



ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ
Α Δ Ι Π
ΑΡΧΗ ΔΙΑΣΦΑΛΙΣΗΣ ΚΑΙ ΠΙΣΤΟΠΟΙΗΣΗΣ
ΤΗΣ ΠΟΙΟΤΗΤΑΣ ΣΤΗΝ ΑΝΩΤΑΤΗ
ΕΚΠΑΙΔΕΥΣΗ

HELLENIC REPUBLIC
HQA
HELLENIC QUALITY ASSURANCE
AND ACCREDITATION AGENCY

Accreditation Report
for the Undergraduate Study Programme of:
Business Administration
Institution: University of Patras

Date: 20 February 2019

ΑΡΙΣΤΕΙΔΟΥ 1 & ΕΥΡΥΠΙΔΟΥ, 105 59 ΑΘΗΝΑ
Τηλ.: +30 210 9220944, FAX: +30 210 9220143
Ηλ. Ταχ.: adipsecretariat@hqa.gr, Ιστότοπος: <http://www.hqa.gr>

1, ARISTIDOU ST., 105 59 ATHENS, GREECE
Tel.: +30 210 9220944, Fax: +30 210 9220143
Email: adipsecretariat@hqa.gr, Website: www.hqa.gr



Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση
Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινωνικό Ταμείο

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



EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION
FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE
IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Report of the Panel appointed by the HQA to undertake the review of the Undergraduate Study Programme of **Business Administration of the University of Patras** for the purposes of granting accreditation

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Part A: Background and Context of the Review	4
I. The Accreditation Panel.....	4
II. Review Procedure and Documentation	5
III. Study Programme Profile	8
Part B: Compliance with the Principles	9
Principle 1: Academic Unit Policy for Quality Assurance	9
Principle 2: Design and Approval of Programmes	12
Principle 3: Student- centred Learning, Teaching and Assessment	15
Principle 4: Student Admission, Progression, Recognition and Certification	18
Principle 5: Teaching Staff.....	19
Principle 6: Learning Resources and Student Support.....	24
Principle 7: Information Management	26
Principle 8: Public Information	29
Principle 9: On-going Monitoring and Periodic Internal Review of Programmes.....	31
Principle 9: On-going Monitoring and Periodic Internal Review of Programmes.....	31
Principle 10: Regular External Evaluation of Undergraduate Programmes	33
Principle 10: Regular External Evaluation of Undergraduate Programmes	34
Part C: Conclusions	35
I. Features of Good Practice	35
II. Areas of Weakness.....	35
III. Recommendations for Follow-up Actions	35
IV. Summary & Overall Assessment	36

PART A: BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT OF THE REVIEW

I. The Accreditation Panel

The Panel responsible for the Accreditation Review of the Undergraduate Study Programme of **Business Administration, of the University of Patras** comprised the following three (3) members, drawn from the HQA Register, in accordance with the Law 4009/2011:

- 1. Prof. Constantine Passaris (Chair)**
University of New Brunswick, Fredericton, New Brunswick, Canada

- 2. Prof. Sotiris Hji-Avgoustis**
Ball State University, Muncie, Indiana, USA

- 3. Prof. Orestis Schinas**
Hamburg School of Business Administration (HSBA), Hamburg, Germany

II. Review Procedure and Documentation

Please refer briefly to the Panel preparation for the study programme review, as well as to the documentation provided and considered by the Panel. State the dates and of the site visit and describe the visit schedule and the meetings held. Feel free to mention any additional information regarding the procedure, as appropriate.

The Accreditation Panel (henceforth the Panel) received all relevant files via Dropbox on November 29, 2018, before the visit to the Department of Business Administration (henceforth Department) of the University of Patras. The Panel was pleased with the effort and quality of all submitted documents and the overall organization of all submissions. The Panel wishes to acknowledge the efforts of OMEA (Department-level Internal Evaluation Committee) with guidance from MODIP (University-level Evaluation Committee) and all department faculty who participated in the preparation of the submitted material. The Panel also wishes to acknowledge the efforts of the Hellenic Quality Assurance and Accreditation Agency (henceforth HQA/ADIP) to collect and present all relevant reports along with guidelines and instructions in an electronic format on Dropbox.

In addition to the submitted documents, the Panel had access to more pertinent information provided on the university and department websites.

The Panel met for the first time in person on Monday, December 10, 2018, during an overview and orientation meeting organized by HQA/ADIP. The purpose of the meeting was to review HQA/ADIP objectives and expectations.

The Panel was driven to the campus of the University of Patras in the afternoon of Monday, December 10 in preparation of its visit of the Department of Business Administration the following morning.

On Tuesday morning, the Panel was greeted at the hotel by Dr. Ioannis Giannikos, member of the faculty of the Department and the department representative on MODIP. After a brief tour by car of the university campus, the Panel arrived at the offices of the Department to begin its work. The Panel wants to acknowledge the department's efforts to distribute the agenda in advance of the site visit. The agenda was followed closely throughout the day which enabled the Panel to meet with all pertinent stakeholders and have adequate time to engage in fruitful conversations.

The first meeting of the day was with the university's Vice Rector/President of MODIP, Professor Karamanos and the Head of the Department, Associate Professor Androulakis. Professor Karamanos provided us with a brief history of the University of Patras, from its early beginnings in 1964 to the present. As the third largest university in Greece, the University of Patras is well positioned to serve the needs of the community and the country. The Department is part of the School of Business Administration under the leadership of Dean Voutsinas. The School consists of four academic departments: Department of Business Administration, Department of Business Administration of Food and Agricultural Enterprises, Department of Cultural Heritage

and Department of Economics. The Department was established in 1999, and it has in excess of 1300 students and a growing alumni base. The faculty consists of six full professors, four associate professors and seven assistant professors. This appears to be a good distribution between senior and junior faculty members.

The plan of study consists of 40 core (required) courses and 8 electives, admittedly a heavy core concentration, a fact that was also raised by the Department Head.

Associate Professor Androulakis also discussed faculty loads and some of the challenges associated with increased enrollments and a lack of resources to add more faculty. The expected teaching load is four courses per year. In addition to their teaching responsibilities, faculty members are actively engaged with their students outside the classroom either to assist individuals with course related questions or offer career mentoring. This commitment is to be commended, especially under the current circumstances of increased enrollments and lack of resources to add more faculty. It is not surprising to hear from faculty that their increased workload often extends to weekend hours.

In the area of scholarship, Professor Karamanos shared with the Panel the university's recent accomplishments on national and global rankings, important indicators of the quality of research productivity. The Panel supports the university's efforts to publicize widely faculty and other institutional accomplishments on a regular basis.

The next meeting on the agenda was with OMEA and MODIP representatives. The two-hour meeting was very beneficial to the Panel because it covered most of the information required for our report. We want to thank all MODIP and OMEA representatives who took time out of their busy schedules to participate in these deliberations. Representatives from MODIP included Professors Karalis and Giannikos and from OMEA Professors Stamatiou, Voutsinas and Georgopoulos. The Panel apologizes if it failed to recognize other participants.

During this meeting, the goals and objectives of each assessment group (OMEA and MODIP) were clearly defined and explained. Even though the emphasis on academic assessment is fairly new at the university, the results of the process are beginning to pay dividends in the area of program improvement. The process has clear strategic goals and objectives that become the road map for all academic departments. MODIP requires annual department self-studies to monitor and improve academic quality. After all, ongoing improvement is the foundation of a good assessment model. MODIP also designed a digital assessment tool that provides access to quantifiable data that can be used in assessment related decisions. Of special note is the effort by MODIP to identify best practices across the university as a way of providing ongoing support to all academic units.

OMEA's main objective is to strengthen the department's academic programs in accordance with MODIP's guiding principles and objectives. The department generates data to assess teaching quality. Examples include but are not limited to student evaluations, graduation rates and admission rates.

During the deliberations, it was clear that the department uses a student-centered approach to improve teaching quality. There is a sincere interest in student achievement and many of the assessment tools used are student focused.

Some of the issues raised during these deliberations include the high faculty to student ratios (1:64), growing incoming class of students (250+) and physical classroom space to accommodate increased student enrollments. In the area of scholarship, the discussion focused on teaching loads and the challenges, especially budgetary limitations.

The next meeting involved the Panel and representatives of the department's faculty. Participants included the following faculty members: Maroudas, Peppas, Nearchou, Oikonomakis, Aggelopoulos, Myloni, Papadimitriou and Polychroniou. The meeting was cordial and very productive. Due to time constraints, 45 minutes allotted for this meeting, the discussion focused on issues faculty members are facing, including class sizes, lack of resources for professional development, access to journals in their disciplines. A sense of belonging and a commitment to student success were clearly observed during the Panel's interactions with the faculty group.

Following the meeting with the faculty was a meeting with several undergraduate students. The students offered their experiences and observations of the university in general and the Department in particular. Again, the short length of the meeting offered the Panel a small glimpse into student life. Overall, students were satisfied with their experiences and available resources.

Professor Androulakis, Head of the Department, took the Panel on a walking tour of nearby classrooms and instructional facilities. We visited a few classrooms, the department's library, faculty and administration offices as well as a computer lab.

The last two meetings before the wrap up sessions, included Skype conversations with a group of successful graduates who are pursuing successful careers in their chosen fields and a couple of industry partners who have some knowledge of the quality of the Department's graduates. The graduates shared with us their positive experiences as students in the Department and how their careers were shaped by those experiences.

The day concluded with wrap up meetings with OMEA and MODIP representatives, including the Head of MODIP, Vice Rector Karamanos. Panel members were given an opportunity to ask last minute questions to help them with the preparation of the report.

The Panel wishes to express its gratitude for the warm hospitality it received from all participants, including the staff it came across during the tour of Department facilities.

III. Study Programme Profile

Please provide a brief overview of the Study Programme with reference to the following: history, academic remit, duration of studies, qualification awarded, employment opportunities, orientation challenges or any other key background information. Also you may provide a short description of the home Department and Institution, with reference to student population, campus or any other facts, as deemed appropriate.

The Department of Business Administration was founded in 1999 and is part of the School of Business Administration which was established in 2013. The objective is to educate top level graduates by providing them with the knowledge and the skills that will enable them to pursue their goals, professional or academic, and to play a prominent role at local, national or international level.

The total number of students matriculated directly from the centrally planned examinations is increasing at 7.4% annual rate. The number of transfer-in and -out students is partially compensating the increase of the student number, as more students are leaving the department every year. These problems are well known to the academic community and relate to wider social and economic trends in Greece rather than Department-specific attributes.

At the same time the evolution of the faculty numbers is alarming.

The facilities of the Department are rather dated yet deemed satisfactory considering the cutbacks of the public sector in Greece.

The Programme seems to satisfy the students (revealed positive assessment through questionnaires) and receives positive feedback from the stakeholders and alumni (results of the deliberation). There is an effort in progress to link academic modules with professional qualifications, as in the case of the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA), where the course examinations lead to a waiver of some of the professional examinations of ACCA. Such initiatives are praised and definitely help towards the bridging of the academia with the industry and enhance further the employability of the graduates.

PART B: COMPLIANCE WITH THE PRINCIPLES

Principle 1: Academic Unit Policy for Quality Assurance

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 ALL INSTITUTION'S AREAS OF ACTIVITY, AND PARTICULARLY AT THE FULFILMENT OF QUALITY REQUIREMENTS OF UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMMES. THIS POLICY SHOULD BE PUBLISHED AND IMPLEMENTED BY ALL STAKEHOLDERS.

The quality assurance policy of the academic unit is in line with the Institutional policy on quality, and is included in a published statement that is implemented by all stakeholders. It focuses on the achievement of special objectives related to the quality assurance of study programmes offered by the academic unit.

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 programme, its purpose and field of study; it will realise the programme's strategic goals and it will determine the means and ways for attaining them; it will implement the appropriate quality procedures, aiming at the programme's continuous improvement.

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

- a) the suitability of the structure and organization of the curriculum;*
- b) the pursuit of learning outcomes and qualifications in accordance with the European and the National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education;*
- c) the promotion of the quality and effectiveness of teaching;*
- d) the appropriateness of the qualifications of the teaching staff;*
- e) the enhancement of the quality and quantity of the research output among faculty members of the academic unit;*
- f) ways for linking teaching and research;*
- g) the level of demand for qualifications acquired by graduates, in the labour market;*
- h) the quality of support services such as the administrative services, the Library, and the student welfare office;*
- i) the conduct of an annual review and an internal audit of the quality assurance system of the undergraduate programme(s) offered, as well as the collaboration of the Internal Evaluation Group (IEG) with the Institution's Quality Assurance Unit (QAU);*

The Department of Business Administration at the University of Patras operates within the legally mandated and overarching national government regulations. It is worth noting that because of financial and budgetary cut backs that have been imposed to all the academic institutions of higher learning in Greece, the Department faces distinct challenges in pursuing its academic mission.

The process of internal quality assurance (QA) is new to the Hellenic higher educational landscape, and in consequence there is a steep learning curve for creating a culture of awareness and acceptance of the benefits of quality improvements.

It is worth noting that the Panel was enthusiastically and cordially received during its onsite visit. This warm reception that was afforded the Panel included the Vice-Rector, the chair of the Department, the department's OMEA unit, the faculty members, undergraduate students, graduates who are currently employed and community stakeholders.

The Department was established in 1999 and has embraced a strong commitment and engagement to quality assurance procedures. Through its OMEA unit it completes an annual quality assurance review. It has also embraced a culture of continuous self-evaluation for the purpose of adopting best practices and implementing required improvements. The Department is also called upon to serve in a consultative capacity to other academic units at the University of Patras.

The Department operates under the auspices of a Quality Assurance Policy as mandated by HQA/ADIP. This policy has been endorsed by the University of Patras administration, the academic Senate and the whole academic community.

It should be noted that the University of Patras has a long history of internal quality assurance evaluations. At the University level, MODIP maintains a web site with all the relevant information and procedures. Its quality assurance strategic plan has ten objectives which are clearly articulated on its website and project a welcome compliance with the requirement of transparency.

The Panel was favorably impressed by the enthusiastic quality assurance culture that exists at the Department and the range of participants that are engaged with this process. These include the chair of the Department, the internal OMEA unit, the faculty members, the undergraduate students, graduates who are currently employed and stakeholders. All of them are very keen in playing a positive and constructive role in advancing the quality assurance mileposts.

Worthy of special mention is the observation that the Department has succeeded in developing an engaged quality assurance culture within its academic community. This takes the form of a commitment to improve the quality of teaching, the mentoring of their students and emphasizing the importance of academic research for their professoriate.

The objective of the Departmental quality assurance system is to enhance the academic mission of the unit and the academic experience for its students. All of these are in compliance with the directives provided by HQA/ADIP. From a practical point of view this exercise facilitates maintaining the Department's academic brand as well as competing successfully with other universities in Greece and internationally for academic recognition and research grants.

The Panel deliberated at great length its concern that the transition from paper based student course evaluation forms to the current electronic format has resulted in a significant decrease in participation rates. The Panel was pleased to note that this was a matter that also concerned the chair of the Department, the academic unit's OMEA group and its faculty members.

Panel judgement

Principle 1: Institution policy for Quality Assurance	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	X
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

The Panel was very impressed with the level of student engagement in the quality assurance process and recommends that every effort should be made to increase the student participation rates for the completion of the electronic evaluation forms.

The QA/QC systems are in place and embraced by the faculty, students and the administration. Nevertheless, it takes time to fully implement the outcomes of the procedures as a decision support tool. Therefore, the Panel strongly advises the Department to carry on with this good practice and implement findings of the QA/QC outcomes in next planning initiatives.

Principle 2: Design and Approval of Programmes

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD DEVELOP THEIR UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMMES FOLLOWING A DEFINED WRITTEN PROCESS WHICH WILL INVOLVE THE PARTICIPANTS, INFORMATION SOURCES AND THE APPROVAL COMMITTEES FOR THE PROGRAMME. THE OBJECTIVES, THE EXPECTED LEARNING OUTCOMES, THE INTENDED PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS AND THE WAYS TO ACHIEVE THEM ARE SET OUT IN THE PROGRAMME DESIGN. THE ABOVE DETAILS AS WELL AS INFORMATION ON THE PROGRAMME'S STRUCTURE ARE PUBLISHED IN THE STUDENT GUIDE.

Academic units develop their programmes following a well-defined procedure. The academic profile and orientation of the programme, the objectives, the subject areas, the structure and organisation, the expected learning outcomes and the intended professional qualifications according to the National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education are described at this stage. The approval or revision process for programmes includes a check of compliance with the basic requirements described in the Standards, on behalf of the Institution's Quality Assurance Unit (QAU).

Furthermore, the programme design should take into consideration the following:

- *the Institutional strategy*
- *the active participation of students*
- *the experience of external stakeholders from the labour market*
- *the smooth progression of students throughout the stages of the programme*
- *the anticipated student workload according to the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System*
- *the option to provide work experience to the students*
- *the linking of teaching and research*
- *the relevant regulatory framework and the official procedure for the approval of the programme by the Institution.*

Bearing in mind the guiding points outlined above regarding Principle 2 on the Design and Approval of the Programme, the following findings are reported:

1. Institutional Strategy:
 - a. The Panel is not aware of any strategic plan for the Department and for the further development of the Programme.
2. Active participation of the Students:
 - a. The Panel has observed the active participation of the students in the change-procedures of the existing educational plan but not in the creation of any new Programme.
3. Shared experience of external stakeholders:
 - a. The Panel is unable to assess due to lack of any evidence or documentation.
4. Smooth progression of students:
 - a. Evidence suggests that 1 out of 2 students (approx.) enrolled have surpassed the 6 (v+2) year threshold. This practice causes undue hardship on the limited resources.

5. Students' workload:
 - a. Generally, almost 25 hours of workload correspond to an ECTS. Out of these 25 hours, circa 1/3 corresponds to 'in-class' work, i.e. attendance of lectures and exercises. Considering international experience, the workload is deemed as expected and satisfactory.
 - b. Students should satisfactorily conclude 48 modules, where only 8 of them are electives.
 - c. The total workload is broken down into 30 ECTS per semester ($30 \times 8 = 240$ in total); as expected electives are not offered in the early semesters, as foundation work is scheduled.
 - d. During the deliberations, students stressed the need for more (and updated in terms of content) case-studies incorporated in the modules. Moreover, they underlined the positive effect of mid-terms, essays and generally other than the final examination forms of assessment introduced by the faculty. Finally, the students emphasized the positive impact of ERASMUS and generally of internally mobility, as well as of the internship, for their studies and personal development.
6. Work experience option:
 - a. In the last semester, the option of internship is offered to students. This offer is not linked to ECTS.
 - b. Given the feedback from invited employer (as stakeholder), the performance of the students was reckoned as very satisfactory. The feedback also from the faculty was also positive on the subject matter.
 - c. Currently the University makes use of 100% of the available funding for internship. This funding covers the social security and salary of students.
 - d. Almost 26% of the participants in internship programmes 'stay' with the employers, therefore almost 10% of the fresh graduates are directly employed.
 - e. Despite the positive feedback and the eager participation of students, the faculty stressed the impact of the deindustrialization and economic decline of the region on the number of available positions for students.
7. Linking of teaching and research:
 - a. This issue is thoroughly discussed in Principle 5.
 - b. Feedback from students and faculty implied a justifiably low due to the nature of any undergraduate programme the infiltration of recent scientific contributions in the learning material.
8. Regulatory framework for the approval of amendments in existing or launching of new programmes:
 - a. The Panel does not have sufficient information to assess this criterion.

Panel judgement

Principle 2: Design and Approval of Programmes	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	x
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

Considering the above findings, the Panel submits the following recommendations for the perusal of the Department, the School and the University:

1. The Department should develop a strategic plan that meets the needs of this Programme.
2. The University and the Department are encouraged to evaluate current practices in the area of student transition and progress (students surpassing 6 years of studies) and to find a modus operandi with all stakeholders.
3. The scheduled workload is considered satisfactory. As per the discussions with the faculty, the suggestions of the students for incorporating more 'case-studies', updating the content vis-à-vis the trends and conditions of modern economy, such as of digitalization, sustainability and ethical governance, as well as further enhancement of mobility and internship, are embraced. The Panel could only applaud the effort of the faculty and the constructive review of the students. Lastly, the Panel would like to suggest a further strengthening of the analytical skills of the students, as the University has a technological orientation and the industry calls for relevant skills, competences and application of knowledge gained in the University.
4. The Panel strongly advises the Department and the University to support and develop further the option of internship. Due to the fiscal conditions in Greece, it is advised to expand the internship option in the European Union by using available funds and opportunities in all Member States. The student council could also support this venture under the auspices of the faculty members and relevant bodies.
5. Although the issue of bridging research and lecturing is extensively discussed in the section of Principle 5, it should be highlighted that the Panel does not deem the relatively low incorporation of recent research into the learning material. It is strongly advised the faculty to focus on methodological knowledge and skills, especially in the first years. It is essential for the students and their development as humans and scientists to acquire sufficient methodological knowledge, as the didactic goal should be no other than 'analyzing a complex problem' and 'synthesizing a solution' on the basis of facts and science. Further recommendations are provided in the section of Principle 5.

Principle 3: Student- centred Learning, Teaching and Assessment

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD ENSURE THAT THE UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMMES ARE DELIVERED IN A WAY THAT ENCOURAGES STUDENTS TO TAKE AN ACTIVE ROLE IN CREATING THE LEARNING PROCESS. THE ASSESSMENT METHODS SHOULD REFLECT THIS APPROACH.

Student-centred learning and teaching plays an important role in stimulating students' motivation, self-reflection and engagement 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, enabling 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;*
- *reinforces 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 students' complaints.*

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;*
- *the regulations for assessment take into account mitigating circumstances*
- *assessment is consistent, fairly applied to all students and carried out in accordance with the stated procedures;*
- *a formal procedure for student appeals is in place.*

Student centered learning shifts the emphasis of learning from the professor to the students. Students assume a certain level of autonomy and independence that allows them to design unique academic experiences that will complement their unique learning styles. During the visit, the Panel had an opportunity to meet with a representative sample of undergraduate

students and observed briefly classroom instruction in one of the lecture halls that housed over 200 students.

During the interaction with the students, the topic of student learning was discussed. There was consensus that multiple evaluation methods during the semester are preferable over a cumulative examination at the end. The students commented on the effectiveness and ease of use of the online platform E-class. The platform allows instructors to post class material for all students to access right before, during and after class. This tool advances the principles of student-centered learning since it offers students a level of autonomy and independence.

The students complemented how accessible their faculty members are. The Panel was impressed that despite the large class sizes, students still feel connected to their faculty mentors. Their interactions with their faculty cover topics from course assistance to career advice. The students repeatedly mentioned that they receive individual attention from their faculty members promptly.

Regarding the campus infrastructure, the students did not raise any red flags other than some minor cosmetic changes they would like to see. They commented on how safe and secure they feel on campus. In terms of WiFi access, all students felt that was not an issue. The students also expressed their satisfaction with the openness and availability of green space.

Finally, a discussion followed on issues related to accessibility and university policies related to student performance. Even though the students were not very familiar with these topics, many of the questions were addressed by the Vice Rector and other faculty during the wrap up meeting. For example, the Panel asked and received adequate information regarding the university's formal grade appeal process.

The Panel believes the faculty of the department are committed to student learning and efforts are underway to address the needs of all students.

In terms of the points that need to be addressed above, the Panel offers the following assessment using three indicators: Observed, not observed, unable to assess:

- *respects and attends to the diversity of students and their needs, enabling flexible learning paths;*

Observed

- *considers and uses different modes of delivery, where appropriate;*

Observed (E-learning, individual out of class assistance)

- *flexibly uses a variety of pedagogical methods;*

Observed

- *regularly evaluates and adjusts the modes of delivery and pedagogical methods aiming at improvement*

Observed (student feedback from surveys)

- *regularly evaluates the quality and effectiveness of teaching, as documented especially through student surveys;*

Observed

- *reinforces the student's sense of autonomy, while ensuring adequate guidance and support from the teaching staff;*

Observed

- *promotes mutual respect in the student - teacher relationship;*

Unable to assess

- *applies appropriate procedures for dealing with students' complaints.*

Observed

All the following criteria were observed during the visit and examination of material provided to the Panel either in advance, during or after the conclusion of the visit.

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;*
- *the regulations for assessment take into account mitigating circumstances*
- *assessment is consistent, fairly applied to all students and carried out in accordance with the stated procedures;*
- *a formal procedure for student appeals is in place.*

Panel judgement

Principle 3: Student- centred Learning, Teaching an Assessment	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

The Panel recommends that the Department continues its present practice to engage students for the purpose of achieving their own learning goals.

Principle 4: Student Admission, Progression, Recognition and Certification

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

Institutions and academic units need to put in place both processes and tools to collect, manage and act on information regarding student progression.

Procedures concerning the award and recognition of higher education degrees, the duration of studies, rules ensuring students progression, terms and conditions for student mobility should be based on the institutional study regulations. Appropriate recognition procedures rely on institutional practice for recognition of credits among various European academic departments and Institutions, in line with the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention.

Graduation represents the culmination of the students' study period. Students need to receive documentation explaining the qualification gained, including achieved learning outcomes and the context, level, content and status of the studies that were pursued and successfully completed (Diploma Supplement).

The Panel observed that the regulations regarding student admission, progression, recognition and certification are clearly published in electronic format. It is noteworthy, that the Panel did not hear a single student complaint regarding this matter.

It is important to note, however, that as these regulations are amended or changed the electronic platform should be updated on a frequent and regular basis.

The Panel was satisfied that the Department of Business Administration and the University of Patras in general has implemented a satisfactory system for the approval and recording on the student academic transcripts the courses and grades that were earned, through the ERASMUS program or other types of international opportunities that the University of Patras has signed MOU's, in an efficient and seamless manner.

Furthermore, the Panel was favourably impressed with the efforts of the University of Patras to integrate international ERASMUS students into their undergraduate programs.

Panel judgement

Principle 4: Student Admission, Progression, Recognition and Certification	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

The Panel recommends that the Department increase the number of students participating in the ERASMUS program in order to provide them with an international learning experience and a global mindset.

Principle 5: Teaching Staff

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD ASSURE THEMSELVES OF THE QUALIFICATIONS AND COMPETENCE OF THE TEACHING STAFF. THEY SHOULD APPLY FAIR AND TRANSPARENT PROCESSES FOR THE RECRUITMENT AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE TEACHING STAFF.

The Institutions and their academic units have a major responsibility as to the standard of their teaching staff providing them with a supportive environment that promotes the advancement of their scientific work. In particular, the academic unit should:

- *set up and follow clear, transparent and fair processes for the recruitment of properly qualified staff and offer them conditions of employment that recognize 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 members (with respect to attendance requirements, performance, self-assessment, training etc.);*
- *develop policies to attract highly qualified academic staff;*

Bearing in mind the guiding points outlined above regarding Principle 5 on Teaching Staff, the following findings are reported:

1. Recruitment and employment:

- a. The faculty of the Department of Business Administration summarized the procedure of recruitment and employment as dictated by the Law. The procedure is well-known to the academic community and any criticism is out of the scope of this report. Nevertheless, the faculty stressed that the description of the position, i.e. the academic profile of the candidate is duly discussed and agreed among the faculty members in the relevant bodies and with respect to the procedures in place.
- b. All faculty members highlighted the extreme lecturing workload, as a result of:
 - i. The decrease of the number of faculty members, due to the limited financial capacity of the public University as a result of the fiscal conditions in Greece;
 - ii. The increase of the number of students as per relevant Ministerial Decree.A ratio of 1 faculty member per 64 students was reported.

2. Opportunities for professional development:

- a. All faculty members stressed the importance and the positive contribution of the ERASMUS Programme for the mobility of both students and faculty. The participants confirmed the support and encouragement of the executives of the University and of the Department to further foster the mobility of the faculty for research and educational purposes. As a rule of thumb, every faculty member can apply for a sabbatical leave every three years. Nevertheless, it was clarified that the workload of the member on sabbatical is distributed among other faculty members or allocated to contracted external experts. This practice results in either extreme workload for some faculty members for a period of time, which diminishes any available time for research and personal development, or to a budgetary burden in the form of an outlay at the University level, with all relevant administrative limitations and implications.

- b. Mobility is linked with the desire and strategic goal of the Department to become more visible in the academic market by encouraging the faculty members to participate in Conferences and Forums that eventually will result to publications and international collaborations.
 - c. However, all faculty members accentuated the lack of funding for any mobility initiative, including participation in Conferences. It was communicated that relevant applications are declined by the management of the University due to the lack of available budget or the available budget of 150 Euros does not suffice for the fees and travel expenses.
 - d. Last but not least, it was emphasized that faculty members do not have access to the online databases with Journals and Articles relevant to their fields of interest, research and educational needs. It appears that not all discipline-specific Journals are accessible in the online-system of HEAL or of the University.
- 3. Link between education offering and research results:**
- a. The Programme under examination is of undergraduate level, therefore papers and recent research results as learning material in many of the subjects -modules- delivered may be suitable. Nevertheless, it was clearly explained that research papers are used for educational purposes in the following indicative yet limited cases:
 - i. In modules related to operations research, logistics, production planning, etc., where papers are uploaded in the e-class platform for the support of exercises or numerical examples.
 - ii. In modules related to the evolution of ideas and concepts, some monumental papers or texts might support the educational procedure.
 - b. The faculty members stressed also the diverse background in terms of skills, competences and knowledge of the intake cohorts of students. Many of the fresh students lack solid mathematical background, therefore it might be difficult to follow quantitative modules. In this regard, many students are not confident with the use of the English language, that hampers further the educational procedure.
- 4. Innovation in teaching:**
- a. The Panel praises the commitment of the faculty members and their effort to overcome difficulties, such as the diverse background of the students, the lack of confidence and competency in English, the weak analytical skills of some students. Some interesting and indicative examples demonstrate the use of new technologies and didactic excellency:
 - i. The use of e-class online system for all modules, enabling and ensuring transparency, accountability and communication among students and lecturers;
 - ii. The offering of non-mandatory/remedial courses in mathematics for the support of weak students;
 - iii. The offering of English courses (horizontal initiative of the University);
 - iv. The incorporation of 'modern' examples in modules, e.g. the mathematical modeling of the 'influencer' in social media, instead of the obsolete examples available in most textbooks.
 - b. Moreover, the Panel should praise the efforts of the faculty to adapt the examination methods to the needs of the module and of the students instead of a final written exam, as in the cases:
 - i. Encouragement for the submission of 'exercises' and 'large-scale, real-world cases' in quantitative modules;

- ii. Group assignments that stimulate group-work and interpersonal skills;
 - iii. Submission of essays that advance students' skills in academic and professional writing in both Greek and English.
- c. Finally, initiatives, such as:
- i. Mentoring, coaching and consultation of students (institutionalized and ad hoc);
 - ii. Offering of classes to pupils at local schools to assist them in making informed decisions regarding their future academic plans; should be commended and applauded.

5. Promotion of research:

- a. Given the statistics provided, it seems that the faculty remains active despite the extreme workload. Considering that 18 faculty members on average (contracted staff is not counted) are active researchers every year, then the 'production' of almost one paper per faculty member is considered more than satisfactory. This trend is also supported by an almost equal number of contributions in peer-reviewed conferences.
- b. Given all the feedback regarding limited time and resources, the 'production' seems to be satisfactory and there is substantial indication of improvement, as most younger members of the faculty publish in leading journals.

6. Quality assurance processes:

- a. It was explained and demonstrated that most (if not all) procedures are available in an online system (e-tickets) and all faculty members have access. This applies not only for the common or trivial administrative tasks but also for the educational functions, e.g. see //eclass.upatras.gr). These online systems ensure the anticipated educational quality levels.
- b. Current and past chairpersons of the Department and/or of significant bodies highlighted the importance of the procedures as a tool of avoiding conflicts and of achieving consensus among faculty members. Subject to discussions and consensus in the relevant bodies, the Department prescribes procedures or clarifies potentially vague or intentionally adaptable and flexible parts of wider policies and rules of the University or of the Law. As a result, the 'rules of the game' are clarified and transparently available to all participants.

7. Attracting highly qualified academic staff:

- a. It was mentioned in numerous occasions, the strategic goal of inviting external experts from the academia and the industry is set and given the financial limitations achieved.
- b. The desire and request for increase of the budget for the organization of conferences by the faculty of Department in Patras could serve many goals simultaneously, such as:
 - i. Lectures to students and conferring with doctoral candidates;
 - ii. Osmosis with the local society;
 - iii. Exchange of views, bridging of gaps and fostering the communication among all stakeholders of the Department.
- c. It was stressed that ERASMUS enabled and still enables visits of and cooperation with international experts.
- d. As recruitment procedures and compensation packages are determined by the supervising Ministry of Education, neither the Department nor the University can influence relevant decisions, therefore there is no issue of recruiting renowned experts demanding a special treatment.

- e. It was mentioned that any desired improvement in qualifications is reflected in the profile of new faculty members (see point on recruitment above).

Panel judgement

Principle 5: Teaching Staff	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	X
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

Considering the above findings, the Panel submits the following recommendations for the perusal of the Department, the University and of the competent Authorities:

1. The future development of the number and expertise of faculty members should be strategically discussed at all necessary levels and should be incorporated in the strategic plan of the Department of the School of Business Administration. The currently reported faculty/student ratio of 1:64 is considered high and should be lowered. The improvement of the ratio is the result of either increase of the faculty members or reduction of the fresh-students intake. Both are decisions that should be discussed at higher administrative levels than the Department on focus.
2. Mobility of researchers should be further encouraged and promoted. As budget constraints are strict and inelastic, a plausible solution could be the allocation of a budget to the Department instead to every researcher, so the Department can better plan and allocate resources.
3. In view of the limited resources of the University and of the State, official cooperation among Hellenic and international libraries and institutions for the mere alleviation of this predicament should be examined. It is imperative that the University provide access to library resources to support faculty research.
4. The faculty is encouraged to carry on the 'good practices' reported in section 3 of the findings and explore further the options of gradually:
 - a. increase the number of papers used in modules, especially in specialization and elective modules;
 - b. incorporate papers and results of the papers and contributions of the faculty members in the educational procedure;
 - c. streamline the requirements of essays, theses, and other forms of examination to the commonly used logic and template of academic papers.
5. The faculty is further encouraged to carry on with the adopted 'student-centric' approach. It seems that there is a fruitful consensus among students, faculty and administration that is beneficial for all stakeholders.
6. The Panel applauds the effort of the faculty to contribute in peer-reviewed journals and strongly encourages younger researchers to focus on their research and transfer their results into existing and new modules.
7. It is recommended to 'digitalize' further all administrative and educational procedures. Such a policy ensures not only transparency, accountability and better planning and

allocation of resources, but also deems operations 'location-agnostic', partially alleviating problems related to the available physical infrastructure.

8. The Department is strongly encouraged to organize seminars and conferences by inviting experts from the academia and industry. Students and selected stakeholders, such as local business units, should be targeted. Given the budgetary constraints, these seminars could be sponsored by leading local businesses and organized at the premises of the Department in order to minimize costs and outlays. All in all, ERASMUS founding could be further considered as possible channel of cooperation and financial support.

Principle 6: Learning Resources and Student Support

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD HAVE ADEQUATE FUNDING TO COVER TEACHING AND LEARNING NEEDS. 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, BOARDING, CAREER AND SOCIAL POLICY SERVICES ETC.).

Institutions and their academic units must have sufficient funding and means to support learning and academic activity in general, so that they can offer to students the best possible level of studies. The above means could include facilities such as libraries, study rooms, educational and scientific equipment, information and communications services, support or 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 or international students, students with disabilities) and 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 ensures that all resources are appropriate, adequate, and accessible, and that students are informed about the services available to them.

In delivering support services the role of support and administrative staff is crucial and therefore they need to be qualified and have opportunities to develop their competences.

The Panel had an opportunity to visit on foot several of the instructional facilities available to the students in the Department. The tour included stops at the Department's library, a computer lab and two classrooms. The Panel also discussed the topic of adequate facility infrastructure with the Head of the Department.

The campus physical environment is very attractive with adequate green space. The buildings appear to be easily accessible. It was noted that all buildings are equipped with ramps to allow access to students on wheelchairs.

The classrooms are climate controlled year round and furnished with quality tables and chairs. The Panel observed first-hand the impact increased enrollments have on the physical space. A classroom furnished to accommodate under 200 students had chairs up and down the two aisles to meet new capacity needs. Despite these challenges, the Panel did not observe a direct impact on the quality of instruction and student learning.

During the wrap up meeting, the issue of accessibility of physically challenged persons was raised. The Vice Rector provided adequate information related to university efforts and policies on this matter.

Lastly, the students shared with us their satisfaction with the Department and University support services available to them.

It is of note that the students we interacted with during our formal meetings were not handpicked by the Department but rather they volunteered for this meeting.

Panel judgement

Principle 6: Learning Resources and Student Support	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

It is the Panel's assessment that the department has adequate physical space to meet its instructional responsibilities, but increased enrollment trends may cause a hardship in maintaining a satisfactory learning environment.

The Panel suggests the use of online tests before and after an educational session (e.g. a lecture) or unit (e.g. the lectures of a week), in order to assess the achievement of the learning outcomes. As an example the online platform www.socrative.com is used for these purposes in other Institutions.

Principle 7: Information Management

INSTITUTIONS BEAR FULL RESPONSIBILITY FOR COLLECTING, ANALYSING AND USING INFORMATION, AIMED AT THE EFFICIENT MANAGEMENT OF UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMMES OF STUDY 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 as well as to the academic community. Reliable data is essential for accurate information and for decision making, as well as for identifying areas of smooth operation and areas for improvement. Effective procedures for collecting and analysing information on study programmes and other activities feed data into the internal system of quality assurance.

The information gathered 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 programme(s)*
- *availability of learning resources and student support*
- *career paths of graduates*

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

The University operates the e-class system that was analyzed in the section on Principle 5. Following the discussions with the faculty and the feedback of the students, the Panel is convinced that the e-class facility fully serves the educational purposes. Apparently, the success of any e-platform depends on the content and the in-class (physical) support, that are thoroughly monitored through online questionnaires centrally managed from MODIP/OMEA.

The Department has established procedures for the collection of data enabling analysis of demographic, lecturing and course evaluation, and student progression. Currently, the system does not collect data on the employability and career path of graduates. Nevertheless, it is evident that both at University and Department level there is an effort to establish contact with as many alumni as possible, in order to strengthen the ties among students, faculty and graduates as well as to serve diverse purposes, such as feedback for the programmes, dissemination of information and news and promotion of internship goals.

A rather thorough presentation, given time constraints, on the QA/QC system of ODIP/OMEA was offered to the Panel. It seems that the system fully supports data collection and analysis of educational delivery. The electronic collection of data (students' evaluation per module) is supported by 1 out of 4 students on average. A sample of 25% of the total population is indicative (thorough statistical analysis is required for the validity of the results out of the sample). During the deliberations, the Panel asked conscientiously the participants, both faculty and students. The responses were practically streamlined if not identical:

- in the past where questionnaires in paper were distributed to the students in the last lecture before the examination, the submission-rate was close to 100% yet the quality of the responses was questionable, as the participating students have not embraced or understood the need of the evaluation procedure;
- currently, where questionnaires are available online, only committed students participate therefore their response is constructive.

It was only presented that all faculty members have access to the evaluation of their interest, e.g. course evaluation, aggregate evaluations, etc. and the system provides rights and privileges of access as per the current framework, e.g. MODIP has access to all data, OMEA has access to department-related data, faculty members to their courses, etc. The frequency of surveys seems to be sufficient while the analysis of the data, the procedures of extracting information as well as the support of decisions is deemed satisfactory. All results are visualized and communicated thoroughly. At this point, one should highlight that all comparisons (benchmark analyses, etc.) are based on School or University peers; it would be useful to have comparisons and assessments vis-à-vis Programmes and Departments offering similar content in Greece and abroad.

All in all, it is clear that the 'system' is working, and fruitful results are extracted and considered when planning next steps or offering educational content.

Panel judgement

Principle 7: Information Management	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	x
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

Considering the above findings, the Panel submits the following recommendations for the perusal of the Department and the University:

1. Establish online procedures for the monitoring of the employability and career path of the graduates.
2. Establish online procedures for strengthening the ties with the alumni.
3. Establish benchmarking, ranking and generally 'comparison' metrics in order to evaluate the performance of the Department and of the Programme against 'competitors' in the national and international markets.
4. Link (if it is not already bridged) the e-class platform with online databases and library-services (e.g. access to journals, reports, etc.)

As a remark, one could also suggest incorporating research, coaching, mentoring and other functions in the system, yet the collection of the data might spark legal, ethical or administrative issues, therefore it could be useful to set up the procedures on volunteering basis, so the

workload and the productivity as well as the engagement of the faculty could be better monitored and communicated.

The Department has made initial strides to connect with their alumni. The Panel believes much more needs to be done. The Departments alumni is a valuable resource for informed feedback and an important ally in promoting quality assurance.

Principle 8: Public Information

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD PUBLISH INFORMATION ABOUT THEIR TEACHING AND ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES WHICH IS CLEAR, ACCURATE, OBJECTIVE, UP-TO-DATE AND READILY ACCESSIBLE.

Information on Institution's activities is useful for prospective and current students, graduates, other stakeholders and the public.

Therefore, institutions and their academic units provide information about their activities, including the programmes they offer, the intended learning outcomes, the qualifications awarded, the teaching, learning and assessment procedures used, the pass rates and the learning opportunities available to their students, as well as graduate employment information.

The Department is communicating information about the undergraduate and the graduate courses through the website and a newsletter.

The website <https://www.bma.upatras.gr> provides all necessary information about the lectures, faculty, rules and regulations, etc. about the course and the department. One could consider this website as a virtual warehouse of information. Available information in Greek seems to be updated yet this is not the case in the English version. Information on research in both Greek and English is missing (visited on 12/12/2018). Nevertheless, evaluation reports and other critical documents are available publicly, a clear sign of the strive of the Department for transparency.

The Department issues also a newsletter yet not systematically. In the newsletter, news on seminars and events as well as awards and news of graduates are communicated. An example of the newsletter was not presented to the Panel.

During the deliberations, the faculty members highlighted:

- the communication of news through social-media, such as Facebook, yet the channels are not owned and controlled by the department;
- the alumni network, i.e. a list of emails of graduates, that enables the dissemination of relevant information to the graduates.

The Department does not have a communication policy nor a social-media specific policy.

Panel judgement

Principle 8: Public Information	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	X
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

Considering the above findings, the Panel submits the following recommendations for the perusal of the Department, the School and the University:

1. It is strongly suggested, the Department to formulate and follow a coherent communication strategy that includes also policies for the social media.
 - a. It is important the Department to select the appropriate social media and own the channel that distributes the information to its members, i.e. students, faculty, alumni, associated and affiliated members as well as interested users of these media.
 - b. It is necessary the Department to control the quality, quantity and integrity of information transmitted; legal and policy issues might emerge therefore a policy and relevant QA/QC procedures are required.
 - c. The Department should also have the relevant 'metrics' in place, e.g. 'read ratios', 'time to respond', 'next visit', etc., in order to measure the penetration of the message to the targeted groups.
2. The Department is encouraged to prepare a newsletter regularly, e.g. every quarter; the goal of this newsletter is to update the recipients and to invite them to visit firstly the website of the Department and secondly any relevant and affiliated source. Students and administrative staff are also encouraged to contribute small texts.
3. It is also suggested the Department to issue a Thesaurus annually, i.e. a summary of all educational and research activities of the academic year. The goal should be no other than the consolidation of information in a common format of information spread in many documents and the website, such as classification of the aggregate research production, educational effort, evaluations, research grants, etc. It is at the discretion of the Departments to decide the content of the Thesaurus. Sensitive or personal information, such as evaluations, might not be published, yet this is a subject of internal discussions, agreement and consensus.
4. The Thesaurus and the newsletter could be used as reference for alumni and stakeholders as well as offer content for the social-media channels.
5. It is strongly suggested the newsletter and Thesaurus to be available in both Greek and English.
6. All the above recommendations should be closely linked with the established QA/QC policies of MODIP and OMEA and should at the end also lead to sort of 'corporate identity' of the Department.

Principle 9: On-going Monitoring and Periodic Internal Review of Programmes

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

Regular monitoring, review and revision of study programmes aim to maintain the level of educational provision and to create a supportive and effective learning environment for students.

The above comprise the evaluation of:

- the content of the programme in the light of the latest research in the given discipline, thus ensuring that the programme is up to date;*
- the changing needs of society*
- the students' workload, progression and completion;*
- the effectiveness of the procedures for the assessment of students*
- the students' expectations, needs and satisfaction in relation to the programme;*
- the learning environment, support services and their fitness for purpose for the programme*

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. Revised programme specifications are published.

In theory, a self-study describes how the academic department is fulfilling its mission by focusing on teaching, scholarship and service. Ideally, a self-study discusses how goals and objectives are linked to the university mission and strategic priorities, and includes strategies for further developing the department's programs. The self-study should provide information that reveals the department's efforts to develop and offer a high-quality education for students through a curriculum that is relevant, rigorous and current. The self-study often includes identifiable student outcomes and assessment of those outcomes. The self-study also includes descriptions of faculty contributions to quality, including teaching, research, and service excellence.

The University of Patras is in the process of building the infrastructure that will contribute to a culture of academic excellence through ongoing assessment efforts of its academic programs.

Panel judgement

Principle 9: On-going Monitoring and Periodic Internal Review of Programmes	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	X
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

The Panel recommends that future reports begin to incorporate the following topics to ensure ongoing quality evaluation and improvement of all academic programs:

- Student learning outcomes and assessment results of those outcomes that inform changes in curriculum, pedagogy, instructional resources, and student services.
- The department's efforts to enhance student learning, promote research excellence, and serve constituents' needs.
- Innovations that enhance research and teaching effectiveness.
- Peer comparison that offers quality benchmarks.
- Indicators of quality, including teaching, research, and outreach awards; refereed publications in quality journals.
- Invited lectures and presentations.
- Prestigious positions and invited memberships.
- Placement of graduates.
- Student retention, average time to completion, and graduation rates.
- Results of student exit interviews, alumni surveys, and employer surveys.
- Results of faculty-designed and other assessments of student learning.

Principle 10: Regular External Evaluation of Undergraduate Programmes

PROGRAMMES SHOULD REGULARLY UNDERGO EVALUATION BY COMMITTEES OF EXTERNAL EXPERTS SET BY HQA, AIMING AT ACCREDITATION. THE TERM OF VALIDITY OF THE ACCREDITATION IS DETERMINED BY HQA.

HQA is responsible for administrating the programme accreditation process which is realised as an external evaluation procedure, and implemented by a committee of independent experts. HQA grants accreditation of programmes, with a specific term of validity, following to which revision is required. The accreditation of the quality of the programmes acts as a means of verification of the compliance of the programme with the template's requirements, and as a catalyst for improvement, while opening new perspectives towards the international standing of the awarded degrees.

Both academic units and institutions participate in the regular external quality assurance process, while respecting the requirements of the legislative framework in which they operate.

The quality assurance, in this case the accreditation, is an on-going process that does not end with the external feedback, or report or its follow-up process within the Institution. Therefore, Institutions and their academic units ensure that the progress made since the last external quality assurance activity is taken into consideration when preparing for the next one.

The Panel is cognizant of the external evaluation for the Department of Business Administration that took place from January 27-29, 2014, as well as the final report which was subsequently submitted.

This is the first time that the Department of Business Administration at the University of Patras undergoes an external accreditation process carried out by a panel of international and independent experts.

The process of external accreditation conforms to the stated policy of HQA/ADIP and also provides an international filter for the Department of Business Administration at the University of Patras. It has as an overarching objective to enhance the Department's academic brand, allow its faculty members to compete for research funds from EU sources, facilitate the student mobility within the ERASMUS program and other international exchange opportunities and the cross fertilization of ideas and best practices between the local academic community and the international accreditation panel of experts.

The Panel strongly endorses the stated objective of the HQA/ADIP that the quality assurance process does not have an end date. In effect, it is an ongoing and persistent process that aims at academic excellence. In consequence, the process of quality assurance should be perceived as a continuum time line. At the end of the day, the implementation of best practices, improvements and establishing internal mileposts for self-assessment and quality assurance are the most effective methods for achieving quality assurance excellence.

Panel judgement

Principle 10: Regular External Evaluation of Undergraduate Programmes	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	X
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

The Panel recognizes that internal quality reviews are completed on an annual basis by the academic unit's OMEA. Based on this observation the Panel is of the opinion that external accreditation panels should only be required periodically.

The Panel recommends that a future external accreditation for this Programme should be formed after five years have elapsed.

Last but not least, the Panel suggests ADIP has a role to monitor the QA plan of MODIP.

PART C: CONCLUSIONS

I. Features of Good Practice

Greek universities are the custodians of the nation's most valuable resource – its young women and men. In consequence, they have an obligation to serve as catalysts for a purposeful dialogue with government, civil society, the business sector and other partners in order to ensure adequate financial and human resources that will empower them to fulfill their academic mission. The Department of Business Administration at the University of Patras is uniquely situated to spearhead this constructive dialogue.

The Department exhibits the following good practices:

1. A system is in place to support efforts toward Quality Assurance, OMEA at the departmental level, in partnership with MODIP, at the university level.
2. There is an enthusiastic spirit for quality assurance among faculty, students, alumni and stakeholders.
3. The academic program is student-centric and supportive of effective learning outcomes and student mentoring.
4. There is a commendable engagement and commitment on the part of the faculty for their academic mission.

II. Areas of Weakness

1. The Department lacks a comprehensive and coherent strategic plan that prohibits them from realizing their full academic potential.
2. A comprehensive media and alumni outreach engagement plan has the potential of enhancing the quality assurance objectives of the Department.
3. It is imperative to establish measurable outcomes to assess progress toward quality assurance goals and objectives.

III. Recommendations for Follow-up Actions

1. The Department should develop a thorough strategic plan that will be used to:
 - a. define clearly the vision and the mission of the Programme and of the Department,
 - b. set priorities,
 - c. focus energy and resources,
 - d. strengthen educational and research operations,
 - e. ensure that students, faculty, administrative staff, alumni and other stakeholders are working toward common goals,

- f. establish agreement around intended outcomes/results, and
- g. assess and adjust direction of the Programme(s) and of the Department in response to a changing academic and economic environment.

In particular, the strategic plan should also (indicatively and not exhaustively) consider the:

- h. reduction of the need -dependency- of public funding through commissioned research and offering of executive training courses;
 - i. measurable improvement of the visibility of the Programme at national and international level;
 - j. measurable improvement of the employability and experiences gained abroad of the students;
 - k. specific and measurable research and educational goals;
 - l. workload and work-life balance of the faculty;
 - m. procedures taking into account the feedback from students, faculty and stakeholders, as well as from established procedures, such as the questionnaires, towards the improvement of the Programme (see Principle 9);
 - n. policy regarding communication, use of public media, etc. as well as of the engagement of the alumni in the development of the Programme (see Principle 8).
2. Bearing in mind that this is the first accreditation report for this Programme, the Panel recommends the next panel to monitor the implementation of the recommendations in this report.

IV. Summary & Overall Assessment

The Principles where full compliance has been achieved are:

Principles 3, 4 and 6

The Principles where substantial compliance has been achieved are:

Principles 1, 2, 5, 7, 8 and 10

The Principles where partial compliance has been achieved are:

Principle 9

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 Accreditation Panel for the Business Administration
Undergraduate Programme of the University of Patras**

Name and Surname

Signature

Prof. Constantine Passaris

University of New Brunswick, Fredericton, New Brunswick, Canada

Prof. Sotiris Hji-Avgoustis

Ball State University, Carmel, Indiana, USA

Prof. Orestis Schinas

Hamburg School of Business Administration, Hamburg, Germany