



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@ethaee.gr • www.ethaee.gr

Accreditation Report for the New Postgraduate Study Programme of:

Cultural Studies: Modern Hellenism and the Balkans

**Department: History and Ethnology
Institution: Democritus University of Thrace
Date: 23 November 2024**



Με τη συγχρηματοδότηση
της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης



Πρόγραμμα
Ανθρώπινο Δυναμικό και
Κοινωνική Συνοχή



Report of the Panel appointed by the HAHE to undertake the review of the New Postgraduate Study Programme of **Cultural Studies: Modern Hellenism and the Balkans** 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: Strategy, Quality Assurance Policy and Quality Goal Setting for the New Postgraduate Study Programmes	8
Principle 2: Design and Approval of New Postgraduate Study Programmes.....	11
Principle 3: Regulations for Student Admission, Progression, Recognition of Postgraduate Studies, and certification	14
Principle 4: Teaching Staff of New Postgraduate Study Programmes	17
Principle 5: Learning Resources and Student Support	21
Principle 6: Initial Internal and External Evaluation and Monitoring of New Postgraduate Study Programmes	24
Part C: Conclusions	27
I. Features of Good Practice.....	27
II. Areas of Weakness.....	27
III. Recommendations for Follow-up Actions.....	27
IV. Summary & Overall Assessment	29

PART A: BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT OF THE REVIEW

I. The External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel

The Panel responsible for the Accreditation Review of the new postgraduate study programme of **Cultural Studies: Modern Hellenism and the Balkans** of the **Democritus University of Thrace** comprised the following five (5) members, drawn from the HAHE Register, in accordance with Laws 4009/2011 & 4653/2020:

1. Assoc. Prof. Victor Roudometof (Chair)

University of Cyprus, Cyprus

2. Prof. Dimitris Michailakis

University of Linköping, Sweeden

3. Assoc. Prof. Eka Tchoidze

Ilia State University, Georgia

4. Prof. Nicholas Tsagourias

University of Sheffield, United Kingdom

5. Mr. Dimosthenis Kostakis

University of Ioannina, Greece

II. Review Procedure and Documentation

In reviewing new inter-disciplinary Postgraduate Study Programme "Cultural Studies: Modern Hellenism and the Balkans", developed by the Department of History and Ethnology of Democritus University of Thrace the External Evaluation and Accreditation Panel (EEAP) comprised of five (5) members, drawn from the HAHE Register, in accordance with Laws 4009/2011 & 4653/2020.

The objectives of the Panel, as described in the Guidelines for the Members of EEAP, are:

- to establish whether the data provided from the various resources is consistent among one another and reflect the actual situation.
- to identify strengths and areas of weakness.
- to engage in a constructive dialogue with the Institution, leading to reflection and continuous enhancement of the study programme.

Following a well-prepared schedule provided by HAHE, the Panel held several separate interactive virtual (by electronic means, ZOOM) meetings and visits as follows:

On Monday, 11/11/2024, the following virtual meeting took place: Meeting with

- Vice Rector: Prof. Marirena Grigoriou,
- Head of the Department: Prof. Georgios Tsigaras
- Director of PSP2 Asst. Prof. Athanasios Kougkoulos
- MODIP staff: Mrs. Styliani Gkavaki

On Tuesday 12/11/2024 the following virtual meetings took place:

- Meeting with the teaching staff (Prof. Emmanouil Varvounis, Prof. Elpida Vogli, Prof. Vassileios Dalkavoukis, Assoc. Prof. Vassiliki Kravva, Assoc. Prof. Athena Macha – Bizoumi, Assoc. Prof. Angelos Palikidis)
- On-line tour: classrooms, lecture halls, libraries, laboratories, and other facilities as well as discussion about the University's facilities
- Meeting with employers, social partners
- Closure meeting with the Vice-Rector, Director of the postgraduate programme, the Head of the Department, MODIP Manager

Because this is a new Programme there were no meetings with students or alumni. During the virtual meetings, the EEAP had the opportunity to meet, talk, and interact with all the participants.

All participants were encouraged to express their views and talk freely about their overall learning experience.

Participants welcomed the opportunity to talk to the EEAP and to voice their views.

The discussions were very constructive and fruitful and were conducted in a cooperative manner and attitude.

All the meetings included presentations, discussions, and question-and-answer sessions. During the final meeting the EEAP made an informal presentation of some initial key findings. The internal evaluation report and other extensive material were made available to the Panel electronically in advance through HAHE.

More information and materials were made available during the meetings.

The Department of History and Ethnology has worked diligently in advance to all relevant materials and organizing and hosting virtual meetings.

The EEAP feels that the Department has done a great job throughout the internal evaluation process and that the objectives of the process have been fully met.

The eagerness of the Department to answer questions posed by the Panel's members and to provide additional information and clarifications to the Panel during the meetings is worth noting.

The Panel expresses its gratitude and appreciation to all the units of the Democritus University of Thrace (incl. the Department as well as the central administration) for their co-operation and professionalism.

This Accreditation Report is based on information collected and views expressed during the virtual meetings and on information contained in the internal evaluation report and other documents submitted before and during the virtual meetings.

III. Postgraduate Study Programme Profile

The post-graduate programme “Cultural Studies: Hellenism and the Balkans”, has been developed by the Department of History and Ethnology of the Democritus University of Thrace. It is designed to apply the theoretical perspective of Cultural Studies to the bilateral relationship between Greece and the Balkans over the post-1453 era. While there is a similar post-graduate programme in another Greek university, this post-graduate programme explicitly focuses on the cultural relationships between Greece and the Balkans over the post-Byzantine era. The programme has an inter-disciplinary focus on culture that incorporates elements of anthropology, folklore studies, museology, literature, film studies and art history.

The programme aims to expand relations with cultural institutions in Greece and the Balkan countries as well as to offer expert knowledge to educators interested to learn about the use of cultural approaches in education. The programme is specifically designed to capitalize on long-standing relations between the Department and other Modern Greek programmes in neighbouring countries.

A total of 8 graduate courses have been developed. All courses are mandatory. There are no electives. A thesis is required after coursework is completed. Each semester in consists of 13 full teaching weeks. For the award of the Diploma of Postgraduate Studies, 90 ECTS credits are required.

Teaching will be done exclusively through distance teaching via a combination of synchronous and asynchronous learning. The teaching method was selected to attract postgraduate students who cannot enrol to a post-graduate programme designed in the conventional manner that required physical attendance. In addition, the distance learning method will make the programme competitive for students from neighbouring countries.

The University has used and integrated e-learning tools and resources and has accumulated considerable experience on the use of distance education tools during the Covid pandemic.

A minimum of 15 and a maximum of 40 students per year is specified. Students who are admitted to the programme should have a bachelor’s degree from a Greek university or similar institution abroad.

The tuition fees are set at 2000€ for the three semesters of study. Tuition fees will be paid in instalments.

PART B: COMPLIANCE WITH THE PRINCIPLES

Principle 1: Strategy, Quality Assurance Policy and Quality Goal Setting for the New Postgraduate Study Programmes

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD INCLUDE IN THEIR STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT THE DEVELOPMENT, ORGANISATION, AND IMPLEMENTATION OF NEW POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES (PSP) IN SPECIFIC SCIENTIFIC FIELDS AFTER INVESTIGATING THEIR FEASIBILITY AND SUSTAINABILITY.

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD APPLY A QUALITY ASSURANCE POLICY FOR THE NEW POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES AS PART OF THEIR STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT.

THIS POLICY SHOULD EXPAND AND BE AIMED (WITH THE COLLABORATION OF EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS) AT THE PSP OF THE INSTITUTION AND THE ACADEMIC UNIT. THIS POLICY SHOULD BE PUBLISHED AND IMPLEMENTED BY ALL INTERESTED PARTIES.

By decision/s of the Institutional Senate, the Institutions should adapt their strategy to allow for the provision of postgraduate study programmes, in addition to attending to the profile, vision, mission and strategic objectives of the Institution. In this strategy, the Institutions should anticipate the potential benefits, difficulties or risks from the implementation of new postgraduate study programmes and plan all the necessary actions to achieve their goals. The Institution's strategic choices should be documented through specific feasibility and sustainability studies, especially for new postgraduate study programmes.

In the case of PSP delivered by distance methods, the Institution prepares and applies an e-learning strategy. The Institution's e-learning strategy is integrated into its overall strategy and identifies educational goals while keeping up to the rapid technological changes and to the developments in pedagogical models. The Institution should include in its strategy the justification and feasibility as to why e-learning has been selected as the appropriate learning strategy for the particular programmes of study where it is applied.

In the context of e-learning, innovation strategies, the possibility of programme revision, the linking between learning and research (requiring knowledge of the latest innovations in order to select the most appropriate means to achieve the learning outcomes) should be taken into account.

The quality assurance policy of the academic unit for postgraduate study programmes should be in line with the Institution's strategy 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 postgraduate 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 continuous 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 and the availability 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 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 internal review and audit of the quality assurance system for 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 Department of History and Ethnology in cooperation with the Quality Assurance Unit of the Democritus University of Thrace has synchronized the Quality Policy of the Postgraduate Study Programme (PSP) "Cultural Studies: Modern Hellenism and the Balkans" with the Quality Policy of the Democritus University of Thrace. The PSP is committed to the implementation of a quality policy that underpins and supports the academic character of the PSP, to promote its purpose and object, to implement its strategic objectives, by defining the means and methods of achieving them.

For the planning of actions to ensure the quality of the studies, the PSP has drawn up objectives, in accordance with the HAHE model, which includes quality indicators, the required actions to achieve these objectives, identified the persons responsible for their implementation and the corresponding timetable. In that process the participation of all stakeholders is also ensured.

The PSP has a number of means of communicating the Quality Policy. The quality policy is posted on its website so that new and current students can be informed. Incoming students are also informed of the PSP's quality policy during the welcome ceremonies for postgraduate students. The quality policy of the PSP is also communicated in contacts with the local community, in the activities with professional associations of cultural programmes and in the presentation of the results of research carried out within the PSP.

More specifically, the following methods are used for public information on the activities of the PSP:

1. The official website of the Department of History and Ethnology
2. The DUTHNET eClass distance learning platform used by the faculty and staff members and students enrolled in the PSP

3. The websites of the Democritus University of Thrace
4. Printed material, which is available in digital form on the website of the PSP
5. Publications in the local press
6. Interviews and reports in the local media

II. Analysis

The Quality Assurance Policy of the PSP sets the framework of an effective monitoring, evaluation, and improvement of its quality. Based on the analysis of available evidence, the EEAP recognises strong commitment and dedication from the involved stakeholders to follow accurate quality standards. There are several mechanisms in place to ensure that the PSP is in line with the Department's strategic goals and that it will be subjected to regular evaluations and assessments. An ongoing monitoring will foster excellence in teaching, alignment with labour market needs and it facilitates student acquisition of advanced education with a specialised focus, cultivation and extension of research abilities, and critical thinking. Moreover, the programme demonstrates cautious financial resource management. The Quality Assurance Policy is well communicated and constantly available online for review.

III. Conclusions

The PSP "Cultural Studies: Modern Hellenism and the Balkans" has established a Quality Assurance Policy that ensures systematic monitoring and evaluation. External stakeholders expressed their intent to contribute significantly to the implementation of the strategic goals and processes of the PSP. Based on the evidence provided, the EEAP recognises that effective mechanisms are in place. For these reasons, the quality assurance policy and quality goal setting are deemed fully compliant to achieving excellence within the PSP, while demonstrating continuous dedication to improvement through well-established quality assurance processes.

Panel Judgement

Principle 1: Strategy, Quality Assurance Policy and Quality Goal Setting for the New Postgraduate Study Programmes	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

None

Principle 2: Design and Approval of New 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 NEW POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES. THE OBJECTIVES, THE SPECIFIC SCIENTIFIC SUBJECT AND THE STREAMS OR SPECIALISATIONS, THE EXPECTED LEARNING OUTCOMES AND THE EMPLOYMENT PROSPECTS ARE SET OUT IN THE PROGRAMME DESIGN. DURING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NEW 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, the specialisations, the expected learning outcomes, the structure, the courses, the teaching and assessment modes, the teaching staff and the necessary resources 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. In particular, for each expected 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 for the 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 process of developing this programme follows established procedures and is compliant with the School's and University's policies and regulations. The design, academic profile, content, learning objectives and delivery modes of the programme are appropriate. The expected learning outcomes are aligned with the European and National Qualifications Framework (EQF, NQF), and the Dublin Descriptors for level 7. The programme as well as individual courses seek to deepen students' knowledge and the attainment of transferrable skills. There is a quality assurance policy and an international strategy. The attainment of the expected learning outcomes or the general objectives of the programme are mainly gauged through on going and summative assessment as well as feedback by students and graduates.

II. Analysis

The process of designing and setting out the content, learning outcomes of the programme is well-defined and complies with the School's and University's policies and regulations. Information about teaching methods is provided in the course descriptions but there is no overall policy to reflect the character and objectives of this programme, neither the novelty of the applied methods is explained. There is no information as to how the fairness and transparency of these assessment methods but also of the assessment is ensured and how students will be supported to attain their academic potential. One of the selling points of the programme is its interdisciplinarity, however there is no information as to how interdisciplinarity is maintained across the programme and in particular in relation to the dissertation. There is no general course on research methods which will be necessary for the dissertation since students may have diverse academic and professional backgrounds. During our meeting with external stakeholders, it became apparent that they did not play an active role in the design of the programme. There is also no information in the submitted materials as to how external stakeholders will participate in the delivery, development or revision of the programme. The programme wants to establish links with the labour market which is commendable. However, the programme does not offer internships or other modes of engagement with the professions. The programme and in particular certain members of staff have a network of external academic links. This is commendable but there is no explanation as to how any new knowledge drawn from such networks will be integrated into the programme. From the submitted material and discussion with faculty, it appears that the main focus of the programme is knowledge rather than skills even if it mentions transferable skills.

III. Conclusions

The programme is compliant with certain aspects of this principle but falls short in others. The programme should:

1. Introduce clearer and measurable indicators to assess the extent to which the programme has attained its goals;
2. Provide grade descriptors to make assessment fair and more transparent;

3. integrate external stakeholders in the design, delivery or revision of the programme;
4. update its content regularly and link it to market needs;
5. offer a module on research methods;
6. update the content of existing modules regularly to include new knowledge in particular from academic networks
7. ensure as far as possible practical experience or internships
8. consider the bundle of skills each course and the programme as a whole offer
9. introduce novel teaching methods to support the relevant claim

Panel Judgement

Principle 2: Design and Approval of New Postgraduate Study Programmes	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	X
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

1. Introduce clearer and measurable indicators to assess the extent to which the programme has attained its goals;
2. Provide grade descriptors to make assessment fair and more transparent;
3. Integrate external stakeholders in the design, delivery or revision of the programme;
4. Update its content regularly and link it to market needs;
5. Offer a module on research methods;
6. Update the content of existing modules regularly to include new knowledge in particular from academic networks
7. Ensure as far as possible practical experience or internships
8. Consider the bundle of skills each course and the programme as a whole offer
9. Introduce novel teaching methods to support the relevant claim

Principle 3: Regulations for 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).

The Institution should develop and publish the internal regulations prescribed by law which, among other things, should regulate all issues of postgraduate studies from the beginning to the end of the studies.

Indicatively:

- *The students' 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*

In case that the PSP is offered through distance learning methods, the Institution should have in place a regulation for e-learning, including in particular the following issues:

- *Services of the Institution to support e-learning*
- *Methodology for the development and implementation of courses*
- *Ways of providing teaching and variety of teaching and assessment modes*
- *General standard of course structure*
- *Student support system*
- *Support of faculty/teachers with mandatory e-learning training for new staff members*
- *Technological infrastructures made available by the Institution*
- *Student identity confirmation system (student identity check, assignment and exam writing process, security and certification issues).*
- ❖ *The Institution should establish rules for the provision of appropriate access and for the assurance of the participation of students affected by disability, illness, and other special circumstances.*
- ❖ *Ethical issues, such as those concerning data protection, intellectual property rights and rules for protection against fraud are governed by the e-learning regulation.*

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

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

This programme has policies to support students and monitor their progress. The programme provides for student mobility and offers scholarships. For teaching methods and e-support it refers to a particular University/School regulation.

II. Analysis

The programme demonstrates strengths in its approach to student support, progression, recognition of studies, and certification. The equally distributed among the courses. The opportunities ECTS credits are for international mobility and participation in conferences and workshops are commendable. There is no information about the admission and selection criteria and process (the A11 document refers to general University wide criteria). This policy should include information about required grades, disciplines, professional experience, interviews and so on. There is also no specific information about data retention and handling which important since this is an online programme. The reference to a University regulation regarding e-learning teaching and support is not sufficient and does not support the claim of student-centred teaching and learning in relation to this programme or the claim that novel methods of teaching are used. Faculty were not able to provide specific information on this matter during the meeting. It seems that all courses use the same assessment methods. The programme should state its own policies on teaching and e-learning support and perhaps diversify if needed. As noted in relation to principle 2, a general course on research methods will be necessary in particular with regard to dissertation in order to help students attain the objectives of the programme and reflect the student-centred character of the programme to the extent that students may come from diverse backgrounds and disciplines. No internships or practical engagement is provided which undermines the claim that the programme is job oriented.

III. Conclusions

The programme addresses issues related to student support, progression, recognition of studies, and certification. However, there is no programme specific policy on admissions, e-learning support and teaching.

Panel Judgement

Principle 3: Regulations for Student Admission, Progression, Recognition of Postgraduate Studies, and certification	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	X
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

1. Adopt and publicise admission criteria and selection methods
2. adopt programme specific teaching policies
3. adopt programme specific e-learning-policies
4. establish internships or other methods of linking the programme with the labour market

Principle 4: Teaching Staff of New 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 and scientific competence of the teaching staff at the PSP, the appropriate staff-student ratio, the proper staff categories, the appropriate subject areas, the fair and objective recruitment process, the high research performance, the training, 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 PSP “Cultural Studies: Modern Hellenism and the Balkans” belongs to the School of Classics and Humanities, Department of History and Ethnology.

The Programme has a Teaching Staff of 26 members (14 Members DEP/ faculty members Μέλος ΔΕΠ, and 12 Members with Unpaid Contract/ Αμισθί σύμβαση / Collaborating Educational Staff, Members ΕΕΠ?). From these 26 teaching staff there are 6 from Academic Institutions outside Greece (1 from Serbia, 2 from Turkey, 1 from Romania, 1 from Cyprus and 1 from Czech Republic). The 20 members are from the DUTH and other 4 Greek Universities (of Athens, Thessaloniki, Aegean and Ionian).

For the teaching staff with unpaid teaching contract, the relevant request is examined at the Special Account for Research Funds (ΕΛΚΕ) of the DUTH Then an extract of the minutes is drawn up and an act of approval is issued, which is posted immediately on the ΔΙΑΥΓΕΙΑ (Ministry of Digital Governance of Greece). Therefore, the contract is signed.

Before the beginning of each academic year, the Coordinator Board (Σ.Ε.) of the Interdepartmental Programme of Post-Graduate Studies (D.P.M.S.) assigns teaching work and appoints as responsible/coordinators Professors for each course (totally 8). The supervisors/coordinators will assess the needs of each course and draw up course plans and a list of recommended teachers for each teaching unit. The Coordinator Board reviews the outlines and recommends to the Board of Post- Graduate Studies (Ε.Π.Σ.) the assignment of teaching tasks to additional teaching staff. The Board of Post-Graduate Studies, taking into

account the research- scientific and independent teaching work, as well as the professional work of the teaching candidates and available evaluations of each lecturer by undergraduate and postgraduate students, decides whether to invite the proposed lecturers or to reject some of them.

Procedures for the selection of adjunct/ assistant faculty members (επιλογή μελών επικουρικού διδακτικού προσωπικού) are as follows:

After the Coordinator Board of the Programme of Post-Graduate Studies' recommendation, an invitation is issued to the doctoral candidates of the faculty. The applications are submitted to the Secretariat of the Department and are examined by the Coordinator Board, which makes a recommendation to the Department's Assembly, which decides on the assignment of the teaching assistantship.

At the University functions the Center of Teaching and Learning/ (<https://ctl.duth.gr/>). Its goal is to promote and create a community of learning, innovation, and continuous improvement of teaching at the DUTH. The Center supports faculty members and lecturers into exchanging views and creating good practices of learning and teaching, to record their needs, to reflect, to develop modern and effective educational actions, including the use of ICT in the teaching of university courses. The Center supports teachers and informs them about the use of New Information and Communication Technologies. The Center enhances communication between teachers and organizes meetings to exchange views on successful practices or problems encountered during their teaching field.

The PSP "Modern Hellenism and the Balkans" includes 8 courses. Per course consists of 30 hours of synchronous and 9 hours of asynchronous teaching, per semester 120 hours of synchronous and 36 hours of asynchronous teaching and in the whole PSP 240 hours of synchronous and 72 hours of asynchronous teaching. That is, per course, per semester and in total the PSP includes 76.92% of synchronous and 23.08% of asynchronous teaching.

A good example of the PSP is a Seminar on Scientific Technography (without ECTS) in the third Semester for the assumption on a semester basis for the support of students who are in the process of writing their master's Thesis, which has to be composed in the same third Semester.

All 8 courses are compulsory and there is one coordinator professor for each. 5 from these 8 coordinator/ moderator professors have been collaborating with the Hellenic Open University for years. The remaining 3 were involved in teaching process during the pandemic. Consequently, all of them have valuable experience in open and distance education.

The staff is encouraged to participate in the Erasmus+ Mobility Programmes, which enables them to make short-term visits to the Universities with which the DUTH collaborates.

Among good practices of encouraging the teaching staff is a special Award for Excellent teaching. The award (a plaque and a diploma) is awarded annually by the Rector of the DUTH at public ceremony held during the celebration of the Three Hierarchs (January 30th).

Among the awarded professors of the DUTH is Emmanuel Varvounis, PSP's teaching staff and one of the 8 coordinators.

The teaching work of the PSP is divided into:

- ✓ Lectures/Seminars
- ✓ Preparation of assignments and support of students in their carrying out of them.
- ✓ Correction of assignments and personalized feedback to each student.

The Department of History and Ethnology organizes and participates in scientific workshops, presentations, and other research activities taken place in the Balkans. Also, at the DUTH some conferences of regional importance have been organized during the previous years.

The evaluation by the students is done by filling out a questionnaire, online; the electronic system fully ensures the anonymity of participants. For evaluation of the teaching staff, the main axes are:

- ✓ Teacher's skills,
- ✓ the quality of teaching,
- ✓ the quality of the course.

The DUTH follows quality assurance processes for all staff members including processes focused on the educational material, in the material and technical infrastructure and in the administrative services.

II. Analysis

The EEAP analysed all documents submitted on file, including the updated documents and presentations during the interviews and took into consideration the discussions with staff about the processes of staff recruitment, workload, and the supporting system in place for the advancement of the scientific work of the academic staff. It also took into consideration discussion with employers, and other stakeholders regarding the link between teaching and research.

The DUTH provides staff with a supportive environment that promotes the advancement of their scientific work. It applies fair and transparent processes for the recruitment of development of the teaching staff.

There are no electives and no course on Balkan history.

III. Conclusions

The EEAP members confirmed, through their review of the relative documents, that the DUTH has adopted all the relevant rules and has taken all measures to monitor the adequacy of the teaching staff of the academic unit teaching at the Programme, 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, and staff development policy.

The lecturers who are to be employed to cover the teaching needs of the specific PSP have high specialization in the individual scientific fields of the PSP and have teaching and published research work in authoritative scientific journals.

The DUTH takes all necessary steps to fill new positions with highly qualified staff in order to meet the teaching and research needs of the programme. It follows clear, transparent, and fair processes in recruitment according to Greek legislation. The University provides good infrastructure and sufficient technological support.

Panel Judgement

Principle 4: Teaching Staff of New Postgraduate Study Programmes	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

The PSP should introduce electives, including a course on Balkan history.

Principle 5: Learning Resources and Student Support

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD HAVE ADEQUATE FUNDING TO COVER THE TEACHING AND LEARNING NEEDS OF THE POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES. 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, 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 and foreign students, students with disabilities), in addition to the shift towards student-centered 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 postgraduate programme is expected to welcome 15-40 students. It will be taught entirely remotely, and the language of instruction will be in Greek. The faculty members' lectures will be delivered from 2 classrooms, which are fully equipped and configured for online teaching. These particular classrooms have already been used for other online courses. The department has access to the necessary applications to provide the e-learning education, like Teams, Moodle, E-class, etc. Through these tools, each module can provide a variety of supporting material, such as articles, presentations, slides, notes, podcasts, multimedia material, bibliography, etc.

The successful completion of the programme is achieved by successfully completing 8 courses. Each course is achieved after 13 3-hour sessions, 3 of them to be delivered asynchronously. The diploma is issued in both Greek and English language.

II. Analysis

In total there are 24 lecturers, with workloads ranging from 0.23 hours to 2.76 hours per week. It is worth noting that most of the teachers already have experience in the e-learning process, through their collaboration with other departments, while through the Teaching and Learning Support Centre (Κέντρο Υποστήριξης Διδασκαλίας και Μάθησης), the teachers are continuously trained in the use of the department's technologies and e-services.

Teachers are evaluated via an anonymous form by students. In addition, there is an established award for outstanding teaching, which can be awarded to the lecturer once every 4 years and includes a symbolic gift of up to 2,000 euros, which can be used for the academic needs of the awardee.

Participation in the programme requires the payment of tuition fees of 2,000. Tuition fees are payable at the beginning of each semester in two equal instalments. These funds will be used for staff salaries, further equipment and consumables, as well as for travel expenses, for inviting foreign lecturers.

Regarding the building facilities, there is the Library, the Laboratory of Folklore and Social Anthropology (Εργαστήριο Λαογραφίας και Κοινωνικής Ανθρωπολογίας) and the Secretariat. However, the physical infrastructure is expected to meet the needs only of students residing in the area where the University is located. The library contains more than 30,000 book and journal titles. In addition, a reading room is available that includes 11 computers. There is no electronic library, however the department aspires to overcome this obstacle by utilizing personal electronic resources, through the open repositories (Academia) and through the Heal-Link service that is offered to its students.

The Laboratory of Folklore and Social Anthropology (<https://www.he.duth.gr/el/page/ereyna#>), apart from its workshops and research activities, has electronic access to journals on the History of Thrace, as well as to documents on the material culture of the region. Moreover, through the laboratory, MOUs have been signed with national and international institutions, such as those of Russia and Romania.

Regarding the secretariat, there is an online platform through which students can submit applications, view their grades and perform any formal obligation.

For newly admitted students, an online welcome ceremony is foreseen to inform them about the above, as well as about the institutions of the Student Advocate, Psychological Support, the Erasmus+ programme and the Academic Advisor.

On the department's website there is an extensive and detailed report on the institution of the Student Advocate, who can act as a mediator between the disputes that may arise between students and the department. The website is fully accessible for people with disabilities; however, it is only offered in Greek.

In addition, the Department of Counselling and Psychosocial Support (<https://dosyp.duth.gr/tmima-simvouleutikis-kai-psixokoinwnikis-ipostirikseis/>) provides support to students in issues of stress and pressure related to examinations. This department

is made up of specialised scientists, and the site is accessible in English and for people with disabilities.

The Academic Advisor provides advice on the progress of studies, professional rehabilitation, but also on the opportunities offered by the department, such as the Erasmus+ programme, which provides for short-term internships (up to two weeks), even in foreign countries. Their participation in the Erasmus+ is rewarded with 3 ECTS.

III. Conclusions

In conclusion, the programme is fully compliant with the principles of the HAHE.

Panel Judgement

Principle 5: Learning Resources and Student Support	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

- The establishment of an electronic library would simplify the educational process.
- The description and presentation of the equipment through a video, for example on the department's website, could improve the image of aspiring students about the programme.
- The departmental content on the website is sometimes not offered in English and other times is non-functional when offered in English.

Principle 6: Initial Internal and External Evaluation and Monitoring of New Postgraduate Study Programmes

INSTITUTIONS AND ACADEMIC UNITS SHOULD HAVE IN PLACE AN INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM, FOR THE AUDIT, INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL EVALUATION OF THE NEW POSTGRADUATE PROGRAMMES, THUS ENSURING COMPLIANCE WITH THE PRINCIPLES OF THE PRESENT STANDARDS. ANY ACTIONS TAKEN IN THE ABOVE CONTEXT SHOULD BE COMMUNICATED TO ALL PARTIES CONCERNED.

The internal evaluation of the new PSP includes the assessment of the accreditation proposal, as well as the documentation in accordance with the Principles of the present Standards and the quality procedures of the Institution's Internal Quality Assurance System (IQAS). The internal evaluation of new postgraduate study programmes also aims at maintaining the level of educational provision and creating a supportive and effective learning environment for students. The Institution, through its Quality Assurance Unit (QAU) and the corresponding academic units, organise and support the external evaluation procedures of the new PSP, according to the specific guidelines and directions provided by HAHE.

The above comprise the assessment of:

- the objectives, content, and structure of the curriculum, the knowledge offered and the level of science and technology in the given discipline, thus ensuring that the PSP is up to date, according to the relevant documentation listed in the decisions of the pertinent bodies*
- the entailed students' workload for the progression and completion of postgraduate studies*
- the satisfaction of the students' expectations and needs in relation to the programme*
- the learning environment, support services, and their fitness for purpose for the PSP in question*

Postgraduate study programmes are designed and established in accordance with the provisions of the Institution's internal regulations, involving students and other stakeholders.

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The University, through MODIP and with the assistance of the Department, organises and supports the internal and external evaluation procedures of the new PSP. The quality assurance and evaluation procedures of the PSP will be carried out based on the internal evaluation. The internal evaluation of the new PSP includes the evaluation of the accreditation proposal and documentation in accordance with the requirements of the HAHE standards.

The formal evaluation of the content of the courses and the teaching in individual study modules will be obtained through anonymous questionnaires distributed to students. The maintenance of academic standards and the management and enhancement of both procedures for quality assurance and control are the collective responsibility of the department. The annual Internal Evaluation Reports, monitoring indicators, and related

results are expected to be published on the department's website, facilitating information dissemination and feedback opportunities for all interested parties.

The evaluation of the educational process by students at all levels is carried out on a semesterly basis during the teaching period. The process of electronic evaluation of the teaching work is carried out, in total for all courses of the current semester, exclusively by the members of the internal evaluation team of the Department. The questionnaire completed by the students includes three groups of questions concerning (i) the competences of the lecturer, (ii) the quality of teaching and (iii) the quality of the course. After the completion of the evaluation of each semester, through the Quality Assurance Unit, it is possible to extract the relevant results of which the members of the teaching staff and the internal evaluation teams of the respective academic units are informed after the end of the respective examination period and the registration of the students' marks.

The evaluation of lecturers by postgraduate students is carried out regularly towards the end of the semester (8th - 11th teaching week) in an anonymous and electronic way through the relevant application of the Quality Assurance Unit of the University of Thrace by completing a course evaluation questionnaire. Upon completion of the evaluation process, the Information System of the Quality Assurance Unit allows the members of the internal evaluation team to extract aggregated data per lecturer and course.

The indicators resulting from the electronic questionnaires, completed by students for the evaluation of lecturers, are used for the continuous improvement of the quality of the academic activities of the postgraduate PSP. The internal evaluation team examines the data collected and informs the Departmental Assembly and the Steering Committee of their use.

The annual internal evaluation of the PSP is carried out in collaboration with the Quality Assurance Unit and is described in detail in the corresponding procedure of the Internal Quality Assurance System. In the context of this procedure the Quality Assurance Unit shall plan the internal evaluation. The continuous monitoring and periodic internal evaluation of the PSP aims to maintain and/or improve the educational level and at the same time to create a supportive and effective learning environment for postgraduate students, which is provided for in Article 9 of the Internal Regulations for Postgraduate Studies of the PSP. External evaluation is the final phase of the cycle of the quality assurance process for the PSP. It consists of the analytical-critical examination of the results of the internal evaluation by a committee of independent experts. The external evaluation of the PSP will be conducted through MODIP, with the Department organising and supporting the processes of the external evaluation in accordance with the specific instructions and guidelines of the University. The findings and recommendations of the External Evaluation Committee will be discussed in specific meetings of OMEA, the involved individuals in the PSP, and the Director for further reflection and possible implementation actions.

When the external evaluation of the PSP is completed and the accreditation report is submitted, OMEA of the Department, together with MODIP, will ensure that the External Evaluation Committee's recommendations are adopted and become the main axes of the implementation of quality assurance procedures.

II. Analysis

The EEAP believes that the Department has adopted mutually agreed procedures concerning the implementation of the curriculum and quality indicators of the entire PSP, focusing on data collected through an evaluation form. With respect to the University, the PSP will be regularly internally reviewed and revised with the participation of students and faculty members. The information collected will be analysed, and the PSP will possibly be modified according to the internal and external evaluation data.

III. Conclusions

The EEAP members confirmed through their review of the relevant documents that the University of Thrace and the Department have in place competent bodies and mechanisms to regularly review essential aspects of the PSP. These aspects include the objectives, content, and structure of the curriculum, the knowledge offered, and the level of science and proven experience in the subject, to ensure the modern nature of the PSP.

Panel Judgement

Principle 6: Initial Internal and External Evaluation and Monitoring of New Postgraduate Study Programmes	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

None

PART C: CONCLUSIONS

I. Features of Good Practice

1. The PSP has a Quality Assurance Policy (QAP) that ensures systematic monitoring and evaluation.
2. External stakeholders have expressed their intention to contribute significantly to the implementation of the strategic goals and processes of the PSP.
3. The University has taken all necessary measure to ensure continuous monitoring of all aspects related to the smooth operation of the programme.
4. Teaching staff is highly suited to the individual areas of the PSP.
5. The University has adequate learning resources and most importantly, it has the necessary digital tools required for the operation of a distance learning programme. The University has a good infrastructure and sufficient technological support.
6. The PSP has a strong inter-disciplinary orientation.

II. Areas of Weakness

1. The PSP lacks measurable indicators to assess goal attainment
2. No grade descriptors are provided and hence assessment lacks sufficient transparency
3. External stakeholders do not seem to be integrated in the design, delivery or future revisions of the programme
4. No information has been provided on how to continuously update content and link it to market needs
5. There is no module on research methods or evidence of novel methodologies
6. No information provided on how to update the content of existing modules regularly to include new knowledge
7. The issue of practical training or internships is not sufficiently addressed
8. No information provided or publicized about admission criteria and selection methods
9. No evidence provided for programme specific teaching and e-learning policies
10. The departmental content on the website is sometimes unavailable in English and other times the English version is non-functional
11. There are no electives and no course on Balkan history.

III. Recommendations for Follow-up Actions

1. The establishment of an electronic library would simplify the educational process, especially so for a distance learning programme.
2. The description of the available equipment through a video on the department's website could improve the PSP's image for prospective students.
3. The English language version of the departmental website should become fully functional.
4. The PSP should adopt clearer and measurable indicators to assess goal attainment

5. Grade descriptors should be developed and made public in order to help with perceptions of fairness and transparency
6. External stakeholders ought to be fully integrated into the design, delivery or revision of the programme
7. The modules' content should be updated regularly and linked to market needs. The content of existing modules should be regularly updated to include new knowledge in specialty areas.
8. The Department should consider offering a module on research methods
9. The Department should overcome existing obstacles and ensure offering the maximum of practical training or internships in order to cultivate market links
10. The PSP should adopt and publicise specific admission criteria and selection methods
11. The PSP should adopt specific teaching and e-learning policies
12. The PSP should develop electives, inclusive of a course on Balkan history.

IV. Summary & Overall Assessment

The Principles where full compliance has been achieved are: **1,4,5,6**

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

The Principles where partial compliance has been achieved are: **2,3**

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

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

The members of the External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel

Name and Surname

- 1. Assoc. Prof. Victor Roudometof (Chair)**
- 2. Prof. Dimitris Michailakis**
- 3. Assoc. Prof. Eka Tchoidze**
- 4. Prof. Nicholas Tsagourias**
- 5. Mr. Dimosthenis Kostakis**