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HELLENIC REPUBLIC

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HELLENIC QUALITY ASSURANCE
AND ACCREDITATION AGENCY

Accreditation Report for the Undergraduate Study Programme of:

History and Ethnology

Institution: Democritus University of Thrace

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



Report of the Panel appointed by the HQA to undertake the review of the Undergraduate Study Programme of **History and Ethnology** of the **Democritus University of Thrace** for the purposes of granting accreditation

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PART A: BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT OF THE REVIEW

I. The Accreditation Panel

The Panel responsible for the Accreditation Review of the Undergraduate Study Programme of **History and Ethnology** of the **Democritus University of Thrace** comprised the following three (3) members, drawn from the HQA Register, in accordance with the Law 4009/2011:

- 1. Prof Diamantis Panagiotopoulos**
University of Heidelberg (Chair)
- 2. Prof Anastassios Anastassiadis**
McGill University (Montreal)
- 3. Prof Georgios Kazamias**
University of Cyprus

II. Review Procedure and Documentation

Prior to their visit in Komotini, the members of the Accreditation Panel (AP) had the opportunity to study and discuss all relevant documents supplied to them by HQA in advance, including: (a) the Department's Proposal for Accreditation with several annexes and indexes covering all crucial aspects of the Study Programme, (b) the 2014 External Evaluation Report and (c) the HQA Guidelines.

The review procedure began on 10 February with a comprehensive briefing via Skype by Dr Christina Besta, General Director of HQA, in which both aims and criteria of the accreditation system were explained and discussed. Then, the AP members met in a private consultation to briefly discuss the Proposal, to divide tasks among them, and to organize in detail the teamwork.

The visit of the Department by the AP members was conducted between 11 and 12 February 2020 following a tight but well organized schedule. On the first day (11/02), the AP members visited the premises of the Department of History and Ethnology, where they met first with the Deputy Rector and President of the Institutional Unit of Quality Assurance (MODIP), Prof Zoe Gavriilidou, and the Head of the Department, Prof Emmanouil Varvounis. In the subsequent meeting with the MODIP and the Department's Internal Assessment Committee (OMEA) representatives and staff, a first brief overview of the Undergraduate Programme was presented, during which its current status and the degree of compliance with the HQA standards were discussed. In three meetings with 16 staff members, 12 students and 10 graduates, the AP members had the opportunity to discuss several aspects of the Undergraduate Programme pertinent to each group. In all these cases, conversation was open and productive, demonstrating the strong engagement of the teaching staff members for the departmental matters and also the apparent and frank interest of students and graduates to participate in the accreditation procedure and contribute to it through information and suggestions. The AP members noted however the fact that not all staff members were invited to participate in the first of these meetings. The criteria of selection were not made clear. The programme of the first day closed with a meeting with 10 employers and social partners from the wider region, in which external stakeholders from the public or cultural sector shared their views on the social significance of the Department and its study programmes and made numerous suggestions towards its firmer embedment within the local society.

On the next day (12/02), the AP members visited again the building of the Department, where they were given a guided tour of classrooms, lecture halls, the library, the computer room, the offices of the teaching and administrative staff, the Laboratory of Folklore and Social Anthropology, Laboratory of Modern and Contemporary History and Historical Education, Laboratory of Byzantine and Post-Byzantine Research, and Laboratory of Technology, Research and Applications in Education. Then, the AP members visited the Laboratory of Physical Anthropology, arguably the best equipped laboratory of this kind in Greece, and were impressed by its facilities, technical equipment and excellent operational scheme. Then the AP members moved to the Rectorate building. After a debriefing meeting, in which the AP

members discussed the most important outcomes of their visit and agreed upon the content of the oral report, the visit ended with a closure meeting with OMEA and MODIP representatives. In this last 90 minutes long meeting, the AP members discussed several points which needed further clarification and presented their preliminary key findings. At the end of their visit in the premises of the Rectorate, the AP members were delighted to have the opportunity to meet the Rector, Prof Alexandros Polychronidis, who expressed his strong interest for the Department and the accreditation procedure.

It is notable and much appreciated that, during their visit to the Department, the AP members were given access to additional material or information as requested, on paper and/or in digital format. The reception of the AP members by the Department was excellent and all staff members and students were particularly cooperative and willing to support the accreditation procedure, providing any material requested and answering all questions posed by the AP members.

III. Study Programme Profile

The Democritus University of Thrace (DUTH) was founded in 1973; its first students arrived in 1975. Its Departments have their seats in four towns (Komotini, Xanthi, Alexandroupoli and Orestiada). The University proudly advertises on its website its 45 year history, its over 500 members of academic staff and over 25,000 students.

The Department of History and Ethnology (TIE, hence 'The Department') is located in the town of Komotini, the administrative centre of the region of Eastern Macedonia and Thrace. The Department of History and Ethnology is the only one in Greece offering this particular combination of disciplines. It was established in 1990, the first students coming in 1991-92. The Department shares the School with the Department of Hellenic Philology (Classics) and the Department of Language, Literature and Civilisation of the Black Sea Region; these three Departments comprise the School of Classics and Humanities.

The Department is housed in a drab but functional 1970s building that follows the secondary school architecture of the time. The Department has 24 teaching faculty (21 of whom are tenured or tenure-track professors); about half are historians, around 4 ethnographers or anthropologists, while the remaining staff are in diverse disciplines related to History (incl. Archaeology and Physical Anthropology). Two members of adjunct faculty (through ESPA programmes) offer other teaching necessary for the enrichment of the curriculum of the Department. Additional classes in other subjects are offered by members of the Departments of Hellenic Philology or Black Sea Studies, as necessary.

The Undergraduate Study Programme (SP) offers two study specializations:

- History
- Ethnology (incl. Archaeology and Physical Anthropology)

The minimum duration of undergraduate studies cannot be shorter than eight semesters, during which students have to successfully attend 48 courses (or 46 courses + undergraduate thesis). Another 8 language classes are added on top of these, though marks of these are not counted for the final degree mark.

Courses are divided into 18 compulsory core classes (9 history, 7 ethnography/ anthropology, 2 methodology), 16 specialization (12+4) as well as elective subjects (14 if no final year thesis is opted for, 2 less if the student opts for undergraduate thesis).

Compulsory core subjects (in Semesters 1-3) are introductory courses, which cover all periods of History and Ethnography (incl. Anthropology / Folk Studies / Archaeology / Demography et. al). Courses in Literature (Ancient, Byzantine and Modern Greek) necessary for the Pedagogy and Teaching Competence Programme (Pedagogiki Eparkeia), are offered by the Classics

Department, part of the free elective component. In the end of the third semester, when students have completed the compulsories, they choose one of two specializations of the undergraduate Study Programme (SP).

No small group seminars (or *frontistiria*) are cited in the programme, though we were told such type of classes often take place during the third hour of the 3-hour teaching slots.

The character of the SP can be explained with reference to the history of the Greek Higher Education system. In Greece, the single Schools of Philosophy (*Philosophiki Scholi*) were split into specialised Departments in the early 1980s. Usually a Department comprising History and Archaeology (sometimes grouped with another subject) was founded in each of the existing Schools of Philosophy. Their programmes of study included philological subjects, so that the degree awarded would entitle the bearer to be employed by the state and work as secondary school teacher of subjects, such as Ancient and Modern Greek and Latin, and also history. The inherited structure of a Greek Department of History combined with another subject (Archaeology or Ethnology in this case) and the pursuit of multiple aims is evident (and partly responsible) for both the strengths and the weaknesses of the SP under examination. The Department has chosen to 'farm out' most teaching in subjects other than history and use the space created for the innovative subjects of Ethnography, Anthropology etc. In order to retain the professional rights of its students (i.e. the right to take part in examinations organised by the State for the recruitment of secondary school teaching staff), the Department has devised a way (Pedagogy and Teaching Competence Programme) that also enriches the SP, albeit in a Pedagogical direction. However it is questionable if students acquire the necessary level of knowledge of Ancient Greek and Latin to be successful in the examinations of ASEP (as and when they happen). The Department expressed the wish that the occupation of 'Philologos', currently a generalist that is expected to teach Ancient and Greek Literature, Grammar, Writing Skills, History and Latin will at some point split into discipline fields. This proposal is entirely above and beyond the remit of this Accreditation Panel.

The SP is the only one in the field offered by a Greek University to include History and the teaching of Ethnography (and Anthropology, Folk Civilisation, Art History and a host of other related disciplines). We think this plurality is one of its major assets. The Programme offers a wide range of courses, which aim to secure an overview and understanding of the subjects and methods of various disciplines. It is questionable whether the degree in its present form secures expert knowledge and skills necessary for a successful career related to its main subjects. However, it gives sufficient 'tasting grounds' for what is usually the first contact with these new (for the Greek Secondary Education) disciplines.

The optional "Practical Training" module has been introduced. This is a valuable part of the SP; it takes place in either public or private entities and can be paid or voluntary; it can occasionally happen in the Department Laboratories; but this depends on the rules applied by the State ... rules that often change.

Each year the Department is allocated about 200 students by the Greek Ministry of Education through examinations. Approximately 135 to 155 students actually enrol every year. Currently, the Department has 1,000 enrolled students (555 of them are within the n years of study).

From the formal and informal meetings during the site visit in Komotini, the AP members realized that the members of the Department are aware of the problems and the challenges of the present. The Department has long taken the necessary action to secure the professional rights of its graduates for the ASEP examinations. It has introduced and makes available to its students, a range of electives in the essential classes required leading to the Pedagogy and Teaching Competence Certificate.

The Department is encouraged to reflect further on its mission and the factors enhancing the employability of its graduates. More on this will be said below. This may require some prioritization of sectors or perhaps dropping some of the existing sectors. An optimal solution could mean specializing, if this enhances the employability of graduates. But this is for the Department to decide.

PART B: COMPLIANCE WITH THE PRINCIPLES

Principle 1: Academic Unit Policy for Quality Assurance

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD APPLY A QUALITY ASSURANCE POLICY AS PART OF THEIR STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT. THIS POLICY SHOULD EXPAND AND BE AIMED (WITH THE COLLABORATION OF EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS) AT ALL INSTITUTION'S AREAS OF ACTIVITY, AND PARTICULARLY AT THE FULFILMENT OF QUALITY REQUIREMENTS OF UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMMES. THIS POLICY SHOULD BE PUBLISHED AND IMPLEMENTED BY ALL STAKEHOLDERS.

The quality assurance policy of the academic unit is in line with the Institutional policy on quality, and is included in a published statement that is implemented by all stakeholders. It focuses on the achievement of special objectives related to the quality assurance of study programmes offered by the academic unit.

The quality policy statement of the academic unit includes its commitment to implement a quality policy that will promote the academic profile and orientation of the programme, its purpose and field of study; it will realise the programme's strategic goals and it will determine the means and ways for attaining them; it will implement the appropriate quality procedures, aiming at the programme's continuous improvement.

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

- a) the suitability of the structure and organization of the curriculum;*
- b) the pursuit of learning outcomes and qualifications in accordance with the European and the National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education;*
- c) the promotion of the quality and effectiveness of teaching;*
- d) the appropriateness of the qualifications of the teaching staff;*
- e) the enhancement of the quality and quantity of the research output among faculty members of the academic unit;*
- f) ways for linking teaching and research;*
- g) the level of demand for qualifications acquired by graduates, in the labour market;*
- h) the quality of support services such as the administrative services, the Library, and the student welfare office;*
- i) the conduct of an annual review and an internal audit of the quality assurance system of the undergraduate programme(s) offered, as well as the collaboration of the Internal Evaluation Group (IEG) with the Institution's Quality Assurance Unit (QAU);*

Study Programme compliance

The Department has introduced in 2018 a systematic and solid quality assurance policy which is in accordance with the European and the National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education. The quality assurance policy, which has been published and is easily accessible on the Department's homepage, is informed by the Department's vision to provide its students with an excellent academic education.

Its main points are presented in the orientation meeting for new students. Within this framework, the commitment to a systematic monitoring of the Undergraduate Programme is apparent. The main instrument of this policy is an annual detailed internal evaluation by the Internal Evaluation Group (OMEA) in close cooperation with the University's Quality Assurance Unit (MODIP), which ensures that this annual procedure is carried out in accordance with the criteria set by HQA. Beginning in 2015, the statistical results of the annual internal evaluation, which document and analyse the Department's main achievements in all areas, are presented in form of a chart including numerous key performance indicators. These indicators refer mainly to learning outcomes and research output, teaching methods and student satisfaction. The results of the annual evaluations are discussed in departmental meetings and are used as a basis for the reports requested by HQA in the case of external evaluations and accreditations. On the basis of these results, a series of measurements have been taken at an almost annual basis for improving the SP so that it should not only fulfil the quality requirements, but also meet pressing needs, which are specific to this Department. Beginning in the academic year 2016/2017, the students are provided with a Diploma Supplement in Greek and English.

Learning outcomes and qualifications are explained in a very detailed manner in the Department's website. Staff members have an ongoing preoccupation with enhancing the quality and effectiveness of teaching, the quality and quantity of research, and fostering a stronger collaboration with the various stakeholders in society. The importance of a qualification which will help graduates to be successful in the job market is generally acknowledged. The Department strives not only to provide them with basic knowledge on theory and method with a pronounced focus on the significance of interdisciplinary approaches, but has also taken some measures to that effect by increasing exposure of undergraduate students to practical experience, in order to better equip them for the job market, as well as for postgraduate studies and research.

Despite the fact that the results of the internal evaluations are communicated and discussed among the teaching staff, they are not published in the Department's website, where one can only find the external evaluation report of 2014. The same applies also to the report of the newly founded Research Committee of the Department. Furthermore, annual meetings with students in which the Department's quality assurance policy is supposedly explained, are announced in the Department's website, but have not taken place yet.

The overall impression of the Department's Assurance Policy is very positive, given the fact that this process helped the faculty members to pinpoint strengths and weaknesses of the SP and to make several improvements. Therefore, it can be stated that the academic unit policy for quality assurance is applied in a very good manner.

Panel judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

Publication of the results of the annual internal assessments in the Department's homepage.

Publication of the reports of the newly founded Research Committee of the Department.

Launching of the announced annual meetings with students for the communication of the Department's quality assurance policy.

Principle 2: Design and Approval of Programmes

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD DEVELOP THEIR UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMMES FOLLOWING A DEFINED WRITTEN PROCESS WHICH WILL INVOLVE THE PARTICIPANTS, INFORMATION SOURCES AND THE APPROVAL COMMITTEES FOR THE PROGRAMME. THE OBJECTIVES, THE EXPECTED LEARNING OUTCOMES, THE INTENDED PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS AND THE WAYS TO ACHIEVE THEM ARE SET OUT IN THE PROGRAMME DESIGN. THE ABOVE DETAILS AS WELL AS INFORMATION ON THE PROGRAMME'S STRUCTURE ARE PUBLISHED IN THE STUDENT GUIDE.

Academic units develop their programmes following a well-defined procedure. The academic profile and orientation of the programme, the objectives, the subject areas, the structure and organisation, the expected learning outcomes and the intended professional qualifications according to the National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education are described at this stage. The approval or revision process for programmes includes a check of compliance with the basic requirements described in the Standards, on behalf of the Institution's Quality Assurance Unit (QAU).

Furthermore, the programme design should take into consideration the following:

- *the Institutional strategy*
- *the active participation of students*
- *the experience of external stakeholders from the labour market*
- *the smooth progression of students throughout the stages of the programme*
- *the anticipated student workload according to the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System*
- *the option to provide work experience to the students*
- *the linking of teaching and research*
- *the relevant regulatory framework and the official procedure for the approval of the programme by the Institution.*

Study Programme compliance

In 2011, the Department accomplished a revision of its SP. This revision took into account the requirements of the Bologna Process which was regarded by the Department as a challenge and opportunity to shape a modern study programme that is adapted to current needs. The implementation of the programme since then has been successful, despite the numerous problems caused by the severe financial crisis and the limited available resources, both human and material.

The objectives, intended professional qualifications, learning outcomes, and sources of information are thoroughly outlined in the Study Guide of the Programme (Οδηγός Σπουδών). According to this, the SP aims at preparing both qualified scholars, able to continue their studies at the postgraduate level and pursue a researcher's career, as historians or ethnologists, but also as archaeologists and/or physical anthropologists. An additional aim of the SP is to equip students with the pedagogical qualification which, according to Greek legislation, is a condition for employment in secondary education. In this respect, the SP follows the criteria for the acquisition of the Pedagogy and Teaching Competence Certificate

established in 2014. Compatibility with European standards is ensured through the rigorous application of the ECTS system.

The SP is ambitious, combining the systematic study on a high level of two disciplines which in other European universities are the subject of distinct programmes of study, namely History and Ethnology, including also – to a lesser extent – the disciplines of Archaeology and Physical Anthropology. The SP also provides the opportunity for students to take elective courses in two further departments of DUTH, thus enhancing its multidisciplinary character. In parallel, the SP offers broad education in Humanities with a special emphasis on theory and method combined with an apparent regional focus (Balkan, Eastern Europe, Mediterranean). This distinctive curriculum serves in an ideal way the Department's vision to foster interdisciplinarity and methodological openness and at the same time to act as a core of cultural diversity and intellectual cosmopolitanism, in a key region of the Greek state. More important still, the curriculum addresses the needs of teaching, by taking into account local specificity and international academic standards and practices.

The structure of the SP is rational. It comprises various categories of courses in terms of level (introductory and advanced) and subjects (chosen between History and Ethnology). It allows students to have a common core curriculum at the beginning and then at a later stage to choose one of the tracks (History/Ethnology). Students have also the opportunity to take courses in Archaeology and Physical Anthropology. The SP is structured in such a way that ensures a smooth transition from the introductory to the advanced level. Furthermore, it includes 8 courses of foreign language teaching (theoretically English, Italian or a Black Sea region language, in practice Italian only); thus raising the total amount of courses from 48 to 56. The acquisition of the Pedagogy and Teaching Competence Certificate is optional and requires the choice of a module including 8 courses (among the 56 in total). This option is pursued by the majority of students. Practical courses, which are organized within the Department, and to a lesser extent in cooperation with external institutions, give students the possibility of acquiring valuable work experience and enhance the linking of teaching and research. Explicit statements, made to the AP members by undergraduate and postgraduate students, converge towards their approval of the SP design. The students enjoy a satisfactory degree of flexibility in the construction of their individual programme of study.

The process for the design and approval of the SP follows a strict and well organized scheme. The revision of the SP takes place following a decision of the Departmental Board, when this is regarded necessary, either for academic reasons or to conform to the guidelines of the HQA and the Ministry of Education. The annual reports of MODIP and OMEA play a crucial role in this procedure. A key criterion for any revision in the last years has been the Department's commitment to student-oriented education. The main responsibility for the design and revision of the SP, rests with the members of the Department, who are highly qualified, and include established scholars in their corresponding fields with a wide network of international and local contacts. Student participation at the aforementioned boards (which is prescribed by law) remains limited, despite the Department's concern and efforts to invite the students to engage themselves into this process. The Department has also tried to involve various

stakeholders into this process, by distributing questionnaires to them, yet the response was disappointing. Given the fact, that the consultation of representatives from non-academic public and private institutions can be a valuable source of experience and inspiration for the SP, the AP members encourage the Department to persist with regular meetings. The establishment of a formal consultation process is neither necessary nor helpful.

However, the AP members notice that the Curriculum Committee (Epitropi Programmatis Spoudon) meets irregularly and limits its scope to the rearrangement of specific courses without any apparent reflection on the strategic needs of the SP.

In its present version, the SP, the last revision of which took place in 2018, has implemented most of the recommendations included in the 2014 External Evaluation Report.

Panel judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

Stronger involvement of the students' representatives and stakeholders in the design, revision and approval of the SP.

Enhance the role of the Curriculum Committee with a stronger focus on strategic planning and proposals to the Department. All these actions should be fully documented.

Principle 3: Student- centred Learning, Teaching and Assessment

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD ENSURE THAT THE UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMMES ARE DELIVERED IN A WAY THAT ENCOURAGES STUDENTS TO TAKE AN ACTIVE ROLE IN CREATING THE LEARNING PROCESS. THE ASSESSMENT METHODS SHOULD REFLECT THIS APPROACH.

Student-centred learning and teaching plays an important role in stimulating students' motivation, self-reflection and engagement in the learning process. The above entail continuous consideration of the programme's delivery and the assessment of the related outcomes.

The student-centred learning and teaching process

- *respects and attends to the diversity of students and their needs, enabling flexible learning paths;*
- *considers and uses different modes of delivery, where appropriate;*
- *flexibly uses a variety of pedagogical methods;*
- *regularly evaluates and adjusts the modes of delivery and pedagogical methods aiming at improvement;*
- *regularly evaluates the quality and effectiveness of teaching, as documented especially through student surveys;*
- *reinforces the student's sense of autonomy, while ensuring adequate guidance and support from the teaching staff;*
- *promotes mutual respect in the student - teacher relationship;*
- *applies appropriate procedures for dealing with students' complaints.*

In addition :

- *the academic staff are familiar with the existing examination system and methods and are supported in developing their own skills in this field;*
- *the assessment criteria and methods are published in advance;*
- *the assessment allows students to demonstrate the extent to which the intended learning outcomes have been achieved. Students are given feedback, which, if necessary is linked to advice on the learning process;*
- *student assessment is conducted by more than one examiner, where possible;*
- *the regulations for assessment take into account mitigating circumstances;*
- *assessment is consistent, fairly applied to all students and carried out in accordance with the stated procedures;*
- *a formal procedure for student appeals is in place.*

Study Programme compliance

The AP thanks the OMEA for its transparency and openness and for providing a number of highly valuable material to it during the visit. The AP could not visit classes because the site visit took place during the winter break week in between semesters. Beyond the information included in the Study Guide, the Department's webpage and electronic platforms, the generic declarations in the Accreditation Proposal, and the on-site interviews with a few students and

faculty, the AP has gathered limited evidence, regarding teaching methods and diversified teaching.

Evidence for diversified teaching is provided in the Accreditation Proposal (also under Principle 4). However, the cases provided seem to be exceptional, and the overall impression is that teaching is in most cases lecture-based, just as had already been noted by the external evaluation report in 2014 (i.e. the 3-hour lecture format). The surrounding cultural environment offers rich possibilities for alternative approaches through fieldwork. A certain number of professors take adequately advantage of it, as is also indicated by the discussions with various institutional partners. Similarly, the Department boasts a certain number of active research labs where students can familiarize themselves with hands-on approaches, rather than simply sitting passively through lectures. Fieldwork and lab activity could be more systematically included in the organization of a course and the evaluation of student performance.

There are no seminars for upper level students; small audiences are a requirement for a seminar according to international practice, as indicated and suggested in the evaluation report of 2014. This transformation of the SP could be systematized and produce a gradual path for students: introductory level courses with provision for tutoring, through labs or frontistiria, leading to upper level courses with fieldwork and research papers, then to research seminars and then, eventually to an undergraduate thesis (see also principle 4).

Evaluation of progress is predominantly based on written final exams. Research papers, where they are available as a mode of assessment, are optional in most courses. The Department has to be commended because it insists on students having written at least two research papers before graduating. When courses rely on alternative means of examination, these are not always adequately explained. There is no formal provision for alternative modes of examination in the undergraduate study guide. For the moment, this seems to be mostly a practice dependent on individual choice, and requires formalization. As a rule, student assessment is conducted by one examiner in both written and oral examinations, with the exception of the undergraduate thesis (where two examiners are required).

The electronic platform of e-class is generally well designed. However, there is still a lot of potential in that system that needs to be explored. The AP noticed that some courses do not have a course description, others refer to out of date material; in other cases the bibliography is very short (1 or 2 items in the list, usually the ones included in the platform 'Evdoxos'); in some (very) rare cases, courses do not contain anything. Course descriptions are available on the Departmental website and the Study guide, but syllabi detailing the weekly course evolution, the mode of evaluation, the professor's office hours, are not uploaded for each course. For sure, professors explain or hand out that info in class but this needs to be systematized and made available to every student through the e-class.

The irregular and rather low rate of students graduating within four years of study (only 4 out of 76 in 2015-2016; none out of 80 in 2016-2017 and 15 out of 164 in 2017-2018) cannot solely

be explained by factors independent of the Department's will, such as the state-regulated mode of admission to Greek universities; the state-mandated number of admitted students; the state-imposed measure of maintaining stagnant students and allowing for a student to take a course and an examination numerous times; and the general social context. The rather heavy workload (7 courses and 21 hours of course-time and mostly lectures, per week), as attested by students, and already signaled by the evaluation committee in 2014, is an inhibiting factor for student attendance and performance. A first-year student can have a timetable that looks like this: Mon 9-12am and 3-6pm; Tue 6-9pm, Thu 12-3 pm and 3-6pm and Fri: 9-12 am and 12-3pm. In general, students may spend 6 hours in a row per day in class, though some professors do divide their classes in 2 slots rather than the typical 3-hour one, a practice that should be encouraged.

Since students are allowed to sit for examination regardless of how many times they have attended class, attendance is not regular. Not attending classes encourages over-dependence on the written course material(s). State regulations allow students to take and retake exams regardless of attendance. Evidence from the examinations provided by the Department indicates that there are certain upper-level courses enrolled by very few students, while at the same time these students do not sit for the exams (in some cases, out of 60 or 70 students enrolled less than 10 actually show up for the exams; on the contrary in larger introductory courses more than 100 students may show up for the exams). It might be that these no-shows are due to students above their n years of study. This should indicate that it is optimal to focus on incentivizing students to finish within their regular years of study by easing their course load and diversifying their modes of examination as indicated above. It will also allow the Department to use its human resources more efficiently (eventually by breaking introductory level courses in smaller sections). The AP also notes that spread of grades may vary depending on courses. Though there seems to be no indication of any sign of grade inflation or lowering of evaluation standards, the Department may wish to monitor and reflect collectively on grading practices in order to avoid that at the same level of studies, in some courses almost all of students sitting for the exams pass, while in others less than half may do so.

Provisions for student appeals regarding grievances are included in the regulations and students seem well informed about them. There is also a student ombudsman at the University level and there are clear indications about contacting this office on the University's webpage.

The Department applies regular evaluation of teaching through questionnaires. The response of students is average though the rate varies depending on courses. In some cases almost half of the students that sit for the exams have evaluated the course while in other cases only very few students do so; in one case, out of 215 students registered for the course, 123 sat for the exams and 6 only evaluated the course. Thus, the findings may lose in terms of value.

Panel judgement

Principle 3: Student- centred Learning, Teaching an Assessment	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	x
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

Ensure that the e-class platform is systematically used by all members of the staff and is regularly updated.

Increase the number of students who participate in labs and write assignments/papers.

Systematize alternative modes of assessment by incentivizing student attendance and by integrating lab and fieldwork.

Introduce labs, fieldwork and tutorials (frontistiria) as complementary to lectures.

Introduce two (2) small group upper level seminars, one in each track (with a limited number of students).

Reduce class sizes by offering more sections of larger courses (eventually reducing the number of elective courses offered every year)

The pass-rates and grade-spreads should be monitored. They should be discussed collectively but also individually with the staff members (perhaps by the Chair of the Department). A follow-up procedure should also be devised.

Principle 4: Student Admission, Progression, Recognition and Certification

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

Institutions and academic units need to put in place both processes and tools to collect, manage and act on information regarding student progression.

Procedures concerning the award and recognition of higher education degrees, the duration of studies, rules ensuring students progression, terms and conditions for student mobility should be based on the institutional study regulations. Appropriate recognition procedures rely on institutional practice for recognition of credits among various European academic departments and Institutions, in line with the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention.

Graduation represents the culmination of the students' study period. Students need to receive documentation explaining the qualification gained, including achieved learning outcomes and the context, level, content and status of the studies that were pursued and successfully completed (Diploma Supplement).

Study Programme compliance

Greek universities have no control over admissions and the number of incoming students. This is a permanent source of problems and has negative effects on academic life, impacting the Department's ability to effectively cater to students' needs. Universities based at a certain distance from the largest cities of Greece, usually receive applicants who have scored lower marks in the entrance examinations. Universities outside Athens or Thessaloniki frequently suffer from the loss of admitted students who are allowed to move to another University through transfer. Nevertheless, the Department prides itself on being accessible and student-friendly serving the needs of a reasonable incoming student population (which is rarely from the surrounding area). The Department has a statistically insignificant number of foreign students as well as students with disabilities. Measures are taken, both at the Department and at the University level, to ease the transition of all students into university life, though this is complex given the Department's space allocation and extension over two sites, something that should be resolved once the Department moves to its new grounds in the main University campus. The internal evaluation report and discussions during the AP's visit show evidence that the Department is making serious efforts to accommodate students' needs. A well designed process, which includes a fairly modern electronic data system, aims to help students familiarize themselves with registration, the Library, the SP, the various labs, and other relevant facilities.

Incoming students are informed they have access to an academic advisor (one per track and one for the pedagogical certificate) and are encouraged to interact with relevant faculty. There is a general introductory meeting organized annually by the Department. All the students the AP met were aware of the existence and role of academic advisors. They mentioned that the

academic environment is friendly and supportive. The Department has established, though not yet implemented, the function of an Academic mentor, and all registered students will, as of next year, be assigned to a specific Academic mentor. The AP commends the Department on this step taken, and insists on the need for the systematization of the publication and updating of faculty's (especially advisors') office hours on the Departmental webpage and on e-class.

During its visit, the AP had the opportunity to meet with a group of pre-selected (almost exclusively) upper-level students and received valuable feedback. The feedback of earlier year students would also have been welcome. The AP believes that the students are highly satisfied with the clarity of information and advice with which they are provided. Students reported that faculty are easily accessible and respond regularly and promptly to email communications. In addition, the students feel that the Department's (and the University's) database system is good. Genuine efforts are made to keep it up to date and improve its quality. The AP met with a good number of the 24-member Department faculty and is pleased with their commitment to students' needs. The administrative staff appear accommodating, courteous, and competent.

The relative high number of stagnant students, especially the alarmingly low number of students who finish within 4 years of study, should be an issue that the Department needs to tackle collectively (see also principles 2 and 3). The Department is conscious of this issue and has set precise goals to reduce stagnation: increasing the number of students within their n years of study to 60% from 50.7% of the total student population in 2016-2017 (46.6% in 2017-2018); decreasing the number of n+1 and n+2 students (though the numbers for 2017-2018 indicate that the situation is rather deteriorating); reduce the number of n+2 and above students to 30% of the total population, down from 37% in 2016-2017. Similarly the Department should fix parallel goals for the number of graduations within the n years of study (5.26% in 2015-2016; 0% in 2016-2017 and 9.15% in 2017-2018), since the number of registered students can also be reduced by external factors, i.e. due to students transferring to other Departments/Universities (currently approx. 55-65 students per year do so).

The AP is particularly concerned by the increasing numbers of stagnant female students. There were 365 female students over the n years of study for 392 within the n years of study in 2015-2016. This ratio has been reversed and in 2017-2018 there are 421 female students over their n years of study for 338 within the n years of study. Though this may be caused by factors external to the Department, the Department might want to consider measures to address this challenge, especially given its anthropological focus.

Regardless, the Department should clearly delineate the means by which a higher graduation rate can be achieved without the possibility of creating grade inflation and through increasing quality of teaching and diversity of grade assessment.

The Department participates in the Erasmus programme. It is pleased with its outgoing record but not with its incoming one. A Department member handles bilateral agreements with partner institutions and student advising. The Department has eleven partnerships and would like to increase their number. The Department's website (as well as the faculty) informs students of Erasmus opportunities and requirements. Some students participate in the

Erasmus programme and the Department is making efforts to increase participation. Faculty involved in the programme spoke positively of the Department's record and the success of the students who had the opportunity to participate. The few students who shared their experiences with the AP expressed similar sentiments. It should be added that the Department does not offer any courses in English, which might be an inhibiting factor explaining the absence of incoming Erasmus students. The AP feels that the Department should offer such courses and also make them open to its own students, as part of the electives. The Department has fixed as a goal to increase the number of incoming and outgoing Erasmus students.

The Department is actively seeking internship opportunities for their students and there is a committee in place to coordinate the process. Until recently internships were mostly used in the Department's research labs, but the Department is making efforts to diversify internship outlets. The development of foreign language skills (see also Principle 2) might be a boosting factor with regard to internship outlets for the Department's students.

The ECTS system is applied across the curriculum and the University does provide students with a Diploma Supplement issued upon graduation.

Panel judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

Students' progress should be monitored more systematically in order to reduce failure and drop-out rates; with appropriate actions taken like more advising and student-centered teaching.

The scheduled revision of the SP is an opportunity to evaluate the application of the ECTS system (eventually giving more ECTS credits to courses requiring more lab or fieldwork, or reading and writing intensive upper level seminars).

In future, the School/Department could co-ordinate (and advertise accordingly) the offering of certain courses in English in order to attract incoming Erasmus-students.

Consider ways to help stagnant students (esp. females) complete their studies, without sacrificing quality.

Principle 5: Teaching Staff

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD ASSURE THEMSELVES OF THE QUALIFICATIONS AND COMPETENCE OF THE TEACHING STAFF. THEY SHOULD APPLY FAIR AND TRANSPARENT PROCESSES FOR THE RECRUITMENT AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE TEACHING STAFF.

The Institutions and their academic units have a major responsibility as to the standard of their teaching staff providing them with a supportive environment that promotes the advancement of their scientific work. In particular, the academic unit should:

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

Study Programme compliance

The teaching staff of the Department is composed of 21 academic staff members: 1 full professor, 15 associate professors, 5 assistant professors. It also has 1 language teacher (EDIP in Italian), two Laboratory Teaching Staff and two adjunct teaching staff.

The legal framework for academic staff recruitment is set by the state and conforms with international standards. This ensures the appropriate level of qualification and competence. The Department's composition (only one full professor, for 15 associate professors) in connection with retirements over the recent years, shows that the time of the founders-pioneers of the Department has drawn to a close.

There are three levels on which academic staff may develop opportunities for professional skills development, through integration of its members in various activities of research at different levels:

Through **university structures**, by participation at activities in research laboratories. There are five established laboratories, some with a long life behind them, others much newer:

- Laboratory of Physical Anthropology (est. 1993),
- Laboratory of Folklore and Social Anthropology (est. 2015),
- Laboratory for Byzantine and Post-Byzantine Studies (est. 2017, replacing the older Laboratory for Palaeography and the Conservation of Manuscripts and Old Printed Books),
- Laboratory of Technologies, Research and Applications in Education (LAB.T.R.A.EDU, est. 2018), and
- Laboratory of Modern and Contemporary History and Historical Education (est. 2019).

Staff may involve themselves formally or informally in the activities of these laboratories, according to their research interests. Indeed, some laboratories cite staff members as part of their official or formally enrolled members.

At the **local and regional level**, there are links with a diverse selection of local cultural and social partners (incl. the Ephorate of Antiquities, the local Bishopric, Foundations or Societies, the local teachers' structures etc). Though these links exist, perhaps they could be fostered and nurtured further. The Department is quite active in local conferences (some sections more than others, on average one large, perhaps international, conference per year and many smaller, often thematic ones).

At **national and international** levels, the personal research networks of the academic staff could be augmented by the formal or informal links forged by the University (eg. Bilateral Agreements, Erasmus Networks). Participation in international conferences would also help. In this perspective, the external mobility of the teaching staff through the Erasmus+ programme, which plays already a significant role, could be further strengthened. Bureaucracy (either coming from the European Union or the Greek State) has been mentioned as a factor that discourages staff from involving themselves in these activities and/or increasing uncertainties. Nonetheless, these are opportunities that should be further used, encouraged and perhaps expanded; these opportunities include increasing the number of outgoing staff (4 staff that used them are mentioned in Παράρτημα 9Γ Δραστηριότητα Εργαστηρίων). The number of incoming professors should also be increased, if for no other reason, for the sake of exposing students to their teaching; these are both main goals of the Erasmus+ program.

The Department is now at a crossroads: in the coming years, it may re-define itself, reviewing its main directions. It is the staff members, in association with students and, to an extent, external stakeholders (and with the State's dominant role a given) that will decide which direction they want to follow: Will the Department follow the conventional model of the *Φιλοσοφική Σχολή*, whose main direction is to train generalist teaching staff for Education? Or will future development be to further strengthen the innovative fields of Social and Physical Anthropology in the Department's direction. For future graduates, it boils down to a choice between possible state employment (if successful in future ASEP examinations) or the more uncertain, diverse free market opportunities, available essentially through its other strands. The Pedagogy and Teaching Competence Programme has been there for a long time, developed and secured to date, and leads graduates to a possible career in teaching. This decision in some way impacts on the academic staff careers and individual choice. It also impacts on future appointments in the Department.

A good practice the Department has adopted is to use the teaching offered by the Department of Philology to strengthen the student learning in both Ancient Greek and Greek Literature; this good practice could perhaps be formalised somehow to include specific teaching in these subjects, guiding students to such teaching.

The attractiveness of a good Department and its power to retain staff, depends basically on its research strategy. Some improvements may be highlighted in order to strengthen the link

between teaching and research. A student-staff colloquium would help staff know each other's research interests and so increase collaboration opportunities.

The Democritus University of Thrace is perhaps the sole university in Greece that hosts a long-established Laboratory of Physical Anthropology (see above), and provides a curriculum combining training in History and Ethnography (including different strands of Anthropology). The Department's activities (e.g. founding of new laboratories) show that similar initiatives are welcomed for other historical periods, between disciplines or on a transversal mode (e.g. material culture, oral history). These initiatives could provide opportunities to reinforce the link between research and teaching and strengthen ties among colleagues, leading even to combined research grant proposals. Establishment of a departmental student-staff colloquium (something suggested by the Evaluation Committee in 2014) is strongly suggested by the AP.

One way new appointments could be integrated in the Department is by developing research teams in which new staff could be integrated. This could go some way towards alleviation of the effects of 'researcher loneliness'.

The Department has obviously suffered from loss of personnel through natural wastage and from limited staff recruitment over the last years. Its personnel complement (21 in place, 1 position advertised) compares quite well with its ideal number of 25 staff in full formation. We have not discussed plans for further recruitments with the Department in great detail. In view of the past differences in the Department, the AP members understand this reticence as a need to safeguard the good climate among staff. We would simply like to draw the Department's attention to the importance of ensuring the implementation of globally accepted standards in terms of future recruitment. Actions taken in order to attract good candidates, could ideally be used to strengthen further the Department's good standing in future evaluations.

In a similar manner, and on the basis of the more general discussion about the SP and the role of Philology in it, the collaboration with the neighbouring Philology Department should be pursued and reinforced. The same stands for language teaching in collaboration with the Department of Black Sea Studies.

Panel judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

Take actions to reinforce the links between teaching and research.

Encourage integration of staff in Laboratories, if they so wish.

Nurture links with external stakeholders and increase this group.

Establish student-staff colloquium.

Elaborate recruitment priorities, not on the sole basis of covering specific fields, but also taking into account innovation with regard to research, curriculum design and capacity of introducing new courses in various streams of the curriculum.

Principle 6: Learning Resources and Student Support

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD HAVE ADEQUATE FUNDING TO COVER TEACHING AND LEARNING NEEDS. THEY SHOULD –ON THE ONE HAND- PROVIDE SATISFACTORY INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES FOR LEARNING AND STUDENT SUPPORT AND–ON THE OTHER HAND- FACILITATE DIRECT ACCESS TO THEM BY ESTABLISHING INTERNAL RULES TO THIS END (E.G. LECTURE ROOMS, LABORATORIES, LIBRARIES, NETWORKS, BOARDING, CAREER AND SOCIAL POLICY SERVICES ETC.).

Institutions and their academic units must have sufficient funding and means to support learning and academic activity in general, so that they can offer to students the best possible level of studies. The above means could include facilities such as libraries, study rooms, educational and scientific equipment, information and communications services, support or counselling services.

When allocating the available resources, the needs of all students must be taken into consideration (e.g. whether they are full-time or part-time students, employed or international students, students with disabilities) and the shift towards student-centred learning and the adoption of flexible modes of learning and teaching. Support activities and facilities may be organised in various ways, depending on the institutional context. However, the internal quality assurance ensures that all resources are appropriate, adequate, and accessible, and that students are informed about the services available to them.

In delivering support services the role of support and administrative staff is crucial and therefore they need to be qualified and have opportunities to develop their competences.

Study Programme compliance

The Department has the essential facilities to ensure an appropriate learning environment. The present building is unattractive: we suspect arrival in the university for the first time must be an anti-climax for new students. A new building in the University main Campus, outside the city of Komotini, is currently being built and scheduled to finish in 1000 days or so. This building is a source of hope for staff: it has provision of classrooms, offices, laboratory spaces, even for housing the university museum collections.

As indicated above, there were no classes and few students on site during the visit. The four classrooms we were shown (two large, two smaller) were clean and functional, even if the building overall was drab and unattractive. We were told there are no serious shortages of space, though some staff offices are in pairs (a few in threes).

Both dormitories (around 500 rooms) and sports facilities are available in the campus outside Komotini (where the Rector's Offices and the Sports Science Department are housed). Subject to social criteria, rooms are allocated and enough rooms are reportedly available.

The AP was concerned that students would be cut off from town life and facilities when the move happens. However, we were told the bus services between the town of Komotini and the Campus are both frequent and free. This complements the food offered in the two

university kitchens (one in Komotini, one in the Campus, for the residents of the Student Halls). This is available free of charge. There seemed to be no complaints by the students we talked to about the quality of the food.

The facilities reportedly provide adequate IT infrastructures and resources for all students, including through the internet platform of DUTH. We noticed the computer cluster was running the older, no longer supported Windows 7.

The DUTH Library, is largely virtual; this is explainable by the spread of the University over four towns in Thrace. The Department library is in fact the Spoudastirio; it holds some 30.000 volumes of books and journals and also has some computer terminals for accessing the library electronic catalogue. It has three members of staff but only one trained librarian. This has an obvious impact on its services and opening hours. Further acquisitions (sometimes donations of whole libraries) increase its holdings but at the same time the induced need of cataloguing puts further stress on staff and resources. The current library is barely adequate for a teaching-only institution.

Funding for the Library, an essential part of university activities, is obviously inadequate. As is the case with most Greek University libraries, it is underfunded: We were told the sum made available for book purchase (5,000 € annually) is really a pittance. Despite the Department's best efforts, the Library is suitable for teaching purposes only. For the research needs of staff and students (esp. postgraduates) it is inadequate. Spacewise, it is seriously cramped; it is hoped things will be better in the new building, where the ground floor and part of the basement are earmarked for the new library of the three Departments.

Services for disabled students are limited to a lift, that gives access to top floors of the building, and a WC for disabled persons. All spaces in the building are wheelchair accessible. The disabled provision will in future be complemented by a new voluntary service, 'syntrofos meletis' ('study companion'), that will pair disabled students with non-disabled ones, on a voluntary basis, following a short training offered by a qualified member of staff. This service is not yet operational. Services to all students will also benefit from the 'synigoros tou foititi' ('student ombudsman'). This service is not yet fully operational in the Department (it has been offered to medical students in the Alexandroupoli campus, experimentally).

Generally speaking, there is an adequate forward thinking for a range of support services essential to the students, including services for disabled students, even if many of them are not yet available.

Panel judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

The new building should solve most problems when completed (classrooms, offices, lab. space, museum, Library).

Examine computer provision (upgrade/ update IT clusters).

Library resources are barely adequate for a teaching-only university; inadequate for a research-oriented institution. Increase resources, incl. human ones.

Make the student ombudsman ('syntrofos tou foititi') operational.

Principle 7: Information Management

INSTITUTIONS BEAR FULL RESPONSIBILITY FOR COLLECTING, ANALYSING AND USING INFORMATION, AIMED AT THE EFFICIENT MANAGEMENT OF UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMMES OF STUDY AND RELATED ACTIVITIES, IN AN INTEGRATED, EFFECTIVE AND EASILY ACCESSIBLE WAY.

Institutions are expected to establish and operate an information system for the management and monitoring of data concerning students, teaching staff, course structure and organisation, teaching and provision of services to students as well as to the academic community.

Reliable data is essential for accurate information and for decision making, as well as for identifying areas of smooth operation and areas for improvement. Effective procedures for collecting and analysing information on study programmes and other activities feed data into the internal system of quality assurance.

The information gathered depends, to some extent, on the type and mission of the Institution. The following are of interest:

- *key performance indicators*
- *student population profile*
- *student progression, success and drop-out rates*
- *student satisfaction with their programme(s)*
- *availability of learning resources and student support*
- *career paths of graduates*

A number of methods may be used for collecting information. It is important that students and staff are involved in providing and analyzing information and planning follow-up activities.

Study Programme compliance

Upon entry to the university, student data is collected and subsequently harvested and analyzed by the university services; this gives a wealth of information (demographic, social, etc) to the Department and the University. Data is available, the constraint is staff (as we were told during meetings), staff that can process and analyze it. The Department has established procedures for the collection of data of student body characteristics, teaching methods and student progression.

Our main area of concern is student satisfaction questionnaires. These are in electronic form and collected towards the end of classes each semester, completed in sessions where the teaching staff is not present. However few students do complete the questionnaires: over one academic year (2017-18) for which a report was furnished, just under 1100 questionnaires were filled for close to 100 classes. The completion of the survey is at this stage optional; as a result, very few students complete them, rendering its validity and usefulness doubtful at best. As the Department's report itself remarks, the small sample shows a "weakness that does not allow for safe and well-grounded conclusions" (Annex 6A ερωτηματολόγια αξιολόγησης). We

are told legal constraints limit the possible steps the Department can take; however, the average rate of returns of student questionnaires is under 5%, rendering the whole exercise as it is currently performed, largely pointless because it does not allow comparisons or conclusions (see also Principle 4). This deprives the Department from an invaluable tool that would help individual staff members and the Department collectively from examining its academic 'product', with a valuable tool telling teaching staff what they did well and what needs to be reexamined. The Department is aware of this and is taking steps to correct it, by persuading students their anonymity is safeguarded and their replies are taken into account.

Linking the questionnaire completion to the release of marks to the student could be one solution; however, this is (probably) not legal in Greece. There may exist alternative paths to get effective results. Similarly, though data protection legislation may prohibit publicizing class results, what is immediately publishable is anonymous overall mark spreads presented in graphs, where the trends may be interpreted and compared. We tried to get this from the Department in time for writing the report, but we were told shortages of staff made this close to impossible.

Greek legislation allows students to abandon their studies only at their own request and initiative; this creates the phenomenon of stagnant students. Therefore, no reliable data is available on the drop-out rates or its reasons, except on an occasional, anecdotal basis.

The employability and career paths of graduates are only available on an empirical basis, i.e. what individual staff members get to know of their former students' progress, through individual contact. It is recommended that the university alumni / careers office, should be strengthened and encouraged to collect employment data and provide information on career paths and employability of graduates. A completion of studies questionnaire could also be introduced; this should be sent out by the alumni office on graduation and subsequently, at set intervals.

Panel judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

Continue efforts to persuade students to complete satisfaction questionnaires.

Strengthen Career office, include Alumni data.

Better staffing of computer data analyses offices.

Principle 8: Public Information

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD PUBLISH INFORMATION ABOUT THEIR TEACHING AND ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES WHICH IS CLEAR, ACCURATE, OBJECTIVE, UP-TO-DATE AND READILY ACCESSIBLE.

Information on Institution's activities is useful for prospective and current students, graduates, other stakeholders and the public.

Therefore, institutions and their academic units provide information about their activities, including the programmes they offer, the intended learning outcomes, the qualifications awarded, the teaching, learning and assessment procedures used, the pass rates and the learning opportunities available to their students, as well as graduate employment information.

Study Programme compliance

Most necessary information is on the Departmental website (or in some cases on the central website of the University). Staff CVs are available in Greek and in English. The academic unit policy is also available online. Information is clear, generally up-to-date and easily accessible.

The course outlines are available in the department's Study Guide (in fact they take up most of the overall study guide).

Panel judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

The AP recommends that the website be regularly updated and that a faculty member is assigned to oversee this procedure.

Principle 9: On-going Monitoring and Periodic Internal Review of Programmes

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD HAVE IN PLACE AN INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM FOR THE AUDIT AND ANNUAL INTERNAL REVIEW OF THEIR PROGRAMMES, SO AS TO ACHIEVE THE OBJECTIVES SET FOR THEM, THROUGH MONITORING AND AMENDMENTS, WITH A VIEW TO CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT. ANY ACTIONS TAKEN IN THE ABOVE CONTEXT SHOULD BE COMMUNICATED TO ALL PARTIES CONCERNED.

Regular monitoring, review and revision of study programmes aim to maintain the level of educational provision and to create a supportive and effective learning environment for students.

The above comprise the evaluation of:

- *the content of the programme in the light of the latest research in the given discipline, thus ensuring that the programme is up to date;*
- *the changing needs of society;*
- *the students' workload, progression and completion;*
- *the effectiveness of the procedures for the assessment of students;*
- *the students' expectations, needs and satisfaction in relation to the programme;*
- *the learning environment, support services and their fitness for purpose for the programme*

Programmes are reviewed and revised regularly involving students and other stakeholders. The information collected is analysed and the programme is adapted to ensure that it is up-to-date. Revised programme specifications are published.

Study Programme compliance

The reviewing, assessing, and revising process of the curriculum is ensured by regular procedures which were first implemented in 2018. The Internal Evaluation Group (OMEA) of the Department of History and Ethnology, and in particular the Study Programme advisors (σύμβουλοι σπουδών) are active in organizing the annual assessments of the SP. These internal assessments review all types of teaching by collecting and analysing the relevant information in order to make the SP still more effective. As already mentioned, the SP is periodically updated with respect to the latest theoretical and methodological developments in History, Ethnology, and to a lesser extent Archaeology and Physical Anthropology.

The on-going monitoring and reviewing process is very well organised and implemented. The annual assessments partially conform to legal regulations. The numerical indicators are properly recorded, documented and submitted to the Quality Assurance Unit (MODIP). However, the Department does not seem to generate a fully comprehensive annual report reflecting on its performance and indicators and suggesting strategic goals or actions accordingly. The Department's indicators give the picture of a generally positive development of the strategic goals of the SP. Yet, both results and actions plans are not communicated effectively to the students, since they are not available in the Department's website.

Panel judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

Introduce a comprehensive annual report, reflecting on performance and indicators and suggesting strategic goals or actions accordingly.

Principle 10: Regular External Evaluation of Undergraduate Programmes

PROGRAMMES SHOULD REGULARLY UNDERGO EVALUATION BY COMMITTEES OF EXTERNAL EXPERTS SET BY HQA, AIMING AT ACCREDITATION. THE TERM OF VALIDITY OF THE ACCREDITATION IS DETERMINED BY HQA.

HQA is responsible for administering the programme accreditation process which is realised as an external evaluation procedure, and implemented by a committee of independent experts. HQA grants accreditation of programmes, with a specific term of validity, following to which revision is required. The accreditation of the quality of the programmes acts as a means of verification of the compliance of the programme with the template's requirements, and as a catalyst for improvement, while opening new perspectives towards the international standing of the awarded degrees.

Both academic units and institutions participate in the regular external quality assurance process, while respecting the requirements of the legislative framework in which they operate.

The quality assurance, in this case the accreditation, is an on-going process that does not end with the external feedback, or report or its follow-up process within the Institution. Therefore, Institutions and their academic units ensure that the progress made since the last external quality assurance activity is taken into consideration when preparing for the next one.

Study Programme compliance

The Department's SP underwent an external evaluation set by the HQA in 2014. Subsequently, the Department engaged with the evaluation results of 2014, as indicated in its proposal for certification submitted in 2019. The Department has undertaken specific actions in relation with the recommendations of the HQA evaluation committee, though it is unclear whether this procedure was continuous and gradual and left a specific paper-trail through annual internal evaluation reports (see Principle 9). The AP was not made aware of the Department undergoing any other external evaluation in the meantime.

The AP members noted that the Department members present during the AP visit seemed perfectly aware of the importance of the external review and seemed whole-heartedly committed to ensuring the success of the Department through the implementation of the recommendations made. The entire Department participated positively in the AP's accreditation visit, provided the data AP asked for, and answered all its questions. The AP also noted that external stakeholders expressed a vivid interest for the Department and seemed willing to enhance this relationship and participate more actively in the evaluation and the follow-up process.

Panel judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

The AP would like to suggest the following actions:

Following the communication of the evaluation results by the HQA and the University's QAU, the Department's Internal Quality Assurance Group (OMEA) should assess and reflect on the results, as well as establish a first plan of action; this should be communicated to all Department members.

Following the Departmental discussion on the HQA external evaluation report and the Department's OMEA suggestions, identify concrete tasks, a specific timeline and the Departmental committees that should be entrusted with their implementation. This is most importantly relevant for the Curriculum committee.

Communicate the Department's resolutions to outside stakeholders who have an interest in the Department's success and to the students (possibly through a town-hall meeting).

PART C: CONCLUSIONS

I. Features of Good Practice

Within the recent context in Greece, the Department of History & Ethnology seems as a whole committed to the accomplishment of its mission. The support staff is dedicated and the academic staff seems, in general, engaged in ensuring the success of its students and the production of quality research. There exist a certain number of cutting-edge research fields (e.g. Physical Anthropology) that, in addition to their research output, secure research grants. There are also fields solidly integrated in the local community (Anthropology and Ethnology). These research fields seem to function as a beacon for the Department. They could serve as model for the development of similar research clusters in other areas, given the research profile of staff members (e.g. ethnic groups and boundaries from antiquity to present times). The Department is situated in a particularly rich multicultural environment which offers opportunities in some highly valued research fields (e.g. the presence of various religions and interreligious contacts; a considerable archaeological and architectural heritage); various museums. The use of the existing laboratories, museum collections (whether inside or outside of the Department) is capital for the training of the students and should be reinforced.

Student experience appears in general to be positive, thanks to the small size of the Department, the intimate atmosphere cultivated on-site and the relatively good quality and optimal use of the existing support services. Collectively, the teaching staff appears to be responsive to remarks about enhancement of the students' learning experience, curriculum design and SP organization.

The Department has the opportunity of maximizing collaborations with nearby institutions of higher learning in order to increase the breadth of its SP thus enhancing the job opportunities and diversifying the career trajectories of its graduates without risking the atomization of research through the transformation of the staff into an ad hoc collection of individual profiles in very different fields. The Department has managed to secure the professional rights of its graduates.

Further strengths include:

- Information and resources made readily available to students
- Faculty are easily accessible to students
- The Staff is reliable and efficient
- Strong faculty research in certain areas, a benefit to undergraduate students
- The internship program is solid and supported by the Department
- Good relations with local cultural institutions and the community at large

II. Areas of Weakness

A clear differentiating feature that distinguishes the Department graduates from other History and Archaeology graduates appears to be missing. The Department can choose to adapt its SP to a changing environment and to comply with the best international standards, whichever direction it chooses to develop.

Results of annual assessment are not published.

The role of the Curriculum Committee is weak.

The SP lacks tutorials (frontistiria) for early years' students and seminars for upper-level students.

The ECTS system has been applied mechanically.

Limited effective monitoring of the teaching.

Limited use of local links by the Department and its staff.

No student-staff colloquium.

Relatively limited international mobility of academic staff and students. Relatively limited participation to research funding applications from non-Greek sources.

Absence of data about the professional career of former students.

Limited resources of the Library.

III. Recommendations for Follow-up Actions

The quality assurance policy which has been systematically pursued by the Department in the previous years could be enhanced by taking several additional measures:

- The role of Curriculum Committee should be enhanced so that the latter can acquire a stronger focus on strategic planning and proposals to the Department. It is further crucial that all these actions as well as the results of the annual internal assessments should be fully documented and communicated not only to staff members but also to students through the Department's homepage.
- The results of the annual internal assessments and the newly founded Research Committee should be published in the Department's homepage, so that they can be easily accessible to students.
- A stronger involvement of the students' representatives and stakeholders in the design, revision and approval of the SP.
- A better communication of the results and thus the efficacy of the quality assurance policy evaluation process can be further achieved through the announced annual meetings with students.
- More efforts should be made to persuade students to complete satisfaction questionnaires.
- The Career Office should be strengthened, so that Alumni data can be included.

If the Department so chooses, the Anthropology/Ethnography combination may be a possible skillset of the students. Another alternative, we think is a stronger philology and pedagogics character (along with the history/ethnography combination) that will strengthen the position of graduates in the ASEP examinations (when offered).

The quality of the curriculum would profit enormously through the introduction of more courses in labs, fieldwork and tutorials (frontistiria) as complementary to lectures and small group upper level seminars in both tracks (with a limited number of students in each seminar). This should be combined by integrating alternative modes of assessment (written assignments/papers, work in labs, fieldwork).

The introduction of courses in English could attract more incoming Erasmus-students and be also appealing for their own students. Furthermore, it must be ensured that the e-class platform should be systematically used by all members of the staff and be regularly updated.

The forthcoming revision of the SP provides an opportunity to re-examine the application of the ECTS system (perhaps giving more ECTS credits to more demanding courses).

The pass-rates and grade-spreads as well as student's progress should be monitored more effectively. The Department should further consider ways to help stagnant students (esp. females) complete their studies, without sacrificing quality.

Elaborate recruitment priorities, not on the sole basis of covering specific fields, but also taking into account innovation with regard to research, curriculum design and capacity of introducing new courses in various streams of the curriculum.

Following the communication of the evaluation results by the HQA and the University's QAU, the Department's Internal Quality Assurance Group (OMEA) should assess and reflect on the results, as well as establish a first plan of action which will include concrete tasks and a specific timeline.

IV. Summary & Overall Assessment

The Principles where full compliance has been achieved are:

1, 6, 8, 9, 10

The Principles where substantial compliance has been achieved are:

2, 3, 4, 5, 7

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 Accreditation Panel for the Undergraduate Programme History and Ethnology of the Democritus University of Thrace

Name and Surname

Signature

- **Prof. Diamantis Panagiotopoulos (Chair)**, Universität Heidelberg, Heidelberg, Germany
- **Assoc. Prof. Anastassios Anastassiadis**, McGill University, Montreal, Canada
- **Assoc. Prof. Georgios Kazamias**, University of Cyprus, Nicosia, Cyprus