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

SOCIAL WORK DEPARTMENT
ELMEPA
Institution:
DATE 24-29 MARCH 2025

Report of the Panel appointed by the HAHE to undertake the review of the New Undergraduate Study Programme in operation of Social Work of the ELMEPA (Institution name) for the purposes of granting accreditation

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PART A: BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT OF THE REVIEW

I.   The External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel

The Panel responsible for the Accreditation Review of the new undergraduate study programme in operation Department of Social Work of the ELMEPA comprised the following five (5) members, drawn from the HAHE Register, in accordance with Laws 4009/2011 & 4653/2020:

The Panel responsible for the Accreditation Review of the undergraduate programme of Social Work of the Hellenic Mediterranean University was comprised by the following five (5) members, drawn from the HAHE Register, in accordance with Laws 4009/2011 & 4653/2020:

1. Prof. Efffrosyni Kokaliari, PhD LICSW (Chair)
(Title, Name, Surname)
Springfield College Department of Social Work -USA
(Institution of origin)

2. Prof. Elisabeth Kirtsoglou,
(Title, Name, Surname)
Durham University, Durham, United Kingdom
(Institution of origin)

3. Prof. Dimitris Michailakis
(Title, Name, Surname)
University of Linköping, Social Work- Sweden
(Institution of origin)

4. Prof. Apostolis Papakostas
(Title, Name, Surname)
Södertörn University, Social Sciences
(Institution of origin)

5. Student
Ms Aikaterini-Anna Michioti, student of Philosophy,
(Title, Name, Surname)
University of Patras, Patras, Greece
(Institution of origin)

II.   Review Procedure and Documentation

Please refer briefly to the Panel preparation for the new undergraduate study programme in operation review, as well as to the documentation provided and considered by the Panel. State the dates of the site visit and describe the visit schedule and the meetings held. Feel free to mention any additional information regarding the procedure, as appropriate.

Prior to their online visit to the Department of Social Work in Heraklion, members of the External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel (EEAP) had the opportunity to study all accreditation support materials supplied to them by HAHE in advance, including:

· HAHE Materials such as P12B_Guidelines for EEAPanel, P13B_MAPPING GRID & ASSESSMENT GUIDE, European Qualifications Framework, P1B Standards

· Social Work Department Materials and the Department's Proposal for Accreditation along with several annexes such as: Proposal for Academic Accreditation Report for Accreditation Proposal Strategic Development Plan of ELMEPA (2022-2025); Feasibility and Sustainability Study; Four-Year Operational Plan (2021-2025) ELMEPA Quality Policy. These documents collectively outline ELMEPA's strategic vision, quality assurance policies, feasibility studies, and operational plans for the Social Work Department.

The visit to the Department took place between 24-26/March 2025 and then members of the EEAP Prof. Kokaliari, Prof. Kirtsoglou, Prof. Michailakis, Prof. Papakostas and student Michioti had the opportunity to meet with various constituencies and write the report. During the meetings the committee asked and received copies of the PowerPoint presentations and representative faculty publications.

On Monday, March 24, 2025, at 16:00, the External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel (EEAP) convened for a private meeting. They discussed the proposal report, allocated tasks, and identified key issues for the upcoming review. Following a break at 18:00, the EEAP at 18:30 they met with Prof. Mauromatakis Fotios Vice-Rector/President of MODIP and Dr. Papadakaki Associate Professor Head of the Department. This session provided a comprehensive overview of the Social Work Undergraduate Programme, covering its history, academic profile, status, and areas of concern. In summary the Department, one of only four in Greece, offers a professional degree in Social Work . Its mission is to educate SW professionals while advancing social work as a recognized and impactful field. With modern infrastructure, active research labs, and strong student support services, the department fosters critical thinking and applied learning. Strategic goals include international collaboration, quality improvement, and alignment with European and global standards. Graduates are well-prepared for roles in public and private sectors, equipped to meet evolving social challenges.

At 19:15, the EEAP met with members of OMEA and the Quality Assurance Committee (QAC)/Quality Assurance Unit (QAU/MODIP), including Dr Koukouli Sophia, Associate Professor, Dr Papadaki Vasileia, Associate Professor, Dr Kasseri Zacharoula, Assistant Professor, Dr Koutsouraki Eleni, Assistant Professor and QAC Members Associate Professor Pachoulakis Ioannis, and Prof. Mavromatakis Fotios, Head of MODIP.

This discussion centered on the programme's compliance with the Quality Standards for Accreditation. Faculty presented a comprehensive analysis of the Department of Social Work. They described the Department's strategic planning and its feasibility and the Department's vision, which is to provide high-quality undergraduate and graduate education, research, and innovation, with a focus on international networking and collaborations with social and productive entities. Regarding the curriculum structure, faculty noted that it comprises 8 semesters, with either 40 courses and a thesis or 42 courses without a thesis. Particular emphasis is placed on the internships, which take place in the 5th, 7th, and 8th semesters. Despite challenges such as professor workload and reliance on temporary staff, reduced administrative support the department's strengths include a stable student body, secured professional rights, and a clear strategic focus on relevance, adaptability, and global alignment.

Both meetings were informative and demonstrated the department's long term dedication to social work and students. The day concluded at 21:15 with an internal debriefing session, where EEAP members reflected on their initial findings and prepared for next stage meetings.

On Wednesday 26-3 at 16:00 to 16:45 the committee met faculty Markakis George, Professor Kalaitzaki Argyroula, Associate Professor Koutra Kleio, Associate Professor, Oikonomou Aikaterini, Assistant Professor. They discussed professional development opportunities, mobility, workload, student evaluations; competence and adequacy of the teaching staff to ensure learning outcomes; link between teaching and research; teaching staff's involvement in applied research, projects and research activities directly related to the programme; possible areas of weakness. The meeting focused on the evaluation of the Department of Social Work, featuring contributions both from professors and students. They presented the progress made since the department's establishment as a university entity in 2019. Dr Koutra noted that the curriculum has been enhanced, now featuring fewer but more focused courses and a better integration of theory and practice along with focus on research.

Following a short break at 17:00 the committee met with ten representative students mostly from semesters six and eight. Students shared their satisfaction with the curriculum, with particular emphasis on the importance of practical training and supervision as key components of their education. Many indicated that they opted for additional courses instead of pursuing a thesis. The conversation also explored the identity of the social work profession and how it distinguishes itself from related fields like psychology and sociology. Students were particularly connected to the faculty and proud of being members of the department. They discusses about feeling a strong inclusive community. Their professors ensure that materials are accessible to everyone.

At 18-19:00 the committee met with administrative staff and teaching staff representatives to discuss the facilities. Mrs Kornarou Georgia, Secretary of Social Work, Mr Asiminakis Manousos, Special Technical Laboratory Staff, Moudatsou Maria, Assistant Professor Prokopakis Emmanouil, Assistant Professor, Mrs Pelekidou Lina, Special Technical

Laboratory, Staff Mrs Kirmizaki Styliani, Special Technical Laboratory Staff. In this meting the committee were able to evaluate facilities and learning resources to ascertain that the learning materials, equipment and facilities are adequate for a successful provision of the programme. Faculty and staff were particularly happy with their new building and library. They noted that they have adequate resources for students as they collaborate with other libraries in Greece and demonstrated their priority and commitment to provide access to learning materials for students with special needs. They noted significant improvement in the department's facilities, following the move to the new building in 201, which was described as the *most modern building in the academic landscape of Crete.* The administrative support, librarian, technicians are indeed the backbone of the department, consistently responsive, organized, and incredibly dependable. Their attention to detail keeps everything running smoothly and makes a meaningful difference in the daily experience of faculty, and students.

19:00- 19:30 The committee had a break.

At 19:30 Our day continued with a meeting with ten community representatives. They highlighted the strong collaboration with the department and its commitment to community outreach. They also pointed out the significance of students' internships and supervision and how well prepared students go to their placements. Additionally educational initiatives and the cooperation with the department on community awareness matters central to the community.

At 20:15 the committee had a debriefing meeting to discuss the outcomes of the online review. At 20:45 -21:15 The day concluded with a meeting with the Omea and Quality assurance representatives followed by a short meeting with the Vice-Rector and the head of the department. The committee reported that they were impressed with the program, the commitment of the faculty and the satisfaction of the students but also how important they are to the community. Among others the committee recommended an increase in faculty and administrative staff and commented on a remarkable department.

III.   New Undergraduate Study Programme in operation Profile

Please provide a brief overview of the new undergraduate study programme in operation with reference to the following: history, academic remit, duration of studies, qualification awarded, employment opportunities, orientation challenges or any other key background information. Also, you may provide a short description of the home Department and Institution, with reference to student population, campus or any other facts, as deemed appropriate.

Social work is a dynamic, justice-driven profession that bridges theory, research, and evidence-based practice to address complex social, economic, and systemic inequalities. Rooted in human rights, intersectionality, and anti-oppression frameworks, social work aims to dismantle barriers that perpetuate marginalization and exclusion. Social workers operate across micro, mezzo, and macro levels, engaging in direct support, community organizing, and policy transformation to create sustainable change. Social work strives to ensure that individuals, communities thrive in the face of oppression, instability, and evolving demands.

The Department of Social Work was founded in 1973 and is part of the School of Health Sciences. It became integrated into the Hellenic Mediterranean University (ΕΛΜΕΠΑ) in 2019 (Law 4610/2019) and falls under the Health and Welfare scientific domain (International Standard Classification of Education - ISCED 0923). The department's central mission is to train professional social workers equipped to address contemporary social challenges, crises, and inequalities. Its curriculum combines theoretical foundations with practical experience, aligning with international standards and emphasizing diversity, inclusion, and equity. Notably, the department gained administrative independence only in 2021, a delay that reflects broader bureaucratic obstacles in Greek higher education. Despite its short period of autonomy, the department has made remarkable progress in education, practice, and research.

According to its SWOT analysis, the program is closely aligned with labor market demands, preparing students for a range of roles in public and private social services, healthcare, community development, NGOs, and policy-making. Social work is a legally recognized profession in Greece, and the undergraduate degree also provides a license to practice. The department maintains collaborations with institutions such as the University of Crete and is active in international social work networks. It has launched two master's programs and participates in several international research projects. Faculty are engaged in research with regular publications in peer-reviewed international journals. Their work often informs social policy and reflects ongoing engagement with community needs and national priorities.

Since 2015, the department has been housed in modern facilities with updated classrooms, digital tools, and dedicated research labs. Faculty and students often express pride in the department's physical infrastructure. The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated their transition to blended learning, and both faculty and students have since become proficient in using digital tools such as E-class. The program consistently attracts high numbers of applicants, with competitive admission scores (above 14,200 points), and student enrollment remains steady, indicating both academic interest and program credibility. For many, the program is a first-choice option.

The department is actively involved in the Erasmus+ program, facilitating both student and faculty exchanges and fostering a global learning environment. It regularly hosts Erasmus+

events centered on social justice and community engagement. There are currently 12 resident faculty members who are deeply committed to teaching, research, and academic service. Each typically teaches two courses per semester and contributes to departmental governance, thesis supervision, and student mentoring. Between 2016 and 2021, faculty produced 123 publications and participated in numerous national and international projects focused on themes such as gender, intersectionality, social cohesion, trauma, and aging. The department's research strategy reflects its commitment to addressing urgent social issues, in line with its graduate programs and research labs. Faculty come from diverse academic and professional backgrounds, enriching the educational experience and fostering a well-rounded, interdisciplinary approach to learning.

The Department of Social Work is led by a distinguished faculty of 12 dedicated to integrating research, theory, and practice in social work education. Their research spans clinical practice, social policy, public health, and community interventions, contributing to national and international discourse in the social work. Through thoughtfully structured coursework and hands-on research, faculty support students in developing deep disciplinary knowledge along with essential skills in analysis, synthesis, and critical reflection. This approach prepares them for professional practice and positions them for future academic and research opportunities. The department promotes a learning environment that is socially responsive, and deeply student-centered.

A key strength of the program is its strong integration of theory and practice. The curriculum emphasizes field internships, encouraging students to design and implement community-based actions and interventions. These experiences reinforce principles of equality, anti-racism, anti-discrimination, and human rights. Students work directly with vulnerable populations, allowing them to see the real-world impact of their efforts and role in advancing social change.

The curriculum is delivered over eight semesters (four academic years), with weekly course meetings and three examination periods per year (January, June, September). Each semester includes thirteen weeks of teaching and two to three weeks of exams. Students complete a mix of core, foundational, and general education courses, alongside elective courses—choosing four to six depending on whether they undertake a thesis. The thesis is optional, worth 8 ECTS, and replaces two electives, allowing for in-depth exploration of a chosen topic.

Practical training is a central element of the program, unfolding in three sequential phases—Supervised Practice I, II, and III—beginning in the fifth semester. These placements take place in professional settings and are supported by both academic and field supervisors. Attendance is mandatory (minimum particularly for lab-based and practical components. Students are encouraged to engage actively with their learning environment and to evaluate the quality of instruction.Support services such as academic advising, library access, and digital tools are available throughout the program. Grading follows a 5–10 scale, with degrees classified as Good, Very Good, or Excellent. Only required courses factor into the final degree grade. The department remains strongly committed to student support, educational quality, and academic integrity, fostering a learning experience responsive to the demands of both the profession and society.

Upon graduation students become also licensed Social Workers.

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 place 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

Please comment on the compliance with the Principle. Specifically: Please describe the findings related to the Principle, analyse, and conclude your judgement. <u>*Findings*</u>*,* <u>*analysis of judgement*</u> *and* <u>*conclusions*</u> *should be developed below in* <u>*three distinct parts.*</u>

I.   Findings

This is a new department, following the creation of the new Hellenic Mediterranean University. The Department of Social Work was established as part of the University to provide academic and professional education in the field of social work. The undergraduate programme is comparable to social work programmes from other universities. Even the practice/training follows the same pattern as in other social work departments.

As a scientific field the Department is part of the internationally established scientific fields of Higher Education, as defined by the international categorization of scientific fields in education issued by UNESCO. For the design of the curriculum, the guidelines of the European Association of Schools of Social Work are followed. In addition, the guidelines for training of the International Association of Social Workers are considered.

II.   Analysis

The department has developed procedures to ensure and improve the quality of its operations. A SWOT analysis was prepared to plan the strategic academic development of the Department of Social Work and the new curriculum. The Panel found that the revised undergraduate curriculum in Social Work meets international standards. The programme structure and learning outcomes are in accordance with similar existing international programmes, and they adhere to the criteria set by international organisations.

Strengths
It is a high-demand department with a high graduation rate and institutional safeguarding of the professional rights of graduates. The Department is very active in terms of student mobility through the ERASMUS exchange programme.

Weaknesses
The number of faculty members does not adequately cover the needs despite recent recruitments. There is a very significant shortage of teaching staff, and a significant shortage of Laboratory Teaching Staff/Specialist Technical Laboratory Staff.

Threats
Underfunding; cost of student life; geographical location.

Opportunities
Cooperation with social actors at national level; cooperation with foreign universities; Quite high absorption of graduates by the labour market.

III.   Conclusions

The Department is clearly under-staffed. More permanent positions should be created and filled, so that the undergraduate study program is properly supported. This is the responsibility of the Ministry of education and not of the University.

The University leadership supports the Program and is committed to undertake all the necessary steps to help it grow.

The University leadership makes funds available for hiring adjunct teaching staff to support the needs of the study Program.

The study Program contains all the required courses for a diploma in social work.

There is a serious imbalance between the number of adjunct and resident faculty.

Many courses (obligatory and electives) are taught by adjunct teaching staff because the permanent faculty members are so few and cannot possibly cover all the needs of the study program.

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	
Substantially compliant	**X**
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

Please provide your recommendations with regard to issues that need to be addressed, as appropriate.

- ·   More permanent positions should be created and filled, so that the study program is properly supported.
- ·   Ensure the progression and interconnectedness in the courses of the study program.

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

Please comment on the compliance with the Principle. Specifically: Please describe the findings related to the Principle, analyse, and conclude your judgement. Findings, analysis of judgement and conclusions should be developed below in three distinct parts.

    I.   **Findings**

The Undergraduate Programme in Social Work at the Hellenic Mediterranean University is designed according to national and European standards for higher education, specifically adhering to the requirements set by the Hellenic Authority for Higher Education (HAHE). The programme is structured to provide comprehensive theoretical knowledge, practical training, and research skills, preparing students for professional practice, social policy development, and further academic research.

The curriculum follows a four-year model, consisting of eight semesters that include compulsory courses, electives, practical training, internships, and a final thesis. This structure is detailed in the Programme Study Guide (Β11 Οδηγός Σπουδών) and supported by the Strategic Plan (Β3 Στρατηγικό Σχέδιο ΕΛΜΕΠΑ), which outlines the programme's alignment with institutional goals.

The Quality Assurance Policy of the academic unit is articulated in the Quality Policy Document (Β6 Πολιτικής Ποιότητας ΕΛΜΕΠΑ). It includes a commitment to meet applicable requirements by adhering to HAHE standards, the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS), and specific institutional guidelines. Additionally, it explicitly emphasizes the commitment to continuous improvement through periodic internal and external evaluations.

Continuous improvement is promoted through:

-       Regular internal evaluations (as documented in Β15 Αποτελέσματα Εσωτ Αξιολ.)

-       Strategic planning involving stakeholders (outlined in Β3 Στρατηγικό Σχέδιο ΕΛΜΕΠΑ)

-       Periodic curriculum reviews informed by feedback from students, graduates, faculty members, and social partners.

The Programme Study Guide, Strategic Plan, and Quality Policy are publicly available and communicated to all relevant parties. Specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and timely (SMART) goals have been established in relation to teaching methods, student satisfaction, learning outcomes, and research output. These goals are documented in the Quality Goals Documents (Β8 Στοχοθεσία Ποιότητας ΕΛΜΕΠΑ, Β9 Στοχοθεσία Ποιότητας). The associated Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are clearly defined, monitored, and updated periodically to ensure alignment with institutional objectives.Student evaluations are a critical aspect of the programme's quality assurance processes. As documented in the Internal Evaluation Reports (Β15 Αποτελέσματα Εσωτ Αξιολ.) and Evaluation Questionnaires (Β16 Υπόδειγμα Ερωτηματολογίου), students report high levels of satisfaction with the quality of teaching, the relevance of courses, and the practical training opportunities provided.

II.   Analysis

The design and approval process of the Undergraduate Programme in Social Work at HMU demonstrates high compliance with established standards. The programme is well-structured, with a clear alignment between its objectives, learning outcomes, and curriculum content. The inclusion of practical training opportunities, especially through field placements, supervised internships, and Erasmus+ programmes, enhances the programme's quality and relevance.The Quality Assurance Policy clearly includes a commitment to meet applicable requirements and promote continuous improvement. The policy is well-documented and appears to be aligned with institutional goals. However, there is room for enhancement in communication to ensure that all stakeholders fully understand the implications of adhering to quality requirements.

Continuous improvement is actively promoted through systematic monitoring of goals and KPIs, as evidenced in the Quality Goals Documents (B8, B9). However, the process for integrating stakeholder feedback into curriculum reviews could be more systematically structured, with clearer mechanisms for documentation and follow-up actions.

Positive feedback from students highlights the effectiveness of teaching methods and the overall academic environment. However, while student feedback is considered in programme evaluations, the mechanisms for systematically incorporating this feedback into curriculum updates and quality assurance processes could be further formalised. Establishing dedicated

meetings to discuss student evaluations and incorporating their findings into documented action plans would strengthen the programme's responsiveness to student needs and expectations.

The Strategic Plan (Β3 Στρατηγικό Σχέδιο ΕΛΜΕΠΑ) highlights the importance of continuous improvement and periodic reviews, but the establishment of structured guidelines for systematic monitoring and updating of goals is an area for further development.The existing structure provides an excellent foundation for undergraduate education, demonstrating high standards of quality and effectiveness.

III.   Conclusions

The Undergraduate Programme in Social Work at HMU meets the requirements of Principle 2: Design and Approval of Programmes. It is well-designed, comprehensive, and aligned with institutional, national, and European standards, providing a solid foundation for professional practice and research. The programme demonstrates responsiveness to stakeholder needs and maintains strong ties with external partners. The Quality Assurance Policy is comprehensive and includes commitments to both meeting applicable requirements and promoting continuous improvement. Specific goals are established and monitored through KPIs. Small improvements could be made in further formalising feedback mechanisms in the future.

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

Please provide your recommendations with regard to issues that need to be addressed, as appropriate.

Consider further formalising mechanisms for integrating stakeholder feedback, ensuring consistent documentation and implementation of recommendations from students, graduates, employers, and social partners. This could be accomplished through dedicated Programme Review Meetings with clear minutes and action points.

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

Please comment on the compliance with the Principle. Specifically: Please describe the findings related to the Principle, analyse, and conclude your judgement. Findings, analysis of judgement and conclusions should be developed below in three distinct parts.

I.   Findings

Structure of the study programme

The duration of the Undergraduate Programme of Studies is eight (8) independent academic semesters spread over four (4) academic years. The successful student must complete 240 ECTS.

The curriculum of the Department includes the following categories of courses:
- Courses of the Scientific Area/Discipline*: These are courses that directly relate to the scientific subject of the Social Work Curriculum.
- Courses addressing specific knowledge*: These are courses which, although not directly related to the scientific subject of the Programme, nevertheless constitute necessary scientific knowledge for the student to understand issues within the scientific subject of Social Work.
- Courses of general knowledge*: Courses aiming at the acquisition of general knowledge, aiming at the broader education of the student as a scientist and as a citizen.

Practical Training-Supervision in Social Work
During the 5th, 7th and 8th semesters, Practical Exercise I, II, and III are carried out respectively. *Practical Training* provides students with the opportunity to link theoretical knowledge with practice and to develop the application of Social Work in the context of a Social Service-Organization. They are supported by social workers working in the organisations that students are placed for their practical training.

Preparation   of   a   thesis
The final year students (7th and 8th semester) of the Department can write a thesis. The thesis is optional, it can be replaced by two Elective Courses and is equivalent to eight (8) credits.

There are several relevant organisations in the region that work with the department offering placement to students. The department seems very well embedded to the local community and the memoranda of understanding seem to benefit both parties and the students.

Evaluation of the quality of teaching
The evaluation of teachers by students is carried out in the context of internal evaluation. For the academic year 2020-21 in the total of 22 theoretical courses and on 755 questionnaires the score was 4.3 and according to the grades of the scale from 1-5 it is evaluated as 'satisfactory'. The adequacy of the teaching staff regarding knowledge and experience was rated (4.4) while the lowest score was given to the success in stimulating interest in the subject matter of the course (4.0).

II.   Analysis

The study guide is clear, and the course structure is logical. The range of subjects offered in the programme cover a wide range of perspectives and allow students to choose from a variety of electives. The dissertation course allows students to work independently and develop their knowledge, skills and specialism. The students are also allowed to take course from several Erasmus partners available.

The courses are taught in a combination of a traditional academic style using the lecture rooms, seminar-based discussions and labs. The students are assessed by several different types of assignments.

III.   Conclusions

The evidence from the documentation, the discussions with the faculty members, the students and the partners provided the panel with a clear picture of the academic processes. The faculty team is very enthusiastic despite being a small team and most of them are early career academics.

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

Please provide your recommendations with regard to issues that need to be addressed, as appropriate.

The thesis for the undergraduate diploma is optional, i.e. neither compulsory nor usual, as students usually avoid it. Those choosing to write a thesis can skip two courses. This is a serious fault of the program. If the thesis were compulsory, the students would at least get acquainted with the fundamentals of a research culture, and this would prepare some of them for postgraduate studies. This is also a bad incentive: by offering students the choice to avoid two courses, it simply teaches them to avoid learning.

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-centered 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

Please comment on the compliance with the Principle. Specifically: Please describe the findings related to the Principle, analyse, and conclude your judgement. Findings, analysis of judgement and conclusions should be developed below in three distinct parts.

I.   Findings

The aim of the Program is to train students in the theory and methods of social work and provide students with the skills necessary for understanding the complexities and challenges of the Greek society as part of a global world. It reflects the needs of the rapidly changing Greek society as well as the globalised world where issues of multiculturalism and exclusion are central.

The main pedagogical methods are lectures, seminars labs and practice. Research-led teaching is supported by distinct labs. Labs present their work in organised, separate webpages.

The members of the Department are well aware of the latest trends in pedagogy and do their best to implement those practices. For example, they are familiar with the benefits of small group teaching, such as seminars and tutorials.

The teacher-student relationship is very strong. Members of the faculty support their students' learning process through individual email communications and face-to-face meetings.

II.   Analysis

Students reported that teachers are generally very responsive and supportive. The commitment of the teachers to their students and to the Program is praiseworthy.The process of revising and improving the curriculum considers students' evaluations of each course. All undergraduate courses are subject to student evaluation. Student satisfaction is also measured through questionnaires. The evaluations are among the most important resources that the faculty can employ to assess the effectiveness and appropriateness of teaching, including the curriculum. Questions asked follow international standards, e.g. whether the objectives of the course are clear, whether the material covered meets the objectives of the course, whether the material is well organized, whether the material used helps to better understand the subject matter, how satisfactory are the main textbooks or notes and how difficult is the course for its level. Students are also asked to evaluate how the teachers have organized the presentation of the material in the lessons, whether teachers succeed in stimulating interest in the subject matter of the course, whether they analyzed and presented the concepts in a simple and interesting way using examples, whether they encourage students to raise questions and queries and to develop their own judgement, etc.

The instrument of Academic Advisor is well organized. The Academic Advisor is a member of the faculty and provides guidance to students regarding the choice of their courses and any problems that may arise during their studies.

There exist regulations to deal with the complaints and objections from students aiming at strengthening the student-centered educational process and systematically improving the quality of the educational and administrative services provided. These objections refer to disagreement over studies and attendance, inappropriate behavior by a member of the academic or administrative staff, inadequate guidance of students by a member of the academic staff, etc. There is place for student appeals and for examining inconsistencies and cases of multiple failures. The 'Student's Advocate' is a service of great importance and will address any grievance issues that may unfold.

III.   Conclusions

The overall understanding of the Committee is that the Program is delivered in a student-centered learning environment that promotes mutual respect.The possibility of elective specialisation promotes a student-centred program creating flexible learning paths while encouraging students to develop individual skills. While the ability to specialize unquestionably promotes a student-centred programme by creating flexible learning paths and by encouraging students to develop individual skills, the sheer number of elective courses and the combinations that students can potentially make might produce very different, or even incommensurable, outcomes regarding the skills of graduates with a bachelor's degree in social work. The expected working load of students Is unrealistic and needs adjustment.

Panel Judgement

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

Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

Please provide your recommendations with regard to issues that need to be addressed, as appropriate.

Reduce or consolidate the elective courses into thematic areas related to two or three areas of specialisation.

Adjust the expected working-load of students to reality.

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

Please comment on the compliance with the Principle. Specifically: Please describe the findings related to the Principle, analyse, and conclude your judgement. Findings, analysis of judgement and conclusions should be developed below in three distinct parts.

I.   Findings

Students are joining the programme after taking the entrance examinations which are organized by the Ministry of Education of the Greek State. 150 students enroll in the Department annually.

At the start of each academic year professors offer to students all the necessary information. They receive information about the programme structure, courses, timetable, the facilities, and tools available in the Department and about their rights and obligations. Moreover, the Department has adopted an advisor process where each student can receive academic advice from faculty members throughout their studies. Upon graduation, graduates receive a Diploma Supplement, containing detail information about their studies. Students can receive scholarships through the Greek State Scholarship Foundation. Students ,also, receive information regarding the Erasmus exchange programme and the opportunities for internships with Erasmus+, through the webpage of the University, with emails and through personal meetings.

II.   Analysis

The students are joining the programme after successfully taking the entrance examinations, which are organized by the Greek State. Students find all necessary information about their study programme structure, teaching staff, timetables, studies rules and regulations, and procedures on the internet site of the Department. They ,also, have online access to all information concerning their progress towards the degree, e.g., grades for exams, projects and courses. The Department fully implements the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) for its programme. The website of the Department contains a detailed description of the courses. Students can participate in the ERASMUS exchange programme..

III.   Conclusions

The Department of Social Work ELMEPA has developed and apply excellent published rules and regulations that cover all aspects and phases of its undergraduate study programme.

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

R5.1 – The Department should increase its effort in convincing its students to participate in

the ERASMUS exchange programmes.

R5.2 – Teachers should inform early and encourage students to undertake a thesis that would also boost their academic career.

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

Please comment on the compliance with the Principle. Specifically: Please describe the findings related to the Principle, analyse, and conclude your judgement. Findings, analysis of judgement and conclusions should be developed below in three distinct parts.

I. Findings

Faculty teaching responsibilities are reasonable and assigned according to national legislation and departmental decisions, typically involving two courses per semester, alongside extensive engagement in academic advising, curriculum committees, and departmental operations. Although the minimum teaching load is six hours per week, many faculty members exceed this due to additional responsibilities such as thesis supervision, participation in graduate programs, and involvement in various university committees.

Beyond teaching, faculty are actively engaged in a wide array of research activities. These include developing and implementing research projects, preparing grant proposals, participating in academic conferences, and publishing scholarly articles. The department's staff contributes significantly to fields such as gender equality, social cohesion, youth, elder care, road safety, and trauma recovery, with several members leading or collaborating on both national and European research initiatives. Key areas of focus include violence and abuse, aging, community development, migration, and poverty.

The department demonstrates strong research output, with 123 publications between 2016 and 2021—98 in international journals and 25 in Greek ones. In 2021 alone, 41 publications were produced, alongside 30 conference presentations. Citation metrics reflect substantial academic impact, with an average of 513 Google Scholar citations per faculty member, and several members showing high h-index scores in both Google Scholar and Scopus.The department's research strategy is shaped by its academic identity, research laboratories, and graduate program specializations, emphasizing both continuity and innovation. With a commitment to advancing knowledge and addressing pressing social issues, the faculty maintain a vibrant presence in national and international research landscapes.

II.   Analysis

The department has undergone significant transformations, particularly in response to recent changes in Greek legislation. Under the previous TEI framework, social work faculty often lacked the formal qualifications required for promotion to assistant, associate, or full professor roles. Over the past decade, however, many faculty members took initiative—taking leave to pursue doctoral studies in Sweden and other countries. As a result, several have been successfully elected to higher academic positions. The progress within the department is truly admirable. The team is doing an excellent job and takes pride in the growing number of social workers now represented among the faculty.

III.   Conclusions

This is a great department and needs to be supported as much as possible by government resources. Faculty respond to a plethora of responsibilities which complicates the opportunity to focus on scholarly outcome or community work.

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 Increase in faculty numbers and resources.

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

Please comment on the compliance with the Principle. Specifically: Please describe the findings related to the Principle, analyse, and conclude your judgement. Findings, analysis of judgement and conclusions should be developed below in three distinct parts.

    I.   Findings

The programme has excellent infrastructure. Some steps have been done to facilitate the needs of the students, although there is room for improvement. Firstly, the programme's facilities are in an excellent condition and very well maintained. There are some lecture halls that can host up to 150 students. Also, in the facilities of the programme, there is a library that can provide to the students the necessary information sources. In the library, there is a study room with computers with access to the Internet that can be used by the students. Furthermore, there is the website of the programme that provides the students with useful information, and links to useful services, such as e-class, webmail, and e-student. As noted, e-class is very updated and gives access to students to the material used in the classroom.

    II.   Analysis

The facilities are modern and that is something appealing for students and teachers too. There is a good condition under which students live. Also the website has not shown any difficulties and this seems important as nowadays students tend to use media more than any other factor to stay informed about the news and keep in touch with their teachers.

Another important part that should be highlighted is the communication that students can have with their teachers, and specifically the care and protection that teaching staff shows at students with special needs. The Department has provided these students with the necessary equipment so that they can attend the classes and study as all the other students.

III.   Conclusions

The programme has established a solid foundation with well-maintained facilities and a supportive online platform, critical improvements which are necessary in internet infrastructure, communication systems, student welfare and accurate dissemination of information

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

R7.1 - The infrastructure is in good condition but there is also chance and will of improvement.

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

Please comment on the compliance with the Principle. Specifically: Please describe the findings related to the Principle, analyse, and conclude your judgement. <u>Findings</u>, <u>analysis of judgement</u> and <u>conclusions</u> should be developed below in <u>three distinct parts.</u>

I. Findings

This is practically an old department in a new university but with well-established collegial organs, devices and routines to collect, analyze, evaluate and report information concerning the quality relevant aspects of the studies.

II. Analysis

The main unit responsible for the quality assurance is MODIP, that is the overarching Quality Assurance organ for the whole university. At the department level, the OMEA is the collegial organ that corresponds to the functions of MODIP. The administrative staff at the department is responsible for the practical matters. Modern digital means are used to collect and report information and data. Moreover, the department has established data collection procedures which are used actively to monitor specific areas of interest such as the percentage of students that fail each course, each course's failure rate and how this changes from year to year and the type of assessment (oral, written, essays) and its potential role in students' progression.

III. Conclusions

The impression of the Committee is that all the above are functioning smoothly. Nearly all participants in the evaluation process praised the functionality of these operations.

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

Please provide your recommendations with regard to issues that need to be addressed, as appropriate.

None

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

Please comment on the compliance with the Principle. Specifically: Please describe the findings related to the Principle, analyse, and conclude your judgement. Findings, analysis of judgement and conclusions should be developed below in three distinct parts.

I.   **Findings**

The institution has established a comprehensive framework for ensuring that key information related to the University, the academic unit, and the Undergraduate Programme in Social Work is publicly accessible and transparent. Relevant information is made available through official institutional websites, programme-specific documents, and quality assurance reports.

The following information is published online and accessible to all stakeholders:

-      Programme Structure and Mode of Attendance: The programme's structure, duration, and mode of attendance are clearly described in the Programme Study Guide (B11 Οδηγός Σπουδών). This guide outlines the number of semesters, compulsory and elective courses, practical training requirements, thesis completion, and the ECTS credits assigned to each component.

-      Criteria for Assessment and Degree Awarded: The requirements for successful progression and graduation, including the grading system, assessment criteria, and the final degree awarded, are detailed in the Programme Study Guide and Internal Regulations (B19 Εσωτερικός Κανον Λειτ ΠΠΣ).

- Teaching Staff Information: Information about the teaching staff, including qualifications, research output, and CVs, is made available through official university websites and specific departmental documents (Β14 Ονομαστικός Κατάλογος ΔΕΠ, Β23 Αναφορά των επιδόσεων ΔΕΠ).

- Course Outlines: Complete course outlines, including course descriptions, learning outcomes, teaching methods, and recommended readings, are provided in the Course Outlines Document (Β12 Περιγράμματα Μαθημάτων).

- Quality Assurance Policy: The Quality Assurance Policy of the academic unit is clearly articulated in the Quality Policy Document (Β6 Πολιτικής Ποιότητας ΕΛΜΕΠΑ) and is made available to all stakeholders through the institutional website.

- Practical Information: Information of a practical nature, such as accommodation options, public transport connections, and campus maps, is available online through the university's official website and related publications.

The available information is clear, up-to-date, and easily accessible. It is presented in a structured manner that facilitates public understanding of the programme's objectives, structure, and requirements.

II.   Analysis

The institution demonstrates strong compliance with Principle 9 by providing comprehensive and transparent information about the Undergraduate Programme in Social Work. The availability of relevant documents and policies online ensures that prospective and current students, faculty, external stakeholders, and the general public have access to accurate and detailed information about the programme.

The programme's commitment to transparency is evident through the publication of key documents, such as the Programme Study Guide (Β11 Οδηγός Σπουδών), Quality Policy Document (Β6 Πολιτικής Ποιότητας ΕΛΜΕΠΑ), and Course Outlines Document (Β12 Περιγράμματα Μαθημάτων). Additionally, the official website provides important practical information, enhancing accessibility for prospective students and visitors.

III.   Conclusions

The Undergraduate Programme in Social Work at HMU demonstrates high compliance with Principle 9: Public Information. The availability of detailed and transparent information through official documents and online resources supports the programme's commitment to quality assurance and accessibility.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

Please provide your recommendations with regard to issues that need to be addressed, as appropriate.

NONE

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

Please comment on the compliance with the Principle. Specifically: Please describe the findings related to the Principle, analyse, and conclude your judgement. Findings, analysis of judgement and conclusions should be developed below in three distinct parts.

I. Findings

The self-assessment, the external evaluation, the MODIP indicators, the questionnaires of students and graduates, the consultation of the committees of the Department and the General Assembly, are key sources that contribute to the on-going monitoring and periodic review of the Program.

II. Analysis

Each member of the teaching staff is responsible for the updating of the content, the bibliography and the pedagogical methods of his/her course. The review of the content of the program in light of the latest research in the given discipline ensures that the program is up to date. The program is primarily designed and developed by the Department's academic staff and it is subject to external evaluation.

The Program is monitored annually by the faculty members of the Department both individually and collectively within the framework of the OMEA and the Departmental Assembly.

The participation of faculty members in research projects, conferences, workshops, seminars and the production of publications by faculty members plays a key role in the revision of the curriculum. This, in turn, enriches the teaching activities, thus contributing to the updating of course material.

The assessment, updating, and upgrading of the curriculum, seminars and courses taught by the academic staff is conducted individually by each faculty member and in cooperation with colleagues.

III.   Conclusions

The Panel finds that the Programme is fully compliant with the requirements of principle 10.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

Please provide your recommendations with regard to issues that need to be addressed, as appropriate.

None

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

Please comment on the compliance with the Principle. Specifically: Please describe the findings related to the Principle, analyse, and conclude your judgement. Findings, analysis of judgement and conclusions should be developed below in three distinct parts.

I.   Findings

The programme demonstrates a strong commitment to periodic internal and external evaluations of the Undergraduate Programme in Social Work. The process follows the guidelines set by the Hellenic Authority for Higher Education (HAHE) and is integrated into the institution's broader Quality Assurance Framework.

The programme is subjected regular internal evaluations through the Internal Evaluation Reports (Β15 Αποτελέσματα Εσωτ Αξιολ.), which involve systematic data collection, analysis, and reporting on programme performance. These reports are prepared with contributions from faculty members, administrative staff, students, and external stakeholders. The use of evaluation questionnaires (Β16 Υπόδειγμα Ερωτηματολογίου) provides valuable insights into student satisfaction and areas for improvement. The department has also participated in previous external evaluations and has received recommendations aimed at enhancing programme quality. The Institution's Strategic Plan (Β3 Στρατηγικό Σχέδιο ΕΛΜΕΠΑ) incorporates findings from past external reviews to ensure alignment with national and international quality standards. Furthermore, the Quality Assurance Policy (Β6 Πολιτικής Ποιότητας ΕΛΜΕΠΑ) is designed to support continuous improvement through the implementation of feedback derived from these evaluations.

The programme's adherence to this principle is further evident through its engagement with social partners, graduates, and professional associations to ensure the relevance of the curriculum and the employability of its graduates. The existence of these well-defined processes ensures that stakeholder feedback is appropriately considered and integrated into programme updates, contributing to continuous improvement and alignment with national and international standards.

II.   Analysis

The Internal and External Evaluation processes are generally well-structured and comprehensive, reflecting a strong commitment to continuous improvement and accountability. Faculty members are fully aware of the importance of external reviews and actively contribute to the preparation of evaluation reports. The participation of administrative staff and students in these processes further strengthens the credibility and inclusiveness of the evaluations. It is evident that recommendations from previous external reviews have been taken into consideration in the development of the new undergraduate programme. This is particularly evident in the Strategic Plan (Β3 Στρατηγικό Σχέδιο ΕΛΜΕΠΑ), which outlines specific goals for curriculum enhancement, teaching quality, and student support.In the future, the programme team could consider documenting systematically the processes of integrating feedback and follow-up actions and making them accessible as a matter of best practice

III.   Conclusions

The Undergraduate Programme in Social Work at HMU demonstrates high compliance with Principle 11: Periodic Internal and External Evaluation. There is a well-developed framework for conducting periodic internal and external evaluations, with comprehensive procedures for stakeholder engagement, data collection, and reporting.

The institution's commitment to quality assurance is evident through its Strategic Plan, Internal Evaluation Reports, and Programme Review Processes, which provide a structured basis for evaluating programme effectiveness and implementing improvements. The programme team deserve commendation for the successful transition from a Technological Educational Institute (TEI). Their remarkable adaptability and commitment to continuous improvement are evident in their establishment of a robust Quality Assurance Framework, reflecting a high level of professionalism and dedication to excellence.

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

Please provide your recommendations with regard to issues that need to be addressed, as appropriate.

Consider establishing a standardised format for recording meetings, decisions, and action plans related to feedback integration and follow-up actions.

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

Please comment on the compliance with the Principle. Specifically: Please describe the findings related to the Principle, analyse, and conclude your judgement. Findings, analysis of judgement and conclusions should be developed below in three distinct parts.

    I.   Findings

On 29.12.2021 the Quality Assurance Unit (QAU) of the Hellenic Mediterranean University completed the audit of the internal evaluation procedures of the Undergraduate Studies Programme of the Department of Social Work.

The data on which the audit was based were as follows:
The Department's Internal Evaluation Report for the year 2020-21.
The Quality Indicators and Data for the year 2020 from the information system of HAHE.

The audit of the above by members of the QAU of the Institution showed that the process of internal evaluation of the undergraduate study programme followed the principles of the Internal Quality Assurance System of the Hellenic Mediterranean University and was in accordance with the quality assurance standards of the HAHE.

The sources, which were correctly used in accordance with the Internal Quality Assurance System of the Institution and the HAHE standards, to obtain the information were: (a) the statistical data kept in the Department's Secretariat and (b) the aggregated results of the evaluation questionnaires, which were completed electronically by the students.

II.   Analysis

The recently updated curriculum has brought education closer to the needs of society and the issues that our graduates will have to face.

The highlights of the Department are:
Student interest in the Department as evidenced by the attraction of many students with a high admission base (14,200 points, the highest in the Hellenic Mediterranean University).
The high evaluation by students of the competence of the teaching staff in terms of knowledge and experience (4.4); the rating (4) on whether the teaching staff succeed in stimulating interest in the subject matter of the course is to be expected, as the teaching was exclusively distance learning.

The main negative aspects of the Department are:
Insufficient staffing in terms of faculty members combined with the large number of students. The consequence of the insufficient staffing is the increased need of the Department to recruit temporarily contracted staff. These needs combined with inadequate funding have an impact on the workload and professional fatigue of faculty members who make every effort to maintain a high standard of study.

III.   Conclusions

Insufficient funding to cover fixed teaching needs which, due to the specificity of the subject matter during supervision practice, requires small supervisory teams and therefore an increased number of contract teachers.

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

Please provide your recommendations with regard to issues that need to be addressed, as appropriate.

- · Further consolidation and development of inter-university collaborations with national and international universities and internationalisation.
- · Organise the effort to collect and systematise data on the professional absorption of graduates. Currently the rate is 40%.
- · Improve the working conditions of contractual teaching staff, as they contribute significantly to the implementation of the educational process.
- · Review and reduce the number of admissions so that the number of students is in proportion to the number of faculty members and the existing infrastructure.
- Consider formalising mechanisms for auditing the integration of stakeholder feedback, ensuring consistent documentation and implementation of recommendations from students, graduates, employers, and social partners, as well as follow-up actions.

PART C: CONCLUSIONS

I. Features of Good Practice

Please state aspects of good practice identified, with regard to the new undergraduate study programme in operation.

The Quality Assurance Policy is comprehensive and includes commitments to both meeting applicable requirements and promoting continuous improvement. Specific goals are established and monitored through KPIs. The availability of detailed and transparent information through official documents and online resources supports the programme's commitment to quality assurance and accessibility. There is a well-developed framework for conducting periodic internal and external evaluations, with comprehensive procedures for stakeholder engagement, data collection, and reporting.

This is a wonderful program that combines strong academic foundations with hands-on learning through field placements, preparing students for real-world social work With a focus on human rights, equity, and inclusion, the program equips students to work with marginalized and vulnerable communities. Courses address contemporary issues like diversity refugee trauma, and poverty.

Professors and staff are particularly enthusiastic and committed to the program. Professors bring both scholarly expertise and practical experience, that further nourishes the learning environment. Based in Crete, the program addresses the unique social challenges of the region that are unique and require attention. They are actively building international partnerships, giving students access to collaborative research and exchange programs. Students often choose the program as their first choice and report being satisfied by the faculty and support. A major strength of the program is the dedicated administrative team including the librarian, highly responsive, organized, and playing a key role in creating a smooth, student-centered experience. The committee was very impressed with how the department attends to students with special needs.

II. Areas of Weakness

This is a well-developed program and it is admirable how much has been achieved in the context from transition from TEI to AEI. SOme weakness and recommendations are below

III. Recommendations for Follow-up Actions

Faculty & Staffing

• the state should create and fill more permanent faculty positions at any rank as needed to properly support the study program.

• Increase resources to meet the growing needs of students and academic offerings.

• Improve working conditions for contractual teaching staff, recognizing their essential contributions.

Hire more administrative staff for the support of the program

Curriculum & Academic Structure

• Ensure logical progression and interconnectedness across all courses within the study program.

• Reduce or consolidate elective courses into thematic clusters aligned with two to three areas of specialization.

• Adjust student workload expectations to better reflect the reality of their academic and personal capacities.

Undergraduate Thesis

• The current optional thesis policy, which allows students to skip two courses, may undermine the development of research culture.

• It is recommended that you make the undergraduate thesis compulsory to ensure all students engage with foundational research skills, better preparing them for postgraduate studies.

• also removing the option to bypass coursework can promote a stronger learning ethic.

Internationalisation & Student Opportunities

• Increase efforts to promote ERASMUS+ participation among students

•Further consolidate inter-university collaborations, both nationally and internationally, to strengthen academic exchange and global visibility.

Enhance Graduate Outcomes & Program Evaluation

• Systematise the collection of graduate employment data•

Review- reduce student admissions to ensure alignment with faculty capacity and available infrastructure.

Feedback & Quality Assurance

• Formalise mechanisms for integrating stakeholder feedback, including students, graduates, employers, and social partners.

• Conduct dedicated Programme Review Meetings with clear documentation minutes and follow-up steps.

• Establish a standardized format for ongoing integration of meetings, decisions, and follow-up actions related to program improvement and feedback integration.

IV.   Summary & Overall Assessment

The Principles where full compliance has been achieved are:

1,2,3, 5,6, 7, 8,9,10, 11, 12

The Principles where substantial compliance has been achieved: 4

The principles where partial compliance has been achieved are: None

The principles where failure of compliance was identified are: None

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

The members of the External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel

Name and Surname   **Signature**

1. Professor Effrosyni Kokaliari, Springfield College, USA (**Chair**)

2. Professor Elizabeth Kirtsoglou, Durham University, United Kingdom

3. Professor Apostolis Papakostas, Södertörn University, Sweden

4. Professor Dimitris Michailakis, University of Linköping, Sweden

5. Ms. Aikaterini Anna Michioti, Undergraduate student
   Department of Philosophy, University of Patras, Greece