



ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ

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ΑΡΧΗ ΔΙΑΣΦΑΛΙΣΗΣ ΚΑΙ ΠΙΣΤΟΠΟΙΗΣΗΣ
ΤΗΣ ΠΟΙΟΤΗΤΑΣ ΣΤΗΝ ΑΝΩΤΑΤΗ ΕΚΠΑΙΔΕΥΣΗ

HELLENIC REPUBLIC

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HELLENIC QUALITY ASSURANCE
AND ACCREDITATION AGENCY

Accreditation Report for the Undergraduate Study Programme of:

Pharmacy

Institution: University of Patras

Date: 29 February 2020

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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 **Pharmacy** of the **University of Patras** for the purposes of granting accreditation

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PART A: BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT OF THE REVIEW

I. The Accreditation Panel

The Panel responsible for the Accreditation Review of the Undergraduate Study Programme **Pharmacy** of the **University of Patras** comprised the following four (4) members, drawn from the HQA Register, in accordance with the Law 4009/2011:

- 1. Professor Arion Xenofon Chatziioannou (Chair)**
University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), USA

- 2. Dr Georgios Aislaitner**
Bundesinstitut für Arzneimittel und Medizinprodukte (BfArM), Germany

- 3. Dr Nikoletta Fotaki**
University of Bath, United Kingdom

- 4. Andreas Vitsos**
Panhellenic Pharmaceutical Association (PFS), Greece

II. Review Procedure and Documentation

- General information and review material

All relevant review material was received about 4 weeks prior to the visit to the Department of Pharmacy by 3 members of the Accreditation Panel (AP); 10 days before the visit the material was received by 1 member of the AP. Supplementary material providing clarifications was received during the site visit.

- Dates of the site visit

The visit at the Department of Pharmacy of the University of Patras was carried out from Monday February 24, 2020 until Tuesday February 25, 2020.

- AP meetings

On Monday February 24, 2020, a briefing took place at the ADIP offices from 9.30 am to 12:15 pm. The current General Director of ADIP, Dr. Besta, informed the AP about the overall goals of the visit. The AP was then transported to the Department of Pharmacy of the University of Patras where they met with the Vice-Rector/President of University Quality Assessment Committee (MODIP) (Prof. Nikos Karamanos), the Head of the Department (Prof. Georgios A. Spyroulias), Internal Audit Team (OMEA) (Prof. Sophia Antimisiaris, Prof. Evangelia Papadimitriou, Prof. Christos Kontoyiannis, Prof. Sotiris Nikolaropoulos) and MODIP representatives (Prof. Costas Stathopoulos, Prof. Athanasios Karalis, Assoc. Prof. Konstantinos Nikolakopoulos). The meeting ended at 7.00 pm and the AP members were transported back to the hotel.

On Tuesday February 25, 2020, the AP members were transported to the Department of Pharmacy of the University of Patras where they met with teaching staff members (academic) and a representative of Laboratory Teaching Staff (EDIP) to discuss professional development, workload, undergraduate curriculum development and possible weaknesses. Discussions took place with undergraduate students (3rd, 4th and 7th year) regarding their study experience and student welfare. Afterwards, the AP met with graduate students (current MSc and PhD students, and graduated students) to discuss their experience of studying at the Department and career paths. The AP met with employers, social partners and discussed relations of the Department with external stakeholders from the private and the public sector. The AP also visited selected teaching and research facilities of the Department. A meeting with OMEA and MODIP representatives took place for a discussion on several points/findings which needed further clarification, and Prof. Arion Chatziioannou, the Chair of the AP, presented informally the findings of the visit. The Panel met on Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday 26-28 February, 2020 to prepare its report, which was submitted to HQA on Saturday 29th February, 2020.

Summary: The Department of Pharmacy of the University of Patras organized an extensive schedule that allowed meetings and discussions with most of the teaching staff. The AP had the opportunity to briefly visit teaching and research facilities. The AP also met formally with representatives of the students and selected stakeholders and representatives of MODIP, OMEA and Dean of the School of Health Sciences.

III. Study Programme Profile

The University of Patras was founded by Legislation Decree 4425 of November 11, 1964 and has been in operation since 1966. In June 2013, the University of Western Greece joined the University of Patras.

The University is located in 6 cities: Patras, Messolonghi, Agrinio, Aigio, Pyrgos and Amaliada. Its Campus is a 4,500-acre open space located to the northeast and 12 km from the city of Patras.

It is the third University of Greece in terms of student population, teaching, administrative and other staff, number of Departments and awarded degrees.

At the University of Patras (June 2019) there were 29,901 undergraduate students, 1,901 postgraduate students and 2,030 PhD candidates. The total number of academics is 715. Academic work is assisted by 454 administrative staff and 1,598 researchers.

The Department of Pharmacy was established in 1977 by Presidential Decree 835/1977 Government Gazette A271. The first students were admitted in 1978 as Department of Physico-mathematical School, and since 1983, together with the Department of Medicine formed the School of Health Sciences (Presidential Decree 127/83).

The Department of Pharmacy in the University of Patras welcomed 143 undergraduate students for the year 2018-2019. During the same time period, there were 920 undergraduate, 118 postgraduate and 60 PhD students.

The Undergraduate Programme is prepared by the General Assembly of the Department of Pharmacy.

The duration of undergraduate studies in Pharmaceutical Science is five (5) years (ten semesters) and includes lectures and laboratory practicals (from 1993-94, according to Presidential Decree 110/93). From Academic Year 2016-2017, the New Curriculum is implemented gradually and annually. Study Guide (version 04), posted on the Department's website represents the Organization of the Study Programme valid from 14 January 2020.

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);*

Study Programme compliance

The Department of Pharmacy in co-operation with the University Quality Assessment Committee (MODIP) has a quality assurance policy harmonised with the University of Patras (UP). The Department of Pharmacy of the University of Patras trains students from 1977. The strategic goals of the programme of the Department of Pharmacy are interconnected with those of the University of Patras, clearly stated and published online.

The following are stated in the application for obtaining a certification: establishment and operation of the Undergraduate Programme Committee, establishment and Functioning of an Internal Audit Team (OMEA), Annual Internal Evaluation of the Department (Internal Audits), External evaluation of the

Department carried out on a regular basis either through the ADIP or through other Departmental procedures.

An update of the Curriculum has taken place recently in 2016. Quality Assurance Policy is communicated sufficiently to all parties involved, since it is posted on the Department's website. Quality Assurance relevant documentation is published online (home page of the Department).

Newcomer students are informed on the policy at the welcoming reception event, which for the academic year 2019-2020 took place on Tuesday 15th October 2019.

Specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and timely goals have been set. The goals up to December 2020 are publicly available. The strategic goals are paired with suitable Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). The goals are duly monitored updated and communicated. It is clear that the strategic goals of the Department are immediately related to achieving a certificate for Full Compliance with Quality Assurance requirements and do not represent a "Business Plan" or a roadmap for a certain period of time.

Panel judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

1. An External Advisory Board/Committee could be established to provide feedback from external Stakeholders ensuring that the strategic goals are aligned with employment and societal needs.

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.*

Study Programme compliance

The Department of Pharmacy offers an undergraduate degree of 300 European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) credits (obtained after successful completion of 48 modules). Ptychion is expected to be completed in 10 semesters (5 years) and complies with Greek and EU standards. Graduation rates up to N+2 years (N = 5) are exceptionally high (approximately 80%). There is an average of 20 students per year, who are added to the pool of the registered students without a degree, increasing the current total number of students to 920.

Curriculum revisions are initiated by OMEA and must be approved by MODIP and the University General Assembly before becoming final. The students have the option of participating in curriculum changes via their representatives in the departmental and University committees. The educational programme at the undergraduate level took into account earlier recommendations in reducing the number of modules (from 53 to 48). The structure of the curriculum covers all major subjects needed for the education of pharmacists and in accordance with national and European standards. Traditional teaching methods are used with attendance of the practical classes being mandatory. Apart from the general scientific modules, modules on Pharmacy practice and Pharmaceutical care are included in the curriculum that is helpful for the development of professional skills. Exams take place three times each year.

Student support should be offered through academic tutors, since the role is foreseen by the current legislation.

Teaching and research are linked via the diploma thesis. Undergraduate research is offered to the students performing an experimental diploma thesis.

The quality of the Department's graduates is highly perceived by external stakeholders. External stakeholders would strongly support enhancement of students' innovations and entrepreneur skills. Students have the possibility of going abroad to EU institutions of higher education via participation in the Erasmus or other mobility programs. The students' initiative in organizing seminars is impressive.

For the course questionnaires please see Principle 7.

Panel judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

2. Role of the academic tutor should become active
3. Enhance innovation and entrepreneurship via seminars, as also noted by the previous Accreditation Panel.
4. Integration of the external stakeholders (i.e. creation of External Advisory Board/Committee) to the departmental educational/training activities.
5. The Department should increase the interaction between students and local/international industry by inviting professionals to participate in various related activities (i.e. workshops, seminars).
6. The Department could encourage and increase undergraduate research thus enhancing experiential learning (especially for students who do not choose a lab based diploma thesis).
7. Update the curriculum within the pharmacy practice and pharmaceutical care modules to include suitable training in first aid, patients' interviewing, advice and vaccination methods, in line with the new professional rights of Greek pharmacists.
8. Consider a simulated pharmacy for the educational needs of Pharmacy practice and Pharmaceutical care modules.
9. Improvements of scientific skills of students should be implemented. Presentation skills such as Diploma Thesis openly presented and literature research and analysis should be included and explicitly described in the Research Methodology modules.
10. Consider the timely announcement of the exam programs for all three exam periods of the academic year at its beginning.

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.*

Study Programme compliance

The Department is focused on a student centred approach as mentioned in the declaration of conformity. Courses are delivered through lectures, laboratories and practical training, using most of the existing contemporaneous teaching methods. Course material is uploaded and available through "e-class", although some issues with the functionality of the system were reported.

The teaching staff seems to be very supportive and students develop individual skills through the final diploma thesis and seminars provided within the pharmacy practice course at their last year of studies. These seminars are given by experts from the Pharmacy profession from Community Pharmacy, Hospital or Industry settings.

There is also provision for special educational methods concerning students with special needs. Moreover, the building is wheelchair accessible.

A study guide is published and available online including a detailed course description and assessment criteria. Students are informed during the first class of each course about assessment methods and criteria.

A formal procedure for student appeals is foreseen by the University of Patras Regulatory Framework (last update 25.10.2019).

Both teaching staff and student satisfaction was noted during our visit to the Department. It was assumed that teaching and learning occurs in mutual respect among teaching staff and students.

For the course questionnaires please see Principle 7.

Panel judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

11. A formal procedure for student satisfaction (or complaints), in a face to face and confidential manner, should be established for those students who cannot express themselves through the internet based platform such as for example students with special needs.

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).

Study Programme compliance

First year students are received in a dedicated welcome ceremony at the Department. Through this day, students are informed about the structure of the study, the Department's quality declaration and its research and social activity. They are given also information about university's services such as secretary, social services and the additional infrastructures such as gym.

Student progress is monitored by OMEA and reported to MODIP. The data of student progress are provided by the electronic system of MODIP and the electronic secretary.

Student mobility towards other European universities is encouraged and funded through grants such as Erasmus. All course material is expressed into the ECTS system and the coursework performed during the student mobility program is recognized as part of the learning process.

As mentioned by MODIP and OMEA a Diploma Supplement is issued regularly upon graduation for all graduates. This process is active at least from 2018 and on.

During the last year of studies, a Diploma Thesis, literature review or experimental, is performed following specific guidelines at the Department website.

The Department provides an excellent network for practical training to undergraduate students and graduates. Established relations with Achaia Pharmaceutical Society and Pharmacy departments of the two main hospitals of Patras («Agios Andreas» and University Hospital «Panagia I Voitheia») substantially facilitates practical training and job-specific skills development. Existing networking with the pharmaceutical industry provides opportunities for practical training. In this context, some funding is available through ESPA grant for training, offering posts for paid practical training within Community or Hospital Pharmacy.

Panel judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

None

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.*

Study Programme compliance

Recruitment of qualified staff follows procedures that are determined by state law and these procedures are followed by this academic unit.

The importance of both teaching and research is consistently maintained in a balanced manner and therefore as the faculty roster changes over time (through mobility and retirements), the educational mission of the programme, is always strong.

The teaching load appears to be consistent with international practices (5-14hrs/week) and its variation reflects the variability in time spent between teaching and research.

Scholarly activity, in terms of research and publications, is strongly encouraged and should continue to be so, as it elevates the overall level of the study programme, by exposing students to cutting edge research.

Programs like Erasmus are used to promote faculty, student and staff professional development.

Teaching methodologies are modern and include e-learning and the use of electronic media, but also more traditional methods, as required in laboratory and hands on classes.

The performance of faculty in teaching is monitored with a quality assurance process and by student questionnaires. Perhaps most importantly though, evidence to the success of this is provided by the high employers' satisfaction of graduates of the Programme, regarding the skillset of the degree holders.

The environment at the Department has very attractive components, such as excellent research lab spaces and a student body that is amongst the best that Greece has to offer. Drawbacks though are the bureaucratically lengthy process of faculty recruitment that is overly centrally organized by the central administration of the Department of Education. This process in the past has resulted the loss of a leading candidate with international recognition, who was elected by the academic unit, but many years (approximately 4) elapsed between the election and approval of his appointment. By any measure, such a process is considered a failure (not of the academic unit), that results in a significant loss for the academic unit.

Laboratory Teaching and Technical Staff (EDIP and ETEP) and substitute teaching fellows as defined by Presidential Decree 407/80 also contribute to educational process.

Panel judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

12. For the continuation of the overall success of the Programme, the administration should concentrate on the recruitment of young and dynamic faculty, who are not born from the inside culture, and can seed innovative ideas and methodologies.
13. In the centralized process of education in Greece that includes the student selection process, the true power of the academic unit to shape its long-term future, lies in part in its capability to hire faculty with research interests aligned with its strategic vision. The current strategic plans are overly focused on immediate needs of the educational programme such as the incorporation of the MS degree in the 5 year study plan. It is recommended that the academic unit appoints an advisory committee of internal and external scientists aware of the local and regional environment in Greece and internationally that will help provide a vision statement, which will then help guide the future directions for hires. This vision statement should be reviewed periodically, e.g. every 4 years.
14. A formal mentoring process for new faculty hires is recommended, such that newcomers can be helped to navigate the academic life, its obligations and privileges.
15. Although this is not under the purview of the academic unit, but a more generalized issue of the current centralized system, the central education administration should be timely responsive to hiring opportunities.

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.

Study Programme compliance

The Department has sufficient funding for research activities. Undergraduate students' benefits from this funding could be associated with the Diploma Thesis.

The Department of Pharmacy has a dedicated building for the education and training of undergraduate students. The classrooms available in the Department's building include two large and one small classroom and access to lecture halls of the University is available. Teaching laboratories for its undergraduate students are considered sufficient. The AP cannot comment on the availability and quality of the equipment in the teaching laboratories, as during the visit there were no practical classes running. Internet access (Eduroam) is available in the building. Maintenance issues of the building were noted (humidity and deteriorated wall conditions, as well as clogged sinks in the labs).

The methodology of procurement of reagents is overly centralized and causes unacceptable delays.

The Department offers a computer room and students have access to the University's Library. Counselling services are available at the University. Classes are offered face-to-face, and material related to teaching activities is uploaded in the Department's "e-class".

Exchange programmes are in place providing opportunities for students (e.g. Erasmus) that encourage mobility, networking and acquisition of potentially new skills.

Panel judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

16. The Department in conjunction with the University and the Technical Services should take appropriate measures for the improvement of the building maintenance.
17. Parking spaces near the building entrance for persons with special needs should be increased.
18. Consider extending the operating hours of the Computer room.
19. The methodology of procurement of reagents should be revised.

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.

Study Programme compliance

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

The effective management of the Undergraduate Programme of Pharmacy as well as related activities is achieved through the collection and use of information. This is done through the Digital Jump Information System («Ψηφιακό Άλμα») available at the University of Patras, which enables students to collect information on students, staff, infrastructure, the Undergraduate Programme of studies structure, the organization and quality of teaching, the provision of services, etc.

Tools for the collection of data:

A) Teaching staff information is collected annually through the completion of electronic personalized questionnaires (Inventory Bulletin) accessible via the Internet via secure authentication and authorization.

B) The annual quantitative data completed by the Departments' Secretariat in both the Informatics System for Quality Assurance (PSDIP) of the University of Patras and the Integrated National Informatics System (OPESP) of the Hellenic Quality Assurance and Accreditation Agency (ADIP) provide aggregate information on the operation of the Department and the research activity of its teaching staff.

C) The collection of information by undergraduates and post graduates is carried out annually through the completion of electronic questionnaires, on an internet based platform. Course questionnaires are sent to the students at the end of each module, but before the assessment. These provide evaluation of the module and suggestions for improvements. The overall evaluation of the modules from the students reveals student satisfaction with the course, even though response rates range from approximately 4% to 20%, observed also in other universities worldwide. The total number of questions in the questionnaire for the undergraduate students are 36 and it takes approximately 7 minutes to complete it without writing any comments. These questionnaires (in coordination with UP's system), cannot become compulsory due to legal requirements.

Significant effort is dedicated to the development of questionnaires and tracking of student responses. For some reason, a number of students appeared to be unaware that these results are posted, showing that perhaps some outreach to the students is warranted, with explanations of the importance of the questionnaires. This could also improve the response rates.

Information obtained from the satisfaction surveys is systematically analysed, appropriately communicated and used towards improvement. All relative documentation is published online.

The academic unit analyses and evaluates data related to the availability and accessibility of resources. Annual supplementation of questions about research project, scientific project and observations from members (export of data, recording of information, comparison with data, proposals for improvement and discussion and decisions at the general assembly meeting) are also analysed.

Panel judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

20. Lengthy and time consuming questionnaires should be in principle revisited in order to reconstruct them.
21. Incorporate the additional metrics such as % response and ranges, as well as the faculty research funding for each year (in aggregate).
22. For some reason, a number of students appeared to be unaware that the results of the questionnaires are posted, showing that perhaps some outreach to the students is warranted, with explanations of the importance of the questionnaires.

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.

Study Programme compliance

Key information regarding the academic unit and the study programme are clearly stated and available online.

All course outlines of the Programme, as well as the academic unit Policy for Quality Assurance are complete and available online.

All published information is up-to-date, clear and easily accessible.

Panel judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

None

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.

Study Programme compliance

The academic programme has a high quality process for internal review, which is true not only in form, but as well as in practice. Detailed analyses of internal reviews exist from each year since 2012. The host institute takes this very seriously and is lauded for it.

The outcomes of this review are posted online, which is something that exceeds the current practice in some educational systems. Of course the results of this review are also communicated with the internal evaluation committee of the academic programme.

These reviews result in detailed action plans, which are in general followed through.

Panel judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

23. Provide an executive summary of the annual internal review report, such that it can quickly and directly relay the results to a reader in 2-4 pages maximum.

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.

Study Programme compliance

The Department of Pharmacy underwent a thorough review by ADIP and HQA in 2012. At the time, there was a detailed point by point response to that review, with highlighted changes, that included streamlining the curriculum, and a number of other changes. Overall, these changes have been successful, and have improved the academic unit which has now moved into its new location. The AP is not aware of any other external reviews of the academic unit since 2012.

In the current review, the vast majority of the faculty participated, indicating the widely understood importance, as well as the inclusiveness of the process. This participation was certainly at least corresponding to international norms for this process.

Panel judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

24. The academic staff of the Department of Pharmacy are keenly aware of the importance of the review, but perhaps are not focusing enough on its potential contribution to improvement of the academic unit. The AP is visiting to witness the successes and make recommendations for improvements, where necessary, or where they would enhance the results of the academic unit. The AP also visits on site the academic unit to provide a local picture to the ADIP through the eyes of experienced experts. The AP recognizes the efforts of the academic staff and are amongst the best advocates for any successful program. The establishment of this review in a more frequent cycle, should help smooth this process in the long run.

PART C: CONCLUSIONS

I. Features of Good Practice

The undergraduate Study Programme in the Department of Pharmacy at the University of Patras is a strong academic program, that successfully trains pharmacists which are employed in the private sector (e.g. community pharmacy, industry), the public sector (e.g. hospital pharmacy, EOF), or pursue further studies. Unemployment of graduates is low by any standards and acceptance to the Programme is coveted and highly competitive. The Study Programme has successfully adapted over the years, to accommodate changes in the required training, and most recently is adapting the integration of the MS degree in its 5 year curriculum. Specifically, the Programme has followed the recommendations of the last in depth review and is monitoring student responses with appropriate methods. The overall facilities are considered to be outstanding, with state of the art laboratories and a state of the art building, which though is not without maintenance issues. Many of the faculty of the Department are engaged in research and have significant levels of peer reviewed funding, while they also produce a good number of peer reviewed publications in good international journals.

II. Areas of Weakness

Three main areas of weaknesses were identified, in terms of (a) the development of a strategic plan for the direction of the Department, (b) improvements in student training and services, and (c) learning and research resources:

- (a) An External Advisory Board/Committee should be instituted, to include in addition to inside faculty representatives from within the Department and other Health Sciences faculty, from within Greece, but also stakeholders of the local and regional community. This committee should formulate an intermediate term plan, which should be revised and updated periodically (e.g. every 4 years).
- (b) Student tutoring support should be activated. Student training should incorporate open presentations of the Diploma Thesis, critical review of the literature, as well as recently proposed changes in the duties of pharmacists.
- (c) The new building infrastructure, already shows signs of significant wear and deterioration that unless addressed urgently, will result in extensive damages. The methodology of procurement of reagents is overly centralized and causes unacceptable delays.

III. Recommendations for Follow-up Actions

1. An External Advisory Board/Committee could be established to provide feedback from external Stakeholders ensuring that the strategic goals are aligned with employment and societal needs.
2. Role of the academic tutor should become active.
3. Enhance innovation and entrepreneurship via seminars, as also noted by the previous Accreditation Panel.
4. Integration of the external stakeholders (i.e. creation of External Advisory Board/Committee) to the departmental educational/training activities.

5. The Department should increase the interaction between students and local/international industry by inviting professionals to participate in various related activities (i.e. workshops, seminars).
6. The Department could encourage and increase undergraduate research thus enhancing experiential learning (especially for students who do not choose a lab based diploma thesis).
7. Update the curriculum within the pharmacy practice and pharmaceutical care modules to include suitable training in first aid, patients' interviewing, advice and vaccination methods, in line with the new professional rights of Greek pharmacists.
8. Consider a simulated pharmacy for the educational needs of Pharmacy practice and Pharmaceutical care modules.
9. Improvements of scientific skills of students should be implemented. Presentation skills such as Diploma Thesis openly presented and literature research and analysis should be included and explicitly described in the Research Methodology modules.
10. Consider the timely announcement of the exam programs for all three exam periods of the academic year at its beginning.
11. A formal procedure for student satisfaction (or complaints), in a face to face and confidential manner, should be established for those students who cannot express themselves through the internet based platform such as for example students with special needs.
12. For the continuation of the overall success of the Programme, the administration should concentrate on the recruitment of young and dynamic faculty, who are not born from the inside culture, and can seed innovative ideas and methodologies.
13. In the centralized process of education in Greece that includes the student selection process, the true power of the academic unit to shape its long-term future, lies in part in its capability to hire faculty with research interests aligned with its strategic vision. The current strategic plans are overly focused on immediate needs of the educational programme such as the incorporation of the MS degree in the 5 year study plan. It is recommended that the academic unit appoints an advisory committee of internal and external scientists aware of the local and regional environment in Greece and internationally that will help provide a vision statement, which will then help guide the future directions for hires. This vision statement should be reviewed periodically, e.g. every 4 years.
14. A formal mentoring process for new faculty hires is recommended, such that newcomers can be helped to navigate the academic life, its obligations and privileges.
15. Although this is not under the purview of the academic unit, but a more generalized issue of the current centralized system, the central education administration should be timely responsive to hiring opportunities.
16. The Department in conjunction with the University and the Technical Services should take appropriate measures for the improvement of the building maintenance.
17. Parking spaces near the building entrance for persons with special needs should be increased.
18. Consider extending the operating hours of the Computer room.
19. The methodology of procurement of reagents should be revised.
20. Lengthy and time consuming questionnaires should be in principle revisited in order to reconstruct them.
21. Incorporate the additional metrics such as % response and ranges, as well as the faculty research funding for each year (in aggregate).
22. For some reason, a number of students appeared to be unaware that the results of the questionnaires are posted, showing that perhaps some outreach to the students is warranted, with explanations of the importance of the questionnaires.
23. Provide an executive summary of the annual internal review report, such that it can quickly and directly relay the results to a reader in 2-4 pages maximum.

24. The academic staff of the Department of Pharmacy are keenly aware of the importance of the review, but perhaps are not focusing enough on its potential contribution to improvement of the academic unit. The AP is visiting to witness the successes and make recommendations for improvements, where necessary, or where they would enhance the results of the academic unit. The AP also visits on site the academic unit to provide a local picture to the ADIP through the eyes of experienced experts. The AP recognizes the efforts of the academic staff and are amongst the best advocates for any successful program. The establishment of this review in a more frequent cycle, should help smooth this process in the long run.

IV. Summary & Overall Assessment

The Principles where full compliance has been achieved are:

Principles 1, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10

The Principles where substantial compliance has been achieved are:

Principles 2 and 6

The Principles where partial compliance has been achieved are:

None

The Principles where failure of compliance was identified are:

None

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

**The members of the Accreditation Panel for the Undergraduate Programme
Pharmacy of the University of Patras**

Name and Surname

Signature

- **Prof. Arion Xenofon Chatziioannou (Hadjiioannou) (Chair)**, University of California, Los Angeles, California, USA
- **Dr Georgios Aislaitner**, Federal Institute for Drugs and Medical Devices, Bonn, Germany
- **Dr Nikoletta Fotaki**, University of Bath, Bath, United Kingdom
- **Mr Andreas Vitsos**, Panhellenic Pharmaceutical Association, Zakynthos, Greece