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ΑΔΙΠ
ΑΡΧΗ ΔΙΑΣΦΑΛΙΣΗΣ ΚΑΙ ΠΙΣΤΟΠΟΙΗΣΗΣ
ΤΗΣ ΠΟΙΟΤΗΤΑΣ ΣΤΗΝ ΑΝΩΤΑΤΗ ΕΚΠΑΙΔΕΥΣΗ

HELLENIC REPUBLIC
HQA
HELLENIC QUALITY ASSURANCE
AND ACCREDITATION AGENCY

**Accreditation Report
for the Internal Quality Assurance System
(IQAS)**

Institution Name: University of Macedonia

Date: 10.07.2019

ΑΡΙΣΤΕΙΔΟΥ 1 & ΕΥΡΥΠΠΙΔΟΥ, 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



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



Report of the Panel appointed by the HQA to undertake the review of the Internal Quality Assurance System (IQAS) 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 Internal Quality Assurance System (IQAS) of the Higher Education Institution named: **University of Macedonia** comprised the following four (4) members, drawn from the HQA Register, in accordance with the Law 4009/2011:

1. Prof. Anthimos Georgiadis (Chair)
Leuphana Universität Lüneburg, Germany

2. Prof. Evangelos Dedousis
The American University in Dubai, Dubai, United Arab Emirates

3. Prof. Emeritus Nicholas Kyriakopoulos
The George Washington University, Washington DC, USA

4. Prof. Nicolas Tsapatsoulis
Cyprus University of Technology, Limassol, Cyprus

II. Review Procedure and Documentation

The Accreditation Panel members (AP) attended a meeting in the HQA premises in Athens on Tuesday 18/06/2019, at which staff of the HQA explained the Accreditation Procedure, and the role and tasks of the AP members. The AP members met privately afterwards to discuss their initial impressions from the documents provided by the Department and to organize their review approach and processes. The site visit to the University of Macedonia, UoM hereafter, at Thessaloniki took place on Wednesday 19/06/2019, from 09:30 to 17:00, and Thursday 20/06/2019, from 09:00 to 17:00. At the welcome meeting, the AP met initially the Rector of UoM, Prof. Stylianos Katranidis, and subsequently the Rector along with the Vice Rectors, Prof. Evgenia Alexandropoulou, responsible of Finance, Planning and Development, Prof. Dimitrios Chandrakis, Research and Lifelong Learning, and Prof. Dimitrios Kyrkillis, responsible of Administrative, Academic and Student Affairs and Head of the Quality Assurance Unit (MO.DI.P).

During those meetings, the AP members received a broad overview of the history and current situation of UoM and were informed about the Quality Assurance Procedures of UoM. The Panel laid emphasis on communicating the mandate of the visit and on identifying in particular the procedures and processes in place that will enable in the future monitoring of implementation of the IQAS.

Prof. Kyrkillis indicated that all departments of UoM have fully adopted the Quality Assurance Policy and the majority of them have been applying quality assurance procedures referring to teaching and research for more than a decade.

On the 19/06/2019 the AP had, also, meetings with:

1. the *members of the Quality Assurance Unit (MO.DI.P)* and extensively discussed with them the degree of compliance of the Internal Quality Assurance System to the Standards for Quality Accreditation,
2. *faculty members and Internal Evaluation Groups (IEGs/OMEA)*, to investigate the degree at which the internal evaluation processes were adopted and applied at the departments' level and among the faculty. They also discussed the relationship of OMEAs with the QAU and the means of collaboration, adequacy of resources and possible areas of weakness,
3. *undergraduate students and representatives of the Student Welfare Committee*, to (a) assess students' satisfaction from their study experience and campus facilities, (b) identify students participation and engagement in the quality assurance system, and (c) explore and prioritize issues concerning student life and welfare.

In the morning of 20/06/2019 the Panel visited teaching rooms and various laboratories in the campus and had the opportunity to hear from faculty members, students and laboratory assistants their views regarding the everyday operation of UoM.

The AP had, subsequently, meetings with:

1. *postgraduate students*, to solicit their views on the learning process, progression and assessment and to explore their input and overall involvement in the quality assurance system. Priority issues concerning grants, mobility, research and career opportunities were also discussed.
2. *the chief administration officers and administrative staff*, to determine their attitude towards the IQAS and to discuss with them the impact of official Institutional documents, such as the strategic plan and the Quality Manual, in the development of the Institution. Special issues arising from internal evaluation processes were also examined,

3. *graduates/ alumni*, to discuss their experience of studying at the Institution and their career path after their graduation and to provide feedback for the assessment of the Study Programmes they attended.
4. *external stakeholders*, to discuss the relations of the Institution with external stakeholders from the private and the public sector and to investigate their involvement in the Institution's strategic planning and quality assurance system.

A final meeting with the Rector and Vice Rectors and the Quality Assurance Unit took place on 20/06/2019, 15:30 - 17:00. During the meeting the Panel discussed with the QAU points, that needed further clarification and informed them, orally, about the key findings from their previous meetings and their study of the documents they were provided for the accreditation.

Overall, the onsite visit provided the Panel with the necessary information regarding the operation of the IQAS of UoM. The Panel formed a very good impression of the community of UoM and the external stakeholders. All were cooperative and forthcoming in providing any information the AP requested. The undergraduate students surprised the AP very positively by their maturity, similar to the external stakeholders by the variety of activities and initiatives.

The visit schedule was tight and the AP worked without breaks to keep up with it.

III. Institution Profile

The University of Macedonia is the second and relatively younger University in the city of Thessaloniki, specializing in economic, social as well as sciences of information and art. The state-funded University (Presidential Decree 147 / 10.04.1990), has evolved from the renowned Industrial School of Thessaloniki, which was originally founded in 1948, and its first students were admitted in the academic year 1957-1958.

Currently, the UoM consists of 4 Schools, 8 Departments, all of them located in Thessaloniki in a single one building. The administration comprises of the Rector, 3 Vice-Rectors, the Senate, the Deans of the Schools and the Heads of Departments. It has over 12000 students. The staff consists of approximately 202 permanent academic members, EEP / EDIP / ETEP /other staff 68. It also has 214 administrative staff members

The primary goal of the University is to attain educational quality of the highest standard. Quality is apparent from the high level of graduates and teaching staff, their contribution to the global academic community with prestigious international publications, innovative teaching methods, infrastructure and highly qualified administrative staff. By developing new and upgrading existing curricula of undergraduate studies, organizing postgraduate studies of the highest quality and encouraging scientific research, the University of Macedonia aspires to become one of the highest-ranking Universities in the Balkans as well as in Europe, in the areas of its expertise. It supports knowledge, research and culture. It also strengthens the dialogue with society through the public opinion research unit, the direct supporting of the museum of Macedonian struggle, activities of the school of social sciences, humanities and arts, dissemination of achievements and good practices in sciences & funding, strengthens a dynamic EU citizenship and boosts multi-cultural dimensions.

PART B: COMPLIANCE WITH THE PRINCIPLES

Principle 1: Institution Policy for Quality Assurance

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD APPLY A QUALITY ASSURANCE POLICY AS PART OF THEIR STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT. THIS POLICY SHOULD BE DEVELOPED AND ADJUSTED ACCORDING TO THE INSTITUTIONS' AREAS OF ACTIVITY. IT SHOULD ALSO BE MADE PUBLIC AND IMPLEMENTED BY ALL PARTIES INVOLVED.

The quality assurance policy is the guiding document which sets the operating principles of the Internal Quality Assurance System (IQAS), the principles for the continuous improvement of the Institution, as well as the Institution's obligation for public accountability. It supports the development of quality culture, according to which, all internal stakeholders assume responsibility for quality and engage in quality assurance. This policy has a formal status and is publicly available.

The policy for quality is implemented through:

- *the commitment for compliance with the laws and regulations that govern the Institution;*
- *the establishment, review, redesign and redefinition of quality assurance objectives, that are fully in line with the institutional strategy.*

This policy mainly supports:

- *the organisation of the internal quality assurance system;*
- *the Institution's leadership, departments and other organisational units, individual staff members and students to take on their responsibilities in quality assurance;*
- *the integrity of academic principles and ethics, guarding against discriminations, and encouragement of external stakeholders to be involved in quality assurance;*
- *the continuous improvement of learning and teaching, research and innovation;*
- *the quality assurance of the programmes and their alignment with the relevant HQA Standards;*
- *the effective organisation of services and the development and maintenance of infrastructure;*
- *the allocation and effective management of the necessary resources for the operation of the Institution;*
- *the development and rational allocation of human resources.*

The way in which this policy is designed, approved, implemented, monitored and revised constitutes one of the processes of the internal quality assurance system.

Institution compliance

The University of Macedonia established a Quality Assurance Policy (QAP) outlined in the Quality Assurance Policy Document and detailed in the Quality Manual. The way by which this policy is designed, approved, implemented, monitored and revised constitutes one of the processes of the Internal Quality Assurance System (IQAS) and specifically in the Quality Manual. The IQAS is organized in a way that personal data are protected.

UoM uses the Quality Manual proposed by ADIP. The Quality Assurance Policy Document is for the UoM. However, it needs modifications to better reflect the individual characteristics of the institution. On the contrary, the Quality Assurance Goals are clearly adapted to the specific characteristics of UoM and they are paired with some, newly introduced, relevant and interesting KPIs.

The Quality Assurance Unit (QAU) of UoM discharges its role as the central unit that is responsible for the design, application and update of the quality assurance and evaluation processes very well. The Internal Evaluation Committees (OMEAs) are responsible, in collaboration with QAU, for overseeing the quality assurance processes at the department level and for evaluating their effectiveness. The QAU tries to communicate the Quality Assurance Policy of the Institution to all relevant stakeholders. There is up-to-date information on the QAU website in Greek but this is not the case for English.

The operational goals of Institution's QAP are listed in the Quality Manual and they are grouped under five relevant axes. The strategic goals of UoM's Quality Assurance are further analysed in the Goal Setting document. Although there is not one to one match between the goals defined in the QA policy document and the Goal Setting document the coverage is sufficient. All strategic goals are paired with meaningful and relevant KPIs while some of the KPIs are newly introduced ones aiming to adapt to the specific characteristics of UoM. It is unclear, however, what is the process by which the KPIs and objectives related to QAP are reviewed and revised.

The QAP includes commitment to continuous improvement of students' learning experience, teaching methods, research and innovation. It also includes a commitment to satisfy applicable requirements of IQAS. The Institution made available all necessary information that supports the IQAS operation. This information is clearly listed in the Quality Manual, explicitly for each one of the high-level processes.

In practical means, the Quality Assurance Policy of UoM has two effective components of data collection that refer to the quality of:

1. individual courses (modules) by the students and the self-assessment reports of the faculty with respect to the courses they teach, and
2. research through the annual reports of the faculty.

Every academic semester the students evaluate the courses through questionnaires, which also allow students to enter free-text comments of qualitative nature. Although some departments use electronic questionnaires, especially for post-graduate programmes, this is not the general case.

During the site visit, the Panel got clear evidence that there is an established quality assurance culture, within the UoM community, developed gradually over the last 14 years. However, the Institution's Quality Assurance Policy was not sufficiently communicated to the external stakeholders and graduates, and to the administrative staff. This, in turn, affects the active engagement of the above-mentioned groups to the quality processes which is, currently, quite passive.

Panel judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

1. The Quality Assurance Policy of UoM should be more effectively communicated to some groups of the UoM community (e.g admin staff) as well as to the external stakeholders (graduates, strategic partners, etc).
2. The Quality Assurance Unit should establish formal procedures through which all relevant stakeholders could be actively engaged in the design and application of Institution's Quality Assurance Policy.

3. The Quality Assurance Unit should define a clear process for revising the KPIs and the objectives of QAP.
4. The Quality Assurance Unit should consider the goal of including electronic questionnaires evaluating individual courses as an alternative to the paper forms.
5. Goals and relevant KPIs related to the evaluation of the Study Programmes (curricula) as a whole, based on the feedback of graduates should be included in the Quality Assurance Policy and the Quality Manual.

Principle 2: Provision and Management of the Necessary Resources

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD ENSURE APPROPRIATE FUNDING FOR LEARNING AND TEACHING ACTIVITIES, RESEARCH, AND ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES IN GENERAL. RELEVANT REGULATIONS SHOULD BE IN PLACE TO ASSURE THAT ADEQUATE INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES FOR TEACHING AND RESEARCH ARE AVAILABLE AND READILY ACCESSIBLE (E.G. CLASSROOMS, LABORATORIES, LIBRARIES, IT INFRASTRUCTURE, PROVISION OF FREE MEALS, DORMITORIES, CAREER GUIDANCE AND SOCIAL WELFARE SERVICES, ETC.).

Funding

The Institution ensures adequate funding to cover not only the overhead and operational costs (regular budget and public investment budget) but also costs related to research, innovation and development (Special Account for Research Funds, Property Development and Management Company). The financial planning and the operation of an effective financial management system constitute necessary tools for the full exploitation of the resources.

Infrastructure

Based on the requirements and needs arising during its operation, the Institution has determined ways to define, allocate and maintain all the necessary resources to ensure its smooth and proper functioning, i.e. teaching, research and auxiliary facilities, equipment and software, support facilities (cleaning, transportation, communication) etc. The scope of the IQAS should include a suitable managing and monitoring system to safeguard the infrastructure. Compliance to the internal regulations is also necessary.

Working environment

The Institution ensures -as far as possible- that the working environment has a positive effect on the performance of all members of the academic community (students and staff). Factors that are taken into consideration towards the creation of such a favorable environment are, among others, the sanitary facilities, the lighting/heating/ventilation system, the cleanliness and the overall appearance of the premises, etc. The scope of the IQAS should include an appropriate managing and monitoring system to promote a favorable working environment and to ensure compliance with the existing provisions.

Human resources

The Institution and the academic units are responsible for the human resources development.

The subject areas, as well as the competences and tasks of the staff members are defined by the corresponding job descriptions that are established within the operation scope of each academic or administrative unit. These posts are filled following the requirements set by the law, on the basis of transparent, fair and published processes. The continuous training and evaluation of the staff is considered necessary for the enhancement of the performance, which is recorded and monitored as provided in the context of the IQAS.

The Institution should acknowledge and provide the necessary resources for the implementation of the IQAS, its enhancement and the provision of services that assist the satisfaction of the quality assurance requirements. Moreover, the Institution (Quality Assurance Unit-QAU) should properly organise the administrative structure and staffing of the IQAS, with a clear allocation of competences and tasks to its staff members.

Institution compliance

Funding

Despite substantial cuts in governmental funding during the past several years the UoM has managed to maintain the state of its infrastructure at an adequate level while making remarkable efforts to sustain a satisfactory level of educational services. The Panel notes that several faculty members have taken the initiative to split courses with large student numbers, that cannot be accommodated in lecture halls, in smaller sections effectively doubling and even tripling their own workload without extra compensation. Nevertheless, an efficient system of managing financial resources and combining funds from the ELKE and Property Development and Management Company with those from the tactical budget appears to be in place at the UoM.

Infrastructure

The Institution has found ways to obtain allocate and maintain the necessary resources to ensure its smooth and proper functioning, i.e., teaching, research and auxiliary facilities, equipment and software, support facilities (cleaning, transportation, student dormitories, sports facilities and communication). An appropriate infrastructure plan is in place to ensure the maintenance, refurbishment and upgrade of the UoP facilities. The recent output of this plan, for example, is evident through the renovation of the central amphitheatre and the sports centre. There is an intention to upgrade the buildings to ensure enough teaching place, because there is a lack of space in lecture halls/seminar rooms, faculty and administrative personnel offices, study rooms etc., which is especially acute in the department of Music Science and Art. There is a monthly inspection of UoM's infrastructure while there exists a mechanism for following up and solving issues related to it. Nevertheless, parts of the infrastructure are in need of renovation and maintenance, for instance changing tiles in floors in large parts of the buildings, plastering and painting walls.

Working environment

In the course of discussions with faculty, administrative staff, and Ph.D candidates the Panel noted the collegial spirit, commitment, and satisfaction of the above with the working environment. Faculty do appreciate the encouragement and opportunities for research, such as prizes for publications in top-ranked journals, funds for attending academic conferences, and sabbaticals. Administrative staff, Ph.D students and faculty also appreciate the opportunity to take part in Erasmus exchange programs.

Human resources

The Institution provides the necessary human resources for the implementation of the IQAS using existing personnel and faculty staff. There is an administrative structure in support of the IQAS system (MODIP, OMEAs, Departmental general assemblies, etc.). The subject areas, as well as, the competencies and tasks of the staff members are defined by the corresponding job descriptions that are established within the scope of each academic and/or administrative unit. The vacant posts are advertised and filled according to the requirements set by law, based on transparent, fair and published processes. The continuous training and evaluation of the staff is safeguarded through the quality assurance process. Despite the aforementioned shortage of human resources, the Panel noted the positive comments made by undergraduate and postgraduate students with respect to attention, care, and concern shown towards them by administrative staff and faculty. There is strong evidence that the UoM appropriately meets the expectations and needs of students.

Panel judgement

Principle 2: Provision & Management of the Necessary Resources	
2.1 Funding	
Fully compliant	x
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	
2.2 Infrastructure	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	x
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	
2.3 Working Environment	
Fully compliant	x
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	
2.4 Human Resources	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	x
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Principle 2: Provision & Management of the Necessary Resources (overall)	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	x
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

The institution should intensify its effort to ensure the adequate staffing of MODIP.

Principle 3: Establishing Goals for Quality Assurance

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD HAVE CLEAR AND EXPLICIT GOALS REGARDING THE ASSURANCE AND CONTINUOUS UPGRADE OF THE QUALITY OF THE OFFERED PROGRAMMES, THE RESEARCH AND INNOVATION ACTIVITIES, AS WELL AS THE SCIENTIFIC AND ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES. THESE GOALS MAY BE QUALITATIVE OR QUANTITATIVE AND REFLECT THE INSTITUTIONAL STRATEGY.

The Institution's strategy on quality assurance should be translated into time-specific, qualitative and quantitative goals which are regularly monitored, measured and reviewed in the context of the IQAS operation, and following an appropriate procedure.

Examples of quality goals:

- *rise of the average annual graduation rate of the Institution's Undergraduate Programmes to x%;*
- *upgrade of the learning environment through the introduction of digital applications on*;
- *improvement of the ratio of scientific publications to teaching staff members to*;
- *rise of the total research funding to y%*

The goals are accompanied by a specific action plan for their achievement, and entail the participation of all stakeholders.

Institution compliance

UoM has established specific and measurable goals for its quality assurance within a given period (2018 -2020), which are well in-line with the strategy of the organization. The institution defines clearly the goals, related to the research & innovation, administration and resources in the same document. For example: preparation of all necessary work for immediately accreditation of all 8 study programs, increase the number of students finishing studies on time up to 17 % from 1% (presently), improvement of the infrastructure by renting additional space (index ND05 now 1,75 increase to 2.0).

UoM has set specific goals associated with new relevant KPIs concerning the strategic objectives of the institution, e.g., increase resources and reinforce research and publication activities.

Panel judgement

Principle 3: Establishing Goals for Quality Assurance	
3.1 Study Programmes/ education activities	
Fully compliant	x
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	
3.2 Research & Innovation	
Fully compliant	x
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	
3.3 Administration (funding, human resources, infrastructure management)	
Fully compliant	

Substantially compliant	x
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	
3.4 Resources (funding, human resources, infrastructure)	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	x
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Principle 3: Establishing Goals for Quality Assurance (overall)	
Fully compliant	x
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

1. The institution should establish an action plan that paves the way for the implementation of the goals and communicate it to all the stakeholders
2. The IQAS should establish proper procedures for the monitoring of the KPIs and goals.
3. The UoM should continuously communicate those goals to all the stakeholders.

Principle 4: Structure, Organisation and Operation of the IQAS

INSTITUTIONS SET UP AND ESTABLISH AN INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM, WHICH INCLUDES PROCESSES AND PROCEDURES COVERING ALL AREAS OF ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES AND FUNCTIONS. SPECIAL FOCUS IS GIVEN ON THE QUALITY OF TEACHING AND LEARNING, INCLUDING THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT, RESEARCH, INNOVATION AND GOVERNANCE.

The key goal of the internal quality assurance system (IQAS) is the development, effective operation and continuous improvement of the whole range of the Institution's activities, and particularly, of teaching, research, innovation, governance and relevant services, according to the international practices - especially those of the European Higher Education Area - and the HQA principles and guidelines described in these Standards.

Structure and organisation

In each Institution, the Quality Assurance Unit (QAU) holds the responsibility for the administration and management of the IQAS. The QAU is set up according to the existing legislative framework and is responsible for:

- *the development of specialised policy, strategy and relevant processes towards the continuous improvement of the quality of the Institution's work and provisions;*
- *the organisation, operation and continuous improvement of the Institution's internal quality assurance system;*
- *the coordination and support of the evaluation process of the Institution's academic units and other services, and;*
- *the support of the external evaluation and accreditation process of the Institution's programmes and internal quality assurance system in the context of the HQA principles and guidelines.*

The Institution's IQAS and its implementation processes are determined by the decisions of the competent bodies, as provided by the law, and are published in the Government Gazette, as well as on the Institution's website. The above are reviewed every six years, at the latest.

To achieve the above goals, the QAU collaborates with HQA, develops and maintains a management information system to store the evaluation data, which are periodically submitted to HQA, according to the latter's instructions. The QAU is responsible for the systematic monitoring of the evaluation process and for the publication of evaluation-related procedures and their results on the Institution's website.

The QAU structure has been approved by the Institution's competent bodies, as provided by the law, while all competences and tasks accruing from this structure are clearly defined.

Operation

The Institution takes action for the design, establishment, implementation, audit and maintenance of the Internal Quality Assurance System (IQAS), taking into account the Standards' requirements, while making any necessary amendments to ensure fitness to achieve its aims.

The above actions include:

- *provision of all necessary processes and procedures for the successful operation of the IQAS, as well as implementation of the above processes and procedures on all of the Institution's parties involved ;the Institution's areas of activity can constitute the IQAS processes, e.g. teaching, research and innovation, governance, services etc. An IQAS process is an area of activity including data input, data processing and outputs. A procedure defines the way an action is implemented and includes a course of stages or steps, e.g. the curriculum design procedure;*
- *determination of how the IQAS procedures / processes are audited, measured and assessed, and how they interact;*
- *provision of all necessary resources to enable the IQAS function.*

Documentation

The IQAS documentation includes, among other things, a series of key documents demonstrating its structure and organisation, such as the Quality Manual, which describes how the Standards' requirements are met.

The Annexes of the Quality Manual include:

- the Quality Policy and the Quality Assurance Objectives;
- the necessary written Procedures, along with the entailed forms;
- the necessary Guides, External Documents (e.g. pertinent legislation), as well as any other supporting data;
- the standing organisational structure of the QAU, with a detailed description of the competences, the required qualifications and the goals for each post. The organisational chart is structured in a manner that ensures that the IQAS organisational requirements are fully and properly met.

Institution compliance

The UoM has developed and published a Quality Manual (QM) that states the quality policy of the institution identifies the goals and describes the mechanism for ensuring the quality of the academic activities under the purview of the institution. The manual provides for the establishment of an Internal Quality Assurance System (IQAS) and evaluation by external experts appointed by HQA. The Internal Quality Assurance System (IQAS) covers three major activities, academic, administrative and human capital for the purpose of identifying deficiencies and initiating processes to effect improvements.

The IQAS states that the institution has set specific quantitative and qualitative objectives for safeguarding and ensuring continuous improvements of the three major activities under its purview. To achieve these objectives the manual has detailed descriptions of the following processes: quality assurance of the University of Macedonia, procurement of the necessary resources, setting the quality assurance goals, internal evaluation, collection, analysis and improvement of quality data, dissemination of findings, and external evaluation.

For each of the steps of the process, the manual describes specific input data such as the latest external evaluation report for the Departments and the University. The output of the process is assessment of the quality policies of the university, which take place annually.

Panel judgement

Principle 4: Structure, Organization and Operation of the IQAS	
Fully compliant	x
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

Principle 5: Self-Assessment

THE INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM COMPRISES PROCEDURES PROVIDING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ANNUAL SELF-ASSESSMENT OF THE INSTITUTION'S ACADEMIC AND ADMINISTRATIVE UNITS, ADDRESSING AREAS OF OVERSIGHTS OR SHORTCOMINGS, AND DEFINING REMEDIAL ACTIONS TOWARDS THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE SET GOALS, AND EVENTUAL IMPROVEMENT.

The QAU conducts, on an annual basis, a self-assessment of the IQAS, following the written procedure provided for each area of activity, which is implemented by a certain academic or administrative unit, as appropriate. The procedure determines the timing, the participants, the data under consideration, and the expected outcomes. The self-assessment aims at a final estimation of the suitability of the IQAS in force, as well as at basing decisions concerning the necessary remedial or precautionary actions for improvement.

The data considered in the context of the self-assessment of a programme may, for example, include:

- *students performance;*
- *feedback from students / teaching staff;*
- *assessment of learning outcomes;*
- *graduation rates;*
- *feedback from the evaluation of the facilities / learning environment;*
- *report of any remedial or precautionary actions undertaken;*
- *suggestions for improvement.*

The outcomes of the self-assessment are recorded in internal reports drawn up by the QAU. The reports identify any areas of deviation or non-compliance with the Standards, and are communicated to the interested parties (if appropriate). The Institution's resolutions concerning any modification, compliance, or enhancement of the IQAS operation might include actions related to:

- *the upgrade of the IQAS and the pertinent processes;*
- *the upgrade of the services offered to the students;*
- *the reallocation of resources;*
- *the introduction of new quality goals, etc.*

The outcomes of the self-assessment are recorded and, along with the source data, are archived as quality files.

A special procedure is followed for the compliance check of newly launched programmes (of all three cycles), or programmes that are to be reviewed shortly, prior to the institutional approval of the programme.

Institution compliance

UoM is in full compliance with the directives of HQA and its procedures are based on the principles set up by HQA. The members of QAU have prepared all required documentation and established the procedures to perform the annual quality assessments adequately under extreme time pressure and very limited resources.

According to the IQAS of UoM academic and administrative units are annually reviewed. The administrative units are not fully prepared yet to participate in IQAS but they have provided their organizational charts and data related to their everyday activities, i.e., cases handled in each area of duty.

The self-assessment procedures of the IQAS are clearly described in the Quality Manual. For the academic units, the self-assessment procedure is clearly described in the manual stating in detail the steps to be followed, input and output data, the key personnel, etc. For the administrative units, there is no such rigorous description. As a result, the personnel in these units so far has been involved in IQAS by reporting their activities on an individual basis using simple quantitative indices.

Regarding the input data referring to the evaluation of academic units, the AP found that although an electronic system is in place for the student questionnaires this was only used, so far, in some of the post-graduate programmes.

The AP could not verify that the overall outcomes of self-assessments of academic and administrative units are properly utilized for improvement because the analysis of collected data seems to be done in an ad-hoc basis. On the other hand, the data collected for the self-assessment of academic units are properly recorded and stored in a database system

The reports of previous annual self-assessments for both the Institution and the various academic departments are publicly available through the QAU's website. Some deviations across departments are noticeable, and overall, there is an impression that there have inconsistencies in data collection, analysis and reporting in the past. The AP stresses the importance of feedback to all the parties involved in the self-assessments. The AP did not identify a clear provision in the IQAS on how the self-assessment outcomes are used to develop documented action plans and the way these plans are communicated to the external stakeholders.

Panel judgement

Principle 5: Self-Assessment	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	X
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

1. The procedures for prompt analysis of the available evaluation data, development of remedial actions and feedback to all relevant parties should be improved.
2. A rigorous procedure describing the self-assessment of the administrative units, similar to the one followed by the academic units, needs to be established in IQAS and included in the Quality Manual.

Principle 6: Collection of Quality Data: Measuring, Analysis and Improvement

INSTITUTIONS ARE FULLY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE COLLECTION, ANALYSIS AND USE OF INFORMATION IN AN INTEGRATED, FUNCTIONAL AND READILY ACCESSIBLE MANNER, AIMING AT THE EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT OF THE QUALITY DATA RELATED TO TEACHING, RESEARCH AND OTHER ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES, AS WELL AS OF THOSE RELATED TO THE ADMINISTRATION.

The QAU should establish and operate an information system to manage the data required for the implementation of the Internal Quality Assurance System.

The QAU measures and monitors the performance of the various activities of the Institution, through appropriate procedures established in the context of the IQAS structure, and assesses their level of effectiveness. The measuring and monitoring is conducted on a basis of indices and data provided by HQA in the pertinent guidelines and forms, which are part of the National Information System for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (NISQA). These measurements may concern: the size of the student body, the size of the teaching and administrative staff, the infrastructure, the structural components of the curricula, students' performance, research activity performance, financial data, feedback on student and faculty satisfaction surveys, data related to the teaching and research activity, services, infrastructure, etc.

The QAU makes use of the figures and presents the results for consideration using statistical analysis. Outcomes are displayed through histograms and charts. This sort of information is used by the Institution for decision making, at all levels, pursuing improvement, as well as for setting, monitoring, assessing and reviewing the Institution's strategic and operational goals.

Institution compliance

The MODIP has established an information system for collecting the data required for the implementation of the Internal Quality Assurance System. The measuring and monitoring are conducted on a basis of indices and data provided by HQA in the pertinent guidelines and forms, which are part of the National Information System for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (NISQA). UoM maintains an adequate amount of data to perform its analysis and evaluation. The results from the internal and external reviews are applied toward the continuous improvement. The collected data are presented, both for public and internal consumption and the formation and review of the strategic and operational goals. The institution has in place a mechanism for collecting data pertaining to the quality of the courses taught at the university. It consists of forms that list a number of performance parameters with associated numerical ranges. The forms also have spaces for qualitative answers and comments. The forms are distributed to and collected from the stakeholders, subsequently entered into a data base for subsequent analysis and evaluation. There are no provisions at this time for direct entry of the course evaluation data into the quality assurance data base.

The quality assurance information system has the capability to generate numerical indicators for the educational component, research and innovation activities, procurement and use of financial resources, human potential, and institution infrastructure and services.

The Panel was provided with data pertaining to the academic years 2015-2016, 2016-2017 and 2017-2018. During the visit, the Panel was informed, that only the data for the academic year 2016-2017 should be considered reliable, because there had been some issues in the past with the collection and analysis of the relevant data. As a result, the information is insufficient to assess the evolution of quality and improvement of the academic programs.

The university has provided values for the numerical indicators for the four components of the quality assurance data base. Nevertheless, the presentation of the outputs of the processes has not been sufficiently developed to relate the information to the strategic and operational goals of the institution. As a result, while the IQAS is developed and clearly defined, its utility cannot be assessed on the basis of a single sample year.

Panel judgement

Principle 6: Collection of Data: Measuring, Analysis & Improvement	
6.1 Study Programmes / education activities	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	x
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	
6.2 Research & Innovation	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	x
Non-compliant	
6.3 Activities related to the administration (funding, human resources, infrastructure management)	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	x
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	
6.4 Human Resources	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	x
Non-compliant	

Principle 6: Collection of Data: Measuring, Analysis & Improvement (overall)	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	x
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

1. The university should substantially improve the resources devoted to the IQAS.
2. UoM should strengthen the capability of the information system to disseminate information pertaining to all activities of the university.

Principle 7: Public Information

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD PUBLISH INFORMATION ABOUT THEIR TEACHING AND ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES IN A DIRECT AND ACCESSIBLE MANNER. ALL PERTINENT INFORMATION SHOULD BE UP-TO-DATE, CLEAR AND OBJECTIVE.

The QAU publishes data related to IQAS structure, organisation and operation. Furthermore, the QAU publishes data pertinent to the institutional quality policy and objectives, as well as information and data relevant to the Institution's internal and external evaluation. In the context of the self-assessment process, the QAU verifies that adequate information regarding the teaching activities and, particularly, the programmes' profile and the overall institutional activity is publicly available. QAU makes recommendations for improvement, where appropriate.

Institution compliance

The UoM's publicly available website is comprehensive containing important and updated information on research, teaching and other academic activities. Details of undergraduate and postgraduate programs of study, full course syllabi, curricula and assessment criteria are displayed in the webpages of departments and schools though the absence of short course descriptions was noticed in a few courses. The annual Internal Evaluation Reports of academic departments are publicly accessible and regularly updated.

The webpages of MODIP contain extensive information on all aspects of the unit's activities.

Panel judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

The UoM should develop a fully functional website in English.

Principle 8: External Evaluation and Accreditation of the IQAS

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD BE PERIODICALLY EVALUATED BY COMMITTEES OF EXTERNAL EXPERTS SET BY HQA, FOR THE PURPOSE OF ACCREDITATION OF THEIR INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEMS (IQAS). THE PERIODICITY OF THE EXTERNAL EVALUATION IS DETERMINED BY HQA.

External quality assurance, in the case in point external evaluation aiming at accreditation, may act as a means of verification of the effectiveness of the Institution's internal quality assurance, and as a catalyst for improvement, while opening new perspectives. Additionally, it can provide information with a view to public acknowledgement of the positive course of the Institution's activities.

The Higher Education Institutions engage in periodic external quality assurance which is conducted taking into consideration any special requirements set by the legislation governing the operation of the Institutions and their academic units.

Quality assurance, in this case 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 ensure that the progress made since the last external quality assurance activity is taken into consideration when preparing for the next one.

Institution compliance

By 2016 all departments and the UoM had undergone external evaluations. The present quality assurance accreditation is the first one for the UoM. The majority of staff members are well aware of the importance of the IQAS and their own role in achieving its objectives. The external stakeholders of UoM engaged themselves actively during the accreditation procedure and they reassured the panel with evidence of their active and continuous engagement. Activities with substantial participation of UoM are the currently established "Thessaloniki innovation zone", the museum of the Macedonian struggle and the cooperation with Helexpo. UoM has drafted and submitted a follow-up report in response to the last institution evaluation by the HQA. The report mentions that the institution has addressed satisfactorily a part of the recommendations for improvement. UoM demonstrated credible plans for fulfilment for the partially fulfilled recommendations.

Panel judgement

Principle 8: External Evaluation & Accreditation of the IQAS	
Fully compliant	x
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

The institution should strengthen active engagement of all staff members and other staff of the university to the IQAS issues.

PART C: CONCLUSIONS

I. Features of Good Practice

The AP during their site visit as well as by studying the various documents submitted by UoM for the IQAS accreditation identified the following features of good practice:

- a. The Administration dedicated small research grants from the reserve account of ELKE to support basic research of the faculty. These grants are strongly associated with publications in high quality journals according to international scientific journal rankings.
- b. There is an established culture across the UoM community towards quality assurance.
- c. The Quality Manual is well organized and detailed.
- d. Goal setting is clear and adapted to the specific characteristics of UoM. Every operational goal is clearly paired with relevant KPIs. New KPIs were introduced whenever needed.

In addition, the Panel points out the following and credits the Administration and the QAU of UOM:

1. The university is clean and secure.
2. The faculty is fully cognisant of quality assurance procedures referring to the quality of learning well beyond the establishment of QAU and the formal IQAS procedures.

II. Areas of Weakness

- 1) Some actions and procedures have been ad-hoc and not recorded in the IQAS.
- 2) The process of quality assurance has not been communicated adequately to the admin staff, and external stakeholders.

III. Recommendations for Follow-up Actions

1. Increase the staff dedicated fully to IQAS.
2. Improve communication to, and active engagement of all stakeholders concerning Quality Assurance Policy.
3. Define a clear process for the revision of KPIs and objectives of QAP.
4. Introduce electronic forms and templates for all processes defined in the Quality Manual.
5. Development and publication of action plans in accordance with the outcomes of the evaluation.
6. Establish a rigorous procedure for the assessment of the administrative units.
7. Train the administrative personnel to support the specific needs of the IQAS.
8. Activate as soon as possible an English language website.
9. Develop a marketing plan to highlight the strengths of the institution.

IV. Summary & Overall Assessment

The Principles where full compliance has been achieved are: 3,4,7,8

The Principles where substantial compliance has been achieved are: 1,2,5,6

The Principles where partial compliance has been achieved are: N/A

The Principles where failure of compliance was identified are: N/A

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

The members of the Accreditation Panel for the IQAS of the University of Macedonia

Name and Surname

Signature

- **Prof. Anthimos Georgiadis (Chair)**, Leuphana Universität Lüneburg, Germany.
- **Prof. Evangelos Dedousis**, The American University in Dubai, Dubai, United Arab Emirates.
- **Prof Emeritus Nicholas Kyriakopoulos**, The George Washington University, Washington, USA.
- **Prof Nicolas Tsapatsoulis**, University of Technology, Limassol, Cyprus