



ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ
HELLENIC REPUBLIC



**Εθνική Αρχή
Ανώτατης Εκπαίδευσης**
Hellenic Authority
for Higher Education

Αριστείδου 1 & Ευριπίδου 2 • 10559 Αθήνα | 1 Aristidou str. & 2 Evripidou str. • 10559 Athens, Greece
T. +30 210 9220 944 • **F.** +30 210 9220 143 • **E.** secretariat@ethaae.gr • www.ethaae.gr

Accreditation Report **for the Postgraduate Study Programme of:**

Biomedical And Molecular Sciences
in Diagnosis and Treatment of Diseases

Department: Medical School
Institution: Democritus University of Thrace
Date: 4 November 2023

Report of the Panel appointed by the HAHE to undertake the review of the Postgraduate Study Programme of **Biomedical and Molecular Sciences in diagnosis and treatment of diseases** of the **Democritus University of Thrace** for the purposes of granting accreditation.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Part A: Background and Context of the Review.....	4
I. The External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel.....	4
II. Review Procedure and Documentation	5
III. Postgraduate Study Programme Profile.....	7
Part B: Compliance with the Principles	8
PRINCIPLE 1: QUALITY ASSURANCE POLICY AND QUALITY GOAL SETTING FOR THE POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES OF THE INSTITUTION AND THE ACADEMIC UNIT.....	8
PRINCIPLE 2: DESIGN AND APPROVAL OF POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES.....	11
PRINCIPLE 3: STUDENT-CENTRED LEARNING, TEACHING, AND ASSESSMENT	14
PRINCIPLE 4: STUDENT ADMISSION, PROGRESSION, RECOGNITION OF POSTGRADUATE STUDIES, AND CERTIFICATION.	16
PRINCIPLE 5: TEACHING STAFF OF POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES	20
PRINCIPLE 6: LEARNING RESOURCES AND STUDENT SUPPORT.....	22
PRINCIPLE 7: INFORMATION MANAGEMENT	25
PRINCIPLE 8: PUBLIC INFORMATION CONCERNING THE POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES	27
PRINCIPLE 9: ON-GOING MONITORING AND PERIODIC INTERNAL EVALUATION OF POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES.....	29
PRINCIPLE 10: REGULAR EXTERNAL EVALUATION OF POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES	31
Part C: Conclusions	32
I. Features of Good Practice	32
II. Areas of Weakness	32
III. Recommendations for Follow-up Actions	32
IV. Summary & Overall Assessment	34

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 **Biomedical and Molecular Sciences in diagnosis and treatment of diseases** of the **Democritus University of Thrace (DUT)** comprised the following four (4) members, drawn from the HAHE Register, in accordance with Laws 4009/2011 & 4653/2020:

- 1. Prof. Efthimios Mitsiadis (Chair)**
Universität Zürich, Switzerland
- 2. Assoc. Prof. Stefanos Volianitis**
Qatar University, Qatar
- 3. Dr. Nicholas Ktistakis**
Babraham Institute, United Kingdom
- 4. Mr. Sotirios Mavromatis**
Postgraduate Student, University of Patras, Greece

II. Review Procedure and Documentation

The Hellenic Authority for Higher Education (HAHE) formed an external and independent Panel of experts to assess the compliance of the study postgraduate Programme of Biomedical and Molecular Sciences in diagnosis and treatment of diseases of the Democritus University of Thrace in accordance with the HAHE Quality Assurance requirements (laws 4009/2011 & 4653/2020). The assessment was conducted through document reviews plus onsite and online interviews. The method used was an evidence-based process centred on a sampling of the Department's activities and it was aimed at evaluating the fulfilment of the HAHE requirements of the relevant Quality Standard of the Postgraduate Study Programme and commenting on its compliance, effectiveness, and applicability for the scope of the requirements. The information provided by the Department was assumed to be factually correct

The entire evaluation and accreditation exercise was carried out remotely using the Zoom platform. On 20 October 2023 the External Evaluation and Accreditation Panel (EEAP) received from HAHE the Accreditation support material from the HAHE Cloud Link, which contained the following:

1. Biomedical and Molecular Sciences in diagnosis and treatment of diseases – Democritus University of Thrace, consisting of the documents:
 - 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 of the previous academic years
 - A18. External evaluation of the postgraduate Programme
 - A19. Other documentation material

2. HAHE Material containing the following:

ACRONYMS

European Qualification Framework

M13A PMS Mapping Grid

Guidelines for Accreditation

Guidelines for the Members of the EAAP

Standards for Quality Accreditation of Postgraduate Study Programmes

Template Postgraduate Programme Accreditation Report

On Monday October 23, 2023, the EEAP members met remotely, from 15:00 to 16:00 (Athens time) in view of getting to know each other and establishing a *modus operandi* regarding the exercise of accreditation.

On the same day, the EEAP Review of the PSP study Programme started formally via Zoom at 16:00 (Athens time). In the first part of this virtual meeting (16:00-17:00), the Director of PSP Prof. Theodore S. Lialiaris, the Head of the Department Prof. Konstantinos Vadikolias and the President of MODIP, Prof. Grigoriou Marirena familiarized the Panel with the department and gave an overview of the School's and PSP's origins, evolution and current status. Members of the Steering Committee Prof. Ioannis Tentes, Prof. Maria Lambropoulou, Prof. Petros Skepastianos, Prof. Stella Mitka and OMEA member Assoc. Prof. Konstantinos Anagnostopoulos were also present in the meeting.

On Tuesday October 24, 2023, from 15:00 to 16:00, the EEAP met with the teaching staff of the postgraduate study Programme, Prof. Byron Asimakopoulos, Prof. Grigorios Trypsiannis, Assoc. Prof. Ioannis Karakasiliotis, Dr. Sotirios Malatos, Dr. Stamatia Pouliliou, Prof. Faedra Eleftheriou, Prof. Anastasia Pantazaki, Prof. Ioannis Seimenis and Assoc. Prof. Vasilios Papaliagkas to discuss about the professional development opportunities, mobility, the teaching methods etc. Later, at 16:00 the EEAP met with students of the PSP to discuss about their satisfaction and their study experience. At 17:30, the EEAP met with PSP graduates, Dionysia Amanatidou, Petros Paplomatas, Stella Kanta, Triantafyllos Alexiadis, Christos Nanos, Maria Mavridou, Triantafillia Karamitopoulou, Vasiliki Sapanidou and Panagiota Tsiatsiou to discuss about their experience and their career path. After, at 18:30, the EEAP met with employers and social partners of the PSP, President Georgios Roufos, Prof. Maria Chatzidimitriou, Christos Chatzipapas, Prof. Theodora Papamitsou, Ekaterini Papadimitriou and Theodoros Papadopoulos. Finally, after debriefing among Panel members in private, at 20:00 the EEAP had a closure meeting with the Director of the PSP Prof. Theodore S. Lialiaris, the Head of the Department, Prof. Konstantinos Vadikolias, in presence of MODIP, OMEA members and the Steering Committee and discussed their major findings and recommendations.

During the following days (October 26-28, 2023), the Panel members had meetings for the completion of the draft of the Accreditation Report.

III. Postgraduate Study Programme Profile

The postgraduate Programme Biomedical and Molecular Sciences in diagnosis and treatment of diseases of Democritus University of Thrace was established in 2014 and its aim is to provide education, research, training, and specialization of Biomedical and Molecular Sciences and their applications in the diagnosis and treatment of diseases. The MSc awards a Diploma of Postgraduate Studies (MSc) in "Biomedical and Molecular Sciences in the Diagnosis and Treatment of Diseases" without specialization. The total number of credits (ECTS) required for the award of this MSc is 120. For the acquisition of the MSc, compulsory attendance and successful examination is required in all courses, which are distributed in the first two semesters of study (30 ECTS respectively). During the third semester of studies, the practical training (30 ECTS) is carried out, while the fourth (D) semester of studies includes the successful completion and preparation of the postgraduate thesis, which is worth 30 ECTS credits.

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)*

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The PSP operates its quality assurance policy within the guidelines of the Democritus University of Thrace (DUT) and is evaluated internally by OMEA and ΜΟΔΙΠ, both of which are active and well-staffed. The subject matter of the PSP, Biomedical and Molecular Sciences in diagnosis and treatment of diseases, is an important part of graduate education in Greece because it brings together medical professionals from various subject areas and disciplines. In

addition, the PSP combines expertise from two separate institutions, the medical school at Thrace and the department of Biological Sciences at International University in Thessaloniki.

Several mechanisms exist for the continuous evaluation of this PSP and for keeping its aims and educational goals up to date and relevant. Such mechanisms include: (a) adherence to the description of the syllabus of studies with periodic evaluation, (b) selection of appropriate faculty, (c) utilising modern methods of teaching, (d) encouraging the students to participate in conferences, (e) internal evaluation of the PSP, (f) student-derived evaluation of faculty members, and (g) strong effort to improve the engagements of the students with the Programme of studies.

In terms of specific aims for the improvement of the PSP, the Panel was given a document titled “Στοχοθεσία Ποιότητας της ακαδημαϊκής μονάδας για το ΔΠΜΣ «ΒΙΟΪΑΤΡΙΚΕΣ ΚΑΙ ΜΟΡΙΑΚΕΣ ΕΠΙΣΤΗΜΕΣ ΣΤΗ ΔΙΑΓΝΩΣΗ ΚΑΙ ΘΕΡΑΠΕΙΑ ΑΣΘΕΝΕΙΩΝ»” which had a number of reasonable aims to be completed by the Programme by December 2023. Such aims include the increase in the number of students attending the PSP, improvement in the quality of the research undertaken by the students and additional ways to add new faculty to the teaching Programme.

The Panel notes that a budget plan for the income of the PSP is proposed in the founding document, but a detailed breakdown of the actual income of this PSP, and how the funds are being spent was not presented during the evaluation. The fees right now are 4.000 euros total (actually in the slides it is also written that the fees are 6.000 euros).

II. Analysis

As part of the DUT, the PSP is subject to evaluations by internal committees, and it is clear that such evaluations are taken seriously by the steering committee and the faculty of the PSP.

Although the aims of this PSP are well described, the Panel did not see a structured mechanism that such aims could be discussed with external stakeholders and perhaps modified. This seems to happen on an ad hoc basis, but a more formal process may be desirable.

A complete description of the funds going in and out of the PSP is required and is one of the elements of this principle. At 4.000 euros total per student, this is a significant sum.

In the cases where more than one institution is involved in the design and running of a PSP (such as here with the participation of the International Hellenic University) a good level of communication at the highest level between the two institutions is important to exist.

III. Conclusions

The PSP combines good elements from the medical school in Thrace and the IHU department of biomedical sciences in Thessaloniki to create an attractive Programme of studies aimed at medical professionals.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

- Breakdown of finances is important to exist.
- Formal connection with external stakeholders is desirable.

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).

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The PSP was started in 2015 by the medical school of Thrace and has undergone various modifications over the years. In its current form it is run in co-operation with the department of Biomedical Sciences of the International University in Thessaloniki, and so far, it has admitted three cohorts of students and graduated approximately 50.

The Programme is structured in semesters, it lasts a total of 4 semesters and offers 120 ECTS.

For the current PSP, teaching in person is two times per semester on a Friday/Saturday/Sunday schedule. This is done alternatively in Thrace and in Thessaloniki. The rest of the teaching, 7 Friday/Saturday/Sunday periods, are held online.

Thesis work, which is obligatory, takes place during the fourth semester.

Information on the Programme, its objectives and its timetables are available in the student guide, but less so on the open part of the website.

The students and recent graduates of the PSP that were met by the Panel expressed strong level of satisfaction with the Programme. In some cases, this was manifested in better professional development and in others it was related to an advancement in their academic career. It was evident from these meetings that welfare of the students and an effort to accommodate their professional lives with the pursuit of this graduate degree are important for the leadership of the PSP.

The Panel was shown good evidence that some of the thesis work by the students has been presented in meetings or has form part of a publication. There is no provision for work experience placements in this PSP.

Linking of the graduates to the labour market may be somewhat irrelevant for this PSP in which the majority of students are already professionals who want to enhance their work prospects.

II. Analysis

Although the aims of this PSP are well described, the Panel did not see a structured mechanism that such aims could be discussed with external stakeholders and perhaps modified. This seems to happen on an ad hoc basis, but a more formal process may be desirable.

Increasing the in-person sessions to 4 from the current 2 is in the opinion of the Panel a better option. This was the frequency in the past.

III. Conclusions

This PSP does a good job of combining the expertise of the medical school in Thrace and the biomedical sciences department of Hellenic International University to deliver a Programme of studies that is beneficial to the students attending.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

- Consider increasing the in-person sessions from 2 to 4 for each semester.
- A formal way to involve stakeholders in the design of the Programme is desirable.

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.*

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The PSP "Biomedical and Molecular Sciences in diagnosis and treatment of diseases" includes a total of 10 compulsory courses, an internship, and the conduction of a thesis, while its duration is 4 academic semesters. According to the curriculum guide, all courses include both modern distance learning (<55% of hours) and in-person lectures, while the schedule is limited to four or five four-day sessions for each semester (one four-day session per semester is in-person). Course examinations are mainly conducted by written tests with the possibility of distance examination, during 3 examination periods. It is worth mentioning that alternative

examination methods are also applied, such as assignments during the semester. Finally, course evaluations by students are carried out at the end of each academic semester. The secretariat and the professors make sure that students are informed about the assessments so that as many of them as possible can participate.

II. Analysis

The timetable of this PSP is quite limited during the semester to some four-day sessions. During these four days, all lectures are held either online or in person and their duration on these days is quite long (e.g. on some Saturdays, classes start at 9 am and end at 8 pm). The teaching methods used include live lectures, but given the heavy workload on a single day, the quality of each lecture is compromised. The language in which the lectures are held is mainly Greek, while the same postgraduate degree is also available in English for those postgraduate students from abroad. A large percentage of students take part in the course evaluations, and many professors discuss any problems or complaints of students during the lectures.

III. Conclusions

The PSP covers a wide range of knowledge in biomedical and molecular sciences, but its timetable is quite limited. It would be ideal to increase the number of days on which lectures are held, in order to reduce the lecture load of the four-day courses that have been held so far.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

- Increase the number of live/online lectures to more days.
- Encourage the existence of the academic advisor.
- Creation of an internal evaluation committee to discuss issues related to the improvement of the quality of the PSP.

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.

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

PSP student admission (restricted to 50 as the maximum number of students and to 12 as the minimum number of students per year) follows well-defined and established criteria. The overall number of students admitted has been around 20 in recent years. The PSP requires student fees (4.000 euros for the duration of studies). Some scholarships are available and are attributed to PSP students with specific needs. The selection of the applicants is based on their studies scores, research experience, recommendation letters, and foreign language diplomas, followed by candidates' interviews by an established academic committee composed by three PSP staff members. These procedures are clearly described in the required supporting documents, which also contain information about student rights and obligations and ways to monitor their progression. Research ethics regulation, regulation of studies, internships, mobility, and student assignments are also provided. All this information also exists on the web site that is now in both Greek and English. Eligible for admission are graduates from various fields and disciplines, such as biologists, physicians, dentists, allied health professions, etc.

The PSP has established clear procedures concerning the degree, the duration of studies, and rules ensuring students' progression. Although terms and conditions for student mobility with Erasmus+ or other equivalent mobility platforms, such as COST actions, described in the related documents of the DUT exist, this mobility platform is not used by the PSP.

Multidisciplinary courses and mechanisms of supervision of PSP students' research projects by academic staff within other Departments not belonging to the DUT (AUTH, IHU) are operational within this PSP. A hybrid method of teaching applies, live (20%) and remote (80%), which is helpful for the majority of PSP students.

The Panel felt that the Medical School and DUT have in place appropriate processes and tools to collect and effectively analyse information concerning the PSP students' processes. This information is stored within the PSP students' registration system.

The duration of the PSP is four semesters (30 ECTS each semester), with lectures and seminars followed by the dissertation during the fourth semester. Students are evaluated at the end of the courses (for the first 3 semesters) and the end of their practical courses (fourth semester). Students are obliged to write a dissertation, which is either research-oriented or a meta-analysis or literature-based work. Usually, the students do not require additional time to finish their PSP. The PSP diploma allows the students to either further develop a scientific or academic career by acquiring a PhD degree or to get jobs with specific requirements. The communication between PSP students and staff is excellent. Faculty is constantly available to help the PSP students immediately and provide the necessary information. The progress of the PSP students is closely followed by the faculty. However, the role of the academic advisor is not known or familiar to the PSP students.

The meeting of the Panel with current and past students left a very positive impression of the utility of this PSP. Lectures appeared well structured; however, the majority of them are delivered via the Zoom platform. Many students have part-time or full-time jobs and, therefore, attend the PSP as an extra activity. This involves a specific design of the PSP, and some of the special needs are tackled with hybrid teaching and online options. The actual and past PSP students pointed out that the quality and number of courses were clear and easy to follow. Similarly, all students mentioned that this PSP is very rewarding. Some concerns brought up by past PSP students about the practical work, which takes place on weekends (Friday-Saturday-Sunday, from 10:00 to 20:00) only very few times per semester (actually 2 times per semester, previously 4 times per semester), thus not allowing a more extensive practical training.

Although Erasmus+ platforms are available, as well as other opportunities for students' mobility, the Panel noticed that there is no mobility among the PSP students. PSP faculty adopted methods to motivate PSP students to participate in various national meetings and encourage them to graduate in a timely manner soon after the 4th semester. PSP graduation documents are obtained electronically within a very short time. A simultaneous English translation of the PSP dissertation is obtained.

II. Analysis

This PSP provides an important and interesting basis for further studies in the genetics field and fulfils an important need for further education and training for biologists, medical professionals, etc. This PSP allows the students to follow a research/academic-oriented career or to get a specialised job in the public or private domain. The length of PSP studies (4 semesters) is appropriate.

Whereas online teaching may be beneficial for some students who work, it is less desirable in general for subjects that require hand-on experience. The PSP will need to carefully strike the right balance on this.

A bank of research topics that PSP students could consult prior to their practical exercise is missing.

Students' mobility is a problem, and PSP staff should promote and use the Erasmus+ platform or other opportunities for student mobility and exchange within Greece or abroad.

The Panel, upon consultation with students and stakeholders, believes that this PSP could become stronger and more international by delivering all courses and seminars in English and by encouraging the students to write their theses in English. This will offer more opportunities for international exchanges and increase the chances for the students to get PhD positions or jobs in Greece or abroad.

One question that the Panel addressed during the evaluation/accreditation procedure was the load of teaching and practical courses between the staff of DUT and IHU. Teaching and students' hand-on research experience realised by IHU staff is beneficial, but it is desirable that a number of PSP students realise their practical/research studies (4th semester) in the laboratories of IUH. This is not applied to most of the PSP students, since most of the research activities are taking place at the DUT. A balance should be established in this direction, allowing students to perform their research activity, at least a part of it, in IHU. PSP staff should carefully rethink this issue and look for the right balance of practical/research activities between these two institutions.

III. Conclusions

This is a PSP in the important field of genetics. The length of the four-semester study is appropriate. The practical/research training during the first 3 semesters should be enhanced from the actual two sessions per semester (3 days each session, from Friday to Sunday) to at least six sessions per semester. A committee of 4 to 5 people should be created in order to evaluate and reorganise the PSP according to the presented needs, thus ensuring the continuous quality of the PSP. PSP students must be part of this committee. Participation in this committee of alumni (PSP graduates) and important stakeholders is also recommended, with a strictly consultative function (no voting rights) It. This committee should meet once or twice per year. Students' mobility towards the various European institutions via Erasmus+ and other well-established platforms, such as the various COST actions, should be adopted and promoted. Similarly, mobility of the PSP students to research centres within DUT, University hospitals, and various academic institutions and companies within Greece, etc., should be encouraged. The Panel believes that English for the lectures and seminars should be adopted by the PSP staff. Similarly, the staff should encourage the PSP students to deliver their dissertations in English.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

- The Panel recommends that the practical/research training, which takes place the first 3 semesters, be immediately enhanced from the actual two sessions per semester (3 days each session, from Friday to Sunday) to four sessions, with the goal of reaching at least six sessions per semester over a 2–3-year period.
- The Panel recommends the mobility of PSP students via Erasmus+ or other similar platforms.
- The Panel suggests that the role of the academic advisor should be utilised and considerably reinforced. The PSP students should be informed and make use of the academic advisor.
- A committee of 4 to 5 persons (PSP staff and students) should be created and meet once or twice per year in order to evaluate and reorganise the PSP. It is also advisable the participation of alumni (PSP graduates) and important stakeholders (no voting rights).
- The Panel recommends to the PSP staff that they deliver their courses in the English language. Similarly, PSP students should be encouraged by the staff to write their dissertations in English.
- The Panel suggests a PSP web page in both Greek and English versions. The Panel was informed after the evaluation procedure that an English version is now active.
- The Panel suggests a correct balance between Democritus University and IHU for the realisation of practical/research activities during the 4th semester of the PSP.
- The Panel recommends to the PSP staff that they further motivate students to participate in international meetings and national competitions (prizes for best posters, etc.).
- The Panel suggests the creation of a library of topics where the candidates could choose their topic of interest. This library should be provided on the web page.
- Organisation of an informative, open day where the various stakeholders could explain the possibilities of mobility, job opportunities, etc.

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.

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The staff of the PSP consists of 82 members. A list of the PSP staff, faculty's Department of origin, and other relative documents are provided. The PSP teaching staff is composed of dedicated academics of high quality whose teaching and accessibility are very much appreciated by current and former students. Employment regulations and obligations of the PSP staff are also provided and described in the corresponding official documents. A policy for staff's support and development is in place.

The Department adheres to meritocratic and transparent procedures (using the ΑΠΕΛΛΑ platform) for the selection and recruitment of PSP faculty. This recruitment is based on covering PSP teaching needs and well-defined research directions. Staff from IHU is also very qualified and recognised for their research quality and has experience participating in academic courses.

The research activities of PSP staff are monitored *via* universally accessible tools (e.g., Google Scholar). The PSP staff is evaluated by means of student surveys carried out online; PSP student participation is high (80%), and therefore the evaluation results are statistically sound.

The Panel felt that the PSP staff should meet formally once or twice per year in order to adapt the PSP to its actual needs and reorganise some lectures and seminars. There is constant contact with the PSP students during the lectures and research training.

Overall, the faculty's research and teaching activities are of high quality. The teaching load is not so high for this PSP. A very small percentage of the PSP faculty has been mobile by means of Erasmus+ and related programmes (COST actions).

II. Analysis

The majority of the faculty body originates from DUT and IHU. Staff can cover diverse aspects of the field of the present PSP. There is a core group that administers the PSP.

III. Conclusions

This PSP is very important and a pioneer in post-graduate education in genetics within Greece, serving in both education and training. The connection of Democritus University to IHU is an excellent initiative, according to the opinion of the Panel. However, the Panel believes that PSP staff should better organise the practical/research activities (4th semester) in order to get a more balanced PSP between the two institutions.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

The Panel recommends the creation of a committee of 4 to 5 persons (PSP staff and students) who will meet once or twice per year to discuss progress, problems, and reorganisation of the PSP. The Panel also recommends the addition of a PSP students' representative as well as some important stakeholders.

PRINICPLE 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.

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The Medical School of the University of Thrace (DUT) and the Department of Biomedical Sciences of the International Hellenic University in Thessaloniki (IHU) have excellent new state-of-the-art building and laboratory facilities in the Alexandroupoli University Campuses which are fully equipped to allow both live and distance education of postgraduate students. The lectures are held in the halls of the Programme and Medicine of the DUT and IHU, and the laboratory exercises in excellently equipped laboratories of the DUT and IHU. All areas are easily accessible to people with disabilities.

To serve the purposes of education and research, a single, decentralized and independent Central Library Unit, the "Library and Information Centre of the University of Thrace", operates at the DUT. The Central Library (<https://lib.duth.gr/>) is based in Komotini. Due to the geographical dispersion of the University in four (4) cities of Thrace (Komotini, Xanthi, Alexandroupoli and Orestiada) the Central Library has developed nine (9) Library - branches. One of these nine Library branches belongs to the School of Health Sciences. Through the website of the Central library (https://opac.seab.gr/search~S4*gre) each student can search for material (books, magazines, etc.).

The PSP is supported by an online e-class system <https://eclass.duth.gr/>. Each course has its own online classroom, where course supervision material, announcements, and bibliography

are posted. In the same system, there is a general bulletin board for educational matters for each semester of studies. Students are invited to follow the above notice boards, which are used to formulate the practical exercise groups in each semester.

The Wi-Fi service of DUT is available in all campus areas as well as in the Student Residences. At the same time, the DUT participates in eduroam that provides Wi-Fi access to all students when are visiting other University campuses that also members of eduroam. In addition, the intranet of the DUT is accessible through a Virtual Private Network (VPN), which allows secure connection to remote users.

The institution of the academic advisor of studies is operating within DUT, but not as should be in the PSP. The advisory support of the professors of the Department to the post-graduate students includes issues related to academic life, their path towards the completion of their studies, their professional prospects, doctoral studies, etc.

Also, the institution of student advocate, who can be a Professor or Emeritus Professor appointed by the Senate, operates to mediate between students and professors or administrative services of the DUT, to observe legality in the context of academic freedom, to deal with phenomena of maladministration and to safeguard all operations.

Additionally, an Employment and Career Office offers to students the opportunity to get to know the environment of their future professional career and, at the same time, to acquire knowledge and skills that will enhance their employability. Students have also the possibility throughout the year to apply for scholarships granted by various foundations and award bodies.

Furthermore, an innovative electronic platform, Philologus, provides to all students, faculty and administrative staff members of DUT linguistic correction and philological editing to texts written in Greek. This service is offered free of charge.

The Medical School has established a regulation for the management of student complaints and appeals (document A10) relating to academic matters (teaching and course grading). Similarly, most of the administrative services of DUT include mechanisms for submitting appeals relating to supporting procedures and services, such as the time schedule, the state of infrastructure, the library, IT systems, etc.

Last but not least, DUT provides accommodation and board free of charge to a larger percentage of students, compared to other universities. DUT is the only University in the country that provides free transportation to and from Campuses. Additionally, some primary medical care is also provided to uninsured students.

II. Analysis

The PSP provides excellent and accessible infrastructure and services for learning and student support.

III. Conclusions

The PSP is fully compliant with Principle 6.

Panel Judgement

Principle 6: Learning resources and student support	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

None.

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.

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The DUT, and consequently the PSP, operates several information systems for the management and monitoring of data concerning students, teaching staff, course structure and organisation, teaching and provision of services to students. Specifically, the basic information systems of the Medical School are:

- i) Information System of the Electronic Secretariat (Universis),
- ii) The Integrated Information System (IPS) of MODIP of DUT,
- iii) The Project Management Information System (resCom) of ELKE of DUT,
- iv) The IT Library Information System,
- vi) The Electronic Assessment Information System of MODIP of DUT
- vii) The Integrated Information National Quality System of ETHAAE.

The OMEA collects, processes, and utilizes data collected from the various systems and informs the Assembly of the Department to plan any follow-up activities.

II. Analysis

The PSP has excellent information management system and procedures.

III. Conclusions

The PSP is fully compliant with Principle 7.

Panel Judgement

Principle 7: Information management	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

None.

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.

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The PSP is in the process of redesigning its website, as part of the overall redesign of all websites of the University; in this sense what is there at the moment is incomplete and likely to change.

Within the above limitation, the Greek version of the website provides a minimal set of useful documents concerning the design and aims of the PSP. The English version is mostly non-existent; at the moment it contains the titles of the various sections without any content. The Panel was informed after the evaluation procedure that a more complete English version has been created.

The PSP also has a Facebook page which contains some useful information, again primarily in Greek.

The Panel was informed multiple times that the redesign of the new website is imminent and that funds for it have been secured.

Communication with the students and course content are adequate via e-class.

II. Analysis

The external and public face of this PSP suffers from lack of a good website which would explain to prospective students, faculty and stakeholders what the aims of the Programme are. Hopefully, the redesign of the website will fix this.

III. Conclusions

This principle is not adequately fulfilled at present.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

Urgently improve website with particular emphasis on the English version. The Panel was informed after the evaluation that this has been done.

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.

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

MODIP and OMEA of the DUT perform a thorough and consistent evaluation of this PSP. The learning environment and support services are excellent.

Feedback from the students is obtained formally via questionnaires and informally through discussions with staff members. Students and PSP staff have close relationships, and staff always tries to accommodate student needs. Concerns of the PSP students upon questionnaire analysis are taken into account for potential future course changes as well as potential improvements of the materials taught based on new advances in science.

The PSP is focused on the diagnosis and treatment of diseases using molecular/genetic tools and therefore a large number of high-quality faculty with different and specific expertise, mainly from DUT and IHU, are involved. The objective of this PSP is to provide knowledge to students with diverse backgrounds, such as physicians and other medical professionals, biologists etc the best ways to deal with the diagnosis and treatment of diseases and to obtain the maximum benefit for the patient. In this aspect, the present PSP is definitely unique and highly beneficial to Greek society. The medical/societal need for such diagnostic tools imposes a broader promotion of this PSP in the community.

Although each PSP student is assigned to a selected faculty member and a close interaction with the staff exists throughout the course, the role of the academic advisor is not known to the PSP students.

The meeting of the Panel with employers and social partners of the PSP confirmed that this PSP is of high quality and that its existence serves medical and societal needs.

II. Analysis

This is a well-designed PSP offering essential academic and practical training for diagnostic reasons using molecular and genetic tools. The overall management of the PSP is excellent. It appears that there is significant communication among students and faculty aiming to improve the PSP. However, a formal committee assuring the quality of the PSP does not exist. Ideally, there should be meetings of an established committee towards the end of each semester to evaluate the PSP, propose potential changes, and, if necessary, reorganise the PSP. The participation of a PSP students' representative is necessary. Overall, this PSP that covers a big medical and societal need has good mechanisms in place to monitor, evaluate, and alter its academic and practical courses.

III. Conclusions

This is a well-managed PSP that requires only some improvements through enhanced communication among students, faculty, alumni, and stakeholders.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

- The PSP quality should be monitored by a committee composed of a few faculty members and students' representatives. This committee could evaluate and reorganise the PSP once or twice per year. It is also recommended that alumni (PSP graduates) and stakeholders participate without voting rights.
- A formal annual meeting between faculty from both DUT and IHU should be established to keep the PSP well-balanced between these two institutions.

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.

Study Programme Compliance

The PSP "Biomedical and Molecular Sciences in diagnosis and treatment of diseases" has not been previously subjected to any external evaluation and accreditation process. The faculty members were forthcoming in conducting the accreditation process, as they answered the committee's numerous questions and provided the necessary paperwork. It is worth mentioning that all professors present in the process, as well as the postgraduate Programme's director, seemed to recognize the importance of accreditation and its contribution to the improvement of the PSP's quality. They were all very enthusiastic and respectful to the recommendations made by the Panel.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

The Panel has no further recommendations.

PART C: CONCLUSIONS

I. Features of Good Practice

- This PSP is a timeless and very important Programme and the only one running in Greece for the education and training of the students.
- Multiple research-oriented methods are implemented.
- There is an informative web page in Greek.
- Existence of questionnaires about staff performance.
- Excellent mechanisms to follow up of the students' progression.
- Very good faculty, highly respected and recognized in the field.
- Invitation for lecturing to several word-leaders in the field.
- Complete study guides regarding the students' laboratory exercises.
- Correct number of theoretical courses.
- Satisfactory time for the PSP accomplishment (4 semesters).
- The satisfaction rate of the students is very high.
- Enthusiastic faculty.
- High interaction between the students and faculty.

II. Areas of Weakness

- Web site does not exist in the English version. The Panel was informed that this has been corrected
- Absence of students' mobility; faculty's mobility low.
- Library of topics does not exist.
- Number of practical courses not satisfactory.
- Many students with partial/full-time jobs affecting the functioning of this PSP.
- No information and use of the academic advisor.

III. Recommendations for Follow-up Actions

- Incorporation of more practical practical/research training courses per semester. Consider increasing the in-person sessions from 2 to 4 for each semester.
- Creation of a web page in English. The Panel was informed that this has been corrected.
- Introduction of several new topics of interest.
- Promotion of students' mobility via Erasmus+ or other similar platforms.
- Creation of an internal formal evaluation committee that will meet once or twice per year to discuss issues related to the improvement of the quality of the PSP.
- Involvement of PSP students, alumni, and stakeholders in the design of the PSP.
- Utilization of the academic advisor.
- Organisation of a formal annual meeting between faculty from both DUT and IHU to keep the PSP well balanced between these two institutions.

- More involvement of IHU faculty in the delivery of dissertation theses.
- Organisation of an informative day (open day) where the various stakeholders could explain the possibilities of mobility, job opportunities, etc.
- Creation of a library of topics.
- Existence of documents informing for the breakdown of finances.
- Promotion of formal connections with external stakeholders.
- Promotion of courses delivery in English and encouragement to write dissertations in English.
- Students' motivation to participate in various national and international meetings and competitions.

IV. Summary & Overall Assessment

The Principles where full compliance has been achieved are: **2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10**

The Principles where substantial compliance has been achieved are: **1, 4, 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	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

The members of the External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel

Name and Surname

- 1. Prof. Efthimios Mitsiadis (Chair)**
- 2. Assoc Prof. Stefanos Volianitis**
- 3. Dr. Nicholas Ktistakis**
- 4. Mr. Sotirios Mavromatis**