

QUALITY POLICY  
OF DEMOCRITUS  
UNIVERSITY  
OF THRACE



ΔΗΜΟΚΡΙΤΕΙΟ ΠΑΝΕΠΙΣΤΗΜΙΟ ΘΡΑΚΗΣ | DEMOCRITUS UNIVERSITY OF THRACE

2026

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# Our vision

We believe in a better world. A world that is more equal, sustainable and open, a world in which all can thrive. We are at the heart of the most multicultural and multi linguistic region in Greece, at the crossroads of Europe and Asia, between Thessaloniki, Sofia and Istanbul. We connect Europe, the Mediterranean, the Balkans and Anatolia. We connect knowledge and people.



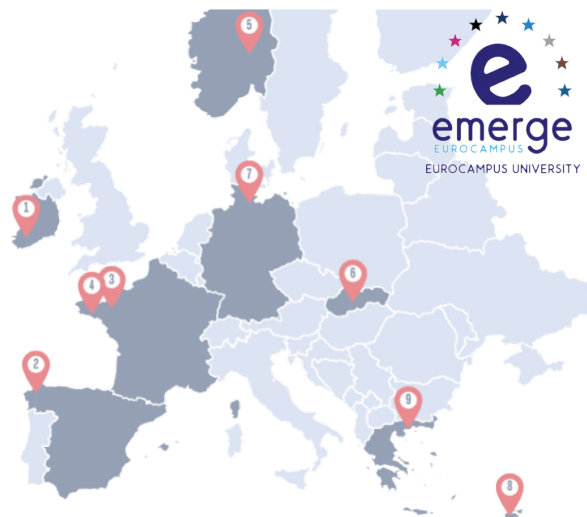
Our university is distributed across the region, with campuses in seven different cities. This unique model is designed to better serve the people of Eastern Macedonia and Thrace. It ensures our regional impact and connects our territory to the world. Our research is aligned with regional needs, with a focus on applied fields from sport science, to engineering and agricultural science.



We are proud of our excellence, illustrated by our success in competitive projects both at the national and the European level, but even more so of our impact on society, the alignment of our research with both the UNs Sustainable Development Goals and our regional priorities. We connect our students to their future careers. Our educational programmes are designed to ensure that our students acquire the necessary skills and competences to thrive in a changing world. We constantly update them to ensure they respond to societal needs.



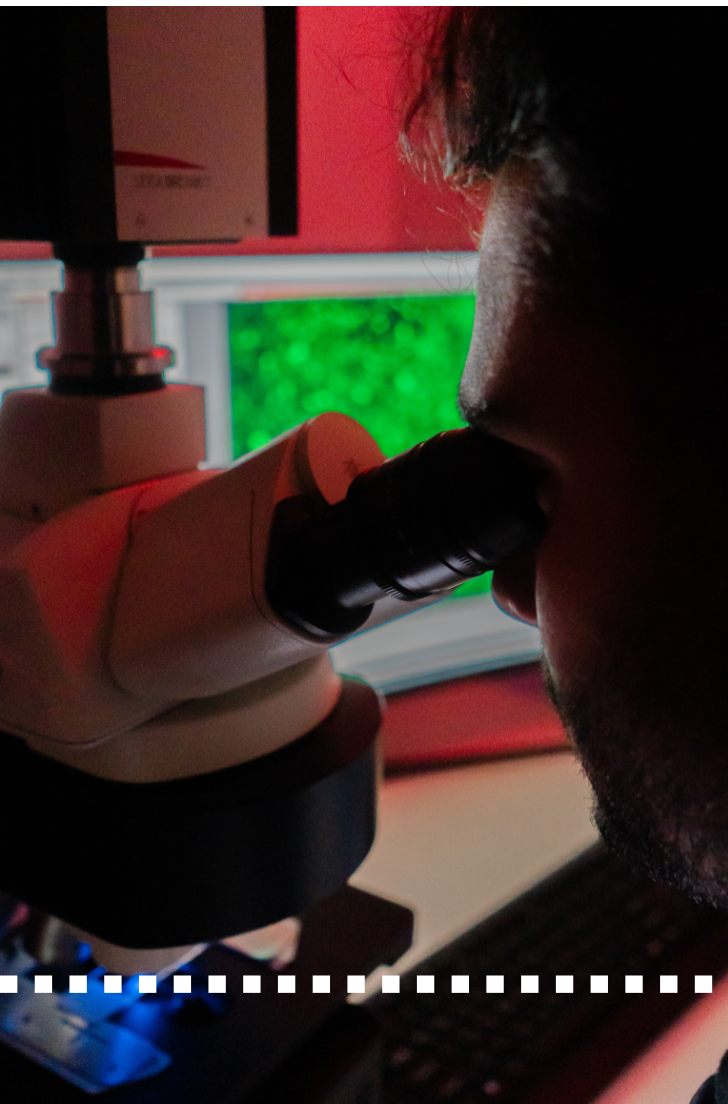
We are part of EMERGE, a European University empowering the margins of Europe through regional and global engagement, with campuses in nine different countries. Through our namesake, Democritus, we connect the past to the future, the atoms, which he was the first to conceive, with a global world.



# Our commitment to the future

To achieve this vision, DUTH is embarking on a transformation, expressed by placing societal and regional engagement at the heart of our identity. This engagement will drive our approach in research and education and define the way we operate as a university, both at the local and the global scale. This vision implies a deliberate shift in how the University defines and communicates its identity.

Building on its regional presence, the University is evolving into a dynamic regional hub – deeply rooted in its territory, yet actively engaged with national, international, and European networks.



As stated in our slogan: We are at the crossroads of Europe and Asia - connecting worlds. This position offers a distinct advantage point for contributing to the European Higher Education and Research Area not as a peripheral actor, but as a relevant and active center of knowledge, co-creation, collaboration, and innovation. Through this transformation, the University strengthens its role in shaping regional development while amplifying its impact across borders. This shift has strong implications.



# Our commitment to the future

1

## **A decentralised vision for Higher Education**

DUTH takes a proactive stance against centralised decision-making in Greece and across Europe. We champion a distributed model of higher education—one that fosters adaptability, and innovation. Our University is proud to be a hub for open exchange, welcoming external collaboration and fostering the free flow of knowledge. Together we promote new approaches to excellence focused on the needs of our society and our region.

2

## **A renewed perspective for our students**

This transformation provides students with a clearer sense of purpose, reinforcing their choice to study at DUTH and equipping them with the skills and mindset needed to thrive in a rapidly evolving world. Our Students will graduate not only job-ready but also with strong critical thinking, problem-solving, and creative skills to address regional, national, and global challenges. They will be guided by ethics, social responsibility, and a deep commitment to human rights, justice, freedom, and solidarity.

3

## **A source of inspiration for our faculty and staff**

Our faculty and administrative teams are reinvigorated by this new direction, recognising the tangible impact of their work on the university, the region, and beyond. Our Researchers aim to generate impactful, basic and applied research that addresses societal needs, with a particular focus on issues relevant to our region. Our Faculty and Staff engage actively in socially responsible activities, strengthening connections with local communities and connecting them to the world.

# Our Values



## Justice & Equity

We uphold the principles of fairness and equity in all our academic and administrative activities. DUTH is committed to fostering a just environment where every individual, regardless of background, has equal opportunities to learn, grow, and contribute to society. Justice and equity guide how we design policies, allocate resources, and support underrepresented groups, aiming to build a university environment that actively combats discrimination and promotes human dignity.



## Solidarity & Inclusion

We cultivate a culture of mutual support and shared responsibility. Solidarity, for us, means standing with communities and working collaboratively to overcome challenges. Inclusion goes beyond representation: we strive to ensure that all voices are heard, all contributions are valued, and diverse identities are fully integrated into campus life. Drawing on the rich social and cultural diversity of our region, we aim to model a university community where difference is embraced and participation is meaningful for all.

## Social Responsibility

We recognise our academic mission as inherently tied to societal progress. Through participatory research, responsive education, and inclusive governance, we advance social justice, solidarity, and civic engagement. Our work is oriented toward upholding dignity, democratic values, and fostering a more equitable world. This responsibility extends beyond the university, reinforcing our commitment to act as a driver of positive change in our region and beyond.



# Our Principles

## Transparency

We are committed to openness in how we work and communicate. Key data and results are made accessible to all university staff. Beyond our internal practices, our assessments of public engagements, including evaluations of this strategic plan, will be transparently available on our website. As the university strengthens its connections with regional, national, and global actors, these transparent practices will play an increasingly relevant role in building credibility and accountability to our stakeholders.

## Accountability

We operate with integrity, responsibility, and clarity in all our processes. Our governance model is participatory, responsive, and designed to create public value. We encourage evidence-based decision-making, collective learning, and continuous institutional self-reflection to ensure ongoing improvement and adaptability.



# Strategic Priorities

**Our vision and commitment to the future translate into three key strategic priorities (P1, P2, P3) and three enabling conditions (E1, E2, E3) that form the core of our new strategy.**

## Key Priorities

1. Anchoring the university to its territory by boosting community engagement
2. Enhancing student experience and campus environment
3. Structuring institutional relationships with key regional actors

## Enabling Conditions

1. Leveling internationalisation to advance education and research
2. Diversifying funding resources
3. Improving university communication and outreach

DUTH is committed to strong societal engagement, encompassing both community engagement and industrial partnerships, as well as connections with key regional and global actors, reflected in priorities 1 and 3. Our approach to community engagement is tailored to the needs of local communities and residents, while our collaboration with institutional actors extends more broadly, from the regional level to global partnerships. The purpose with the first priority is to provide the right conditions to develop education and research considering also the needs of our local communities. Our second priority aims to enhance the student experience and the environment of the campus by creating a dynamic and supportive setting that will promote academic success, well-being, and a sense of community through improved infrastructure, services, and engagement opportunities. The third priority is aimed at structuring institutional relations, scaling existing collaborations, and advancing DUTH's strategic engagement with actors from the regional to the global level.



# Quality Policy for Education

Democritus University of Thrace hereby adopts the present Quality Policy for Education as a central pillar of its Internal Quality Assurance System (IQAS).

The purpose of this Policy is to define the principles, standards and governance framework governing the design, delivery, monitoring and continuous enhancement of all study programmes offered by the University.

This Policy affirms the University's commitment to high-quality, research-informed and student-centred education across all cycles of study.

## Institutional Commitment

The University is committed to delivering high-quality education across all cycles of study, consistent with its academic mission, research orientation, public role and strategic development objectives.

Education at DUTH shall be grounded in academic freedom, scientific rigour, ethical responsibility and respect for diversity.

The University shall ensure that all educational activities promote:

- a) Intellectual development and critical thinking;
- b) Analytical and professional competence;
- c) Research capability and innovation;
- d) Civic awareness and social responsibility.

Educational provision shall contribute to scientific advancement, cultural development and societal progress at regional, national and international levels.

# Quality Policy for Education

## Scope and Applicability

This Policy applies to all study programmes offered by the University, including:

- Undergraduate Study Programmes (UG)
- Postgraduate Study Programmes (PG)
- Doctoral Study Programmes (PhD)

The policy governs programme design, approval, delivery, assessment, supervision, student support and continuous quality enhancement across all Departments and Academic Units.

All academic and administrative bodies involved in educational provision are responsible for implementing this Policy within their respective areas of competence.

## Programme Design and Academic Standards

All study programmes shall:

- Be designed with clearly defined, measurable and publicly available learning outcomes aligned with the National and European Qualifications Frameworks.
- Ensure full coherence between intended learning outcomes, curriculum design, teaching and learning methods and assessment strategies (constructive alignment).
- Reflect current scientific knowledge, disciplinary standards and relevant professional requirements.
- Integrate research-informed and research-based teaching, particularly at postgraduate and doctoral levels.
- Promote interdisciplinarity, innovation and internationalisation where appropriate.

Academic responsibility for programme development, monitoring, and periodic review of study programmes rests with the relevant Departments and programme committees.

Strategic oversight, quality assurance and final approval shall be exercised by the University's governing bodies in accordance with institutional governance structures.

All programmes shall comply with national legislation, institutional regulations and applicable European and international quality assurance standards.

All programmes shall comply with applicable national legislation, institutional regulations and relevant European and international quality assurance frameworks and standards, including the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG).

# Quality Policy for Education

## Teaching and Learning

Teaching and learning at DUTH shall be founded on sound pedagogically principles and designed to foster:

- Active student participation and meaningful participation in the learning process.
- The development of critical thinking, analytical ability, research competence and problem-solving skills.
- Independent learning and academic autonomy.
- Integration of theoretical knowledge with practical, laboratory, clinical or field-based experience, where applicable.

Educational delivery shall be supported by appropriate and up-to-date infrastructure, including lecture facilities, laboratories, clinical units, libraries, digital learning platforms, and other specialised resources necessary for effective learning.

Academic staff engaged in teaching and supervision shall be appropriately qualified and maintain active involvement in research and scholarly activity within their respective disciplines.

The University shall promote and support the continuous professional development of academic staff in higher education pedagogy, innovative teaching practices, assessment methodologies, and supervision.



# Quality Policy for Education

## Assessment and Academic Integrity

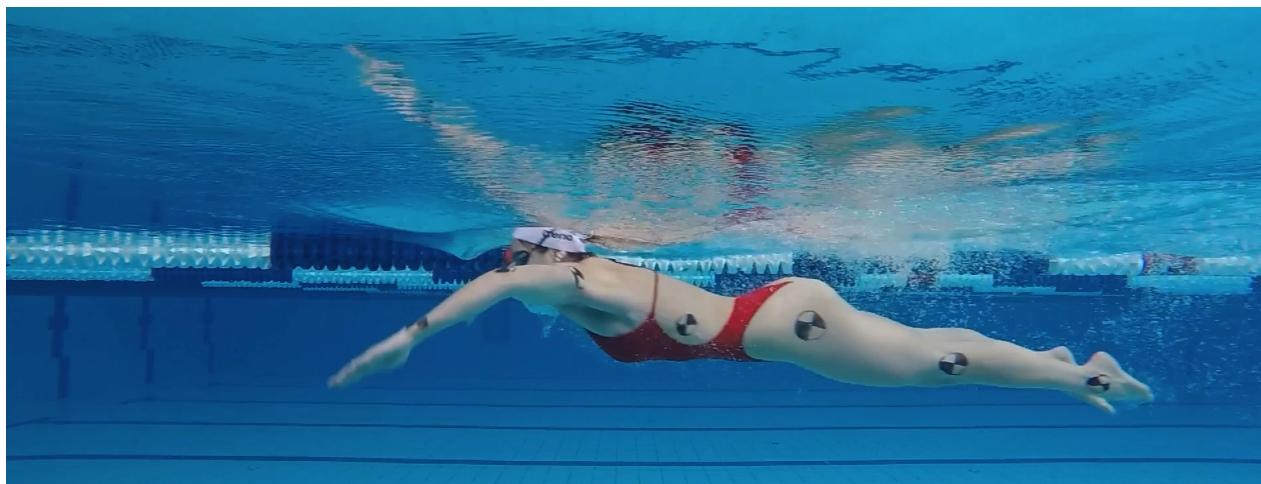
Assessment methods shall be transparent, objective, fair and aligned with intended learning outcomes of each course and programme.

Depending on the nature and level of study, assessment methods may include written examinations, oral examinations, coursework, projects, laboratory assessment, presentations, internships and thesis or dissertation evaluation.

Doctoral education is based on original research conducted under structured and continuous academic supervision. Doctoral theses are evaluated according to established academic, scientific and ethical standards ensuring rigor, originality, and contribution to knowledge.

The University upholds the highest standards of academic integrity, transparency, equity and fairness.

Clear policies, processes and monitoring mechanisms are in place to prevent, detect and address plagiarism, research misconduct and all forms of academic dishonesty.



# Quality Policy for Education

## Student Support and Learning Environment

DUTH shall ensure that students have equitable access to:

- Academic advising and supervision.
- Library services and research resources.
- Laboratories, clinical facilities, and specialised equipment, as required by the programme.
- Administrative and technical support services.
- Student welfare, psychological counseling, and career guidance services.

The University is committed to fostering an inclusive, safe, and supportive learning environment. DUTH shall promote accessibility, equal opportunities, and non-discrimination, ensuring that students with disabilities or specific educational needs receive appropriate accommodation and support to facilitate their full academic participation and progression.

## Quality Assurance and Continuous Improvement

Educational quality shall be monitored through the Internal Quality Assurance System (IQAS), in accordance with national and European standards.

Programme evaluation shall include periodic internal review, external evaluation where required, and systematic consideration of student feedback and stakeholder input.

The University shall use qualitative and quantitative indicators to monitor educational effectiveness and student achievement.

Continuous improvement shall be pursued through evidence-based planning, strategic review and enhancement actions at programme, Departmental and institutional level.

# Quality Policy for Distance Learning

## **Institutional Commitment and Academic Equivalence**

The University is committed to the provision of high-quality Distance Learning Programmes (DLPs) that are academically equivalent to on-campus study programmes and aligned with the University's academic mission, public responsibility and strategic priorities.

Distance learning constitutes a regulated and pedagogically sound mode of delivery that expands access to education while preserving academic standards and the research-led character of studies.

## **Regulatory and Quality Assurance Framework**

All DLPs shall comply with national legislation, institutional regulations, and applicable European and international quality assurance standards.

Distance delivery shall be based on appropriate pedagogical design, combining synchronous and asynchronous learning activities that promote interaction, academic engagement, and independent research, while taking into account the specific requirements of education.

## **Governance, Academic Responsibility and Quality Oversight**

Academic responsibility for the DLPs rests with the relevant Departments and programme committees.

Strategic oversight and approval of such programmes are exercised by the University's governing bodies, while the Quality Assurance Unit (QAU) coordinates monitoring, evaluation, and reporting processes within the Internal Quality Assurance System (IQAS).

# Quality Policy for Distance Learning

## Digital Governance and Technological Infrastructure

The Institutional Digital Governance Unit plays a critical operational and technical role in the implementation and support of distance learning provision.

The Institutional Digital Governance Unit shall ensure the effective management of digital platforms, information systems, cybersecurity, data protection compliance, and the continuous development of the technological infrastructure necessary for high-quality online education.

## Academic Design, Teaching and Assessment Standards

DLPs shall be designed with clearly defined learning outcomes aligned with national and European qualification frameworks and supported by suitable digital infrastructure and learning resources.

Teaching, assessment, and supervision – including thesis supervision – shall be conducted by suitably qualified academic staff with appropriate preparation for distance education.

All academic processes shall uphold principles of academic integrity, transparency, equity, and accessibility.

## Student Support, Accessibility and Inclusiveness

Distance learning methodologies and technologies shall be selected to ensure reliability, data protection, accessibility, and inclusiveness.

Distance learners shall have equitable access to academic supervision, learning resources, library services, technical support, and administrative assistance comparable to those available to on-campus students.

# Research Quality Policy

DUTH is committed to the highest standards of research excellence.

Quality Policy for Research establishes the principles, standards and governance framework governing the conduct, support, evaluation and continuous enhancement of research at DUTH. This Policy applies to all members of the academic staff, researchers, doctoral candidates, postdoctoral fellows, visiting researchers, research associates, administrative staff involved in research management, and any other individuals conducting research under the auspices of the University.

The Policy aligns with:

- a) The European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity (ALLEA);
- b) Horizon Europe regulations and Open Science requirements;
- c) The principles of Responsible Research and Innovation (RRI);
- d) Applicable national legislation and institutional regulations.

## Fundamental Principles of Research Integrity

Research conducted at DUTH shall be governed by the principles of reliability, honesty, respect and accountability.

All research activities must comply with applicable legal, regulatory and ethical requirements at national, European and international level.

The University adopts a zero-tolerance approach to research misconduct, including but not limited to fabrication, falsification, plagiarism and other serious deviations from accepted research practices.

Appropriate procedures shall be established for:

- a) Ethical review and approval of research involving human participants, animals, personal data or sensitive materials;
- b) Investigation and resolution of allegations of research misconduct;
- c) Management of conflicts of interest.

Researchers are responsible for maintaining accurate, complete and secure records of research procedures, data and findings.

# Research Quality Policy

## Scientific Excellence, Rigour and Reproducibility

All research activities shall be designed and conducted according to recognised standards of scientific excellence and methodological rigour.

Research proposals and outputs shall be subject, where appropriate, to peer review and internal or external quality assurance mechanisms.

Research methodologies shall be appropriate to the discipline and shall ensure validity, reliability and reproducibility, where applicable.

The University promotes transparency in research design, analysis and reporting.

## Open Science and Research Data Management

The University recognises Open Science as a standard practice in contemporary research.

Researchers shall, where legally and ethically permissible:

- a) Publish research outputs in open access formats;
- b) Prepare and implement Data Management Plans for funded projects;
- c) Adhere to the FAIR principles (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable and Reusable) in the management of research data.

The sharing of research data shall balance openness with obligations relating to confidentiality, intellectual property rights, personal data protection and contractual requirements.

The University shall provide guidance and infrastructure to support compliant and responsible data management.

# Research Quality Policy

## **Societal Impact, Innovation and Responsible Research and Innovation (RRI)**

Research at DUTH shall contribute to the advancement of knowledge and address societal, cultural, economic and environmental challenges.

The University promotes alignment of research activities with regional, national and European strategic priorities.

Responsible Research and Innovation principles shall be integrated into research practices, including:

- a) Public engagement and dissemination;
- b) Gender equality and inclusiveness;
- c) Ethical foresight and societal impact consideration;
- d) Science education and outreach;
- e) Open governance and transparency.

The University supports knowledge transfer, innovation ecosystems and responsible research commercialisation consistent with ethical and legal standards.

## **Research Support and Infrastructure**

The University shall provide appropriate infrastructure, facilities and professional support services to enable high-quality research.

Continuous investment shall be made in laboratories, equipment, digital systems and research support mechanisms.

Administrative procedures related to research development, funding management and project implementation shall be transparent, efficient and compliant with funding regulations.

# Research Quality Policy

## Professional Development and Research Culture

The University is committed to fostering a research culture characterised by excellence, integrity, equality, collegiality and mutual respect.

Career development opportunities shall be available to researchers at all stages, in accordance with the principles of the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers.

Doctoral education and supervision shall adhere to recognised European principles for doctoral training.

The University shall recognise and reward high-quality research achievements and responsible research conduct.

## Governance, Monitoring and Continuous Improvement

The governance of research quality shall be exercised through the competent academic and administrative bodies of the University, in accordance with institutional regulations.

Research performance shall be monitored and evaluated using appropriate qualitative and quantitative indicators.

The University shall periodically review its research strategy, quality assurance mechanisms and support structures to ensure continuous improvement.

Public reporting of research activities and impact shall be undertaken where appropriate, subject to legal and contractual constraints.

## Compliance with the European Charter for Researchers

The University ensures adherence to the principles of the European Charter for Researchers, as promoted through EURAXESS, by integrating its core principles into institutional research policies and practices.

The University aligns its research governance framework with the Charter's principles on research integrity, ethical and professional responsibility, good research practice, open science, and ongoing professional development for researchers. Through suitable policies, procedures, and support systems, the University fosters a transparent, fair, and high-quality research environment that aligns with European standards for research organisations.

# Internationalisation Policy

## Institutional Framework and Regulatory Alignment

This Internationalisation Policy adopted by Democritus University of Thrace (DUTH) is a binding institutional framework that operationalises the Institution's Internationalisation Strategy in alignment with the standards of the Hellenic Authority for Higher Education (HAHE), the principles of the Erasmus Charter for Higher Education (ECHE) and the obligations arising from participation in the **EMERGE** European University Alliance.

The policy forms an integral part of the University's Internal Quality Assurance System and Strategic Planning and applies to all academic, research and administrative units.

## Conceptual Definition and Strategic Objectives

Internationalisation at DUTH is defined as a horizontal, quality-enhancing and transformative process embedded across teaching, research, governance and student services.

It aims to strengthen academic excellence, institutional sustainability and international competitiveness, while remaining fully aligned with DUTH's public mission and role in the Region of Eastern Macedonia & Thrace.

In accordance with HAHE requirements, internationalisation contributes directly to programme quality, learning outcomes, research capacity and societal impact.

A central operational priority of this policy is the systematic increase of incoming international students as a strategic response to demographic challenges and intensified global competition in higher education.

# Internationalisation Policy

## Compliance with ECHE Principles and Mobility Strategy

Within the framework of the Erasmus Charter for Higher Education, DUTH commits to transparency, fairness, equal access and full academic recognition in all international activities. Mobility, joint programmes and international cooperation actions are implemented in compliance with ECHE principles and are strategically utilised not only as exchange mechanisms, but also as structured pathways for attracting international students into study programmes at DUTH.

## EMERGE Alliance as a Structural Pillar

Participation in the EMERGE European University Alliance constitutes a core pillar of the University's internationalisation policy.

Through EMERGE, DUTH advances joint educational provision, innovative learning models and collaborative research structures that enhance its attractiveness to international students and staff.

Initiatives such as European Degrees, joint quality assurance mechanisms, micro-credentials and flexible learning pathways are fully embedded within the University's internal quality assurance and governance processes and contribute to European and global visibility.

## Development of International Academic Offerings

DUTH commits to the continuous development, quality assurance and international promotion of English-taught programmes, joint and double degrees, and short-term international learning formats, supported by digital, blended and distance-learning modalities. These instruments facilitate internationalisation at home, widen access to DUTH programmes across all campuses and function as drivers for increasing incoming student enrolment, while remaining fully compliant with national and European accreditation requirements.

# Internationalisation Policy

## Strategic International Partnerships and Research Integration

International partnerships are pursued on the basis of academic quality, strategic relevance and sustainability, with priority given to collaborations that support structured student inflows, joint programme delivery and postgraduate recruitment, particularly within Europe, the Eastern Mediterranean, North Africa and East Asia.

International research collaboration is closely linked to educational internationalisation and postgraduate training, supporting joint supervision, collaborative doctoral programmes and the attraction of international researchers and doctoral candidates.

## Monitoring, Evaluation and Continuous Improvement

The University continuously monitors and evaluates the implementation of this Quality Policy through appropriate performance indicators and evidence-based assessments.

Specific metrics and benchmarks are established at departmental and institutional levels to ensure continuous improvement, transparency and accountability, while maintaining flexibility to adapt to emerging academic, societal and technological needs.



# Institutional Scope and Periodic Review

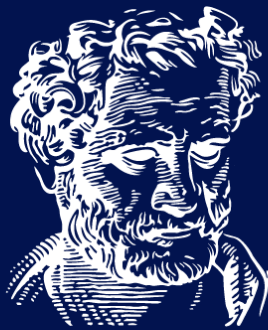


This Quality Policy shall be implemented across all academic, research and administrative units of the University. It shall be periodically reviewed by the competent academic authorities to ensure its continued relevance, effectiveness and compliance with institutional strategy, regulatory requirements and societal expectations.



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