmes	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

The public information concerning the new undergraduate programmes is comprehensive and well organised. As is frequently the case with websites there is always room for improvement. Even though the accreditation panel found the department was fully compliant with respect to this principle there are some aspects that could be improved in the future. These are optional but could result in an even better public image for the department. The website is well organised but focuses mostly on text. It would be good to include some images and videos that would make it more appealing to prospective students and members of the public.

Principle 10: Periodic Internal Review of the New Study Programmes

Institutions and academic units should have in place an internal quality assurance system, for the audit and annual internal review of their new 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 the new study programmes aim at maintaining the level of educational provision and creating a supportive and effective learning environment for students. The above comprise the evaluation of: the content of the 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.

Relevant documentation

- *Procedure for the re-evaluation, redefinition and updating of the curriculum*
- *Procedure for mitigating weaknesses and upgrading the structure of the UGP and the learning process*
- *Feedback processes on strategy implementation and quality targeting of the new UGP and relevant decision-making processes (students, external stakeholders)*
- *Results of the annual internal evaluation of the study programme by the QAU and the relevant minutes*

Study Programme Compliance

Findings

The Internal Quality Assurance is warranted through a collaborative work between the Quality Assurance Unit, the Internal Quality Assurance System and the internal review procedures in place. These processes are frequently reviewed and revised, so as to reflect and serve the needs of students, staff and faculty. As mentioned in previous sections, this is an exercise where all University stakeholders actively take part on an annual basis, with other reviews also taking place per semester basis.

The annual internal evaluation report includes conclusions, comments and findings on the implementation of the academic and research work of the Department, a description of the current situation with identification of strengths and weaknesses, documentation of instructional and research data for all study programs, as well as a record of all other services offered by the Department during the academic year. The Internal report also includes student evaluations of their teachers and courses, and the evaluation of educational materials by teachers. All stakeholders fill out appropriate and relevant questionnaires in the special Information System that has been developed for this purpose.

Naturally, the COVID-19 pandemic has significantly affected this process during the 2020 – 2021 Academic Year, mainly because of the mandatory quarantine and restrictions on movement and gatherings. Therefore, for that year the entire process was carried out remotely online and all meetings took place as teleconferences. For that year, parts of this process could not be fully implemented. It is worth mentioning and commending the perseverance, dedication and hard work of all University stakeholders during that time as this came directly after the department had finalised all aspects of transition from TEI to University. As a result, most faculty and staff spent the entire summer and fall of 2019 ensuring a smooth transition, only to also have to face the COVID-19 impact a few months later. The students were very appreciative of all the faculty efforts to provide the best education possible during the pandemic, despite the understandable fatigue and exhaustion that these members must have already been experiencing. We were delighted to see that despite all these difficulties the faculty and staff not only implemented quality assurance mechanisms but went the extra mile in enriching these processes with additional quality assurance mechanisms.

The main findings of this exercise have clearly laid out areas of strength, but also areas of possible improvement. In terms of strengths, there has been an unprecedented interest for students to study at the Department, especially from intellectually ambitious populations. Students are happy at the institution, consistently rating their professors with high scores, even during the pandemic when the learning environment had to change very quickly. This is a testament to the faculty's care and efforts to maintain student retention at high levels. Finally, there has been an exponentially increasing number of publications, research distinctions and grants, with research playing an ever-increasing role in the profile of the department.

On the other hand, the quality assurance review identified some key areas for improvement that are beyond the university's control. There is a genuine need for an increase of the number of faculty members. The student to faculty ratio is rather high and even though the students are generally happy, the faculty load in terms of teaching, research and service is disproportionate. The program is delivered because faculty work "12-hour" days, as it was often stated in our meetings. The second area for improvement includes the insufficient building infrastructure. There are plans for relocation, but the timeline for such relocation is still unclear. It is our view that the department will thrive in new buildings. Moreover, there is a genuine need for student housing. Room and board in a peripheral university is always challenging and building student housing will help attract and retain even more students. Finally, it would be ideal to increase the budget afforded to the department because of its special needs. Technology based programs typically have higher operating costs and budgets, because of how fast certain software and hardware need to be updated.

In terms of teaching materials, all courses contain all relevant information needed (Student learning outcomes, content, etc.), with clear communication. There is an annual review of all courses and the opportunity to add or drop certain courses from the program. There is an established Curriculum Committee in place that reviews these proposals and makes appropriate recommendations after considering many factors, such as new faculty and / or

faculty interests joining the academic team, retirements / leaves of existing professors. Every course is in fact reviewed and sometimes revised annually in all its facets (grading, assignments, bibliography, etc.), which makes this process highly dynamic and impactful.

Consequently, the findings of internal reviews help make individual and collective revisions. On an individual basis, the feedback that professors receive from students and their peers helps them deliver more effective courses. On the collective level the various committees are also informed by these processes, and in return make crucial changes to processes and mechanisms to benefit the entire academic community.

Analysis of Judgment

Overall, the accreditation panel was well satisfied by the department’s performance and efforts in this principle. It is evident that the mechanisms in place work well and that all stakeholders are committed to actively participate. The system is dynamic and is reviewed regularly and methodically.

Conclusions

The University is fully compliant in this Principle as well. The self-assessment procedure of the programme takes place annually with provisions for the outcomes of the self-assessment to be properly recorded and submitted to the QAU/MODIP of the Institution. The findings of the self-assessment are shared within the academic unit and beyond and the self-assessments result in documented action plans.

Panel Judgement

Principle 10: Periodic internal review of the new study programmes	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

The University is fully compliant for Principle 10, even taking steps beyond the guidelines. The institution fully embraces quality assurance mechanisms and reviews and revises these on a frequent basis, either annually or per semester. We encourage the Institution to continue on this trajectory of self-reflection and development.

Principle 11: Regular External Evaluation and Accreditation of the New Undergraduate Programmes

The new undergraduate study programmes should regularly undergo evaluation by panels of external experts set by HAHE, aiming at accreditation. The results of the external evaluation and accreditation are used for the continuous improvement of the Institutions, academic units and study programmes. 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 panel of independent experts. HAHE grants accreditation of programmes, based on the Reports submitted by the panels, 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 Standards, and as a catalyst for improvement, while opening new perspectives towards the international standing of the awarded degrees. Both academic units and institutions must consistently consider the conclusions and the recommendations submitted by the panels of experts for the continuous improvement of the programme.

Relevant documentation

- *Progress report on the results from the utilisation of the recommendations of the external evaluation of the Institution and of the IQAS Accreditation Report.*

Study Programme Compliance

Findings, analysis of judgement, and conclusions

The department follows all the procedures for the regular external accreditation of academic programs established by the Hellenic Accreditation Agency (HAHE). The department will take into account any recommendations provided by the external panel of experts through the accreditation process to improve and evolve the program over time. This process takes place in coordination with the institution (the Hellenic Mediterranean University). The changes take place through coordination of various committees in the academic unit and the institution.

Panel Judgement

Principle 11: Regular external evaluation and accreditation of the new undergraduate programmes	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

The regular periodic external accreditation process is important in keeping the programme current and following best practices. The department is fully engaged with the accreditation process and was very helpful in collecting and preparing the material for the external committee of experts to write this report. We hope that all this work will make the next accreditation process easier and congratulate the department for their hard work.

Principle 12: Monitoring the Transition from Previous Undergraduate Study Programmes to the New Ones

Institutions and academic units apply procedures for the transition from previously existing undergraduate study programmes to new ones, in order to ensure compliance with the requirements of the Standards.

Applies in cases where the department implements, in addition to the new UGPs, any pre-existing UGPs from departments of former Technological Educational Institutions (TEI) or from departments that were merged / renamed / abolished.

Institutions should implement procedures for the transition from former UGPs to new ones, in order to ensure their compliance with the requirements of the Standards. More specifically, the institution and the academic unit must have a) the necessary learning resources, b) appropriate teaching staff, c) structured curriculum (courses, ECTS, learning outcomes), d) study regulations, award of diploma and diploma supplement, and e) system of data collection and use, with particular reference to the data of the graduates of the pre-existing UGP. In this context, the Institutions and the academic units prepare a plan for the foreseen transition period of the existing UGP until its completion, the costs caused to the Institution by its operation as well as possible measures and proposals for its smooth delivery and termination. This planning includes data on the transition and subsequent progression of students in the respective new UGP of the academic unit, as well as the specific graduation forecast for students enrolled under the previous status.

Relevant documentation

- *The planning of the Institution for the foreseen transition period, the operating costs and the specific measures or proposals for the smooth implementation and completion of the programme*
- *The study regulations, template for the degree and the diploma supplement*
- *Name list of teaching staff, status, subject and the course they teach / examine*
- *Report of Quality Assurance Unit (QAU) on the progress of the transition and the degree of completion of the programme. In the case of UGP of a former Technological Educational Institution (TEI), the report must include a specific reference to how the internship was implemented*

Study Programme Compliance

The department transitioned from being a technical education institute (TEI) to a University in 2019. The first cohort of students under the new academic programme is expected to graduate in the next academic year. This has given the department some information about how successful this transition has been but a more complete picture will emerge once the first cohort of students in the new programme graduates.

Findings

The accreditation panel found that the institution and the department planned well for the transition period and based on our conversations with the students it worked well. There was a thorough mapping of the previous courses to new course names and descriptions. The core courses remained mostly the same but the new programme provides more flexibility with upper year electives. The information about the new programme is clear and the transition

was well thought out and executed especially considering that part of it took place during the pandemic with all the associated challenges placed on higher educational institutions by it. The new degree template and diploma supplement are clear, informative, and follow the current guidelines from the European Union in terms of information provided making it easy for employers and other stakeholders to have a clear picture of what skills and education the graduates of the programme have received. Although the department is small, the faculty research interests cover a variety of relevant topics to the department's mission and are able to deliver a balanced and relevant curriculum. The main effect of the small number of faculty is that some of the upper level elective courses are not going to be offered until new faculty are hired. The department is actively working and lobbying to grow its faculty complement and the accreditation panel supports this effort. Increasing the number of faculty will allow the offering of more elective courses and the potential introduction of new courses as the field evolves.

In addition to the redesign of the undergraduate study programme there were some other challenges that needed to be addressed during the transition. The old TEI curriculum contained many hours of required lab instruction as the mandate of the department was more practical. In addition, it included mandatory practical training. Finally, there was the issue of students who had taken courses with the old regime and how they could complete their degree.

The accreditation panel found that the academic unit did a good job of addressing these challenges and came up with reasonable and creative solutions to them. The practical training and senior thesis were retained in the new undergraduate programme but were made optional. The previous practical training program was well developed with regular participation by various companies, organisations, and other stakeholders. In fact, a common thread among all the external stakeholders that the accreditation panel talked to was the importance and value of the practical training. On several occasions, practical training with a company has led to the trainee being hired by the same company after graduation. The department believes and the panel agrees that the uptake of practical training will be high as the students understand how valuable it is and connects their training with the job market. In terms of the many hours of lab instruction that are not any more available, the faculty provide a variety of optional supplemental instruction on the use of equipment and laboratories utilising resources such as graduate students and postdoctoral trainees. Because of the scope of the department, hands-on experience with equipment is essential and should be supported. Finally, students who entered the department prior to the transition are able to complete their degree using the old study programme guide or alternatively they can transition to University degree by taking three additional courses specifically selected to give them the necessary breadth and depth. This is a reasonable and flexible solution to handle the transition and was facilitated by the relatively direct mapping of the old courses to new courses.

Analysis of judgement

Overall the accreditation panel found that the department has handled the transition from the previous undergraduate study programme to the new one very well. Because of the recent date of the transition there are no graduated students yet under the new regime. The department is carefully monitoring the transition and should be able to adapt to any changes

required as the programme evolves. The transition was handled in a way that is transparent and clear to the students and seems to be going well based on our conversations with both faculty and students. This is very positive especially considering that large parts of it took place during the challenging years of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Conclusions

The department has been successful in ensuring a clear and transparent transition process from the old undergraduate programme and the new one. The external stakeholders emphasised the importance of practical training and laboratory instruction. To the degree possible, given the new regulations governing universities, the department has a good plan to maintain these aspects and evolve them as needed. All indicators show that the transition is going smoothly but we will not know for sure how certain things will work (for example the update of the optional practical training) until the first cohort under the new regime graduates.

Panel Judgement

Principle 12: Monitoring the transition from previous undergraduate study programmes to the new ones	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

There are two aspects of the old TEI programme that the external stakeholders were adamant about how important they are. These are the importance of the practical training/internship in connecting the students with the job market and the importance of hands-on instruction. The department has a good plan about continuing to support practical training as an optional choice and expects there will be good uptake by the students. The panel encourages the department to provide more information about potential organisations that are able to hold students on their website and include testimonials by former students and employers. This would ensure that all students are aware of the possibility of practical training and the value it provides. The optional ad-hoc existing laboratory training is sufficient but ideally could be made more effective by the hiring of specialised laboratory personnel. The accreditation panel encourages the host institution and other relevant parties to consider increasing the number of laboratory instructors. This is particularly important given the more engineering/technical nature of the undergraduate study programme.

PART C: CONCLUSIONS

I. Features of Good Practice

- The undergraduate study programme is unique in terms of scope both at the institution level and nationally. The focus on music technology and acoustics differentiates it from other programs in Greece that have more emphasis on music and arts whereas this program is more geared towards engineering and technology.
- The developed curriculum is well organised, comprehensive, and provides an excellent background to the students. There is a good selection of electives listed in the program. However, there is not enough faculty to offer them all yet (see below for more details)
- There is good job market demand for graduates of the programme. In the past this was facilitated by the required practical training. There are good indications that there will be high student interest in the now optional practical training and this feature will be retained. Both the faculty and the former graduates that the committee spoke to emphasised the importance of the practical training for both learning and future employment purposes.
- The undergraduate study programme follows all the recommended practices for data collection, objective hiring procedures, and internal and external evaluation processes outlined by the Greek regulations governing higher education. The committee wishes to congratulate the department and the committees involved at the University level for the excellent preparation of all the associated documentation which was thorough, clear, and well organised.

II. Areas of Weakness

Overall, the department which is relatively new as a university unit but has a longer history before it transitioned to university status, had done a great job at designing a modern study programme informed by best practices in the areas of sound and music technology. The committee found the level of instruction very good and the momentum of the department going forward excellent. In this section, we list some areas that can be improved.

- The department needs more faculty and specialised technical staff in order to be able to offer the full complement of courses that are listed in the undergraduate study guide. The department is aware of this need, has engaged in strategic planning, and is actively lobbying for new positions.
- The facilities of the department definitely could be improved. Having a single building rather than a collection of different buildings would be better for the students and improve accessibility. Being able to design the new building with the specific needs for

acoustic insulation, equipment, and power would make a big difference and bring the department in line with similar institutions outside of Greece.

- The change from mandatory practical training and mandatory laboratory instruction to optional is not ideal but unfortunately regulated by the higher education regulations for universities in Greece. It is important that the department tries hard to retain the existing connections to employers and try to achieve having a large majority of students do practical training even if it is optional.

III. Recommendations for Follow-up Actions

The two main challenges facing the department are hiring and facilities. They are actively engaged in both of these directions and the committee supports their efforts which we feel are justified. The undergraduate study programme is relatively new and has not yet had graduates. As the first undergraduate cohort graduates the department will be able to self-reflect on what has worked and adapt their course curriculum accordingly. Another important goal is to increase the number of graduate students and post-doctoral fellows. The good news is that the faculty is actively engaged with research in topics that are cutting edge and relevant. The location of the department makes the recruiting of graduate students more challenging but the faculty is determined to do their best to attract more. Participation of faculty members in grants, collaborations, conferences, workshops, and academic study leaves can help foster connections and networks that will enable the research activity of the department to continue to grow. More documentation about practical training opportunities as well as profiles of successful former graduates of the department could be provided on the website and other associated communication material.

IV. Summary & Overall Assessment

The Principles where full compliance has been achieved are: **1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, and 12.**

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

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

Signature

1. Professor George Tzanetakis (Chair)

Department of Computer Science, University of Victoria, Canada

2. Associate Professor Evis Sammoutis (Committee Member)

School of Music, Theatre and Dance, Ithaca College, NY, USA

3. Mrs. Ioanna Kerefiadou

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