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ΑΡΧΗ ΔΙΑΣΦΑΛΙΣΗΣ ΚΑΙ ΠΙΣΤΟΠΟΙΗΣΗΣ
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HELLENIC REPUBLIC

H Q A

HELLENIC QUALITY ASSURANCE
AND ACCREDITATION AGENCY

Accreditation Report for the Undergraduate Study Programme of:

Business Administration
Institution: University of Macedonia
Date: 27 October 2019

ΑΡΙΣΤΕΙΔΟΥ 1 & ΕΥΡΙΠΙΔΟΥ, 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 Macedonia** 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 of **Business Administration** of the **University of Macedonia** comprised the following three (3) members, drawn from the HQA Register, in accordance with the Law 4009/2011:

- 1. Professor Emeritus Spyros Economides (Chair)**
California State University, East Bay, USA

- 2. Assistant Professor Despina Varnava Marouchou**
European University Cyprus, Nicosia, Cyprus

- 3. Mr. Christos Kopatsaris**
Hellenic Economic Chamber, Thessaloniki, Greece

II. Review Procedure and Documentation

The Accreditation Panel (AP) members received the Proposal for Accreditation and associated supporting material for the Department of Business Administration of the University of Macedonia electronically for review, in advance of the scheduled visit on October 22 and 23, 2019.

Immediately after the flight from Athens to Thessaloniki the AP members were greeted by the University Vice Rector for academic and administrative affairs, Professor Demetrios Kirkilis, the Department Chair Vassileios Aletras and his predecessor Professor Yannis Hajidimitriou.

In the follow up meeting, Professor Vassileios Aletras gave some historical facts about the Department of Business Administration which is one of the two departments in the School of Business Administration, the other being the Department of Accounting and Finance. In his discussion, Professor Aletras talked about the basic structure and the associated courses of the Program of Study and outlined the strengths and the weaknesses of the Department, ending with remarks regarding immediate action plans.

Time was devoted in a free form discussion about issues of interest and/or concern to the Department. Points of interest included the good community perception of the Departmental culture for “openness” internally, such as the excellent interaction between students and faculty, and externally, such as the relationship between the Department and the business community. Points of concern included the excessive number of entering students each year. It was mentioned, as an example, that in the academic year of 2018 the Department had about 255 student entry positions, the Ministry of Education increased them to 368, which is a number that was further increased due to the additional 15% allowance for transfer students. The result was, and always is, increased faculty workload, overcrowded facilities and insufficient resources to support basic needs of the Department.

In the remainder of the time, views were exchanged among the participants closely related to the principles of quality improvement, as dictated by ADIP, such as the student centered learning, student practical training, student evaluations, mobility of students and faculty, and relationships with local stakeholders and businesses with regard to student employability.

Finally, a discussion and exchange of views took place regarding the legal changes and ramifications in the status of the “student asylum”. The recent changes implemented by the government have restored safety and have eliminated disruption and chaos that have affected the normal, orderly operation, not only of the department but the entire institution in the past.

The only other meeting of the day was with members of the Unit of Internal Evaluation of the Department (OMEA), representative(s) of the Quality Assurance Unit for the institution (MODIP) and one member of its staff. The major portion of the time in this meeting was devoted on a presentation which focused entirely on the degree of compliance with the 10 basic Quality Principles required by ADIP for the Accreditation of the Undergraduate Study Program. Even though the practice in such meetings is not to allow presentations due to the shortage of time,

the presentation was well prepared and organized and accepted by the AP because it gave a wealth of information and answered a lot of questions that otherwise would have been raised. The questions were confined to clarifications and/or elaborations of the issues involved and the AP got a fairly good idea on the degree of compliance with the Principles of interest for the Accreditation.

The first meeting of the second day was with a group of professors of the Department of all ranks. Some of the concerns that were heard are typical in all departments in higher education. Heavy workload, too many responsibilities, lack of financial resources. There was a comment that the administration should focus more on the safety of the faculty and improve their working conditions, something that was more critical with the prevailing legal “asylum” environment in the recent past. A comment was made regarding the legal restrictions placed on academia regarding the use of post-doctoral personnel in teaching in order to create some extra time for the regular faculty that could be used for research activities. Related to that, it is felt that the government should provide funds for academic assistants and allow for flexibility in their use in various activities. On the question of why the undergraduate thesis is not mandatory, the answer was that the high ratio of graduating students to faculty makes it prohibitive. Several legal and practical reasons were also named as to why the practical training is not a mandatory requirement in the Program of Study.

On the positive side, faculty members were very pleased with the congeniality and friendly working relationship that they have with the students and some of them described the vehicles and tools used to link teaching and research. Faculty is pleased to have benchmarks set for research productivity and to articulate a strategic plan of focused research goals and activities. Issues related to the student evaluations and their use were also discussed.

The next meeting was with undergraduate students. Most of them stated their satisfaction with the content and coverage of their Program of Study and they are appreciative of the friendly and supportive relationship that they maintain with the Faculty. Even though they were not thoroughly familiar with the Quality Assurance effort of the department, they were aware of its impact to the program and of the enhancement that Quality Assurance policy may contribute to the value of their degree. AP members encouraged the students to get interested and involved in the quality improvement efforts as they are the recipients of the resulting benefits. Some of the students indicated that the influence and control of the political party affiliated student organizations in the institution is still an actual deterrent in their ability to organize cultural or social committees and associations or participate in departmental governance committees in the capacity of student representatives. They indicated that the low participation observed in the student evaluations is due to the general student population perception that the conclusions that may be drawn from the evaluations never get to be implemented. However, some students indicated that they have seen some positive improvements. Finally, they do realize that because student population is large and the building is non expandable, there will always be shortage of facilities for educational use.

After a brief lunch, the AP members were taken to a tour of the most essential university facilities, all of which are part of a single building composed of four joint multilevel, intercommunicating towers. Facilities such as classrooms, classroom auditoriums, laboratories,

the electronic conference center and various administrative offices were visited. The AP members were especially impressed with the library and the student / faculty dining facility.

The next meeting was with graduate students of the Department. Some of them were engaged in post graduate degree programs, others were employed with local businesses, and some were involved in both endeavors. They all felt that the knowledge acquired through their Program of Study equipped them well for the challenges of the work environment in which they were employed. Many of them are keeping in touch with their former instructors regarding professional matters. There is no formal structure or mechanism for the alumni community to formalize and streamline the exchange of information or implementation of joint activities with the Department.

The next meeting for the AP was with local employers, social partners and stakeholders of the Department and included executives from (1) business and industry, (2) business consultants and (3) members of chambers of industry and commerce in executive positions. They were all enthusiastic about promoting and strengthening the cooperation between the Department and the local business community and several interests and suggestions were discussed, such as:

- The enhancement of the student practical training, including alternative ways to finance its operation. The stakeholders would like to see the student practical training become a mandatory requirement of the Program of Study. The work and/or research activity to be related exclusively to the local businesses and industry.

- The formation of an Advisory Board with members from the faculty, alumni and stakeholders to become a platform of communication, coordination and information sharing of these three entities. This will formalize and facilitate the achievement of their mutual goals and interests, especially as they relate to the employment and career advancement of the graduates. An electronic portal could be developed to support this effort. Perhaps the existing Student Career Office (DASTA) electronic platform could be expanded and enhanced in order to support the Advisory Board.

Overall, in this meeting the main interest and concern was the enhancement and development of the student knowledge, experience and skills related to the job market in advance of their graduation to improve the graduate's chances of employment on one hand and the interests of employers to find good candidates to fulfill their operational needs.

There was a follow up meeting with the representatives of OMEA, the MODIP group so that the AP could provide feedback about observations and findings as they were observed during the AP visit.

In the closure meeting with the Vice Rector and the Department chair the AP summarized their key findings and impressions regarding the efforts, commitment and compliance of the Department with the Quality Assurance program principles. The AP members expressed their appreciation for the cooperation and hospitality that was extended to them during their stay.

III. Study Programme Profile

The Department of Business Administration is one of the first two departments that were created in the University of Macedonia after it was founded in 1990 as a restructured and redefined Higher Industrial School of Thessaloniki. In 2013 the Department merged with the department of Marketing and Operations Management which was based in the city of Edessa.

The Program of Study of the Department offers 48 courses plus an additional 4 courses of foreign languages which amount to a total of 306 ECTS units. A minimum of 240 ECTS units are required for graduation according to the European directive. Out of the four years which are typically required for graduation, the first two years are devoted to compulsory fundamental courses such as management or marketing and compulsory basic courses such as economics or other quantitative courses. The next two years of the program are composed of compulsory specialization courses and elective courses from both specializations, the two specializations being (1) Business Administration and (2) Marketing and Operations Management.

The Program of Studies is served by 15 professors, 3 Associate Professors, 7 Assistant Professors, 1 Lecturer, 1 Special Education Member, 1 Laboratory Teaching Staff Member and 6 Special Technical Laboratory Staff members. The Departmental Administrative Office has 5 Staff members. The Department has a strong commitment to Quality Assurance and Continuous Improvement and was one of the first to be externally evaluated on these aspects.

The Departmental website <https://www.uom.gr/ba> provides plenty of information on facility infrastructures that are utilized, laboratory facilities, student and faculty affairs in terms of regulations, processes and administrative procedures, faculty research and the implementation of the Quality Assurance Program with regard to structure, resources and support.

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

During the extensive exchange of views with the members of the Institution's Quality Assurance Unit (QAU/MODIP) and the Internal Evaluation Group (IEG/OMEA). The Accreditation Panel (AP) could ascertain the following:

The department proceeded in 2015 to develop a strategic development plan for the five-year period 2015-2020.

The plan includes:

- The mission

- Identifying the objectives
- The Actions in order to achieve the objectives

An academic committee will prepare, as well, the strategic development plan for the next five years 2021-2025.

Based on the strategic development plan, the annual review and the internal audit of the quality assurance system, the overall objectives of the department are as follows:

1. Providing top quality student-centered services
2. Performing cutting-edge research work.
3. Developing partnerships with educational and research institutions in Greece and abroad
4. Providing jobs for its graduates in the private and public sectors
5. Obtaining the necessary information to adapt and enrich the curriculum.

The purpose of the department's quality assurance policy is the overall satisfaction of the stakeholders (Faculty and staff, students, local business community) achieved through:

1. Timely troubleshooting and continuous evaluation of their satisfaction
2. The continuous investigation, recording, analysis and review of the needs of all parties involved, with a view to their optimal satisfaction
3. The continuous monitoring toward the fulfillment of the agreed requirements of the parties involved.
4. Optimizing the use of the resources to ensure economic viability

The Department has established a Quality Assurance policy for the undergraduate program of Business Administration, which is comprehensive, using specific goals paired with key performance indicators (KPIs). The indicators are in line with those required by ADIP and are supplemented by specific ones unique to the Department and the University. QA policies provide for an annual assessment.

The Quality Assurance policy is made public through the Department's webpage www.uom.gr/ba and the internal webpage (www.compous.uom.gr) and the goals are monitored and updated as appropriate during the annual review cycle.

Panel judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

- The AP recommends that IEG/OMEA actively promotes a stronger involvement of the student body, including returning Erasmus students, in the annual quality assessment review, as they are the main beneficiaries of the process.

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 organization of the curriculum has undergone a major review based on the strategic plan (2015 - 2020) in 2013 after the merge with the department of Marketing and Operations Management which was based in the city of Edessa (www.uom.fe/ba/odhgos-spoudon-rmhmatow-ode-2019-2020). The main objective of the curriculum is to achieve the mission of the department.

The structure of the program has a rational nature and is clearly articulated and communicated to all the involved groups. There is an ongoing process with annual revisions of the curriculum including procedures of consultation with all the stakeholders (internal and external) and update the student' guide in these annual reviews.

The Department and the Institute has open communication channels with external stakeholders, and it is important to maintain this good relationship not only to receive feedback from the business community to align the study program with the needs of the job market but also to enhance the employment opportunities of the graduates.

For the design and approval of the curriculum, under the direction and management of the Program of Studies Committee, the Department conducts a mandatory annual Program of Studies review every April and follows institutionalized discrete processes to implement modifications or revisions, as required, based on feedback from students, faculty, external stakeholders or comparative studies of other comparable undergraduate programs.

The curriculum includes 37.96% compulsory courses, 62.04% student elective courses and 9.26% laboratory courses.

Panel judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

- Increase the level of co-operation with Professional bodies as to further enhance the quality of the Program of Studies.
- The Department is encouraged to introduce courses in Ethics and Data Analytics to enhance the Program's value.
- A list of selected courses now offered by the Department should be taught in English, in cooperation with other departments, to enable Erasmus students to take a full-semester ECTS.

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

From the evidence gathered, after the AP's meetings with the various stakeholders including the faculty and students, it seems that the student-centered philosophy has been implemented by the department in most areas of teaching and learning.

Based on data presented to the AP, a comparison of the Department to other similar departments of 10 other Greek Universities, the Department comes 3rd in preference for entering student enrollment.

The students are encouraged to be actively involved in their learning through many different teaching methods used by the faculty of the Department such as: group work, case study, problem solving exercises and analysis and presentation of data. In addition, extra Laboratory – based courses are offered to enhance and address student inquiries concerning the lesson. However, the lecture remains the main method of teaching despite the known drawbacks when it is delivered to large groups of students, such as in the case of first year students. There are office hours organized by faculty where students are encouraged to attend for further support.

Course Outlines are provided for all courses and are made accessible through the University website and through the COMPUS platform. The Course Outlines provide information on the learning outcomes, course content, bibliography and course assessment criteria. However, the Department needs to make sure that all Course Outlines clearly indicate the assessment criteria. The Department should consider adopting midterm exams, (as an additional method of assessment), and as part of the continuous assessment process. This was also suggested by the students.

The students are encouraged to evaluate their courses every semester, through questionnaires (which are given in class), in terms of (a) teaching, (b) content (c) teaching material and (d) faculty. The evaluation results are also used in the computation of some KPIs in the QA process.

Students with learning difficulties are given special attention and assistance to their specific needs by the faculty. The university is shown to be sensitive to the needs of the disabled by providing easy access to all major facilities including the library where a room with appropriate equipment, such as a special magnifying machine and a braille computer is set up for use by the visually impaired students. It is advisable that faculty be well informed (perhaps through specialized seminars) of how to best accommodate and approach students with special learning difficulties.

The students are informed about their courses and other activities through email accounts provided by the University. The electronic platform COMPUS is in operation and enables students to access information regarding their courses. Computer laboratories are accessible on an extended hour schedule.

The Department has adopted the 'Academic Advisor' designation and assignment for each student, which up to now has been in existence as an informal practice and it will become an official policy of the Department in the coming year. The purpose of the Academic Advisor is to support and advice students regarding their courses throughout the duration of their studies. This is a good indication of the academic support provided to students by the Department.

Students are represented in many committees of the Department.

The Career Office DASTA is managing information and communications of interest to Alumni of the Department through social media such as LinkedIn and Facebook. It also operates through the University's website a Graduates Register. It would be advisable, however, to incorporate a sub-section dedicated exclusively to alumni affairs. This could provide the mechanism for networking, publicizing of business opportunities, creation of synergies, and gather data about career paths. These tasks and information would be of value in the QA process.

The department can resolve student complaints (usually about grades or other issues relating to the Program of Study) through the academic advisor. It may be advisable, however, for more serious situations such as, bullying or sexual harassment, that the Department establishes an official Complaint and Appeal Procedure.

Panel judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

- The Career Office should incorporate a sub-module in its portal dealing exclusively with alumni issues
- The Department should consider adopting midterm exams, as an additional method of assessment for student performance
- Familiarize the faculty (through specialized seminars, conferences) of how to best accommodate and approach students with special learning disabilities
- Establish an official Complaint and Appeal Procedure, for student complaints of more serious nature, such as bullying or sexual harassment, rather than limiting the procedure to handling student complaints regarding grades.

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

The number of students admitted to the Department is far higher than what the Department can accept. This is because the admission policies and processes are regulated by the ministry of Education and the Department has no control over the number of students they enroll. This of course places more pressure to the already limited Study Program resources.

The Department has adopted the student Orientation Week for all new incoming students. The students are informed on the different procedures and policies of the Department by faculty and administrative officers such as the librarian and DASTA personnel.

Specific guidelines exist in the Program of Study Guide for the progression of the students through their studies. However, the number of courses required for the completion of the program far exceeds the 240 ECTS requirement and this makes it difficult for the students to graduate within the expected four-year period.

Regarding poor student evaluation results for a given course, on the suggestion of OMEA, the Department chair invites the faculty member to discuss the results and explores methods of improvement.

The Department collaborates with 28 other European institutions in the ERASMUS program. The number of students participating in the ERASMUS program has increased dramatically in the last 5 years. Recently, more courses are offered in English by the Department and this will increase the number of incoming students in the ERASMUS program.

The department provides several laboratories where students can work in smaller groups. The laboratories are equipped with computers and with audio / video devices.

The Practical Experience is not a mandatory Program of Studies requirement. As such, only 1/3 of the students currently participate. The Department has outlined several legal and other practical problems associated with its inclusion as a compulsory requirement.

Panel judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

- Practical Experience should be made compulsory (with allocated ECTS) in the Program of Studies. The Department should seek ways to overcome some of the current obstacles such as the legal ones
- The department should redesign the Program of Studies in order to reduce the number of ECTS from the current 306 to the existing 240 ECTS requirement.

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

The Department is currently supported by 27 active members of faculty. The promotion of faculty is in accordance with a procedure mandated by law, as specified by the Ministry of Education. The student evaluations are also taken into consideration in this process. Recruitment and appointment procedures for new faculty are also prescribed by Law. The Department has adopted recruitment methods aimed to attract highly qualified candidates.

The faculty is encouraged to participate in the ERASMUS program. However, only a small number of Faculty members are participating in the Program because they have to incur part of the cost.

The Department covers a major portion of the cost of 2 internal and 2 external conferences for each faculty member.

The Department prides itself of its high-ranking regarding research publications in peer reviewed journals amongst 5 similar Departments. From the information presented to the AP, over 80% of faculty participate in journal and conference committees and over 80% publish research in journals with impact factor in ABS and SCIMAGO.

There is lack of an official faculty Professional Development Forum informing faculty about new technologies and updated methods of instruction. The Department should consider introducing a peer evaluation review for the instructors to obtain feedback on possible improvements in their teaching or useful comments and suggestions.

The student to faculty ratio is over 65 students per faculty which is far too high, exceeding the recommended number which is around 18. This number is not expected to fall as the number of admitted students is set by the Ministry of Education

Despite the high ratio of students per Faculty member, the students are satisfied with the quality of teaching. This was confirmed at a meeting between the AP members and the students. The main reason behind this success is, perhaps, the dedication of faculty towards their students and their duties.

The teaching workload of staff, by law, is 6 hours per week (minimum). But the workload of each faculty exceeds this number. There are no official incentives provided to the teaching staff who are more actively involved in research to get teaching load reduction.

Panel judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

- The Department should consider establishing a Faculty Professional Development Forum, as a way of informing faculty on new technologies and updated methods of instruction (through specialized seminars or discussions of good practices).

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 University of Makedonia has enough resources to support learning and academic activity in general. For example, the University premises are adapted for people with special learning needs and disabilities, there are ramps and lifts with sound guidance in almost all levels. The library is specially equipped with modern equipment for the blind. All the teaching facilities are equipped with modern technological devices (computers, wireless internet connection, projectors and screens, flip charts, microphones) to facilitate teaching and learning. There are approximately 5 fully equipped computer labs in the University of Makedonia, 2 of which are accessible to students of the Department. The Department has a modern and well-equipped Library with links to databases with hundreds of international journals. The library is also available to the public.

The administrative staff are well qualified to carry out their duties. Many of them have completed or carried out postgraduate studies in subjects relevant to their duties and the Department.

Upon registration, students obtain personal passwords to the University web services and to the COMPUS platform where they find all information regarding their courses.

The Career Office supports the students in finding a job by preparing and developing seminars and presentations on issues regarding CVs, job interviews etc. The Career Office holds Job

forums once every year for employers to recruit graduates to fill job vacancies. It is advisable that the Career Office develops a Career Management System where employers can post job vacancies and internship openings, which could be directed to the students of the Department.

The Practical Experience as a policy was first introduced by the Department in 1997. The University host a Practical Experience (Practicum) Office whose main objective is to make the link between theory and practice by encouraging students to work with local companies for the duration of 3 months. Furthermore, the Office informs students of the new labor market trends and skills required for specific jobs. However, Practical Experience is not mandatory of the Program of Study of the Department.

In recent years the Department has developed an Innovation and Entrepreneurship Unit whose aim is to promote the idea of entrepreneurship through seminars and courses such as Woman and Entrepreneurship, Innovation and Entrepreneurship etc.

The Department also hosts a Student Counselling and Support Centre which offers Psychological Support to the students with mental health problems. The Centre also offers evaluation services for students with specific learning disabilities.

Students have access to the gym through the University's Physical Education Fitness programs.

Student scholarships are not available. Only food subsidies are provided to qualified students based on their financial status.

Panel judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

The Career Office should consider the establishment of a formal Management System on their portal where employers can post job vacancies and internship openings

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 university's central information management system, processes data that is collected and submitted by the departmental administration office to support and manage student and Faculty records. The OMEA submits information relevant to the departmental Quality Assurance system maintenance. The departmental data is supplemented and combined with data information collected and processed on a university wide level through systems, such as COMPUS, for academic support and information exchange and communication between faculty and students or CARDISOFT for student progress information. Easy access and ability to extract, analyze and present the results is provided by the system.

Some of the categories of information provided by the Department specific to its domain are: For students, their profile, their grades, their progress in the Program of Studies, their participation in the Erasmus+ program. For Faculty, results of student evaluations on the courses taught, their career development, their publications and participation in professional conferences or research projects. For Quality Assurance purposes, course outlines, faculty professional activities and administrative or advising duties and research programs and activities. The most important aspect of the system output is the computation and analysis of the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) in all of the three categories above for the purpose of Program of Study improvements, performance measurement and assessment of goal

achievement and eventually for use in the revision or development of the departmental operating procedures and strategic plan.

In addition to the above, the system provides the ability to obtain and/or submit forms and information, such as the Diploma Supplement and other key procedural documents or make single user inquiries on limited basis, controlled by assigned personal codes. Overall, the ability of the Department to gather, submit, process, analyze, disseminate and utilize information is extensive and effective.

Panel judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

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

The Department makes available on the public domain, mostly through its website, [www.https://uom.gr/ba](https://uom.gr/ba), a substantial amount of information related but not limited to:

- Academic Calendar
- Activities conducted for the benefit of the community
- Key administrative procedures and rules concerning students, such as the Study Guide, Erasmus Program, advisory and support structures, post graduate programs, issues of excellence, innovation, laboratory activities and other educational related material, lecture and seminar announcements to name a few.
- Key issues related to faculty, such as their profile, courses taught, publications, academic awards and links with their personal websites.
- The Departmental Newsletter
- Services and activities for the benefit of students such as Career Office, academic advising, psychological support and a one-day informational seminary for new students.
- Student employment opportunities and employment history mainly through the Career Office website which also encompasses a lot of information for its own use.

In general, the Departmental website appears to be extensive with significant and useful content. However, one encounters some difficulties in some search and navigation attempts. Most importantly, since it is meant to be available in both Greek and English, the English version is incomplete and its correspondence to the Greek version is very poor. Although these deficiencies may not be attributed directly to the Department, since the content of the website and not the design and operation are its responsibility. Nevertheless, they reflect back to the Department as far as the user is concerned.

Panel judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

- Although the public information available from the department to all interested parties seems to be broad based and informative and since most of the information is website based, the operational aspects of the website navigation should be improved and the Greek and English versions made compatible and comparable.

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 AP's meetings with the members of the IEG/OMEA and QAU/MODIP, as well as the relevant documents submitted to the AP, illustrate the Department's compliance with the requirement of having in place an annual review of its Undergraduate Study Program. This review is conducted following the process outlined in the Internal Evaluation Quality Assurance System, which is monitored and managed by QAU/MODIP and follows the accreditation guidelines set by ADIP.

The strategic plan of the department is committed to quality assurance, in line with the University of Macedonia. The OMEA is responsible for the internal evaluation system and performs

- a. the gathering of all necessary information from the teaching staff, students, professional bodies and the secretariat; and
- b. the preparation of the annual evaluation report.

Every spring, the Standing Committee on Curriculum Control and Development makes the necessary amendments and every five years redesigns it as part of strategic planning.

The establishment of an external advisory committee in the future (alumni chambers, corporations) is expected to work effectively.

Panel judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

- Initiate an on-going documentation and compilation of key, repeatable ongoing operating procedures and processes which are deemed to be of importance, aiming at their “standardization”. If the documentation is done in an easy to follow graphical form, such as a flow chart, these documents will serve as a “standards manual” that can be followed to ensure consistency of implementation (execution).

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 was evaluated by an External Evaluation Committee (EEC) at the end of 2010. Based on the ADIP guidelines, the external evaluation focused on the following areas as they relate to the QA of the Undergraduate Program of Studies (as well as the Graduate Programs):

- Curriculum
- Teaching
- Research
- All other Services
- Strategic Planning

The EEC made comments, suggestions and recommendations which, for the purpose of Accreditation, the OMEA of the Department has submitted a Progress Report for inclusion in the Proposal for Accreditation, as required by ADIP.

Among the recommendations of the External Evaluation Committee that the department elected to respond, were:

- Establish a mechanism for policy formulation, implementation and monitoring. It must be activated on an ongoing basis:
 - a. the curriculum committee
 - b. the research committee
 - c. the Strategic Planning Committee

- The department should develop clearly formulated statements about its mission and educational goals and include them in the study guide and other department papers.
- The department should expand the scope of its recruitment to include teaching staff from doctoral programs and from outside institutions in Greece and abroad.

The actions taken by the Department in response to the EEC recommendations as presented in the Progress Evaluation Report in the form of two Tables, refer to:

- A Strategic Planning Committee has been set up to prepare the 2015-2020 Strategic Plan
- The activation of a Doctoral Studies Committee in order to monitor and to support the academical research it in the department.
- The strengthening of the department human resources after being merged with the Marketing and Operations Department in 2013.
- The setup of a curriculum committee and the development of a revised curriculum after the merge.
- Facilities upgrading and improvement, especially classrooms.
- Curriculum renewal based on internationally recognized University programs in the field of Business Administration
- Updating and revising of the study guide for the department

The AP observed that the Progress Evaluation report is deficient in terms of addressing all the EEC recommendations. It is rather descriptive and not specific enough. The correspondence between the EEC recommendations and the actions taken by the Department is rather confusing and not readily evident.

Panel judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

PART C: CONCLUSIONS

I. Features of Good Practice

- Encourage and continue the culture of friendly relationship and congeniality between students and Faculty as well the ties between the department and the local business community
- There is a good number of student support services
- The Office of Environmental Management (AISEC) is a progressive and innovative service bureau

II. Areas of Weakness

- There is no long-term strategic plan for targeted or adopted research areas to promote and entice collaboration between Faculty members of the Department or colleagues from other departments to seek research funds in the academic disciplines of the Department or interdisciplinary research projects with other departments.

III. Recommendations for Follow-up Actions

- Consider ways to overcome the obstacles and make the Student Practical Training a mandatory requirement for the Undergraduate Program of Studies with assigned ECTS.
- Establish an Advisory Board with faculty members, alumni and local stakeholders to become a formal platform for communication, coordination and implementation of activities of mutual interest to all. Expand and enhance the Career Office management information system platform to be used for this endeavor.
- Embark on a modification process of the Program of Study to reduce the number of ECTS units accumulated currently before graduation down to as close to 240 from the current number of 306.
- Faculty could consider adopting the practice of recording the time it takes for each type of activity or duty they perform so that a Time Analysis can be performed for the purpose of streamlining, reallocating and possibly redirecting their involvement to tasks and activities that would better match their interests, thus, enhancing their productivity.
- The Department should compile a list of repeatable and/or significant Program of Studies or other administrative procedures and initiate an effort over time to document them in an easy to follow diagrammatic form such as a flow chart. Compile them in a folder for future Accreditation purposes.
- Promote and encourage a form of active participation and involvement of the student body, in the annual quality assessment review. As a start, portion of the undergraduate course offering in Quality Assurance may be dedicated to this effort, perhaps as a form of a case study and serve as a basis to motivate the students at large.

- Consider the establishment of a Peer Evaluation Process of courses as a supplement to student evaluations. Peers could also be drawn from all departments of the university to ensure impartiality and develop a forum for faculty to exchange views for improving best teaching practices.

IV. Summary & Overall Assessment

The Principles where full compliance has been achieved are: 1,2,3,5,6,7,9

The Principles where substantial compliance has been achieved are: 4,8,10

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 UGP Business Administration
of the University of Macedonia**

Name and Surname

Signature

Professor Emeritus Spyros Economides
California State University, East Bay, USA

Assistant Professor Despina Varnava Marouchou
European University Cyprus, Nicosia, Cyprus

Mr. Christos Kopatsaris
Hellenic Economic Chamber, Thessaloniki, Greece