



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. +30 211 1903 400 • E. secretariat@ethaae.gr • www.ethaae.gr

Accreditation Report for the Postgraduate Study Programme of:

Functional Training of Injuries in Athletes and Trainees

Department: Physical Education and Sports Science

Institution: Democritus University of Thrace

Date: May 2026



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 Postgraduate Study Programme of **Functional Training of Injuries in Athletes and Trainees** 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.....	9
PRINCIPLE 1: QUALITY ASSURANCE POLICY AND QUALITY GOAL SETTING FOR THE POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES OF THE INSTITUTION AND THE ACADEMIC UNIT	9
PRINCIPLE 2: DESIGN AND APPROVAL OF POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES.....	13
PRINCIPLE 3: STUDENT-CENTRED LEARNING, TEACHING, AND ASSESSMENT.....	18
PRINCIPLE 4: STUDENT ADMISSION, PROGRESSION, RECOGNITION OF POSTGRADUATE STUDIES, AND CERTIFICATION.	23
PRINCIPLE 5: TEACHING STAFF OF POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES	27
PRINCIPLE 6: LEARNING RESOURCES AND STUDENT SUPPORT.....	30
PRINCIPLE 7: INFORMATION MANAGEMENT	34
PRINCIPLE 8: PUBLIC INFORMATION CONCERNING THE POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES.....	37
PRINCIPLE 9: ON-GOING MONITORING AND PERIODIC INTERNAL EVALUATION OF POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES	40
PRINCIPLE 10: REGULAR EXTERNAL EVALUATION OF POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES	43
PART C: CONCLUSIONS	46
I. Features of Good Practice.....	46
II. Areas of Weakness.....	46
III. Recommendations for Follow-up Actions.....	46
IV. Summary & Overall Assessment	48

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 Functional Training of Injuries in Athletes and Trainees of the **Democritus University of Thrace** comprised the following five (5) members, drawn from the HAHE Register, in accordance with Law 4653/2020:

1. Roussakis Andreas Antonios (Chair)
Imperial College London / Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust
2. KAPANTZOGLOU MARIA
Portland State University (PSU)
3. VENIZELOS NIKOLAOS
School of Medical Sciences Örebro University SWEDEN
4. VOLIANITIS STEFANOS
Department of Physical Education, Qatar University
5. ΣΤΑΥΡΟΠΟΥΛΟΥ ΜΑΡΙΑΝΝΑ
International Hellenic University

II. Review Procedure and Documentation

The EEAP conducted the accreditation review of the Functional Training of Injuries in Athletes and Trainees PSP according to HAHE principles and standard operating procedures for the external evaluation of a postgraduate programme at ISCED Level 7. The review commenced on 18-May-2026 and was completed on 23-May-2026. From a procedural perspective, the review was completed on schedule and within the expected timeframe.

The kick-off meeting took place on Monday 18-May-2026 and involved all EEAP members, Prof. A Gioftsidou, Director of the PSP, Prof. V Derri, the Head of the Department, Prof. M Grigoriou, E Giannakou and Mrs. S Gkavaki, Senior Officials at DUTH. In this introductory meeting, the Head of the Department and the Director of the PSP presented the strategy and organisation of the Department and those of the PSP, respectively, along with the background and orientation of the programme with significant notes on its academic structure, profile, and goals.

The EEAP viewed pre-recorded digital material showcasing the institutional facilities and infrastructure. The EEAP requested a copy of the PowerPoint presentations and a list of recently completed dissertations (summarised data in a tabulated format). Combined, the videos and additional material complemented the original document set that the EEAP previously had access to. Additional information was received by the EEAP on time, as requested. The EEAP reviewed all materials in detail taking into consideration relevant information included in supporting documentation alongside the points made during the live interviews with the teaching staff, students, graduates and stakeholders.

On 19-May-2026 (day 2), the EEAP convened a series of meetings with teaching and research staff (chosen by the Course Director), a group of students from the current academic year, a group of graduates, and a small group of stakeholders. All meetings were held in Greek language. Throughout the accreditation review, discussions were conducted in a constructive, collegial, and open manner. The Chair clarified to all attendees that the EEAP members intended to understand what staff, students, and stakeholders have been experiencing through their participation in the PSP.

The group of teaching staff was comprised of Prof. P Malliou, A Beneka, N. Aggelousis, E Bebetos, A Chatzinikolaou, and I Smilios, who all are highly qualified academics with substantial teaching, research, and managerial experience. A group of ten students from the current academic year, and a group of ten graduates contributed a lot to the discussions that followed. Students were from the second and third semesters and had -to a great extent- a solid background in sports science. The group of graduates was comprised of established professionals in sports science. The stakeholder representatives were five individuals with established careers in the private physical training and rehabilitation sectors, including representation of a non-governmental organisation.

Next, the EEAP had a private (EEAP members only) discussion to reflect on preliminary findings and agree on the overall impression of the PSP and to set the tone of the close-out meeting. The final part of day 2 concluded with a presentation (by the EEAP Chair) of high-level findings which were addressed to the Course Director and DUTH Senior Officials, alongside notes on the report itself to specify timelines and to set the right expectations. The Course Director and DUTH colleagues were invited to comment on the preliminary findings. The EEAP Chair mentioned key strengths as well as areas for development regarding the curriculum, the scientific orientation of the programme, the integration of teaching and research, the mechanisms for quality assurance, the approach to risk management, as well as issues regarding governance, operational delivery, and compliance. The high-level points were overall well-perceived by DUTH staff thereby fulfilling the purpose of the close-out meeting.

III. Postgraduate Study Programme Profile

The PSP was established in 2016 and was re-established in 2018 as a higher education programme designed to provide advanced academic and professional knowledge, skills and competences to individuals with a special interest in the management of injuries in athletes, leading to a master's qualification. The course aims to educate students about how to design, assess, and appropriately use intervention programmes, although research methodology including biostatistics, ethics and regulations are not explicitly taught in a separate module.

The target group is primarily adult athletes and individuals from the general population who exercise regularly. The focus of the interventions (including tailored physical exercise programmes) is not only on prevention and the improvement of general physical health but also rehabilitation practices for individuals with restricted mobility due to injury and/or illness.

The PSP was presented as one of the main priorities of the Department and a high-profile educational programme in general that is of similar value with the undergraduate Sports Science course of DUTH. In its current form, the PSP under review came across as highly comparable in structure to similar courses in Sports Sciences within Greece and abroad.

The total number of ECTSs is 90 with a course layout that spans over 3 semesters. Each ECTS credit translates to approximately 25-30 hours of work. The curriculum covers the foundations of functional physical exercise, injury management, physical assessment, individualised exercise, and the design of holistic physical exercise programmes that aim to effectively manage physical injury. The course mandates by the end of its third semester the completion of an internship in a professional environment (the outcomes of which have to be published in a peer reviewed journal or in the proceedings of a conference) or the conduct of research and the publication of a dissertation that includes the findings of this research (either fully or partly in the proceedings of a conference).

At enrolment, the PSP accepts, as a minimum, graduates of other academic programmes (holders of a university degree or diploma) who have a solid knowledge of a foreign language (B2 level in English, French, German, Italian or Spanish).

Focused on the past two academic years (2024-2025 and 2025-2026), the PSP successfully enrolled 68 individuals (34 each year), of whom, 32 and 29, respectively, were graduates of one of the Sports Science undergraduate programmes of Greece.

The teaching staff include a group of nine academics from DUTH who contribute to the programme equally by promoting active research and development. Students and graduates described the programme as one that is academically stimulating and useful both for their professional development and a stepping stone for further studies at the doctoral level, for those interested in pursuing an academic career. Compared with the other PSPs in Sports

Science within Greece, the PSP under review demonstrates a unique identity in the field of injury management in athletes. The main challenges relate to coordination across institutions, consistency of supervision and practical experience, operationalisation of quality assurance processes and the need for more systematic tracking of outputs such as publications, conference participation, mobility and doctoral progression.

The PSP is funded by tuition fees (that amount to a total of 2,550 EUR per student), donations, bequests, research grants, DUTH institutional and departmental funds, and governmental streams. The largest part of the PSP income is distributed internally to cover salary costs of teaching staff. The remaining part is mobilised to contribute (partly) to external educational activities, PSP-centred promotion work, consumables, scholarships, and in covering travel expenses for staff attending PSP-related meetings outside DUTH.

The Course Director and PSP Leads engage in collaborations with academic institutions (primarily within EU) that generate activities (including community work) that collectively strengthen the research identity and openness of the programme.

PART B: COMPLIANCE WITH THE PRINCIPLES

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

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD APPLY A QUALITY ASSURANCE POLICY AS PART OF THEIR STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT. THIS POLICY SHOULD EXPAND AND BE AIMED (WITH THE COLLABORATION OF EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS) AT THE POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES OF THE INSTITUTION AND THE ACADEMIC UNIT. THIS POLICY SHOULD BE PUBLISHED AND IMPLEMENTED BY ALL STAKEHOLDERS.

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

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

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

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

Documentation

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

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The PSP demonstrates a well-defined scope of work and a developed scientific orientation. To ensure continuous improvement and adherence to its strategic and educational objectives, the programme has adopted a formal Quality Assurance (QA) Policy, which is part of the DUTH global strategy. The Course Director and Leads are committed to developing new insights through research and in response to educational, societal, and professional needs of individual students and staff. On this basis, the PSP enables students to acquire new knowledge and skills and offers them the opportunity to develop expertise, if they wish to continue with doctoral studies.

The policy promotes continuous improvement through specific (PSP-defined) KPIs that are reviewed periodically against strategic goals and outcomes. The policy supports active student, alumni, staff, and stakeholder participation in the process to ensure that all perspectives are effectively considered when important decisions need to be made. The PSP Leads are committed to using available financial resources, including tuition fees, effectively and transparently, to support students meeting their educational and research needs, and to further develop the programme. This approach reflects a sustainable PSP that actively supports students. Examples of support include the opportunity for scholarships, access to professionally relevant technologies, labs and software, and recently renovated infrastructure.

In line with the DUTH QA Policy, the PSP undergoes internal evaluation on an annual basis. There are two strategic goals in place: (a). the enhancement and upgrade of the teaching component of the PSP, and (b). the openness of the programme beyond DUTH and its internationalisation. The KPI-driven approach aims for enhanced teaching and research practices, on-track and on-time delivery, participation of high-performing students and staff, and optimal use of available resources. However, the goals and KPIs remain relatively broad in scope.

The policy is sufficiently communicated to all parties involved, including details on the benefits of improved quality and implications of non-conformity. However, evidence regarding the explicit communication of the policy and awareness beyond the core PSP team is arguably missing. The EEAP was presented with longitudinal QA metrics during the introductory meeting. However, there is limited evidence of awareness among students, graduates, and stakeholders regarding the outcomes of internal QA processes and their impact on the quality of their studies.

Monitoring markers include student satisfaction, student participation in evaluations, feedback on teaching methodology and quality, learning outcomes, assessment methods, research output, metrics of student achievement, student and staff mobility, and publications of dissertations and original research. During interviews, the extent to which student feedback systematically contributes to QA monitoring and change management was not entirely clear.

Overall, the learning outcomes of the PSP are appropriate for ISCED level 7, evidenced by a balanced teaching and research curriculum. Yet, while some dissertations appear research-oriented, others remain closer to case studies, with a large enough proportion of students opting out of the research stream in favour of an internship.

At present, the PSP does not appear to systematically analyse long-term outputs such as doctoral progression, employability in Greece and abroad at a great depth and as formal quality indicators. The Course Director demonstrated awareness of the programme's limitations and a genuine interest in driving continuous improvement with openness to change and capacity to address operational challenges.

Strong evidence that KPI metrics are systematically analysed with clear lessons learnt as outputs from this process is somewhat limited. Operationally, the PSP decision-making process relies primarily on accumulated operational experience which is highly valuable yet somewhat limited as compared to systematic QA analytics. Alumni and stakeholder engagement appears to be generally positive and enthusiastic; however, feedback mechanisms specific to graduates and third parties remain largely informal. Also, change, as a result of reflection from third party feedback, is rather sporadic.

The Course Director articulated a strong vision for enhanced research practices. However, the current position and development phase of the programme do not appear to be strategically focused on collaborations and partnerships, including horizon scanning for emerging academic, professional, and market trends. The development of a solid alumni community that will serve as a hub for career opportunities and collaborations has not been prioritised to a great extent. In addition, the balance between professional training and research-oriented education, at the PSP level, remains insufficiently developed.

II. Analysis

The PSP demonstrates a well-established QA framework aligned with institutional strategy, supported by formal policies, annual internal evaluations, and KPI-based monitoring. These elements indicate that the programme has the essential structures in place to ensure continuous improvement and to support strategic alignment with educational and research objectives at Level 7. However, the effectiveness of the existing QA system is only partially demonstrated in operational terms.

While KPIs and monitoring mechanisms exist, they remain relatively broad and are not yet clearly supported by systematic QA analytics or consistently evidenced target-setting. As a result, QA processes appear more procedural than fully data-driven, limiting their capacity to inform structured decision-making and benefit the programme through sustained programme enhancement.

Stakeholder and student engagement is formally embedded, but evidence suggests that feedback mechanisms remain largely informal and inconsistently translated into measurable improvements. Similarly, communication of QA outcomes beyond the core programme team appears limited, reducing transparency and shared ownership of quality processes.

III. Conclusions

Overall, while the PSP demonstrates a solid QA foundation and clear strategic intent, the current implementation shows partial operational maturity. The principle can therefore be considered partially met, with further development required to strengthen data-driven QA processes, stakeholder feedback integration, and outcome-based monitoring.

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	
Partially compliant	X
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

- To refine KPIs with clear, measurable targets and SMART goals linked to key outcomes
- To ensure QA data is systematically used to drive programme improvements
- To formalise student, alumni, and employer feedback processes further
- To improve communication of QA outcomes to all parties involved
- To track graduate outcomes (e.g. employability, progression to PhD, publications)
- To develop a strategic plan for new partnerships and internationalisation

PRINCIPLE 2: DESIGN AND APPROVAL OF POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES

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

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

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

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

In addition, the design of PSP must consider:

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

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

Documentation

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

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The Approval procedure for the PSP follows the below defined steps, each of which must approve the proposal: 1. Recommendation of the Department's Assembly; 2. The Recommendation is forwarded to the Postgraduate Studies Committee, and then the Senate decides on the establishment of the PSP and then notifies the Ministry of Education for approval and 3. Following approval, the decision is Published in the Government Gazette.

The duration of the PSP is three (3) semesters. The total number of Credit Units (ECTS) required to obtain the postgraduate degree is ninety (90). To obtain the postgraduate degree, it is required: to attend eight (8) modules (60 credit units) during the first two semesters of study, and to write a Thesis with a public defence and positive evaluation, or to carry out a Practical Training (30 credit units) in the third semester.

The curriculum of the PSP, as described in the Study Guide and outlined in the modules' syllabi, is comparable with accepted standards in this specific knowledge area and similar programmes internationally. The Learning Outcomes of the PSP, as stated in the Accreditation Proposal and the Student Guide are:

1. Knowledge of the mechanisms of knee ligament injury, treatment options, as well as planning and implementation of rehabilitation and functional reintegration programmes
2. Knowledge of the treatment options for meniscus tear and planning of rehabilitation and functional reintegration programmes.
3. Knowledge of the most common injuries in the ankle joint and planning of rehabilitation and functional reintegration programmes for ankle joint sprains.
4. Knowledge of shoulder injuries (dislocation, tendon rupture, rotator cuff tear) and designing rehabilitation and functional reintegration programmes for athletes and trainees.
5. Knowledge of the causes of muscle injuries and designing rehabilitation and functional reintegration programmes for athletes and trainees who have suffered muscle strains
6. Understanding of the injury mechanics of muscle, bone, tendon, ligament and cartilage injuries
7. Application of skeletal tissue biomechanical knowledge to current practical problems in the context of rehabilitation and physical fitness
8. Assessment of the athlete's body composition and measurement of the range of motion in the joints of the upper and lower extremities
9. Delivery of field tests to assess physical fitness for the appropriate design of functional reintegration programmes for athletes and trainees after injury.
10. Knowledge and understanding of behavioural problems and cognitive challenges an injured athlete/trainee faces during their rehabilitation.
11. Participation in the rehabilitation of athletes' or trainees', through application of stress management and motivational techniques
12. Knowledge and understanding of counselling techniques relevant to the injury rehabilitation process.

The PSP offers the option of Internship (Practical Training), or Thesis for the award of the final 30 ECTS in the third semester. The PSP offers mobility opportunities through the Erasmus+ programme.

While there is no formally established procedure or regulation governing periodic curriculum revisions, this does not mean that the programme curriculum is not reviewed on a regular basis. Furthermore, there is no formal inquiry process with stakeholders and external experts to seek feedback ahead of a curriculum revision. The course is evaluated at several time-points by the students but the EEAP could not see a well-established procedure on how feedback notes from students are incorporated in an eventual curriculum revision.

The Study Guide is complete, precise and appropriately presents the structure and function of the PSP. The Teaching Faculty has the required competences and sufficient experience within the academic area to deliver the curriculum of the PSP as evidenced by their research publications record.

II. Analysis

The main criticism of the PSP is the lack of a Research Methods module and the elective option of the Thesis, which is further limited by being only in Study Case format. As it is, the PSP cannot ensure that upon graduation all the essential research Learning Outcomes required at Level 7 are fulfilled for all participating students to the same extent.

The lack of a Research Methods module including statistics and basics on the legislative framework that research is conducted does not necessarily preclude the achievement of the required essential research competences of Level 7, provided that other programme components (i.e., Experimental Thesis with appropriate supervision) are provided. However, the limitation of the Thesis's format to Case Study cannot guarantee that the full range of research methodology competences (i.e., Design, Statistical Analysis, Experimental Inference, etc.) are achieved. Moreover, the Thesis is elective, which allows students to fulfil graduation requirements without having obtained essential research competences of Level 7.

The PSP effectively facilitates highly specialised knowledge in the area of Functional Rehabilitation of Sport Injuries, as documented by the curriculum and the learning outcomes of the taught modules. However, it lacks in specialized research methodology, advanced problem-solving, evaluation of complex data and knowledge synthesis, as evidenced by the Learning Outcomes presented in the Study Guide and modules' Syllabi. These critical limitations in the Learning Outcomes undermine the research identity of the master's degree awarded.

With regards to feedback from stakeholders, even though it is stated in the Accreditation proposal that there are often discussions between faculty and stakeholders, nevertheless, there is no formal procedure for a systematic collection of data and, most importantly, there is no formal and regular curriculum revision procedure.

Similarly, even though there are regular students' evaluations of all the taught modules, including standardised data collection and analysis there is no defined formal procedure that translates the conclusions drawn into concrete curriculum revision actions.

III. Conclusions

The curriculum of the subject matter that the PSP is addressing is well thought out, of high standard, and delivered by competent and experienced faculty. However, there is crucial limitation in the research competences achieved that undermines the expected research identity of a master's Programme and critically compromises the standards of Principle 2.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

- It is recommended that a Research Methods (new) module be included in the curriculum of the PSP to cover not only research methodology, but also statistics, ethical considerations, and the basics of the legislative framework governing research.
- Alternatively, the Thesis should be mandatory (not optional). Additionally, to strengthen the research character of the PSP, the option of undertaking experimental studies should be available to the students.
- A formal procedure/regulation for periodic revision of the programme curriculum should be established. This procedure should include, in addition to scientific developments, both (a) a formal inquiry with the stakeholders, in order to include the feedback of the labour market with regards of the range and the quality of the prospective learning outcomes, and (b) the feedback from the students' course evaluations.

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

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

Student-centred learning and teaching plays an important role in enhancing students' motivation, their self-evaluation, and their active participation in the learning process. The above entail continuous consideration of the programme's delivery and the assessment of the related outcomes.

The student-centred learning and teaching process

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

In addition

- *The academic staff are familiar with the existing examination system and methods and are supported in developing their own skills in this field.*
- *The assessment criteria and methods are published in advance. The assessment allows students to demonstrate the extent to which the intended learning outcomes have been achieved. Students are given feedback, which, if necessary is linked to advice on the learning process.*
- *Student assessment is conducted by more than one examiner, where possible.*
- *Assessment is consistent, fairly applied to all students and conducted in accordance with the stated procedures.*
- *A formal procedure for student appeals is in place.*
- *The function of the academic advisor runs smoothly.*

Documentation

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

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

According to the information provided to the EEAP, teaching methods include PowerPoint presentations, video presentations, oral presentations, and the assignment of individual or group projects in certain modules. Online platform DUTHNET eClass and other internet resources are integrated into the coursework.

The learning objectives and expected outcomes of each module are communicated to students through class materials and in-class instruction. The study guide is available on the Department's website. Student performance is assessed through various methods, including exams, group and individual projects, and laboratory work. Students provide feedback on courses through electronic questionnaires, the results of which are collected and shared with instructors, the department administration, and MODIP (Quality Assurance Unit).

The Department reports that exams are conducted during two designated exam periods per semester, on predetermined dates. Students may notify faculty if they require alternative methods of evaluation. They also have electronic access to search engines and research journals as well as to a central library website for course materials.

The Library and Information Centre of DUTH operates as a unified, de-centralised unit based in Komotini, supporting the University's educational and research activities. Due to the geographical distribution of the University across four cities in Thrace, the Library includes nine branch libraries serving the different Schools and Departments. Through the online catalogue, students can search for and access books, journals, and other academic resources available across the University libraries.

A secretary supports students' needs within the Department. The University provides comprehensive academic and student support services, including Academic Advisors who guide postgraduate students on academic progress, career opportunities, and further studies. Students also have access to counselling, psychosocial support, and accessibility services that promote wellbeing, equal participation, and inclusion in academic life. In addition, the Student Ombudsman acts as an independent mediator between students and the University, supporting the fair resolution of academic or administrative concerns and safeguarding the proper functioning of the institution.

II. Analysis

A variety of teaching and assessment methods are employed, as indicated in the course syllabi, with distinctions made between practical and theoretical content. Modules are well-structured by semester and academic year, with clearly communicated programme expectations. The language used to describe student learning objectives, instructional approaches, and assessments is generally consistent across modules. However, assessment criteria and methods are often not clearly described, and the percentage of the final grade that they account for often is not provided. When reported, the final exam typically accounts for 50–

60% of the overall grade. A second midterm exam and other assignments constitute the remaining portion. Exams are not graded anonymously. Virtual exams also happen for some modules through Microsoft Teams, and it is not clear how their integrity can be ensured.

Students choose between an internship placement or a master's thesis during the final semester, depending on their focus or preference. Students collaborate with faculty on course-related projects. The on-time graduation rate has varied over the years, ranging from 85.3% in 2021–2022 to 47% in 2022–2023. The programme attributes the variability primarily to personal and financial factors.

Course and teaching evaluations are conducted regularly to assess student satisfaction with course content, delivery methods, and instructor effectiveness.

At the beginning of each academic year, the Department provides incoming students with information about the programme and available university services. Students refer to the secretary for any questions or to individual faculty members who teach the related module. Students and faculty did not report the use of an academic advisor with clearly defined responsibilities for student consultation throughout their studies. No interviewed students reported having consulted with their advisor. Individual faculty members also share relevant information and maintain regular contact with students.

Asynchronous instruction accounts for approximately 25% of the programme, while 75% is delivered through in-person or synchronous online instruction, facilitating accessibility and feasibility for students from different regions of Greece with professional and personal commitments.

According to the information provided to the EEAP the buildings ensure accessibility. Students requiring accommodation have access to counselling and other university-level services; however, they did not seem aware of those. No formal procedure within the Department for filing complaints was reported by faculty or students. Faculty members assist students with issues that may come up.

The EEAP recognizes the challenges and resource limitations associated with online assessment procedures. At the same time, exams conducted online without dedicated proctoring or assessment software raise concerns regarding the assurance of academic integrity. Additional measures and clearer procedures to support integrity and consistency in online examinations are needed to strengthen the reliability and transparency of assessment practices within the programme. Furthermore, extensive reliance on multiple-choice examinations may not be fully aligned with Level 7 learning outcomes, which typically require demonstration of advanced critical thinking, synthesis, and applied competencies.

III. Conclusions

- To provide clearer and more consistent descriptions of assessment criteria, grading distribution, and evaluation methods across modules
- To strengthen formal procedures for academic advising, student complaints, and appeals
- To increase student awareness and utilization of available counselling, accessibility, and support services
- To further strengthen the quality assurance of assessment practices, the programme is strongly encouraged to develop clearer procedures and additional safeguards supporting academic integrity and consistency in online examinations, including the use of appropriate assessment or proctoring software.
- The programme is also encouraged to ensure that assessment formats are consistently aligned with Level 7 learning outcomes

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

- To provide clearer and more consistent descriptions of assessment criteria, grading distribution, and evaluation methods across modules
- To strengthen formal procedures for academic advising, student complaints, and appeals
- To increase student awareness and utilization of available counselling, accessibility, and support services
- To further strengthen the quality assurance of assessment practices, the programme is strongly encouraged to develop clearer procedures and additional safeguards supporting academic integrity and consistency in online examinations, including the use of appropriate assessment or proctoring software.
- The programme is also encouraged to ensure that assessment formats are consistently aligned with Level 7 learning outcomes

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

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

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

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

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

Documentation

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

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

Based on the available evidence, the postgraduate programme “Functional Training of Injuries in Athletes and Trainees” has an organised framework for the operation, information provision and support of postgraduate students. The Study Guide presents, with relative completeness, the structure, purpose, learning outcomes, governing bodies, administrative support, infrastructure, funding, admission procedure, duration and conditions of study, students’ rights and obligations, tuition fees, scholarships, curriculum, course outlines, the Master’s Dissertation or Practical Training, and the award of the degree. Its availability through the postgraduate programme website, combined with the existence of regulations, forms and announcements, enhances the transparency and accessibility of information.

The Programme is supported by institutionalised services at University and Department level, such as the Secretariat of the postgraduate programme, the Library, electronic services, the Counselling and Accessibility Unit, the Liaison Office, the Erasmus Office, the Practical Training Office and the Student Ombudsman. The provision of infrastructure for persons with disabilities and the initial orientation of first-year students regarding the available services and the Institution’s digital facilities are also assessed positively. However, the actual degree of use or effectiveness of these services by students is not sufficiently documented, nor are systematic satisfaction data presented.

Student progress is monitored in an organised manner through the University's electronic secretariat information system, which supports the recording and monitoring of registrations, course declarations, attendance, examinations, grades and changes in study status. The system enables each student to be linked with the curriculum and the degree-awarding rules, while at the stage of graduation declaration and oath-taking it provides an overview of the fulfilment of graduation requirements. The existence of statistical reports and interoperability with MODIP and HAHE's OPESP further strengthens systematic monitoring at Programme and Institutional level.

The ECTS system is applied clearly, as the postgraduate programme corresponds to 90 ECTS credits, distributed over three semesters of 30 ECTS credits each. The eight compulsory courses of the first two semesters correspond to 7.5 ECTS credits each, with a detailed workload of 187.5 hours per course, while the third semester includes either a Master's Dissertation or Practical Training, also corresponding to 30 ECTS credits. The implementation of ECTS is also reflected in the Diploma Supplement.

Mobility is institutionally encouraged through Erasmus+ and the internationalisation strategy of the postgraduate programme, with provision for the participation of postgraduate students and the recognition of ECTS credits through a Learning Agreement. However, the evidence indicates that no student mobility abroad has taken place to date, highlighting the need for further activation.

The Master's Dissertation is governed by a clear quality framework, including a dedicated preparation guide, a three-member committee, public presentation, plagiarism check through Turnitin, a declaration of originality and an obligation for scientific dissemination. Similarly, Practical Training constitutes a substantial applied component of the Programme; it is carried out in relevant organisations, such as sports teams, medical centres, clinics, rehabilitation laboratories and physiotherapy practices, and is supported by a coordinator, supervisors, a final report and feedback from host organisations.

Finally, the postgraduate programme is integrated into the institutional framework of ethics and deontology of DUTH, with provisions for research integrity, personal data protection, informed consent, intellectual property and sanctions in cases of plagiarism or falsification – which however, do not come up in a Programme-specific module or dedicated activity. The issuance of a Diploma Supplement in Greek and English is also provided for, although it is not explicitly documented that this is granted automatically without an application. Overall, the Programme presents a positive picture in terms of organisation, documentation and functional structure, with scope for strengthening the documentation of service effectiveness and the practical utilisation of international mobility.

II. Analysis

Based on the available evidence, the postgraduate programme “Functional Training of Injuries in Athletes and Trainees” has an overall organised and sufficiently documented framework for operation, support, monitoring of student progress and recognition of studies. The Study Guide appears to provide comprehensive information on the structure, purpose, learning outcomes, governing bodies, admission and study procedures, students’ rights and obligations, tuition fees, scholarships, curriculum, the Master’s Dissertation or Practical Training, and the award of the degree. The publication of this material through the Programme website, combined with the existence of regulations, forms and announcements, enhances the transparency and accessibility of information.

The monitoring of student progress is systematically supported through the Universis information system, which enables the recording of registrations, course declarations, attendance, examinations, grades and changes in study status. At the same time, the clear distribution of 90 ECTS credits across three semesters, as well as the allocation of 30 ECTS credits to the Master’s Dissertation or Practical Training, document the Programme’s compatibility with the European credit transfer framework. The quality framework of the dissertation is also assessed positively, with provision for supervision, public presentation, plagiarism checking and a declaration of originality, as is the applied dimension of Practical Training in relevant professional organisations.

However, certain points require further strengthening. Although significant student support services are provided at University and Department level, the actual degree of their use, functionality and effectiveness for students is not sufficiently documented, nor are systematic satisfaction data presented. Although mobility through Erasmus+ is institutionally encouraged, the available evidence does not clearly document the extent of student participation in relevant activities. Therefore, more systematic monitoring and documentation of the use of international mobility opportunities is recommended. Overall, the Programme meets the relevant requirements to a significant extent, with room for improvement mainly in relation to documenting the effectiveness of services and the practical utilisation of international mobility.

III. Conclusions

Overall, the postgraduate programme “Functional Training of Injuries in Athletes and Trainees” demonstrates a satisfactory level of compliance, as it has an organised operational framework, adequate documentation of key academic and administrative procedures, and institutionalised student support services. The clear implementation of the ECTS system, the organised monitoring of student progress, the quality framework for the Master’s Dissertation and Practical Training, as well as the provision of procedures for ethics and academic integrity, are assessed positively. At the same time, there is scope for further strengthening the systematic documentation of the effectiveness of support services, the recording of student satisfaction, and the practical activation of international mobility.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

- It is recommended that the actual use and effectiveness of support services by postgraduate students be documented.
- The systematic monitoring and recording of student participation in international mobility activities is recommended.
- It is recommended that it be clarified whether the Diploma Supplement is issued automatically, without an additional application by graduates.

PRINCIPLE 5: TEACHING STAFF OF POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES

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

The Institution should attend to the adequacy of the teaching staff of the academic unit teaching at the PSP, the appropriate staff-student ratio, the appropriate staff categories, the appropriate subject areas, the fair and objective recruitment process, the high research performance, the training-development, the staff development policy (including participation in mobility schemes, conferences, and educational leaves-as mandated by law).

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

Documentation

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

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The evaluation of faculty is conducted by reviewers/evaluators and the election or promotion committee. Faculty candidates are evaluated based on their research productivity, independent teaching experience, and professional contributions, using both minimum institutional criteria and additional indicators such as publication impact, authorship position, and citation records. Teaching competence is further assessed through public trial lectures attended by students, faculty members, and the electoral committee. All election and promotion procedures are conducted through the national electronic APPELLA system, while electoral committees are formed through a lottery process involving both internal and external faculty members from related disciplines.

The teaching staff includes a group of nine academics from DUTH. The programme reports that the instructors possess particularly extensive research and publication records in the subject areas they teach, as well as many years of experience in teaching and supervising master's theses and doctoral dissertations related to the fields that they teach in this Master's programme.

Teaching effectiveness is evaluated through course evaluation questionnaires, which students complete for each module at the end of the semester. The questionnaire is made up of 16 questions concerning: (i) the instructor's competencies, (ii) the quality of teaching, and (iii) the quality of the course. Students are asked to rate each question from 1 to 5. Results shared with the EEAP include a range of ratings from 3.96 to 4.90 from 2021 to 2025. After the completion of each semester's evaluation, the relevant results may be extracted through the corresponding subsystem of the MODIP Integrated Information System. These results are communicated to members of the teaching staff and the Internal Evaluation Group (OMEA) of the respective academic units after the end of the examination period and the submission of students' grades.

Based on information in report (M5.1), until January 2024, the nine faculty members listed published a total of 518 publications, which corresponds to approximately 57.5 publications per faculty member. Regarding the five most recent years until January 2024, the nine faculty members listed published a total of 146 publications, which corresponds to approximately 16.2 publications per faculty member.

II. Analysis

The process of selecting new faculty members is established by Greek law and appears to be consistently followed by the Department. The panel could not evaluate the recent research activity of the faculty in detail, as most faculty CVs were not available online for EEAP review. Based on the two CVs available online, faculty members do not systematically specify their publications in peer-reviewed journals, and the most recent publications reported were from eight years ago or earlier. Overall, faculty members teach modules that are aligned with their academic backgrounds and professional experience, and many are affiliated with the Department of Physical Education and Sport Science.

Regarding teaching evaluations, the student questionnaires provide feedback and information that may support adjustments to teaching methods and course content when appropriate. Descriptors for the ratings are provided in the sample questionnaire, and the questionnaire is relatively short, which may facilitate student participation. In addition, students are given space to provide written overall comments on any aspect of the course in the questionnaire.

III. Conclusions

The EEAP finds that the programme follows transparent and merit-based procedures for faculty selection and evaluation. Faculty demonstrate substantial teaching and supervisory experience, and student evaluations indicate positive perceptions of teaching quality. However, the limited availability of updated faculty CVs and recent peer-reviewed publications restricted the committee's ability to fully evaluate current research activity and scholarly productivity.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

- To improve the public availability and regular updating of faculty CVs and academic profiles
- To provide clearer documentation of recent peer-reviewed publications and current research activity of faculty members
- To strengthen transparency regarding faculty scholarly productivity and research impact

PRINCIPLE 6: LEARNING RESOURCES AND STUDENT SUPPORT

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

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

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

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

Documentation

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

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

Based on the available evidence, the academic unit appears to have adequate material, technical, digital and support infrastructure for the smooth operation of the postgraduate programme “Functional Training of Injuries in Athletes and Trainees”. Teaching rooms, amphitheatres, computer rooms, a teleconference room, laboratory spaces, gyms, a stadium, a swimming pool and a library with access to printed and digital scientific material are recorded. At the same time, the existence of digital infrastructure for synchronous and asynchronous distance education through MS Teams and Open e-Class is documented, as is provision for access for persons with disabilities to physical spaces and digital services. These elements suggest that the Programme can be supported within an appropriate environment for teaching, learning, laboratory work and research activity.

At the level of student support, a relatively broad and multidimensional framework of services is available, both at Institutional and Departmental level. The postgraduate programme Secretariat, the Erasmus Office, the Practical Training Office, the Liaison Office for Studies and Career, the Counselling and Accessibility Unit, the Academic Advisor, the Student Ombudsman are mentioned. In addition, students have access to libraries, electronic services, wireless network, electronic secretariat, email services, social benefits under the prescribed conditions, as well as sports and educational facilities. The provision of support for students with disabilities or special educational needs is also of particular importance.

Student information appears to be provided through multiple channels, mainly through the website of the postgraduate programme, the Study Guide, the digital information material of Democritus University of Thrace and the websites of the individual support structures. The existence of a procedure for maintaining and updating the website, as well as the involvement of the Coordinating Committee and MODIP in evaluating the clarity, adequacy and accessibility of information, reinforces the image of organised information provision. However, the available evidence mainly reflects the availability of information and does not systematically document the actual level of awareness, use and effectiveness of the services by postgraduate students.

With regard to administrative support, the postgraduate programme is supported by four staff members, three of whom belong to the permanent staff and one is an external collaborator. Their responsibilities cover key functions, such as monitoring educational progress, statistical processing of activities, management of student records, digital documents and issued degrees. In addition, a policy for the development of administrative staff through training and education in digital applications is documented. Despite the current adequacy, the evidence highlights potential future pressure on secretarial and technical support due to increased administrative workload and gradual staff retirements.

Finally, the Programme has a clear plan for the use of tuition fees, which are paid in instalments and managed through the Special Account for Research Funds of Democritus University of Thrace. A 30% withholding in favour of the Special Account for Research Funds is provided for, while 70% is allocated to operational needs, such as staff remuneration, travel expenses, educational activities, software, supplies, equipment maintenance, consumables and scholarships. The existence of a five-year revenue and expenditure budget strengthens the sustainability of the planning. Overall, the infrastructure, services and financial organisation are considered sufficiently documented, with a need for continuous monitoring of service use, administrative adequacy and the evolving needs of the Programme.

II. Analysis

The Postgraduate Programme “Functional Training of Injuries in Athletes and Trainees” is supported by an overall adequate framework of material, technical, digital, administrative and financial resources. The available teaching rooms, laboratory and sports facilities, computer infrastructure, library and access to printed and electronic scientific material create an appropriate environment for teaching, practical training, laboratory education and research activity. At the same time, the use of digital tools, such as MS Teams and Open e-Class, strengthens the capacity for synchronous and asynchronous educational support.

The existence of multi-level student support services is also assessed positively, including the Secretariat, the Academic Advisor, the Erasmus Office, the Practical Training Office, counselling and accessibility services, as well as complaint management mechanisms. The provision of support for students with disabilities or special educational needs is consistent with the requirements of inclusive academic operation.

However, the evidence appears to document mainly the availability of services and, to a lesser extent, the degree of their actual use and effectiveness for students. Therefore, more systematic monitoring of the use of support structures would be useful. In addition, although administrative support is considered adequate at the present stage, the possible increase in administrative workload and future staff departures require proactive planning. The existence of a clear financial plan and five-year budget strengthens the sustainability of the Programme, provided that its evolving needs are continuously monitored.

III. Conclusions

Overall, the Programme appears to meet the requirements to a satisfactory extent, as the available evidence reflects an adequate framework of material, technical, digital, administrative and support resources for its operation. The provided infrastructure, student welfare services, information mechanisms and financial organisation of the Programme create an appropriate environment for teaching, learning and academic support. The provision for accessibility, the existence of multiple support structures and the five-year financial planning are also assessed positively. However, more systematic monitoring of the actual use and effectiveness of the services, as well as of future administrative adequacy, is considered appropriate.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

- The systematic monitoring of the actual use and effectiveness of support services by postgraduate students should be strengthened.
- Regular student feedback mechanisms should be developed regarding the adequacy, accessibility and usefulness of the services provided.
- Proactive planning should be established to maintain administrative and technical adequacy, taking into account future staff departures.
- The periodic evaluation of material, technical, digital and financial resources should continue, in relation to the evolving needs of the Programme.

PRINCIPLE 7: INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

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

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

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

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

- *key performance indicators*
- *student population profile*
- *student progression, success, and drop-out rates*
- *student satisfaction with their programmes*
- *availability of learning resources and student support*

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

Documentation

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

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The Department of Physical Education and Sports Science of the DUTH implements procedures related to the collection of information, mainly with the assistance of OMEA, regarding:

- i. the evaluation of Teaching by students by completing electronic questionnaires and the inventory sheets of teachers and modules (MO.DI.P. DUTH),
- ii. the students and their relevant data (e.g. score, number of active students, etc.) via the Information System of the Electronic Secretariat (Universis).
- iii. infrastructure (equipment, buildings, etc.) via monitoring by the Department Directors, the Technical Service, and the Technical Works Directorate of DUTH.
- iv. research projects and the Departmental funding by extracting data (indicators from the Project Management Information System (resCom) of the DUTH's ELKE,
- v. data related to student care by exporting indicators through the Academic Affairs Directorate of DUTH
- vi. data related to the provision of student welfare services by exporting indicators from the Student Ombudsman's Office, DASTA, Library and Information Centre, Counselling and Accessibility Structure.

The basic information systems of the Department of Physical Education and Sports Science of DUTH are:

- i) Information System of the Electronic Secretariat (Universis),
- ii) The Integrated Information System (OPS) of MO.DI.P. of DUTH,
- iii) The Information System of projects management (resCom) of ELKE of DUTH,
- iv) The Information System of the library of DUTH,
- v) The Information System of DASTA of DUTH.
- vi) The Information System of Electronic Assessment MO.DI.P. DUTH
- vii) The Integrated Information System of National Quality (OPESP) of ETHAAE.

The OMEA of the Department collects, processes and utilizes data that reflect the image of the Department with the aim of improving the teaching and research work provided for the postgraduate cycle of study.

The basic statistical indicators for monitoring the research work include the number of scientific papers and bibliographies per year of the Department's faculty and staff members and this work is made known by publishing and updating their detailed biographies on the Department's website. The aggregate indicators that result from the electronic questionnaires, which are completed by the students are used for the evaluation of Teaching. OMEA examines the data collected and informs the Department Assembly.

II. Analysis

The academic unit has established procedures for the collection of data regarding: student body, teaching methods, student progression, employability and career paths of graduates.

III. Conclusions

The PSP satisfies the criteria of 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.

Documentation

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

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The Department of Physical Education and Sport Science at the DUTH, has established a structured, multi-channel system for disseminating information about its postgraduate study programmes. Information is addressed to a wide range of stakeholders, including students, graduates, academic staff, the wider academic community, institutional administration, and the public. The primary communication tools include the official postgraduate programme website, which is regularly updated and serves as the main information hub; the electronic Study Guide, which provides comprehensive academic and administrative information; and the e-Class platform, which hosts course materials.

The published content is comprehensive and available in both Greek and English. It includes information on learning outcomes, awarded titles, curriculum structure, admission procedures, and internal operating regulations. Key information is available at the following link: <https://leidiata.phyed.duth.gr/> These communication channels collectively aim to ensure the accessibility, clarity, and relevance of the information provided.

II. Analysis

The Postgraduate Study Programme (PSP) in “Functional Training of Injuries in Athletes and Trainees”, demonstrates a clear commitment to transparency and accessibility, aligning well with the expectations of Principle 8. The PSP programme’s approach aligns with institutional requirements for transparency by providing both academic and administrative information in a clear and objective manner. The use of Greek and English versions of the website and mobile-responsive design significantly enhance accessibility for a diverse group of domestic and international candidates.

The use of multiple digital platforms ensures that information is widely available and tailored to different audiences. Regular updates to the website and course materials indicate an effort to maintain current and relevant information. However, the analysis is limited by the absence of explicit evidence regarding Quality Assurance Mechanisms (QAM) for verifying the accuracy, objectivity, and timeliness of the website published information. Additionally, while accessibility is emphasized, there is no detailed assessment of usability, inclusiveness or formal feedback mechanisms from users, which are important dimensions of effective public information systems.

III. Conclusions

Overall, The Postgraduate Study Programme (PSP) in “Functional Training of Injuries in Athletes and Trainees”, has implemented a coherent and functional framework for publishing information related to its PSP, fulfilling the core requirements of accessibility and availability. The presence of structured channels and regular updates supports transparency and stakeholder engagement. Nevertheless, existing processes that ensure systematic update, quality control, user feedback integration, and broader accessibility considerations suggests that that there is room for minor improvement in this principle.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

- Improve accessibility by harmonizing the content of the Greek and English versions of the website to include the same design standards.

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

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

The regular monitoring, review, and revision of postgraduate study programmes aim at maintaining the level of educational provision and creating a supportive and effective learning environment for students.

The above comprise the evaluation of:

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

Postgraduate study programmes are reviewed and revised regularly involving students and other stakeholders. The information collected is analysed and the programme is adapted to ensure that it is up-to-date.

Documentation

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

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The Postgraduate Study Programme (PSP) in "Functional Training of Injuries in Athletes and Trainees" has established a structured Internal Quality Assurance System (IQAS) that includes continuous monitoring and annual internal evaluations. These evaluations are supported by institutional bodies such as the Quality Assurance Unit (IQAS; MODIP), OMEA, and the Coordinating Committee. A recent MODIP internal report for the PSP, dated 28/01/2024, shows that data collection is systematic, relying on centralized information systems and student feedback gathered semi-annually through standardized questionnaires. The internal evaluation process follows a clearly defined cycle: data collection, review by assigned evaluators, preparation of reports, institutional approval, and feedback to academic departments. The system incorporates transparency through publication of evaluation reports and active involvement of stakeholders, including students and academic staff. Additionally, there are formal procedures for revising course content, improving teaching quality, and addressing

weaknesses identified through evaluations.

Strategic planning is embedded in the process, with defined objectives, performance indicators, action plans, and timelines. Feedback loops exist at multiple levels (OMEA, Coordinating Committee, General Assembly), ensuring that evaluation results inform decision-making and programme improvements.

II. Analysis

The PSP "Functional Training of Injuries in Athletes and Trainees" of the Department of Physical Education and Sport Science has established quality assurance procedures in accordance with the procedures of the Institution's and the Hellenic Authority for Higher Education (HAHE) model. The certification file of the last internal evaluation (28/01/2024) of the PSP is completed and after approval by the Senate, posted on the corresponding Information System of the HAHE.

The IQAS system of the PSP demonstrates a high degree of formalization and alignment with Quality Assurance Standards (QAS). Roles and responsibilities are clearly distributed, and the use of digital systems enhances data reliability and consistency. Regular student evaluations and structured reporting mechanisms contribute to a strong evidence-based approach.

The presence of multiple feedback loops and institutional discussions indicates a culture of quality enhancement rather than mere compliance. The integration of evaluation outcomes into curriculum updates, teaching improvements, and strategic planning is a significant strength. However, the process appears heavily procedural and centralized, which may introduce additional risks due to bureaucratic complexity. While stakeholder involvement is influential for the development of the programme, the depth of stakeholder engagement (e.g., lack of formal connections with the labour market, limited alumni networking) is less evident. Furthermore, while corrective actions and action development plans are in place, there is limited explicit evidence of measurable outcomes because of these procedures and minimal evidence from impact assessment of implemented improvements.

III. Conclusions

The PSP in "Functional Training of Injuries in Athletes and Trainees" has developed a comprehensive and well-structured internal evaluation and monitoring system that effectively supports continuous improvement. The processes are systematic, transparent, and aligned with institutional quality assurance frameworks. The integration of student feedback, academic review, and strategic planning demonstrates a rather mature quality culture.

Nevertheless, the effectiveness of the system would be strengthened by clearer evidence generation of impact, simplification of procedures where possible, and broader stakeholder engagement. Overall, the framework is robust and operational, but its full effectiveness depends on demonstrable outcomes and continuous refinement.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

- Strengthen evidence of impact by systematically linking evaluation results to measurable improvements and outcomes.
- Enhance engagement with external stakeholders (e.g., employers, alumni) in the evaluation process.
- Simplify and streamline procedures to reduce administrative complexity and improve efficiency.
- Publish the results of the internal evaluation of the PSP on the programme's website, making the information clear and official for all stakeholders and third parties.

PRINCIPLE 10: REGULAR EXTERNAL EVALUATION OF POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES

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

HAHE is responsible for administrating the PSP accreditation process which is realised as an external evaluation procedure, and implemented by panels of independent experts. HAHE grants accreditation of programmes, based on the Reports delivered by the panels of external experts, with a specific term of validity, following to which, revision is required. The quality accreditation of the PSP acts as a means for the determination of the degree of compliance of the programme to the Standards, and as a catalyst for improvement, while opening new perspectives towards the international standing of the awarded degrees. Both academic units and Institutions must consistently consider the conclusions and the recommendations submitted by the panels of experts for the continuous improvement of the programme.

Documentation

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

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The Postgraduate Study Programme (PSP) in “Functional Training of Injuries in Athletes and Trainees” is subject to periodic external evaluation and accreditation governed by the Hellenic Authority for Higher Education (HAHE). This evaluation represents the final stage of the Quality Assurance cycle and is results-driven and based on a critical review of internal evaluation processes.

The evaluation involves structured interaction with stakeholders, including academic staff, students, administrative staff, and external partners. The external evaluation report critically assesses achievements, identifies weaknesses, evaluates improvement actions, and examines alignment with the programme’s mission and objectives.

The Monitoring Report should include the following:

1. Summary of the process for monitoring and evaluating results
2. Action Plan
3. Results Tracking Table

After being finalized through the cooperation of the MODIP and the PSP programme, the Monitoring Report must be submitted to HAHE by the MODIP and published on the Institution’s website as an accompanying document to the External Evaluation and Certification Report. Furthermore, a structured follow-up mechanism the PSP to commit to implementing any recommendations, and prepare an action plan. The monitoring of implementation lasts over a two-year period, and submission of a final monitoring report documenting progress and outcomes is expected to add an extra layer of transparency and accountability.

However, the panel could not find any evidence confirming that a previous external evaluation process had taken place for this PSP.

II. Analysis

The PSP demonstrates a well-defined and systematic approach to External Quality Assurance (EQA), ensuring independence, transparency, and continuous improvement.

The integration of external expert evaluation with internal quality processes strengthens objectivity and credibility. The inclusion of stakeholder engagement enhances the comprehensiveness of the assessment.

Moreover, the requirement for a formal action plan and subsequent monitoring introduces accountability and promotes a results-oriented culture.

While the process is clearly structured, the document provides limited detail on measurable performance indicators, enforcement mechanisms, or consequences for non-compliance.

Furthermore, the description is largely procedural and prospective rather than evidence-based. The document explains what will occur during an external evaluation but does not provide concrete evidence of previous external evaluations, actual recommendations received, or examples of implemented improvements. Although responsibilities, timelines, and monitoring mechanisms are described, the effectiveness of these processes cannot be assessed, as no outcomes or performance indicators are presented.

The panel did not find any documents confirming the completion of a previous external evaluation process by a third party nor a certification decision by HAHE. It appears that this is the first external evaluation process. Nevertheless, the PSP establishes a robust procedural framework for periodic external evaluation and follow-up, adapted to HAHE's requirements and in line with DUTH's strategy for continuous improvement.

III. Conclusions

Overall, the PSP in "Functional Training of Injuries in Athletes and Trainees" reflects a robust Quality Assurance Mechanism (QAM) aligned with international standards, particularly in terms of periodic external review, stakeholder involvement, and continuous improvement cycles. However, there is no evidence of completed external evaluations, concrete recommendations, or documented improvements resulting from such evaluations concerning the PSP. The absence of previous external evaluation does not undermine the design of the system itself. Therefore, the mark below is consistent with the procedural emphasis of the principle.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

- Specify consequences or corrective measures if the Action Plan is not implemented within the two-year monitoring period.
- Ensure that allocated resources for implementing recommendations are formally secured before the Action Plan is approved.
- In any upcoming external evaluation, the PSP Senior Management Team must document concrete examples of how recommendations from external assessors have been implemented and what improvements were achieved including non-significant results.

PART C: CONCLUSIONS

I. Features of Good Practice

- Clear programme structure with defined ECTS, modules, and professional orientation in injury management.
- Highly-qualified and active staff with substantial research output and teaching experience.
- Comprehensive student support infrastructure.
- Well-structured internal QA system aligned with national and institutional frameworks.
- Reasonably effective student evaluation mechanisms and formal internal/external QA cycles.

II. Areas of Weakness

- Lack of structured teaching of methods, statistics, and ethics, undermine the quality of student-led research outcomes.
- QA indicators are broad and not consistently linked to measurable outcomes.
- Assessment transparency can be questioned in the absence of robust safeguarding for academic integrity during online examinations.
- Partly optimised operationalisation of QA feedback loops (data collected but not consistently translated into improvements).
- It is unclear how integration of stakeholder (alumni/employer) feedback into curriculum and QA decisions occurs.

III. Recommendations for Follow-up Actions

QA systems, governance, and monitoring

- To refine KPIs with clear, measurable targets and SMART goals linked to key outcomes
- To ensure QA data is systematically used to drive programme improvements
- Strengthen evidence of impact by systematically linking evaluation results to measurable improvements and outcomes.
- Simplify and streamline procedures to reduce administrative complexity and improve efficiency.
- Specify consequences or corrective measures if the Action Plan is not implemented within the two-year monitoring period.

- Ensure that allocated resources for implementing recommendations are formally secured before the Action Plan is approved.
- Proactive planning should be established to maintain administrative and technical adequacy, taking into account future staff departures.

Curriculum design, teaching, assessment and student experience

- It is recommended that a Research Methods (new) module be included in the curriculum of the PSP to cover not only research methodology, but also statistics, ethical considerations, and the basics of the legislative framework governing research.
- To strengthen the research character of the PSP.
- A formal procedure/regulation for periodic revision of the programme curriculum should be established. This procedure should include, both a) a formal inquiry with the stakeholders and b) the feedback from the students.
- To provide clearer and more consistent descriptions of assessment criteria, grading distribution, and evaluation methods across modules
- The periodic evaluation of material, technical, digital and financial resources should continue, in relation to the evolving needs of the Programme.
- The systematic monitoring of the actual use and effectiveness of support services by postgraduate students should be strengthened.
- Regular student feedback mechanisms should be developed regarding the adequacy, accessibility and usefulness of the services provided.
- To strengthen formal procedures for academic advising, student complaints, and appeals
- To increase student awareness and utilisation of available counselling, accessibility, and support services
- The systematic monitoring and recording of student participation in international mobility activities is recommended.
- It is recommended that it be clarified whether the Diploma Supplement is issued automatically, without an additional application by graduates.
- To develop clearer procedures and additional safeguarding supporting academic integrity and consistency in online examinations, including the use of appropriate assessment or proctoring software.

Stakeholder and alumni engagement

- To formalise student, alumni, and employer feedback processes further
- Enhance engagement with external stakeholders (e.g., employers, alumni) in the evaluation process.
- To develop a strategic plan for new partnerships and internationalization
- To track graduate outcomes (e.g. employability, progression to PhD, publications)

Transparency and academic visibility

- To improve communication of QA outcomes to all parties involved
- To strengthen transparency regarding faculty scholarly productivity and research impact
- Publish the results of the internal evaluation of the PSP on the programme's website, making the information clear and official for all stakeholders and third parties.
- To improve the public availability and regularly updated faculty CVs and their academic profiles
- To provide clearer documentation of recent peer-reviewed publications and current research activity of faculty members

External evaluation

- In any upcoming external evaluation, the PSP Senior Management Team must document concrete examples of how recommendations from external assessors have been implemented and what improvements were achieved including non-significant results.

IV. Summary & Overall Assessment

The Principles where full compliance has been achieved are:

7,8,10

The Principles where substantial compliance has been achieved are:

3,4,5,6,9

The Principles where partial compliance has been achieved are:

1,2

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	Signature
Roussakis Andreas Antonios	Signed by Roussakis Andreas Antonios
KAPANTZOGLOU MARIA	Signed by KAPANTZOGLOU MARIA
VENIZELOS NIKOLAOS	Signed by VENIZELOS NIKOLAOS
VOLIANITIS STEFANOS	Signed by VOLIANITIS STEFANOS
ΣΤΑΥΡΟΠΟΥΛΟΥ ΜΑΡΙΑΝΝΑ	Signed by ΣΤΑΥΡΟΠΟΥΛΟΥ ΜΑΡΙΑΝΝΑ