



**ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ**  
HELLENIC REPUBLIC



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Ανώτατης Εκπαίδευσης**  
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# **Accreditation Report** **for the Postgraduate Study Programme of:**

**Human Reproduction**

**Department: Medicine**

**Institution: Democritus University of Thrace**

**Date: 30 September 2023**



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



Report of the Panel appointed by the HAHE to undertake the review of the  
Postgraduate Study Programme of **Human Reproduction** of the **Democritus University  
of Thrace** for the purposes of granting accreditation

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Part A: Background and Context of the Review</b> .....	<b>4</b>
I. The External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel .....	4
II. Review Procedure and Documentation .....	5
III. Postgraduate Study Programme Profile .....	8
<b>Part B: Compliance with the Principles</b> .....	<b>11</b>
<b>PRINCIPLE 1: QUALITY ASSURANCE POLICY AND QUALITY GOAL SETTING FOR THE POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES OF THE INSTITUTION AND THE ACADEMIC UNIT</b> .....	<b>11</b>
<b>PRINCIPLE 2: DESIGN AND APPROVAL OF POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES</b> .....	<b>16</b>
<b>PRINCIPLE 3: STUDENT-CENTRED LEARNING, TEACHING, AND ASSESSMENT</b> .....	<b>20</b>
<b>PRINCIPLE 4: STUDENT ADMISSION, PROGRESSION, RECOGNITION OF POSTGRADUATE STUDIES, AND CERTIFICATION</b> .....	<b>24</b>
<b>PRINCIPLE 5: TEACHING STAFF OF POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES</b> .....	<b>27</b>
<b>PRINCIPLE 6: LEARNING RESOURCES AND STUDENT SUPPORT</b> .....	<b>29</b>
<b>PRINCIPLE 7: INFORMATION MANAGEMENT</b> .....	<b>33</b>
<b>PRINCIPLE 8: PUBLIC INFORMATION CONCERNING THE POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES</b> .....	<b>37</b>
<b>PRINCIPLE 9: ON-GOING MONITORING AND PERIODIC INTERNAL EVALUATION OF POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES</b> .....	<b>39</b>
<b>PRINCIPLE 10: REGULAR EXTERNAL EVALUATION OF POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES</b> .....	<b>40</b>
<b>Part C: Conclusions</b> .....	<b>43</b>
I. Features of Good Practice .....	43
II. Areas of Weakness .....	43
III. Recommendations for Follow-up Actions .....	43
IV. Summary & Overall Assessment .....	45

## **PART A: BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT OF THE REVIEW**

### **I. The External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel**

The Panel responsible for the Accreditation Review of the postgraduate study programme of **Human Reproduction** of the **Democritus University of Thrace** comprised the following three (3) members, drawn from the HAHE Register, in accordance with Laws 4009/2011 & 4653/2020:

**1. Prof. Nikolaos Venizelos (Chair)**

Örebro University, Örebro, Sweden.

**2. Prof. Panagiotis Karanis**

Medical School - University of Nicosia, Cyprus

**3. MSc Cand. Elena Karydi**

Postgraduate Student, Department of Medicine, University of Patras

## II. Review Procedure and Documentation

In accordance with the requirements of Quality Assurance in Higher Education (laws 4009/2011 & 4653/2020), the Authority of Higher Education (**HAHE**), by individual invitation and after formal acceptance dated 15/09/2023, establishes an independent External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel (**EEAP**), with the mission of assessing the compliance of the **Postgraduate Studies Program in Human Reproduction (PSP-HR)** of the **Department of Medicine** of the **Democritus University of Thrace (DM-DUTH)** scheduled 25-30/09-2023. The established EEAP consists of three experts (3), two from universities abroad and one from Greek University.

The evaluation was carried out through reviews of documents, as well as online interviews with Directors of PSP, the Head of the Department, MODIP members, Steering Committees, OMEA members, teaching staff, students, graduates, and external stakeholders.

The method used was focused on sampling of the Department's activities, with the aim of assessing the fulfilment of the requirements of the HAHE protocol, regarding the quality and compliance of the PSP, its effectiveness, and the implementation of the requirements within the framework of HAHE for PSPs.

On September 25, 2023, the EEAP received digital all information and supporting documents via HAHE's website system.

The content of the materials provided is as follows:

### 1. Departmental Material

A0. Contents

A1. Proposal of academic accreditation

A2. Quality policy of postgraduate study programme

A3. Quality objectives of the academic unit for the postgraduate programmes

A4. Senate decision on the establishment of PSP

A5. Study guide

A6. Course outline

A7. List of names of teaching staff

A8. Report of the internal evaluation

A9. Evaluation from students

A10. Regulation on complaints handling

A11. Operating rules of the academic adviser institution

A12. Internal rules of procedure of PSP

A13. Research ethics regulations

A14. Study Regulations

A15. Diploma Annex

A16. Summary report on teaching staff allowances

A17. Data reports from the Integrated System National Quality Information System (NQIS) for all the previous academic years

A18. External evaluation of the postgraduate programme

## A19. Other documentation material

### 1. HAHE Material

PSP-Guidelines for the EEAP, Acronyms, European Qualifications Framework, Standards PSP En., M12 PSP Mapping Grid, M13 PSP Accreditation Report Template, Guidelines of Accreditation-En., Accreditation Management System - expert manual, and HAHEs additional material the “Final Accreditation Report UGP Medicine DUTH”.

On Thursday 31/08/2023 at 16:00 hrs., an orientation meeting was organized via Zoom by the Director General of HAHE, Dr. Christina Besta on the procedures to be followed during the virtual site visit and the subsequent drafting of the report. Also, during the meeting, the mission of quality assurance (QA) was presented, and guidelines of the accreditation process were given.

The whole evaluation and accreditation process was carried out solely remotely using the Zoom platform. All the evaluation and accreditation reviews were scheduled and performed at Athen’s time zone.

#### Monday, 25/09/2023, 15:00 - 16:00 hrs.

The EEAP members met remotely in view of getting know each other and to establishing a modus operandi regarding the accreditation mission, to schedule and discuss the content and structure of the Report Template, allocation of tasks, for to be prepared ahead of the site visit that would be performed via online using Zoom platform.

At 16:00 - 17:00 hrs., the EEAP started formally the evaluation reviews of the PSP program in **Human Reproduction (HR)**. Initially the EEAP meet, among others, the Director of the PSP-HR programme Prof. Nikolaos Nikolettos, the Head of the Department Prof Konstantinos Vadikolias, who were welcome the EEAP, and the President of MODIP, Prof. Grigoriou Marirena, who briefly presented the compliance and the Standards for Quality Accreditation of institution. The Director of the programme Prof. Nikolaos Nikolettos presented an overview of the postgraduate programme, the history, academic profile, and current status. Present during this meeting, were the MODIP staff/members, Prof. Aggeloussis Nikolaos, Prof. Sirakoulis Georgios, Prof. Antonopoulos, Konstantinos, Assoc. Prof. Markos Angelos, Assoc. Prof. Paschalidou Anastasia, Mrs. Gkavaki Styliani, Secretary of MODIP, Mrs. Marsidou Sofia, Administrative staff. Present in the meeting were also Steering Committee members, Prof. Panagiotis Tsikouras, Prof. Christos Kalaitzis, Assoc. Prof. Emanuel Kontomanolis, Assoc. Prof. Evangelia Nena, and the OMEA member Prof. Constantinos Anagnostopoulos.

At 17:00 to 17:30 hrs., was carry out an on-line tour of facilities by a video produced to access the classrooms, lecture halls, libraries, research laboratories, clinics, and other facilities related to the PSP. An orally tour description of the facilities was given under video-view.

After, the EEAP members, were ending the first day’s sessions by a debrief meeting, to reflect on impressions of the first day and prepared the next day on-line reviews.

Tuesday, 26/09/2023, 15:00 - 15:45 hrs., the EEAP met with the teaching staff of the PSP, Prof. Biron Assimakopoulos, Assoc. Prof. John. Karakasiliotis, Assoc. Prof. Christina Tsigalou, Assoc. Prof. Angelos Daniilidis, Assist. Prof. A. Gerede, K. Arvanitidis, Biologist – Physician EBRD/ EDIP, Aggeliki Tiptiri-Kourpeti PhD Clinical Embryologist, Evgeni Evangelini, PhD, Reproductive Biologist, Director of “Cryogonia”, Athens, Dala Vayia PhD, Clinical Embryologist, Karantzis Panayiotis, MD, PhD, Obstetrician and Gynaecologist, Athens, where discussed the opportunities of professional development, mobility, teaching methods, evaluation by students, and possible areas of weakness.

At 16:00 hrs., the EEAP met with 10 students of the PSP, where the students’ satisfaction of their study experience, the Department and Institution facilities, the students input in quality assurance of PSP and student life and welfare was discussed.

At 17:30 hrs., the EEAP met with PSP graduates, Natalia Sachnova - specialist in Obstetrics and Gynecology, Nektaria Kritsotaki - specialist in Obstetrics and Gynecology, Maria Georganta – Midwife, Triantafilia Iliou - Molecular Biologist, Rania Konstantogianni - Biologist – Embryologist, Konstantinos Nikolettos-specialist in Obstetrics and Gynecology, Aggeliki Tiptiri-Kourpeti, PhD Clinical Embryologist, Charmanidou Triada – Midwife, and discussed their experience and the importance of PSP concerning their career path.

At 18:30 hrs., the EEAP met with employers and external stakeholders from the private and the public sector to discuss external relations of the PSP. Present were, Gkotsidis Konstantinos, Deputy Govenor of the University General Hospital of Alexandroupolis, Michael Koutsilieris, MD, PhD, President of the Hellenic Society of Reproductive Medicine, Papandroudias Andreas UEMS, Vice President, and Chatzipappas Christos, President, Evros Medical Council.

Next after the EEAP members had a debriefing in private, to discuss the outcomes of the daily meetings and prepare a preliminary oral report to the closure meeting.

At 20:00 -20:30 hrs., the EEAP in a short closure meeting was finalised the scheduled PSP-reviews by a short informal oral report of the initial impressions/key findings, to the Director of the PSP-Human Reproduction Prof. Nikolaos Nikolettos, the Head of the Department Prof Konstantinos Vadikolias, MODIP members, Prof. Grigoriou Marirena (president), Prof. Aggeloussis Nikolaos, Prof. Sirakoulis Georgios, Prof. Antonopoulos, Konstantinos, Assoc. Prof. Markos Angelos, Assoc. Prof. Paschalidou Anastasia. Steering Committee members, Prof. Panagiotis Tsikouras, Prof. Christos Kalaitzis, Assoc. Prof. Emanuel Kontomanolis, Assoc. Prof. Evangelia Nena. OMEA member Prof. Constantinos Anagnostopoulos. MODIP staff, Mrs. Gkavaki Styliani, Secretary of Mrs. Marsidou Sofia, Administrativestaff.

During the period 27 to 30 of September 2023, the EEAP members were getting familiar to all material obtained from HAHE and MODIP and worked on the completion of a draft of Accreditation Report (AR) of PSP programme.

### III. Postgraduate Study Programme Profile

Democritus University of Thrace (DUTH.) was founded with the legislative decree no. 37 on July 27th, 1973, and started to run in the academic year 1974-1975. It was named 'Democritus' in honour of the ancient Greek philosopher Democritus, whose origin was from the town of Abdera in the Prefecture of Xanthi. The administrative seat of the University resides in the city of Komotini, the capital city of the Administrative Region of East Macedonia & Thrace.

The University is classified among the biggest Greek Universities in terms of the number of its active student population. Geographically dispersed throughout the cities of Komotini, Xanthi, Alexandroupolis and Orestiada, with 8 Schools, 20 Departments and a wide variety of Postgraduate Programs, with a student population that reaches approximately, 26619 undergraduates, 4142 postgraduate students and 1964 PhD candidate. A research and teaching staff that exceeds 661 people, and approximately 197 administrative staff members. The university still is the only academic institution in the Administrative Region of East Macedonia & Thrace. DUTH. seeks to reinforce its research profile through collaborations and projects that render it one of the leading research organizations in Greece.

The Department of Medicine at Democritus University of Thrace (DUTH) was founded in 1977 (Law 641/1977) and started to run in the academic year 1984-1985 (P.D. 573/1982) houses in the city of Alexandroupolis, in Thrace. In the same area also houses the Department of Molecular Biology and Genetics, the Amphitheatre, the Library of the School of Health Sciences, the Administration building, the Indoors Gym, and the Playing Field.

The Department of Medicine includes a total of 7 sectors, 56 established Laboratories and 32 University Clinics, and 30 special units, and are covered teaching and Research Staff (ΔΕΠ): 51 Professors, 26 Assoc. Professors and 33 Ass. Professors. 7 Laboratory Teaching Staff (ΕΔΙΠ), 18 Special Technical Laboratory Staff (ΕΤΕΠ), and 9 Administrative Staff.

The Department offers except the undergraduate studies programme (6 preclinical semesters and 6 clinical), 19 postgraduate programs of study and supports doctoral and postdoctoral research programs.

The PSP "*Human Reproduction*" was established 2014 (Gazette: 3357 B'/15-12-2014) and started operating in 2015 as a PSP (MSc) in the Department of Medicine of Democritus University of Thrace, while in 2018 it was re-established (Gazette: 2878 B' /19-07-2018).

The programme objective and subject are, the postgraduate teaching, research, practical training in the scientific field of Human Reproduction, the development of skills and familiarization of postgraduate students in the treatment of infertility by use of medically assisted reproduction techniques, as IVF, Artificial Insemination, and other methods.

The PSP "Human Reproduction" is a part of the strategic planning of the Democritus University of Thrace, which aims to further promote knowledge, develop research and the arts, satisfy the educational, research, social, cultural, and developmental needs of the country.



The PSP is structured based on the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS). The duration of the program is 2 semesters of study equivalent to a total of 60 ECTS. (Includes 12 courses of total 50 ECTS, and a Diploma thesis 10 ECTS). To obtain the MSc, is required total 60 ECTS, and compulsory attendance and successful examination in all compulsory courses, as they are distributed in the two semesters of study. 1<sup>st</sup> semester includes 7 compulsory courses of total 30 ECTS and 2<sup>nd</sup> semester includes 4 compulsory course, Internship, and Diploma Thesis of total 30 ECTS.

Study guide for the current academic year (2022-2023) of the postgraduate program M.Sc. In "Human Reproduction" is described in detail in Annex A5 and in the <http://human-reproduction.med.duth.gr/>

## **PART B: COMPLIANCE WITH THE PRINCIPLES**

### **PRINCIPLE 1: QUALITY ASSURANCE POLICY AND QUALITY GOAL SETTING FOR THE POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES OF THE INSTITUTION AND THE ACADEMIC UNIT**

**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 THE POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES OF THE INSTITUTION AND THE ACADEMIC UNIT. THIS POLICY SHOULD BE PUBLISHED AND IMPLEMENTED BY ALL STAKEHOLDERS.**

*The quality assurance policy of the academic unit should be in line with the quality assurance policy of the Institution and must be formulated in the form of a public statement, which is implemented by all stakeholders. It focuses on the achievement of special goals related to the quality assurance of the study programmes offered by the academic unit.*

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

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

- a) the suitability of the structure and organisation of postgraduate study programmes*
- b) the pursuit of learning outcomes and qualifications in accordance with the European and National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education - level 7*
- c) the promotion of the quality and effectiveness of teaching at the PSP*
- d) the appropriateness of the qualifications of the teaching staff for the PSP*
- e) the drafting, implementation, and review of specific annual quality goals for the improvement of the PSP*
- f) the level of demand for the graduates' qualifications in the labour market*
- g) the quality of support services, such as the administrative services, the libraries and the student welfare office for the PSP*
- h) the efficient utilisation of the financial resources of the PSP that may be drawn from tuition fees*
- i) the conduct of an annual review and audit of the quality assurance system of the PSP through the cooperation of the Internal Evaluation Group (IEG) with the Institution's Quality Assurance Unit (QAU)*

#### **Documentation**

- *Quality Assurance Policy of the PSP*
- *Quality goal setting of the PSP*

#### **Study Programme Compliance**

##### **I. Findings**

#### **The Quality Policy (QP) of the Department of Medicine for the PSP Human Reproduction**

The Department of Medicine, in collaboration with the Quality Assurance Unit of the Democritus University of Thrace (DUTH), has harmonized the Quality Policy of the Postgraduate Programs (MSc) and Doctoral Studies with the Quality Policy of the Democritus University of Thrace.

In particular, the Postgraduate Program "**Human Reproduction**", "**MSc. In Human Reproduction**" is part of the strategic planning of the DUTH, which aims at the further promotion of knowledge, the development of research and the arts, the satisfaction of the educational, research, social, cultural and developmental needs of the country, the high-level specialization of graduates in theoretical and applied areas of specific cognitive disciplines, special thematic units or individual branches of the cognitive subjects of the first cycle of studies of the relevant Department.

The Postgraduate Program "Human Reproduction" is committed to the implementation of a quality policy that supports the academic profile and orientation of the curriculum, promotes its purpose and object, implements its strategic goals, determines the means and ways to achieve them and aims at its continuous improvement.

### **Implementation of Quality Policy (QP)**

The implementation of the QP of the Department has been approved by the Authorities of the Democritus University of Thrace through the Quality Assurance and Accreditation Unit in application of the instructions of the Hellenic Quality Assurance & Accreditation Authority in Higher Education (ADIP) and the requirements of the regulatory and legal framework and is published on the website of the Department of Medicine of the Democritus University of Thrace. The results of the internal and external evaluation of the Department of Medicine are available with parallel registration of the required information and data in the Integrated National Quality Information System (INQIS) of the HQA.

#### Quality Policy focuses on:

- a. the academic profile and orientation of the postgraduate program
- b. the learning outcomes and qualifications pursued in accordance with the National Higher Education Qualifications Framework
- c. the structure and organization of the postgraduate program
- d. the quality and effectiveness of postgraduate teaching work, as particularly documented by the evaluation of the students themselves
- e. the establishment of clear and defined objectives for ensuring and continuously improving the quality of the University's curricula and support services
- f. the policy design process, effective organization and decision-making process for continuous quality improvement
- g. the process of implementing the policy for continuous quality improvement
- h. the documentation on quality improvement

#### The Postgraduate Program Human Reproduction:

- Designs, modifies and improves its Curriculum with transparency and participation of all involved parties in order to do so.
- Implements, in full alignment with the quality policy of the Department and the Institution, quality procedures in teaching work.

- Ensures the quality (and quantity) of the research work and teaching work of academics and other members participating as lecturers in the postgraduate program.
- It ensures the connection between teaching and research. It is informed about the level of professional rehabilitation of its graduates and disseminates to students' professional rehabilitation information beyond the typical
- The continuous evaluation and control of the postgraduate program allows continuous improvements aimed at high-quality education and research.

### **Communication of Quality Policy**

The implementation of the quality policy as approved by the Administration of the Democritus University of Thrace through the Quality Assurance Unit in application of the instructions of the National Authority for Higher Education (HAHE) is communicated to all involved parties (faculty, administrative staff, and students) by posted on the website of the [Department of Medicine](#) of DUTH ([Quality Policy PSP « Human Reproduction](#)).

### **Teaching facilities**

Under academic year 2022-2023, the PSP of Human Reproduction enrolls a maximum 40 postgraduate students per cycle of studies. The PSP is structured based on the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS). The duration of the program is 2 semesters of study equivalent to a total of 60 ECTS. (Includes 12 courses of total 50 ECTS, and a Diploma thesis 10 ECTS).

The total number of teaching staff lecturers that are involved in teaching of PSP are 71. 16 of these teachers are faculty members of the Department of Medicine of DUTH, and 55 teachers from other institutions, research centre's or from abroad. Ratio of male to female teachers: 51 /20. Administrative-Technical staff 1.

All the PSP participates lecturers are specialize in the field of infertility and assisted reproduction, with similar clinical and research work, which is published in both Greece and abroad journals. Faculty members with relevant knowledge and experience from other Medical Departments in Greece participate, they are complemented the faculty members of the Department of Medicine at DUTH, with disciplines and academic experience that covering all the courses provided in the PSP. Further, the list is supplemented with Researchers of recognized reputation and specialized knowledge in the field of PSP. The list of teachers and their qualifications can be found on the PSP education website <http://human-reproduction.med.duth.gr/>.

The Department of Medicine of the Democritus University of Thrace (DUTH) is in the city of Alexandroupolis in Thrace. In the same area there is also the Department of Molecular Biology and Genetics, the amphitheatre, the School of Health and Welfare's library, the administration building, the indoor gym, and the playing field.

The Department of Medicine includes a total of 7 sectors, 56 established Laboratories and 32 University Clinics, and 30 special units. The Department offers except the undergraduate studies programme (6 preclinical and 6 clinical semesters), 19 postgraduate study programs and supports doctoral and postdoctoral research programs.

The Department's availability regarding the capacity of classrooms and laboratories for to run the PSP is sufficient, as the capacity is proportioned for more than 40 students. The classes from 2022 to 2023 are held in 80% remotely, and 2 physical attendance meetings (labs in fully equipped laboratory spaces and with highly trained staff).

The Department of Medicine and the PSP have new state-of-the-art facilities that meet all the requirements for people with disabilities.

Study guide for the current academic year (2022-2023) of the postgraduate program M.Sc. In "Human Reproduction" is described in detail in Annex A5 and A6 and on the Website <http://human-reproduction.med.duth.gr/>.

### **Linking teaching and research**

The Department of Medicine of the DUTH conducts high-level research in cutting-edge fields after attracting national and European competitive research programs. There is an interaction between research and teaching practice that creates the appropriate epistemic environment for the provision of high-level knowledge. In the work also includes promoting the participation of postgraduate students, in the research programs of the Department. At the end of each semester, a report on the research activity of the Department is prepared and incorporated into the annual report of the Department to the Quality Assurance Unit.

The Department of Medicine encourages teachers to improve their skills in various ways, encourages them to make use of the offered possibilities, such as educational leave, training, mobility programs, collaborations with researchers from other institutions in Greece and abroad, joint research proposals, etc.

Recently, the Democritus University of Thrace decided to create a Register of Open Access Research Infrastructures of Departments and Institutions (<https://eyap.duth.gr/meyap/>). In this way, innovation and interdisciplinary research are promoted, which are key drivers of development of the Democritus University of Thrace and Greek society.

The total number of publications per teacher who participated in a course in the MSc under the academic year 2021-2022 shows to be 97.21. During the period 2018 to 2022, the average number of publications per teacher of the MSc was 27.36. A brief report of the performance of teaching staff in scientific research is described in Appendix A16.

### **Analysis**

The Quality Assurance Policy of the academic unit seems to be in line with the quality assurance policy of the Institution and is formulated in the form of a public statement, which is implemented by all involved partners.

The Department of Medicine of DUTH demonstrates a good quality and capacity of actively involved teachers with adequate qualifications for to run the PSP.

The QP statement of the Department of Medicine includes commitments that implement a Quality Policy in order to promote the academic profile, the orientation of the postgraduate study programme PSP, and the purpose and field of study.

No visible evidence was found, either on the attached documents or website, of established research collaborations between external academic stakeholders and the Department of Medicine, linked to the PSP level.

The PSP provides a Website in Greek to make the qualifications and learning outcomes of the PSP visible. The information will be also displayed in English open for all foreign interested partners/companies etc.

### Conclusions

The EEAP considers that the School of Medicine of DUTH is in line with the Department's Quality Assurance Policy and the quality objectives for postgraduate study programme of Human Reproduction but does not fully comply with the minimum requirements and commitments required for the implementation of the adequate education quality policy in accordance with HAHEs regulation.

### Panel Judgement

<b>Principle 1: Quality assurance policy and quality goal setting for the postgraduate study programmes of the institution and the academic unit</b>	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	<b>X</b>
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

### Panel Recommendations

- The PSP needs to do easily accessible to locating the established research collaborations particularly linked to PSP level with external academic stakeholder.
- Strengthening the research potential of the Postgraduate Program with emphasis on international research collaborations, enhancing the mobility of postgraduate students and their participation in international scientific conferences.
- The Quality Policy for PSP is available on the PSP's website only in Greek. Needs also to be available in English, so the information will be clearly and completely displayed for all foreign interested partners/companies etc.
- On the Website of PSP, must clearly and concrete displayed the content of the PSP of learning outcomes and qualifications (i.e., Purpose, Objects, Duration and Condition, Categories of Candidates, Tuition and Free Tuition of PSP) in accordance with ENQFHE.

## **PRINCIPLE 2: DESIGN AND APPROVAL OF POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES**

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

*The academic units develop their postgraduate study programmes following a well-defined procedure. The academic profile and orientation of the programme, the research character, the scientific objectives, the specific subject areas, and specialisations are described at this stage.*

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

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

*In addition, the design of PSP must consider:*

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

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

### **Documentation**

- *Senate decision for the establishment of the PSP*
- *PSP curriculum structure: courses, course categories, ECTS awarded, expected learning outcomes according to the EQF, internship, mobility opportunities*
- *Labour market data regarding the employment of graduates, international experience in a relevant scientific field*
- *PSP Student Guide*
- *Course and thesis outlines*
- *Teaching staff (name list including of areas of specialisation, its relation to the courses taught, employment relationship, and teaching assignment in hours as well as other teaching commitments in hours)*

## **Study Programme Compliance**

### **I. Findings**

#### **Senate decision for the establishment of the PSP**

The PSP "Human Reproduction" started operating in 2015 as a PSP (MSc) in the Department of Medicine of Democritus University of Thrace, while in 2018 it was re-established (Gazette: 2878 B' /19-07-2018).

A Proposal and recommendation of the Assembly of the Department is forwarded to the Senate through the Postgraduate Studies Committee of the Democritus University of Thrace. The Senate decides on the establishment of the Postgraduate Program, the decision to establish it, before it is published in the Government Gazette, is notified to the Minister of Education and Religious Affairs for the agreement of a nine-member committee of the Ministry of Education. Approval decision by the Ministry of Education Publication in the Government Gazette of the Senate's Decision. Notification of the Government Gazette to the Ministry of Education

#### **The academic profile and orientation of the programme**

The Postgraduate Program "Human Reproduction" focuses on postgraduate teaching, research, and practical training in the scientific field of Human Reproduction and the treatment of infertility with medically assisted reproduction techniques (IVF, Artificial Insemination, and other methods).

The PSP is part of the strategic planning of the Democritus University of Thrace, is governed by scientific coherence and aims at the further promotion of knowledge, the development of research and science of medicine, the satisfaction of the educational, research, social and developmental needs of the country, the high-level postgraduate teaching, research, and practical education of graduates in the broader scientific field of Human Reproduction.

The implementation of the program includes 2 semesters of study equivalent to a total of 60 ECTS with homogeneous and equal distribution of their educational content: Theoretical courses, practical training, and practice cycle of total 50 ECTS as well as the preparation and presentation of a diploma thesis of 10 ECTS.

#### **The objectives of the program**

- Depth training of participants with all scientifically documented knowledge in the field of Human Reproduction and in the development of skills and familiarization of postgraduate students with the practical treatment, through IVF treatment, of couples with infertility problems.
- The creation of specialized scientific personnel in the field of Human Reproduction that will contribute to the improvement of health services in the private and public sector.
- To ensure the scientific prerequisites for those postgraduate students who wish to continue their studies for the acquisition of a doctoral degree.

#### **The purpose of this Postgraduate Program**

- To promote scientific knowledge and research on Human Reproduction and the treatment of infertility with medically assisted reproduction techniques (IVF, Artificial



- Insemination, and other methods). through IVF treatment, couples with infertility problems.
- To assist in the creation of specialized scientific potential in the field of Human Reproduction that will contribute to the improvement of health services in the private and public sector.
  - The Postgraduate Program is a continuation of the subjects treated by the Department of Medicine, providing high-level specialized knowledge of modern medical practices as well as various interdisciplinary collaborations.
  - The structure of the courses of the postgraduate program of studies of the Department of Medicine specializes and upgrades the knowledge of the graduates of the Department, but also of the graduates of other Departments who will choose it.

### **The structure of the Postgraduate Program**

The PSP is structured based on the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS). The duration of the program is 2 semesters of study equivalent to a total 60 ECTS. (Includes 12 courses of total 50 ECTS, and a Diploma thesis 10 ECTS). To obtain the MSc, is required total 60 ECTS, and compulsory attendance and successful examination in all compulsory courses, as they are distributed in the two semesters of study. 1<sup>st</sup> semester includes 7 compulsory courses of total 30 ECTS and 2<sup>nd</sup> semester includes 4 compulsory course, Internship, and Diploma Thesis of total 30 ECTS.

All courses seem to be conducted in Greek language. The tuition fees are set at 3.000,0€. The PSP of Human Reproduction enrolls a maximum 40 per cycle of studies postgraduate students.

### **Teaching staff and areas of specialisation**

The total number of teaching staff lecturers that are involved in teaching of PSP are 71. 16 of these teachers are faculty members of the Department of Medicine of DUTH, and 55 teachers from other institutions, research centre's or from abroad. Ratio of male to female teachers: 51 /20. Administrative-Technical staff 1.

In the PSP Human Reproduction all participates lecturers are specialize in the field of infertility and assisted reproduction, with similar clinical and research work, which is published in both Greece and abroad journals. Faculty members with relevant knowledge and experience from other medical Departments in Greece participate, they are complemented the faculty members of the Department of Medicine at DUTH, with disciplines and academic experience that covering all the courses provided in the PSP. Further, the list is supplemented with Researchers of recognized reputation and specialized knowledge in the field of PSP. The list of teachers and their qualifications is described in detail in AnnexA7.

The Department of Medicine of the Democritus University of Thrace (DUTH) is in the city of Alexandroupolis in Thrace. In the same area there is also the Department of Molecular Biology and Genetics, the amphitheatre, the School of Health and Welfare's library, the administration building, the indoor gym, and the playing field.

The Study Guide for the current academic year (2022-2023) of the postgraduate program M.Sc. In "Human Reproduction" is described in detail in Annex A5 and the rules of procedure, the Quality Policy, the Study Guide, as well as the Bodies of the MSc can be found also on the website (<http://human-reproduction.med.duth.gr/>).

## **II. Analysis**

The PSP Human Reproduction is part of the strategic planning of the Democritus University of Thrace.

The PSP is conducted by scientific coherence and aims at the further advancement of knowledge and science in medicine, and a high-level of postgraduate education, research, and practical training of graduates in the scientific field of human reproduction.

The structure, content and organisation of courses and teaching methods are oriented towards deepening knowledge and acquiring the corresponding skills.

The duration of PSP Human Reproduction is 2 semesters of study equivalent to a total 60 ECTS, includes 12 courses of total 50 ECTS, and a Diploma thesis of 10 ECTS that needs to be prolonged more in-scientific depth.

All lecturers in PSP Human Reproduction are specialized in the field of infertility and assisted reproduction and it seems that both their clinical and research work to be in a similar field

## **III. Conclusions**

The PSP in its present form is suitable as a postgraduate professional specialization in Human Reproduction. The Panel got the impression that the programme in its present form is nationally oriented, and more efforts are needed to improve the mobility of the participants in the international market. The structure of the programme is in part rational but needs some modifications in scientific/research part (thesis) of the programme to justify a Master of Science degree.

## Panel Judgement

<b>Principle 2: Design and approval of postgraduate study programmes</b>	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	<b>X</b>
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

## Panel Recommendations

- The Panel encourages the faculty and the director of PSP to extend more in-depth the PSP thesis. A Master of Science thesis is usually in level of 20-30 ECTS.
- The Diploma thesis of the students should be written in English to increase the chances to publish a review in different journals.

### **PRINCIPLE 3: STUDENT-CENTRED LEARNING, TEACHING, AND ASSESSMENT**

**INSTITUTIONS SHOULD ENSURE THAT POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES PROVIDE THE NECESSARY CONDITIONS TO ENCOURAGE STUDENTS TO TAKE AN ACTIVE ROLE IN THE LEARNING PROCESS. THE ASSESSMENT METHODS SHOULD REFLECT THIS APPROACH.**

*Student-centred learning and teaching plays an important role in enhancing students' motivation, their self-evaluation, and their active participation 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 by adopting 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*
- *strengthens 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 the students' complaints*
- *provides counselling and guidance for the preparation of the thesis*

*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.*
- *Assessment is consistent, fairly applied to all students and conducted in accordance with the stated procedures.*
- *A formal procedure for student appeals is in place.*
- *The function of the academic advisor runs smoothly.*

#### **Documentation**

- *Sample of a fully completed questionnaire for the evaluation of the PSP by the students*
- *Regulations for dealing with students' complaints and appeals*
- *Regulation for the function of academic advisor*
- *Reference to the teaching modes and assessment methods*

#### **Study Programme Compliance**

##### **I. Findings**

The postgraduate programme (PSP) "Human Reproduction" has a duration of one year divided into two academic semesters. This PSP is addressed to graduate students of medicine, nursing, midwifery, or other Departments of the faculty of health sciences. In total, its curriculum consists of 13 courses, one of which is the internship, and the dissertation, which are divided

into the academic year. The internship has a two-week duration and takes place in an IVF laboratory or in laboratories in the Department of Medicines. The majority of the courses (80%) are conducted remotely. The dissertations are mostly bibliographical, but there is also the possibility to carry out an experimental dissertation. At the same time, the diploma theses correspond to only 10 ECTS. Both in-person and digital teaching tools are used, designed to support, complement, and enrich the educational process. There are 2 laboratory practicals which are conducted face-to-face. The assessment of the courses from the teachers' point of view is mainly done with a final examination. However, there is also the possibility of using other forms of examination such as a series of exercises, mid-term examinations, oral examinations, presentation, or a combination of the above. Course examinations are held at the end of each semester, i.e., in September and January, and there is the possibility in each examination period for a second examination the following month. Faculty evaluation by graduate students is conducted regularly towards the end of the semester (8th - 11th teaching week) in an anonymous manner by students completing a course evaluation questionnaire. The questionnaires are completed anonymously and in person by students, with a high participation rate. The teaching staff takes into account the diversity of the postgraduate students, who come from different knowledge backgrounds. The lectures and the content are quite understandable to the student population, and the lecturers do not hesitate to solve any questions. Current students and recent graduates expressed their satisfaction with the quality of training they have received.

## **II. Analysis**

The curriculum of this postgraduate course includes a wide range of courses covering current and topical issues in the field of Human Reproduction. Consequently, the theoretical training of the students at the end of the Master's degree is quite satisfactory, since they will have expanded and specialised their knowledge in this field.

As for the acquisition of practical experience, the curriculum includes two practical exercises. It is worth mentioning that the majority of the students are mainly from medical, nursing or midwifery schools, thus the laboratory experience provided by the postgraduate programme is useful enough, as it prepares the students for the future.

The courses take place on weekends, which enables people that work to attend this postgraduate course and broaden their knowledge. The programme requirements and other information are available in the "Study guide". The individual courses and the teaching programme are communicated to students very early on. However, detailed information on each subject area taught is not available in the study guide. The internship, although by most students seemed to be of sufficient duration, is only two weeks long. The teachers' evaluation system is widespread among students. It is noteworthy that approximately all the students participate in the internal evaluation process.

## **III. Conclusions**

The curriculum of the postgraduate programme “Human Reproduction” is mostly in line with the standards of HAHE. In general, the Panel finds that the programme is delivered in a student-centred learning environment that promotes mutual respect and is substantially compliant with Principle 3.

### Panel Judgement

<b>Principle 3: Student-centred learning, teaching, and assessment</b>	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	<b>X</b>
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

### Panel Recommendations

- Extend the duration of the PSP from 2 semesters to 3, in order to provide more time for the conduction of the thesis.
- Extend more in-depth the PSP thesis. More face-to-face training.
- Longer duration of practical training, in order to give students more practical experience in the subject.
- Add more information on the courses taught in the study guide.

#### **PRINCIPLE 4: STUDENT ADMISSION, PROGRESSION, RECOGNITION OF POSTGRADUATE STUDIES, AND CERTIFICATION.**

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

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

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

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

##### **Documentation**

- *Internal regulation for the operation of the Postgraduate Study Programme*
- *Research Ethics Regulation*
- *Regulation of studies, internship, mobility, and student assignments*
- *Degree certificate template*

#### **Study Programme Compliance**

##### **I. Findings**

Student admission for the PSP of Human Reproduction is restricted to maximum 40 per year. Eligible for admission are graduates of medical schools, from other Departments of the Schools of Health Sciences and Related Sciences, as Molecular Biology-Genetics, Veterinary Medicine, Nursing, Midwifery, Schools of Sciences (Pharmacy, Biology, Biotechnology), Schools of Psychology, as well as graduates of former Departments of Technological Educational Institutes of a related subject, Universities of Greece or recognized equivalent Institutions abroad as defined by the Ministry of Education, are admitted to the Postgraduate Program.

Foreign students can admit to the MSc in Human Reproduction but must have sufficient knowledge of the Greek language ascertained after an interview. The above provision concerns prospective postgraduate students who have not completed studies in secondary education in Greece or in a Greek-speaking school abroad.

Candidates' number is restricted upon a well-defined selection procedure. The selection of the applicants is based on the studies scores, recommendation letters, followed by candidates' interviews by an established academic committee.

Information of rights and obligations of students, internship issues and scholarship award, procedures, and terms for the preparation of Diploma thesis and ways allowing to monitor

their progression, as well as the research ethics regulation, study regulations, mobility and student assignments, all are clearly described to the required supporting documents (Appendix 1), Information also provided in a web site that exist only in Greek versions (<http://human-reproduction.med.duth.gr/>)

The meeting of the panel with current and past students of the PSP left a very positive impression of the utility of this PSP. All subjects were very enthusiastic and positive concerning their experience and knowledge received.

Upon completion of the studies and after the submission and presentation of the thesis, a diploma supplement is issued automatically and free of charge to all graduates of the PSP program in Greek and English (Appendix A15). The Diploma Supplement follows the model developed by the European Commission, the Council of Europe and UNESCO/CEPES. The purpose is to improve international "transparency" and fair recognition of qualifications at academic and professional level certificates.

## **II. Analysis**

The PSP Human Reproduction fills an important need for education and training of medical and related health professions, molecular biology-geneticists, and biotechnologists.

Current and past students of the PSP left a very positive impression of the utility of this PSP and were very enthusiastic and positive concerning their experience and knowledge received.

The Panel considers that the length of studies of PSP human reproduction is generally acceptable. Human reproduction is an area of great importance to the country. The acquired knowledge is beneficial to the postgraduate students and to society in general.

The Panel recognised that student mobility needs to be further strained in order to make more active use of Erasmus+ and other existing mobility platforms in Greece or abroad.

Information provided on the PSP website is only available in Greek versions

## **III. Conclusions**

The PSP Human Reproduction is well-organized and designed on the fields of Human Reproduction. The Panel, except that recommends extending the thesis deeper, considers that the postgraduate study programme of human reproduction is generally acceptable, and fulfil criteria of Principle 4.



## Panel Judgement

<b>Principle 4: Student admission, progression, recognition of postgraduate studies and certification</b>	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	<b>X</b>
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

## Panel Recommendations

- Longer duration of the Diploma thesis. Extend the length of the thesis to at least 15 ECTS.
- Encouragement of research dissertations in collaboration with research groups out of the own Department, as this would contribute to increased student mobility and the development of more contacts and relationships with other universities or institutes.

## **PRINCIPLE 5: TEACHING STAFF OF POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES**

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

*The Institution should attend to the adequacy of the teaching staff of the academic unit teaching at the PSP, the appropriate staff-student ratio, the appropriate staff categories, the appropriate subject areas, 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 for the PSP and offer them conditions of employment that recognise the importance of teaching and research; offer opportunities and promote the professional development of the teaching staff; encourage scholarly activity to strengthen the link between education and research; encourage innovation in teaching methods and the use of new technologies; promote the increase of the volume and quality of the research output within the academic unit; follow quality assurance processes for all staff (with respect to attendance requirements, performance, self-assessment, training, etc.); develop policies to attract highly qualified academic staff.*

### **Documentation**

- *Procedures and criteria for teaching staff recruitment*
- *Employment regulations or contracts, and obligations of the teaching staff*
- *Policy for staff support and development*
- *Individual performance of the teaching staff in scientific-research and teaching work, based on internationally recognised systems of scientific evaluation (e.g. Google Scholar, Scopus, etc.)*
- *List of teaching staff including subject areas, employment relationship, Institution of origin, Department of origin*

### **Study Programme Compliance**

#### **I. Findings**

The faculty of the PSP consists of 51 members, most of them from the Democritus University of Thrace (DUTH) Medical School, and a small number of additional members from hospitals, other institutions and private establishments within Greece. Information on faculty members' accomplishments was provided during the meeting. However, information in the web pages of the DUTH Department of Medicine is difficult to extract. The list of the teaching staff was provided. Individual performance of all staff members is also available.

During the evaluation, the panel received a positive feed-back about this PSP and the left with the impression that faculty members enjoy being part of the PSP. The panel was informed that the faculty meets regularly to discuss issues relating to the PSP, implement the PSP and evaluate the students. It was clear to the panel members that there is a permanent contact with the attending students during the course work.

Faculty advancement and career prospects based to the PSP relevant, but staff participation in the PSP enhances their professional CV.

## **II. Analysis**

The faculty body covers many aspects of these specific fields. There is a core group that administers the PSP.

## **III. Conclusions**

The present PSP is a very important programme for the education and training of the students and staff at the DUTH.

### **Panel Judgement**

<b>Principle 5: Teaching staff of postgraduate study programmes</b>	
Fully compliant	<b>X</b>
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

### **Panel Recommendations**

The panel recommends that all faculty of the PSP meet once per semester to discuss issues related to the aims, progress, and problems of the programme.

## **PRINCIPLE 6: LEARNING RESOURCES AND STUDENT SUPPORT**

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

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

*When allocating the available resources, the needs of all students must be taken into consideration (e.g. whether they are full-time or part-time students, employed 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. However, the internal quality assurance proves -on the one hand- the quantity and quality of the available facilities and services, and -on the other hand- that students are aware of all available services.*

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

### **Documentation**

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

### **Study Programme Compliance**

#### **I. Findings**

According to the available information of the Democritus University of Thrace (DUTH), each proposal for the Establishment of a Master's Program is submitted. 1. Detailed feasibility and viability report detailing the infrastructure that will be used to conduct the Courses; 2— certification by the President that the infrastructure is sufficiently adequate for the Master's Study Program; 3. The feasibility and viability report describes the administrative and other staff that will support the implementation of the PSP Study Program.

The EAAP has found that the Human Reproduction- HR-PSP at DUTH is hosted in the Campus of the DUTH, School of Medicine and University Hospital of the DUTH. The Department has at its disposal auditoriums and classrooms for the delivery of courses, a library, and computer laboratories for teaching laboratory courses. The postgraduate students can be informed about the services provided through the School of Medicine and the DUTH websites. The

teaching staff includes teaching and research faculty members of the School of Medicine of DUTH as well as other Universities and external collaborators who have undertaken teaching work in the Human Reproduction PSP. The HR websites (<https://eclass.duth.gr/courses/1427301/>; [www.prenataldiagnosis-labor.gr/](http://www.prenataldiagnosis-labor.gr/); <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCyVFJEeakiy36RZMQk8kGvA>) are available.

## II. Analysis

### Teaching spaces

The Program operates in the facilities of the Department of Medicine of the Democritus University of Thrace in one building, started to run in the academic year 1984-1985 houses in the city of Alexandroupolis, in Thrace. In the same area also houses the Department of Molecular Biology and Genetics, the Amphitheatre, the Library of the School of Health Sciences, the Administration building, the Indoors Gym, and the Playing Field. They are covered by classrooms, seminars with excellent modern equipment, and the laboratories mentioned above.

For the operation of the PSP, the existing logistical infrastructure of the Gynaecology Clinic of the Department of Medicine at the University Hospital of Alexandroupolis and the School of Medicine of the DUTH is used.

Digital tools through the IT Department and the Information Centre of the DUTH.

In addition, all postgraduate students are allowed to have at their disposal modern systems provided by the IT Department and the University's Information Centre.

These include:

- Electronic address, access to the University's network securely through a virtual connection (Virtual Private Network - VPN),
- Wireless network and Internet access
- Software Acquisition Office 365 SPSS Microsoft Azure (Formerly Imagine)
- Issuance of an academic identity card, which also functions as a "student pass", through the Electronic Service for Obtaining an Academic Identity Card.
- Student care services free meals, using the codes of their institutional account through the University (<https://merimna.duth.gr>).

### Library

At the disposal of postgraduate students is the fully equipped Library (<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCyVFJEeakiy36RZMQk8kGvA>), which provides all the services of a modern university library (constantly growing collection of various information materials, some of which are also available in electronic form, access to electronic catalogues and information sources, borrowing, lending, support for people with disabilities, information support and training through seminars aimed at first-year postgraduate students to acquire skills in using resources and services, study rooms, plagiarism prevention services).

### **Human resources**

A provision has been made for how the PSP covers administrative and technical needs. Depending on the requirements that arise, the PSP Coordinating Committee can recommend recruiting staff. Approval by the Departmental Assembly and all the prescribed procedures outlined in the Special Funds and Research Account Management Guide is required.

Other supporting or advisory services and Structures

-Access

-Informative material for students

-Social Networks

-PSP website

-Institution of the Academic Advisor

-Institution of the Student's advocate

-PSP committees as defined in the PSP Internal Regulations

### **III. Conclusions**

Overall, the infrastructure and services offered by the <https://eclass.duth.gr/courses/1427301/> and [www.prenataldiagnosis-labor.gr/](http://www.prenataldiagnosis-labor.gr/) PSP are considered adequate. The postgraduate students are mainly informed about the provided facilities via the School of Medicine and DUTH websites. Completing the construction and the regular update of the PSP's website could substantially contribute towards the success of the PSP. The teaching staff is considered adequate to conduct the educational process. The tuition utilization plan appears effective. However, it does not include any provision for PSP scholarship funding. It is particularly encouraging to offer further sources of financing. Overall, an essential PSP training in Human Reproduction.

### Panel Judgement

<b>Principle 6: Learning resources and student support</b>	
Fully compliant	<b>X</b>
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

### Panel Recommendations

- Improve the construction of the Human Reproduction in Greek and English website; update it regularly so that current or new substantially interested national and international students can be quickly and efficiently informed about the services offered by the PSP.
- Re-evaluate the number of teaching staff members participating in the PSP.
- Include further scholarships funding in the tuition utilization plan or clarify the source of this funding.

## **PRINCIPLE 7: INFORMATION MANAGEMENT**

**INSTITUTIONS BEAR FULL RESPONSIBILITY FOR COLLECTING, ANALYSING AND USING INFORMATION, AIMED AT THE EFFICIENT MANAGEMENT OF POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES 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.*

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

*The information collected 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 programmes*
- *availability of learning resources and student support*

*A number of methods may be used to collect information. It is important that students and staff are involved in providing and analysing information and planning follow-up activities.*

### **Documentation**

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

## **Study Programme Compliance**

### **I. Findings**

The competent body for the administration and management of the Foundation's internal quality assurance system is the Quality Assurance Unit (QAQ). At the level of the Academic Unit, the OMEA of the Department is responsible for implementing procedures for collecting, processing and quality assessment and processing of the data collected. OMEA, in the context of the Internal Evaluation Report it carries out annually, collects data for both Undergraduate and Postgraduate Study Programs. The Department's Annual Evaluation Report includes data such as key performance indicators, the profile of the student population, the course of study, success and dropout rates. The Greek designed website of the Human Reproduction by the <https://eclass.duth.gr/courses/1427301/> and <http://human-reproduction.med.duth.gr/>



## II. Analysis

The procedure is defined by the MODIP of the Foundation and is implemented at the Academic Unit level by the OMEA of the Department of Medicine.

### A. Internal Evaluation Process

The procedure followed is as follows:

1. Data collection through the MODIP information system data transfer to the PSP information system
2. Data processing and analysis by the OMEA of the Department
3. Compilation of the Annual Evaluation Report of the School of Medicine - Evaluation of teaching and research work
4. Approval by the Department Assembly
5. Transmission of the Report to the MODIP of the Foundation
6. Sending by MODIP of the "Quality Indicator Reports" from ETHAAE to the Department
7. Consultation with the Assembly and the relevant Committees: OMEA, Coordinating Committee of each Master and Strategic Planning Committee of the Department.

### A. Teacher evaluation process by students - Student participation (Appendix A9)

At the end of each teaching period or the end of the semester (depending on the structure of the Human Reproduction Program), the students are invited through an electronic application developed by MODIP of the Democritus University of Thrace to evaluate the courses/teaching units that have been taught.

More specifically, postgraduate students receive, in their Institutional account, a unique automated message, relevant instructions along with disposable links and unique codes for each course/teaching unit of the semester they attend, where they are asked to fill anonymously and remotely a relevant questionnaire.

The questionnaire is structured in the following sections (Teacher Course, Workshop and free field for developing comments).

The anonymity of the participants in the evaluation is fully guaranteed by MODIP and the relevant assurance is provided, as no identification data is kept and at the end of the process any correlation data is deleted.

To raise the awareness of Postgraduate students and to ensure their participation as much as possible, MODIP, when informing the Secretariats of the PSP, has a standardized, informative message with which it requests the Secretariats:

--To inform their Master's students about the procedure that will follow while urging them to participate and not to ignore the message they will receive.

– To make them aware by using all the means of communication at their disposal (e-class, Facebook, announcement on the website, personal touch) about the value of their participation in these procedures as their involvement contributes to improving the Quality of the services provided studies.

-To inform the course leader so that he, in turn, makes the fellow teachers aware of the procedure, since, if the teachers do not belong to the staff of the Institution and are external collaborators, they may not be familiar or aware of the procedure.

In addition, students upon completion of the course, submit an anonymous completed questionnaire to the Program Secretariat regarding the content of each class, the way it is taught and examined by the teacher, comments for its improvement and its evaluation with a given scale. The Coordinating Committee has drawn up these questionnaires, and the result of their processing is delivered to the lecturers for their improvement, independently and in addition to the provisions of the current regulations of the DUTH.

Tools for data collection and analysis

The following tools are used to collect the data:

- MODIP information system
- Information system for the evaluation of the Courses by the students
- PSP information system, the ETHAAE information system from where the QUALITY INDICATORS REPORT is extracted
- Secretariat system-student log
- Ms teams (For student satisfaction research, for teaching material posting)
- E class for the Structure and Organization of the Course for posting teaching material
- Library Data Partial bibliometric data is given

### **III. Conclusions**

Critical education and training of PSP students and or other professionals in human reproduction related to modern medicine and molecular life sciences. Therefore, the offered PSP of Human Reproduction is an achievement of the faculty for graduate students, postdocs, and senior staff to update their skills and competencies. From an academic point of view, increased awareness concerning research ethics and integrity is recommended. Information Management is the first and crucial step in the quality assurance process. Information management is essential to promote specific PSPs with clinical relevance.

## Panel Judgement

<b>Principle 7: Information management</b>	
Fully compliant	<b>X</b>
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

## Panel Recommendations

- Continue providing guides and information transparently and concisely in human reproduction.
- Refrain from overloading all participants with unnecessary information; revise, re-check and update the systems in a simplified form.
- Update and upgrade regularly the Greek and the English websites.
- Promote further clinical education on Human Reproduction science.

## **PRINCIPLE 8: PUBLIC INFORMATION CONCERNING THE POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES**

**INSTITUTIONS SHOULD PUBLISH INFORMATION ABOUT THEIR TEACHING AND ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES RELATED TO THE POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES IN A DIRECT AND READILY ACCESSIBLE WAY. THE RELEVANT INFORMATION SHOULD BE UP-TO-DATE, OBJECTIVE AND CLEAR.**

*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 PSP they offer, the intended learning outcomes, the degrees awarded, the teaching, learning and assessment procedures applied, the pass rates, and the learning opportunities available to their students. Information is also provided on the employment perspectives of PSP graduates.*

### **Documentation**

- ☐ *Dedicated segment on the website of the department for the promotion of the PSP*
- ☐ *Bilingual version of the PSP website with complete, clear and objective information*
- ☐ *Provision for website maintenance and updating*

## **Study Programme Compliance**

### **I. Findings**

Information about the academic unit and the postgraduate programme is available online, at the website that is created, solely for this programme (<http://human-reproduction.med.duth.gr/>). The website provides a lot of information about the duration of the postgraduate programme, the necessary documents for the admission of students, the schedule of lectures. The academic units' Policy for Quality Assurance is also available online. All courses taught in the MSc, have a website on the e-class platform (<https://eclass.duth.gr/>) of the DUTH, with useful educational material (slides, exercises, notes, etc.), which is addressed to the students of the Department. These websites are updated and enriched by the lecturers on an annual basis. At the same time, the website provides the study guide, which is easily accessible to students. The study guide provides a list of lecturers by name and a brief analysis of each module taught. The course outlines are not very explanatory. The website, for the time being, is only provided in Greek, and the above information is not offered in English.

### **II. Analysis**

The information available online satisfies the requirements of Principle 8, apart from a further analysis of the content of each course, and the absence of the English version. Furthermore, in order to facilitate the students' search for a dissertation, it would be useful to add the CVs of the faculty associated with the programme, or a link directing the students to the CVs on the website, thus giving the most recent research interests of the potential supervisors.

### **III. Conclusions**

Considering that the provision of the above-mentioned public information in English is an essential requirement the panel can only award a substantially compliant mark.

### Panel Judgement

<b>Principle 8: Public information concerning the postgraduate study programmes</b>	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	<b>X</b>
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

### Panel Recommendations

- An English version of the online published information is essential for the full compliance with principle 8.
- It is recommended to add further details on the course's outlines.
- Addition of the CVs of the faculty associated with the programme, or a link directing the students to the CVs on the website.

## **PRINCIPLE 9: ON-GOING MONITORING AND PERIODIC INTERNAL EVALUATION OF POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES**

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

*The regular monitoring, review, and revision of postgraduate 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:*

- a) the content of the programme in the light of the latest research in the given discipline, thus ensuring that the PSP is up to date*
  - b) the changing needs of society*
  - c) the students' workload, progression and completion of the postgraduate studies*
  - d) the effectiveness of the procedures for the assessment of students*
  - e) the students' expectations, needs and satisfaction in relation to the programme*
  - f) the learning environment, support services, and their fitness for purpose for the PSP in question*
- Postgraduate study 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.*

### **Documentation**

- *Procedure for the re-evaluation, redefinition and updating of the PSP curriculum*
- *Procedure for mitigating weaknesses and upgrading the structure of the PSP and the learning process*
- *Feedback processes concerning the strategy and quality goal setting of the PSP and relevant decision-making processes (students, external stakeholders)*
- *Results of the annual internal evaluation of the PSP by the Quality Assurance Unit (QAU), and the relevant minutes*

### **Study Programme Compliance**

#### **I. Findings**

The postgraduate programme (PSP) "Human Reproduction" has in place an Internal Quality Assurance System that audits and reviews the program on an annual basis.

Specifically, the system consists of two parts:

- a. Regular internal review with the participation of students and other interested parties.
- b. Procedures for restructuring/updating the PSP, as/when required.

At the end of each academic year, the coordinating committee evaluates the content of the courses, ensuring their relevance, and plans accordingly the adjustment of the educational and teaching related activities as required.

The Department has established a continuous Internal evaluation process, through the students' questionnaires, in order to improve its overall operation and achieve the stated goals. The learning environment and support services are well suited to the purpose of the PSP in question. Students' needs seem to be considered when designing the programmes' curriculum, as the majority of the postgraduate students and the recent graduates appear very content.

## II. Analysis

The requirements of Principle 9 are satisfied.

## III. Conclusions

The programme fully complies with principle 9.

### Panel Judgement

<b>Principle 9: On-going monitoring and periodic internal evaluation of postgraduate study programmes</b>	
Fully compliant	<b>X</b>
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

### Panel Recommendations

None.

## **PRINCIPLE 10: REGULAR EXTERNAL EVALUATION OF POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES**

**THE POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES SHOULD REGULARLY UNDERGO EVALUATION BY PANELS OF EXTERNAL EXPERTS SET BY HAHE, AIMING AT ACCREDITATION. THE TERM OF VALIDITY OF THE ACCREDITATION IS DETERMINED BY HAHE.**

*HAHE is responsible for administrating the PSP accreditation process which is realised as an external evaluation procedure, and implemented by panels of independent experts. HAHE grants accreditation of programmes, based on the Reports delivered by the panels of external experts, with a specific term of validity, following to which, revision is required. The quality accreditation of the PSP acts as a means for the determination of the degree of compliance of the programme to 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.*

### **Documentation**

- *Progress report of the PSP in question, on the results from the utilisation of possible recommendations included in the External Evaluation Report of the Institution, and in the IQAS Accreditation Report, with relation to the postgraduate studyprogrammes*

### **Study Programme Compliance**

#### **I. Findings**

The postgraduate programme “Human Reproduction” has not been subjected to an external accreditation and evaluation process before. However, an external accreditation of the undergraduate studies in the Department of Medicine took place in 2020.

#### **II. Analysis**

No comparison can be done with previous accreditation of the postgraduate programmes as this is the first accreditation of the programme. In any case, the professors and the director of the PSP were more than willing to participate in the accreditation process. They provided us in a timely manner with the necessary paperwork and were very detailed and honest during the questioning. The faculty seemed to agree with the committee's observations, and they were positive to correct any failures reported in order to improve the quality of the graduate program.

#### **III. Conclusions**

The programme fully complies with principle 10.



### Panel Judgement

<b>Principle 10: Regular external evaluation of postgraduate study programmes</b>	
Fully compliant	<b>X</b>
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

### Panel Recommendations

None.

## **PART C: CONCLUSIONS**

### **I. Features of Good Practice**

- The students' expectations, needs and satisfaction are good in relation to the programme. Good collaboration between faculty and students
- Postgraduates and stakeholders of the PSP were very enthusiastic and positive concerning their experience and knowledge and the utility received in all subjects.
- Students participate extensively in course evaluations. The PSP have an informative website in Greek.
- The postgraduate programme is frequently evaluated by its postgraduate students and internal feedback mechanisms in order to improve its overall operation and achieve the stated goals.
- Periodic revision of the curriculum and content of the courses.

### **II. Areas of Weakness**

- Does not exist an English website version.
- The duration of the PSP is only two semesters. The Diploma thesis is granted with only 10 ECTS.
- The PSP does not participate in mobility programs of MFs

### **III. Recommendations for Follow-up Actions**

- Strengthening the research potential of the Postgraduate Program with emphasis on international research collaborations, enhancing the mobility of postgraduate students and their participation in international scientific conferences.
- The PSP needs to do easily accessible to locating the established research collaborations particularly linked to PSP level with external academic stakeholder.
- The Quality Policy for PSP is available on the PSP's website only in Greek. Needs also to be available in English, so the information will be clearly and completely displayed for all foreign interested partners/companies etc.
- On the Website of PSP, must clearly and concrete displayed the content of the PSP of learning outcomes and qualifications (i.e., Purpose, Objects, Duration and Condition, Categories of Candidates, Tuition and Free Tuition of PSP) in accordance with ENQFHE.
- The Panel encourages the faculty and the director of PSP to extended more in-depth the PSP thesis. A Master of Science thesis is usually in level of 20-30 ECTS.
- Extend the duration of the PSP from 2 semesters to 3, in order to provide more time for the conduction of the thesis.

- Extend more in-depth the PSP thesis. More face-to-face training.
- Longer duration of practical training, in order to give students more practical experience in the subject.
- Add more information on the courses taught in the study guide.
- Longer duration of the Diploma thesis. Extend the length of the thesis to at least 15 ECTS.
- Encouragement of research dissertations in collaboration with research groups out of the own Department, as this would contribute to increased student mobility and the development of more contacts and relationships with other universities or institutes.
- The panel recommends that all faculty of the PSP meet once per semester to discuss issues related to the aims, progress, and problems of the programme.
- Regular updating of the PSP website in Greek and English, so that current/new national and international students with a great interest in the subject, can be quickly and efficiently informed about the services offered by the PSP provider.
- Re-evaluate the number of teaching staff members participating in the PSP.
- Include further scholarships funding in the tuition utilization plan or clarify the source of this funding.
- Continue providing guides and information transparently and concisely in human reproduction.
- Refrain from overloading all participants with unnecessary information; revise, re-check and update the systems in a simplified form.
- Update and upgrade regularly the Greek website.
- Promote further clinical education on Human Reproduction science.
- An English version of the online published information is essential for the full compliance with principle 8.
- Information concerning ways of admission, regulations, and instructions etc., should be available on the PSP website.
- Creation of procedures for maintaining/updating the website of the PSP It is recommended to add further details on the course's outlines.
- Addition of the CVs of the faculty associated with the programme, or a link directing the students to the CVs on the website.
- The PSP is weak in providing students work experience.
- It is recommended to introduce a comparative of the own PSP with Postgraduate Programs of other Universities in Greece / abroad for utilization of international experience in a relevant scientific field.

#### IV. Summary & Overall Assessment

The Principles where full compliance has been achieved are: **5, 6, 7, 9, and 10.**

The Principles where substantial compliance has been achieved are: **1, 2, 3, 4, and 8.**

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

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

Overall Judgement	
Fully compliant	<b>X</b>
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

## The members of the External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel

**Name and Surname**

**Signature**

- 1. Prof. Nikolaos Venizelos (Chair)**  
Örebro University, Örebro, Sweden.
  
- 2. Prof. Panagiotis Karanis**  
Medical School - University of Nicosia, Cyprus
  
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