



ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ  
HELLENIC REPUBLIC



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## Accreditation Report for the Postgraduate Study Program of:

Teaching German as a Foreign Language  
School of Humanities

Institution: Hellenic Open University (HOU)  
Date: 9 September 2023



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 HAHE to undertake the review of the Postgraduate Study Program of **Teaching German as a Foreign Language** of the **Hellenic Open University** for the purposes of granting accreditation

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Part A: Background and Context of the Review</b> .....	<b>4</b>
I. The External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel.....	4
II. Review Procedure and Documentation.....	5
III. Postgraduate Study Program Profile.....	7
<b>Part B: Compliance with the Principles</b> .....	<b>8</b>
PRINCIPLE 1: QUALITY ASSURANCE POLICY AND QUALITY GOAL SETTING FOR THE POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMS OF THE INSTITUTION AND THE ACADEMIC UNIT.....	8
PRINCIPLE 2: DESIGN AND APPROVAL OF POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMS.....	13
PRINCIPLE 3: STUDENT-CENTRED LEARNING, TEACHING, AND ASSESSMENT.....	16
PRINCIPLE 4: STUDENT ADMISSION, PROGRESSION, RECOGNITION OF POSTGRADUATE STUDIES, AND CERTIFICATION.....	19
PRINCIPLE 5: TEACHING STAFF OF POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMS.....	21
PRINCIPLE 6: LEARNING RESOURCES AND STUDENT SUPPORT.....	24
PRINCIPLE 7: INFORMATION MANAGEMENT.....	27
PRINCIPLE 8: PUBLIC INFORMATION CONCERNING THE POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMS.....	30
PRINCIPLE 9: ON-GOING MONITORING AND PERIODIC INTERNAL EVALUATION OF POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMS.....	33
PRINCIPLE 10: REGULAR EXTERNAL EVALUATION OF POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMS.....	35
<b>Part C: Conclusions</b> .....	<b>37</b>
I. Features of Good Practice.....	37
II. Areas of Weakness.....	37
III. Recommendations for Follow-up Actions.....	37
IV. Summary & Overall Assessment.....	39

## **PART A: BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT OF THE REVIEW**

### **I. The External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel**

The Panel responsible for the Accreditation Review of the postgraduate study program of **Teaching German as a Foreign Language** of the **Hellenic Open University** comprised the following four (4) members, drawn from the HAHE Register, in accordance with Laws 4009/2011 & 4653/2020:

- 1. Assoc. Prof. Georgia (Gina) Ioannitou-Valavanidou**  
Le Mans Université, Le Mans, France (Chair)
- 2. Assoc. Prof. Eka Tchkoïdze**  
Ilia State University, Tbilisi, Georgia
- 3. Ms. Eleni Kioura, Postgraduate Student**  
Department of English Language and Literature, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki
- 4. Dr. Katerina Papatheu**  
Dipartimento di Scienze Umanistiche, Università degli Studi di Catania

## II. Review Procedure and Documentation

In preparation for the visit of the Postgraduate Study Program of Didactic of German as a Foreign Language, Institution Hellenic Open University (HOU), the members of the External Evaluation and Accreditation Panel (EEAP) could examine a wide variety of documents provided in advance by HAHE, including the School's Proposal for Accreditation of the Postgraduate Program, the Guide of Studies, the description of courses, the HAHE Guidelines and other relevant information about the Program (statistical data, quality indicators, student questionnaires, strategic goals, etc.). The EEAP also consulted the Website of the School.

The visit was online. The visit took place on Monday 04/09 to Wednesday 06/09/2023. It was preceded by a private meeting of the EEAP on Monday, (via Zoom), and was followed by further private meetings of the EEAP on the following days to finalize the report. During the visit the EEAP had the following meetings:

Monday 04 September 2023

a) 16:00 - 17:00 Meeting with the Dean School of the Humanities Prof. Emmanouil Koutouzis, and the Directors of the two PSP: the Directors of the programs: Associate Prof. Nektaria Palaologou PSP1 and Prof. Marios Chrissou PSP 2, the Vice-President of MODIP Prof. Ioannis Sibetheros, OMEA members, and MODIP member Associate Prof. Dimitrios Fillipis and staff.

The Dean of the School of Humanities, MODIP, the Head of the Department of PSP1 and the Head of the Department of PSP2 gave a short overview of the current situation of the programs and provided the EEAP with information about it.

b) 17:00 - 17:30: meeting with Teaching staff members PSP 1 and PSP 2, Adjunct Teaching Staff PSP1, Adjunct Teaching Staff PSP2, Chief Administrative Officer, and administrative staff members where the EEAP discussed about learning materials, equipment earning resources and of the two PSP.

c) 17:30 – 18:00 Debrief Meeting EEAP members

Wednesday 6 September 2023

a) 15:00 - 15:45 Meeting with the teaching staff of the PSP2. The EEAP discussed professional development, opportunities, mobility, competence, and adequacy of the teaching staff to ensure learning outcomes, workload, evaluation by students; link between teaching and research; projects and research activities directly related to the program; possible areas of weakness.

b) 17:30 - 18:15 Meeting with PSP2 graduates. The EEAP discussed Students' satisfaction from their study experience and their postgraduate studies and their career path.

c) 18:30 - 19:15 Meeting with employers, social partners who discussed with EEAP members various forms and opportunities of collaboration with the Program, relations of the PSP2 with external stakeholders from the private and the public sector. institution and more.

d) 19:30- 20:00 Debrief Meeting EEAP members where discussed the outcomes of the virtual visit and prepare the oral report.

e) 20:00 - 20:30 Closure meeting with the Director of the PSP2, the Head of the Department, MODIP, and PSP2 Steering Committee/ OMEA members. In this final meeting the EEAP provided a general view of some of the conclusions reached.

The EEAP members want to underline that all the above meetings were held in a very constructive atmosphere. Overall, the faculty and staff had prepared a rigorous visit program with presentations and discussions. A series of reports and other documents were provided to

the EEAP during the visit at the request of the EEAP members. All members of the Program were ready and eager to answer the questions by the EEAP, and this facilitated the latter's task in the evaluation and accreditation process.

### **III. Postgraduate Study Program Profile**

The Postgraduate Study Program of Didactic of German as a Foreign Language numbers 5 members of Teaching Staff. None of them is DEP member.

The PSP was established in 1998 and started in 2010 with a 2-year study program. The students of the 2-year Postgraduate program are required to complete, in order to receive the degree, 7 Compulsory courses taught by the Faculty Members, including the Thesis. To obtain the Master degree, 120 credit units (ECTS) are required, divided into 4 semesters. The curriculum is composed of 6 mandatory modules (15 ECTS each) and the dissertation/thesis during the 4th semester (30 ECTS), all online. There is no practicum included in the curriculum.

Admission to the Program takes place according to the general procedures and regulations of the Greek Ministry of Education. They are accepted students that have an undergraduate degree in higher education of a related subject, and certified English language proficiency at B2 level. For the 2nd academic semester of 2022 there are registered 65 students. The participation and success in examinations per academic semester is 82.61% for the 2nd academic semester of 2022. The students must pay fees. The total cost of the Program of studies amounts to 3.600€.

According to its mission statement, the PSP provides students with knowledge, competences, and skills, which relate to the educational field and to the subjects of humanities. The main goal of the program is:

To systematically introduce students to theories of language acquisition, research methodology and techniques for writing scientific papers, didactic pedagogical principles for foreign language teaching, communication activities and student skills and methodology for designing and evaluating German as a foreign subject.

The Program has not yet been evaluated by any external committee – the present evaluation is the first one.

## **PART B: COMPLIANCE WITH THE PRINCIPLES**

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

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

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

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

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

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

#### **Documentation**

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

#### **Study Program Compliance**

##### **Findings**

- a) The suitability of the structure and organisation of postgraduate study Programs



The organization of the PSP GER is explained in comprehensive documents provided to the EEAP that illustrate how the structure and organization of the postgraduate study program conforms with internationally established scientific field of Education Professional Development designated by the international categorization of scientific fields in education, UNESCO ISCED-2011 for level 7, and ISCED-2013 0114 for Teacher Training with subject specialization.

The Program started in 2019 in order to provide innovative pedagogy and practice, cutting edge international research and a socially responsible educational agenda. The objectives of the Program are to advance knowledge in the sciences of Didactics of German as a foreign language, through teaching and research, and to prepare highly qualified professional level educators.

- b) the pursuit of learning outcomes and qualifications in accordance with the European and National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education - level 7

HOU follows the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) which is based on the principle of transparency in learning, and on specific teaching and assessment processes (ECTS Guide). One of the key features of the ECTS system is the mapping of the level of knowledge, skills and competences that are acquired by the student upon completion of the educational process and verified after evaluation (Annex A of ADIP). This is achieved by writing learning outcomes which are attributed to individual Thematic Units and to the Program of Study as a whole (Outline Form Course).

- c) the promotion of the quality and effectiveness of teaching at the PSP

To promote the quality and effectiveness of teaching the PSP has four strategic objectives: (1) monitoring and upgrading the quality, (2) widening the awareness regarding the PSP, (3) strengthening the Academic Development of the DEP and SEP Members, and (4) promoting the PSP interface with external organizations. The University assesses the quality of the educational process at the end of each semester through questionnaires. Surveys are anonymous and allow students to provide appropriate feedback.

The Centre for Teaching and Learning (CTL) at the HOU plans and implements targeted educational and research actions for the further development and interconnection of learning communities, as well as the promotion of educational innovation. These actions contribute to strengthening the quality and effectiveness of the education provided and the teaching and learning work issues. In order to achieve the above objectives, the CTL cooperates with all the academic structures of the HOU, but also with corresponding structures in the internal and external environment of the University, with the aim of improving the didactic methods and the development of effective learning techniques.

- d) the appropriateness of the qualifications of the teaching staff for the PSP

The teaching staff encompasses individuals with various roles and expertise. Their collective qualifications and roles aim to meet the labour market's demands.

The qualifications of the teaching staff contribute significantly to the program's strengths.

- e) The drafting, implementation, and review of specific annual quality goals for the improvement of the PSP

The implementation and review of specific annual quality goals for the improvement of the PSP include the continuous monitoring and evaluation of the critical components in order to ensure it remains on the forefront of social/cultural change and demands of society.

The Strategic Objectives for each axis of activity (1. Education, 2. Research, 3. Connection with society, 4. Internationalization, 5. University environment and 6. Quality Assurance) of the program, are accompanied by more specific actions measured by metrics.

f) the level of demand for the graduates' qualifications in the labour market

The Program emphasizes the importance of providing students with a comprehensive education, covering language acquisition theories, pedagogical principles, and communication abilities. Upon completion of the Program, students are expected to possess the ability to describe language acquisition theories, apply modern teaching methods, evaluate teaching materials, and design effective teaching units.

The Program outlines specific certification requirements, including a B2 certification in the German language. This proficiency requirement is essential, as it ensures that graduates are adequately prepared for language-related roles in the labour market.

The Program is classified as a Master of Education and requires a minimum of four semesters to complete, accumulating 120 ECTS credits. The classification underscores its alignment with the higher education sector and the labour market's demands for highly educated professionals.

The Program's language of instruction and thesis is German, reflecting an international orientation that aligns with the need for graduates to operate in multilingual and multicultural settings.

g) the quality of support services, such as the administrative services, the libraries, and the student welfare office for the PSP

The assessment of support services for the Postgraduate Studies Program (PSP) at the Hellenic Open University (HOU) has yielded several key observations. The Program has implemented substantial measures to furnish critical support services to PSP students, encompassing administrative assistance, library access, and student welfare provisions. Notably, the Program's emphasis on electronic resources within its library system ensures swift access to vital academic materials. Furthermore, a broad spectrum of support services, including scholarship and internship offices, underscores the institution's commitment to holistic student development.

h) the efficient utilisation of the financial resources of the PSP that may be drawn from tuition fees

Concerning the effective management of financial resources derived from tuition fees, the provided information lacks a comprehensive breakdown of resource allocation and utilization within the PSP. While tuition fees for the Program are clearly delineated, a transparent and detailed tuition utilization plan is notably absent.

i) the conduct of an annual review and audit of the quality assurance system of the PSP through the cooperation of the Internal Evaluation Group (IEG) with the Institution's Quality Assurance Unit (QAU)

The internal evaluation procedures carried out at the level of the Foundation, Schools and Study Programs are the responsibility of the Internal Quality Assurance System (IQAS) of the HOU. The competent Units/Offices that collaborate and carry out actions for the operation of the HOU IQAS are:

1. The Internal Assessment Unit (IAU/ ME A)
2. The Office of Strategic Planning and D e v e l o p m e n t
3. The Quality Assurance Unit of the HOU (QAU/MODIP).

The Internal Evaluation Group obtains information to determine the level of quality of all aspects of the educational process. The main goal of this process is to contribute to the continuous quality upgrade of the services provided by the University. The current evaluation focuses on the teachers, the organization of the Thematic Units, the educational material, the logistical infrastructure, and the administrative services.

On the website of Internal Evaluation Unit of the HOU (MEA – <http://meae.eap.gr/>) detailed information on the evaluation actions is available.

The assessment takes place in electronic form via the internet and then the data is fed into an algorithm to calculate the average level per target module. Both electronic assessment and reporting are ISO certified processes in the HOU's internal ISO certification system.

### **Analysis**

The writing of learning outcomes is measurable and state what the students are expected to do when they complete successfully a Thematic Unit or the entire Curriculum. The HOU follows the Bloom & Krathwohl (1956) classification to create the learning outcomes, as grouped into the following categories: knowledge, understanding, implementation, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation (Annex B of ADIP).

The PSP offers Thematic Modules/Units for the theoretical training of students concerning both the theory of language education, as well as the practical application of all modern methods of educational planning and teaching.

The comprehensive skillset that graduates are expected to possess, including language proficiency, and pedagogical expertise, positions them as professionals capable of adapting to diverse work environments.

Upon analysis, these findings affirm the Program's dedication to delivering comprehensive support services to PSP students. The prioritization of electronic resources within the library system aligns with contemporary educational requirements, guaranteeing students immediate access to vital academic information.

### **Conclusion**

The Program is based on a global view of the educator as being perforce connected to societal demands, having competence in subject matter specialization, and developing critical thinking and creativity. The Program presented the EEAP with documents that clearly and comprehensively elaborate the suitability of the structure and organisation of the PSP.

Graduates are well-equipped with a multifaceted skillset, language proficiency, and a recognized degree classification that make them competitive in various roles, including language teaching, and curriculum development. As a result, the graduates of this Program are

well-positioned to excel in their chosen careers and contribute effectively to the field of education and language teaching.

The Centre for Teaching and Learning (CTL) at the HOU plans and implements targeted educational and research actions for the further development and interconnection of learning communities, as well as the promotion of educational innovation. These actions contribute to strengthening the quality and effectiveness of the education provided and the teaching and learning work issues.

While the tuition fees for the Program are well-defined, there is a pressing need for greater transparency in resource management.

#### **Panel Judgement**

Principle 1: Quality assurance policy and quality goal setting for the postgraduate study programs of the institution and the academic unit	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

#### **Panel Recommendations**

None.

## PRINCIPLE 2: DESIGN AND APPROVAL OF POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMS

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

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

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

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

In addition, the design of PSP must consider:

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

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

### Documentation

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

## **Study Program Compliance**

### **Findings**

The Program follows a well-defined procedure for applying the University's mission. The features that are in the study guide (2022-2023) of the Postgraduate Program Didactic of German as a Foreign Language, include the description and objectives of the organization of the Program as well as the educational and professional focus of it. The Program is in German and was started in 2010 and is based on the current concepts and findings of the scientific fields and, more specifically, as they are designated by the international categorization in education, by UNESCO ISCED-2011 for level 7, and ISCED-2013 0114 for Teacher Training with subject specialization.

The above document also describes the delivery and assessment methods of the curriculum, along with its alignment to the European Course Credits System (ECTS). To obtain the Master degree, 120 credit units (ECTS) are required, divided into 4 semesters. The curriculum is composed of 6 mandatory modules (15 ECTS each) and the dissertation/thesis during the 4th semester (30 ECTS), all online. There is no practicum included in the curriculum. The final summative assessment of the modules is arrived at by using the appropriate tools, and it comprises of a series of educational activities in which students engage small written assignments on a weekly basis, a small written assessment, and the final semester project. To assist/prepare the students for their thesis, a module of Research Methodology is provided during the 1st semester.

The linking between teaching and research is achieved by integrating the findings of recent research into the modules taught by the faculty members, and by immersing the students into several assignments, within the framework of the subjects taught, as well as the thesis.

There are stakeholders and social partners collaborating with the Program, such as the Goethe Institute publishing houses and private schools. During our meeting with several of them they informed the EEAP that they offer some limited informal feedback to the Program.

The direction of the Program of Studies is the responsibility of the Director who is a SEP member. The Director calls at regular intervals the Curriculum Committee to discuss issues and make decisions or suggestions to the School of Humanities. The official procedure for the approval of the PSP Didactic of German as a Foreign Language, is approved by the School of Humanities and it is published on the website of the University.

### **Analysis**

The Program has designed a set of modules of study which are appropriate and meet universally accepted standards for the PSP Didactic of German as a Foreign Language.

There is an established procedure calling for periodic updates/revisions of the curriculum. As a result, the Program has recently updated the content of the on-line modules. The Program is committed to the continuous improvement of teaching. The curriculum provides the required skills for the specialization of the students in the field of didactics.

### **Conclusions**

The EEAP has concluded that this Postgraduate Program could be improved by providing a more thorough background in the field of didactics. The EEAP also found that the existing modules require an inordinately large student workload and believe that the curriculum could

be revised by shortening the existing modules and adding two new modules, which would provide the students with more specific knowledge and would broaden the covered scientific concepts in didactics.

The curriculum does not include a practicum. The EEAP questioned that during the visit and the response was that it was not necessary, since the majority of the students are presently working or have worked in the past in this field. During discussion with the students, it appeared that the addition of a practicum to the curriculum acknowledging the skills of those students who have already field experience would be beneficial.

This PSP Program follows a well-defined process which involves the objectives, the intended professional qualifications and includes the appropriate approval committees. The Program considers both the needs of the students and the needs of the market. The participation in this procedure of the students and external stakeholders from the labour market is unofficial and limited.

#### Panel Judgement

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

#### Panel Recommendations

- The EEAP recommends that the Program consider adding two modules with content consistent with the latest trends in the field of didactics of languages, language acquisition, psycholinguistics, language policies, as well as multilingual/intercultural approaches in teaching languages. The EEAP feels that this would make a valuable addition to the postgraduate program and position it as a unique program in its field.
- The EEAP also recommends that a more complete foundation of knowledge be provided for both the quantitative and qualitative analyses of research data for the thesis, to be added to the module Methodology of Research.
- The EEAP recommends the inclusion of a practicum which would significantly strengthen the curriculum. Those students who are presently or have worked in the past in their field of expertise can make use of their experience with in-school training and publishing Portfolios or Teaching methods/materials with new data. These documents can be presented to the Program, to their educational community, to their schools or to other appropriate educational structures.

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

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

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

The student-centred learning and teaching process

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

In addition

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

Documentation

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

### **Study Program Compliance**

#### **Findings**

The postgraduate Program "Teaching German as a Foreign Language" encourages student evaluations on a semester basis. The student evaluations are a major part of the quality



monitoring procedure. Students seem to be familiar with the electronic method of completing these questionnaires. The questionnaires' analysis provided by the Program does not specify the academic year it was carried out. According to this document, the percentage of the students answering the surveys is satisfactory. Specifically, the percentage of participation for evaluation of study program was 100%, for the School 51.6%, for the HOU 47.92%. During the interviews, both current and graduated students confirmed that they are familiar with this process, and they have participated in it at the end of every semester. Professors remind and encourage the students to complete the evaluation questionnaires.

Grade components and assessment methods are published in advance. During interviews, the students praised several aspects of the quality of instruction in courses they had to take. The Program has effectively adapted their courses and evaluation methods for online teaching. The quality indicators for both the courses and the teachers was higher than average (in all questions no student awarded a grade lower than 3 (with a maximum of 5)).

### **Analysis of judgement**

The educational process is evaluated through questionnaires completed each academic semester. By comparing progress over time, these questionnaires provide significant data, which contribute to the improvement of the offered courses. The student participation ensures continuous improvement of the Program's quality and guarantees that student opinions are considered and taken into account when appropriate.

The Program provides appropriate structures and procedures for dealing with student complaints through a complaint form available online. Students are given support to their questions.

It also provides counselling and guidance for the preparation of the thesis by first establishing the topic, identifying a three-member faculty committee, and ensuring the student's submission of the research proposal. Students have regular communication with their coordinator. As this PSP is delivered online, no consideration is given to alternative modes of delivery.

### **Conclusions**

The Program regularly evaluates and adjusts the content of the modules and tracks the quality and effectiveness of teaching, as documented especially through student surveys.

The EEAP finds that the PSP Program in GEM at the HOU employs specific modes of instruction which are deemed appropriate for online delivery. Given that the whole teaching and learning process takes place online, the flexibility of the choosing various learning paths is limited. The program follows an asynchronous type of instruction which does not allow any direct teaching. During the three meetings per module, the interaction between the teaching staff and the students is limited to exchange of information and inquiries about the curriculum materials.

### Panel Judgement

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

### Panel Recommendations

- The EEAP recommends the addition of more meetings during each semester in order to better help the students with their needs and to attend to the diversity of students by adopting flexible learning paths, as appropriate.
- The EEAP also recommends that further measures that will strengthen a more proactive approach for this online program should be taken; this will certainly benefit the students. A couple of ideas towards this end are: (a) making the deadlines for submitting assigned work more flexible, and (b) using more creative assessment methods, such as analysis of video-recorded case studies, micro-teaching applications, and the like.

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

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

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

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

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

**Documentation**

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

**Study Program Compliance**

**Findings**

To support incoming students and facilitate their admission to a university with exclusively online teaching, the Program organizes at the beginning of each academic year several online meetings, where new students are informed about the services offered by the University in general, and about the organization of the study program and the functioning of the Program.

The role of the professor-teacher in the program is one of a professor-advisor since his/her goal is to help and to advise students on issues related to the best way of studying. All professors at the HOU are trained through special seminars on teaching online to ensure their familiarity with this specific educational system. The EEAP found that faculty members are eager to assist students as demonstrated by offering them assistance either through emails, or through phone conversations, as students themselves confirmed in their interviews with EEAP.

A practicum is not included in the Program, as the majority of students are employed either in public or in private schools and they can combine their theoretical knowledge with practice. However, a practicum for the students who are not working in the field is not in place.

The Program publishes every year a complete Study Guide, which is available on the web. The study program includes the completion of a degree thesis. Finally, the Program has secured a number of mobility agreements to promote the mobility of students and faculty members.

### **Analysis of Judgement**

The School has a well-established process for students to register and matriculate through the study program. The number of incoming/outgoing students is not very high. Graduating students will be issued both a Diploma and its supplement automatically and free of charge immediately after the completion of their studies. The thesis is part of the curriculum giving the students the opportunity to develop their research interests and skills.

### **Conclusions**

All procedures concerning student admission, progression, recognition, and certification follow the institutional study regulations. The ETCS system is applied across the study program and the diploma supplement is issued in both Greek and English to all graduates. There is no practicum in the program.

### **Panel Judgement**

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

### **Panel Recommendations**

- The EEAP recommends the inclusion of a practicum which will significantly strengthen the curriculum. The students, in their field of expertise, can make use of their experience with in-school training and publishing Portfolios or Teaching methods/ materials with new data. These documents can be presented to the Program, to their educational community, to their schools or other educational structures they are working in. Practicum sites should also be identified for students with no working experience.
- The Program should continue its efforts to promote students' mobility programs especially in Germany and Austria.

## **PRINCIPLE 5: TEACHING STAFF OF POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMS**

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

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

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

### **Documentation**

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

### **Study Program Compliance**

#### **Findings**

The PSP Didactic of German as a Foreign Language currently has an 8-faculty member Teaching Staff, all SEP. The PSP GER does not have research any DEP faculty members. For recruiting faculty members, the School announces - every three years - positions for annual employment as a member SEP with the possibility of renewal for three consecutive years.

The HOU does not have autonomy in opening new positions. Funding is controlled by the Ministry of Education. The HOU takes all necessary steps to fill new positions with highly qualified staff in order to meet the teaching and research needs of the programme. It follows clear, transparent, and fair processes in recruitment according to Greek legislation. Care is taken to create and maintain a balance among the core scientific domains: linguistics, didactics, German studies, and methodology.

There is no system for collecting the teaching workload in distance learning.

The teaching work is divided into:

- Group Counselling Meetings with students for discussion-guidance-review of the material at least three times per academic semester with a duration of four (4) hours at a time.
- Communication with students outside the meetings for resolving questions in sections of about 20-24 people.
- Preparation of assignments and support of students in their carrying out of them.
- Correction of assignments and personalized feedback to each student.

Both the School and the Program organize and participate in scientific workshops, presentations, and other research activities. In this context, they invite both the general public and scientists and/or distinguished scientists. A good example of such activities is the organization of a Special Seminar (Colloquium) on a semester basis for the support of students who are in the process of writing their Master's Thesis.

The HOU follows quality assurance processes for all staff members including processes focused on the organization of the thematic units, in the educational material, in the material and technical infrastructure and in the administrative services. The evaluation by the students is done by filling out a questionnaire, online; the electronic system fully ensures the anonymity of participants. For evaluation of the teaching staff, the main axes are:

- Teacher's assessment of communication outside Group Counselling Meetings.
- Teacher's assessment during the ACPs.
- Teacher's assessment of the correction of written assignments.

### **Analysis of judgement**

The EEAP reviewed all documents submitted electronically, including all updated documents and presentations offered during the visit, and took into consideration the discussions with staff about the processes of staff recruitment, workload, and the supporting system in place for the advancement of the scientific work of the academic staff. It also took into consideration discussions with students, graduates, employers and other stakeholders regarding the link between teaching and research. The HOU provides staff with a supportive environment that promotes the advancement of their scientific work. It applies fair and transparent processes for the recruitment and development of the teaching staff.

### **Conclusions**

The EEAP members confirmed through their review of the applicable documents that the HOU has adopted all the relevant rules and has taken all appropriate measures to monitor the adequacy of the teaching staff in the academic unit of the Program, the appropriate staff-to-student ratio, the appropriate staff categories, the appropriate subject areas, the fair and objective recruitment process, the high research performance, the training, and the staff development policy.

### Panel Judgement

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

### Panel Recommendations

The EEAP recommends that faculty hires would have to be re-envisioned and fulfilled appropriately. At least one DEP member must be hired for the program.

## **PRINCIPLE 6: LEARNING RESOURCES AND STUDENT SUPPORT**

**INSTITUTIONS SHOULD HAVE ADEQUATE FUNDING TO COVER THE TEACHING AND LEARNING NEEDS OF THE POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAM. 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, NETWORKS, CAREER AND SOCIAL POLICY SERVICES ETC.).**

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

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

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

### **Documentation**

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

### **Study Program Compliance**

#### **Findings**

##### **Provision of Teaching and Learning Facilities**

The Program has established the Online Library and Information Centre, overseen by the Library Committee, as a cornerstone in meeting the academic needs of its students. The Program adopts a dual approach, with a significant emphasis on electronic resources while retaining printed materials. This approach ensures immediate access to vital information, particularly focusing on electronic resources to cater to the modern demand for quick data retrieval. Furthermore, the Program's administrative branches house libraries and reading rooms accessible to both students and the public, further enhancing the learning environment. According to the students and the alumni, the digital library, the data bases as well as the IT infrastructure were easily accessible. Moreover, the Program offers their teaching staff and the students the opportunity to access the digital library of the UOA (University of Athens).



## Range of Support Services

The Program provides a comprehensive suite of support services to address the diverse needs of its PSP students. These services include the Scholarship Office, the Internship Office, and the Protocol and Information Office. Each service caters to specific student requirements, encompassing financial assistance, career guidance, and public relations to enhance the overall student experience. The Public Relations Program plays a pivotal role in promoting the university's activities and managing cultural groups and events, enriching the academic and cultural landscape within the Program. The students and the alumni are thoroughly informed for these services when they join the respective curriculum.

## Awareness and Accessibility of Services

After the EEAP interviewed the teaching staff, the students and the alumni, it was found that the services are generally user-friendly and that there is administrative staff that not only gives them extensive guidance but also helps them in case of a technical issue either via email or telephone (<https://www.eap.gr/en/helpdesk/>). There are also video manuals that provide step-by-step guidelines for the online platforms of the Program. It is noteworthy that the teaching staff helps the students with the use of services, too.

## Administrative Staff for Support Services

The Program of Academic Bodies (TAO) serves as the executive body responsible for implementing decisions within the Program, ensuring seamless coordination of academic entities. TAO plays a pivotal role in supporting the Steering Committee and all academic bodies, managing a substantial workload. Responsibilities include organizing committee meetings, maintaining agendas and records, handling decisions and requests, drafting meeting minutes, and providing administrative assistance to the Steering Committee. TAO is vital for executing the decisions of the Board and fostering cohesion within the university community.

## The ERASMUS+ Office

The ERASMUS+ Office oversees the administration of KA1 Learning Mobility within the Program, encompassing both European Mobility (KA103) and International Mobility (KA106) opportunities. Additionally, this office serves as a vital source of information for the Hellenic Open University academic community, offering details about the services related to the Program. This includes providing information about the various opportunities presented through other Program activities, such as Strategic Partnerships (KA2) and Support for Policy Reform (KA3).

## Educational Platforms and Videoconferencing

In addition to support services and resources, the Program offers various educational platforms. These include semi-annual (<https://courses.eap.gr/login/index.php>) and annual educational platforms (<https://study.eap.gr/login/index.php>) designed to complement the curriculum and provide students with additional learning opportunities. Furthermore, a dedicated videoconference platform facilitates real-time interaction and collaboration among students and instructors. Detailed instructions for accessing and utilizing these platforms are available on the official the Program website, ensuring transparency and accessibility. As

mentioned earlier, the students and the alumni highlighted that no problems occurred while using the services of the Program.

### **Analysis of Judgement**

The EEAP scrutinized these findings, and it is evident that the Program has established a robust foundation for providing essential support services to its PSP students. The emphasis on electronic resources in the library system aligns with contemporary educational needs, ensuring immediate access to information crucial for academic success. The wide range of support services, including scholarships, internships, financial planning, and cultural promotion, underscores the university's commitment to holistic student development.

### **Conclusions**

In conclusion, the Program demonstrates a strong dedication to supporting its PSP students through various services and resources. The prioritization of electronic resources in the library system caters to the evolving needs of modern learners. The wide spectrum of support services, managed by dedicated administrative Program's, enhances the overall student experience.

Nonetheless, there is room for improvement in assessing and enhancing students' awareness and accessibility to these services. Conducting surveys or feedback mechanisms to gauge students' knowledge of available support and their ease of access can provide valuable insights for further refinement.

Additionally, a tuition utilization plan could offer transparency in financial matters related to student support. This, coupled with efforts to bolster awareness and accessibility, can collectively contribute to the university's mission of providing an integrated, effective, and easily accessible support system for postgraduate study Programs.

In essence, the Program has made commendable strides in supporting its students, and with a commitment to continuous improvement, it can further enhance the quality and impact of its support services.

### **Panel Judgement**

<b>Principle 6: Learning resources and student support</b>	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

### **Panel Recommendations**

None.

## **PRINCIPLE 7: INFORMATION MANAGEMENT**

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

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

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

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

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

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

### **Documentation**

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

### **Study Program Compliance**

#### **Findings**

##### **Data Collection Procedures**

The Program has established robust procedures for the systematic collection of data regarding various aspects of its academic unit. These procedures encompass information on the student body, teaching methods, student progression, employability, and the career paths of graduates. Data collection occurs at multiple levels within the Program to ensure comprehensive coverage.

##### **Information Systems and Collection Methods**

The Department employs a combination of information systems and methodologies to efficiently collect data. These encompass electronic databases, surveys, academic records, and collaboration with relevant departments and stakeholders. The Department adopts a data-centric approach to ensure the acquisition of accurate and current information.

## Student Satisfaction Surveys

Regular surveys to gauge student satisfaction are a foundational component of the Department's data collection endeavours. These surveys provide valuable insights into students' experiences, concerns, and suggestions for improvement. They are conducted periodically, once in every semester, to capture changing sentiments and evolving expectations.

### **Analysis of Judgement**

The Program demonstrates a strong commitment to effectively utilizing the data garnered from satisfaction surveys. The collected data undergoes systematic analysis to identify trends, areas requiring improvement, and areas of excellence. The findings are communicated to pertinent stakeholders, fostering transparency and accountability. Most importantly, the data is actively leveraged to drive improvements across various facets of the academic unit, including teaching methodologies, support services, and resource accessibility.

The Program consistently analyses and assesses data pertaining to the availability and accessibility of resources, encompassing equipment, social services, and IT facilities. This scrutiny aids in the identification of deficiencies or areas necessitating enhancements. It ensures that resources align with the evolving needs of the student body and the academic programs offered.

The Program excels in presenting the collected data effectively. The Program employs graphical representations that lucidly portray trends and facilitate straightforward interpretation and comparisons. Visual aids such as graphs and charts are employed to render the data accessible and conducive to informed decision-making. This approach promotes transparency and empowers decision-makers. However, the data are not presented to the students. It is vital that the data should be accessible to both the teaching staff and the students.

### **Conclusions**

In conclusion, the Program has instituted robust procedures for the methodical collection of data, encompassing various dimensions of its academic unit, including details about the student body, teaching methods, student advancement, graduate employability, and career paths. The Program relies on a blend of information systems and methodologies to ensure the precision and comprehensiveness of data gathering.

Regular surveys gauging student satisfaction constitute a pivotal component in capturing student feedback and expectations. The Program adeptly harnesses the insights drawn from these surveys to pinpoint areas warranting enhancement, communicates these findings to relevant stakeholders, and proactively implements changes to enhance the student experience.

Furthermore, the Program steadfastly evaluates the availability and accessibility of resources to ensure alignment with the evolving requisites of the academic community. The data amassed is presented in a transparent and visually informative manner, enabling well-informed decision-making and nurturing transparency.

In summation, the Program’s unwavering commitment to data-driven decision-making and ongoing enhancement is manifest through its comprehensive data collection protocols, effective utilization of survey data, and transparent presentation of findings. These collective endeavours substantiate the Program’s mission to provide a top-tier educational experience for its students.

**Panel Judgement**

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

**Panel Recommendations**

None.

## **PRINCIPLE 8: PUBLIC INFORMATION CONCERNING THE POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMS**

**INSTITUTIONS SHOULD PUBLISH INFORMATION ABOUT THEIR TEACHING AND ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES RELATED TO THE POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMS IN A DIRECT AND READILY ACCESSIBLE WAY. THE RELEVANT INFORMATION SHOULD BE UP-TO-DATE, OBJECTIVE AND CLEAR.**

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

Therefore, Institutions and their academic units must provide information about their activities, including the PSP they offer, the intended learning outcomes, the degrees awarded, the teaching, learning and assessment procedures applied, the pass rates, and the learning opportunities available to their students. Information is also provided on the employment perspectives of PSP graduates.

### **Documentation**

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

## **Study Program Compliance**

### **Findings**

#### **Availability of Key Information**

One of the fundamental aspects of evaluating the online resources for any academic program is the accessibility of key information. In this case, the document reveals that essential information regarding the academic unit and the PSP is indeed available online. Prospective students can access details concerning the Program's structure, mode of attendance, criteria for assessment, degree awarded, and information about the teaching staff. However, it is noteworthy that the primary language used for disseminating this information is German, which aligns with the Program's language of instruction. This linguistic consistency ensures that potential participants are well-informed about language requirements and program details.

#### **Promotion of the PSP**

The second question in our evaluation pertains to whether there is a dedicated segment on the Program's website for promoting the PSP. Unfortunately, the provided document does not offer explicit information in this regard. Further investigation into the Program's website structure and content is required to ascertain whether a dedicated segment exists to highlight the PSP and its unique features, thus aiding in its promotion to potential applicants.

#### **Accessibility of Course Outlines**

Another critical aspect of evaluating the online resources for this PSP is the availability of course outlines. Course outlines for the PSP are accessible on the Program's website. Prospective students heavily rely on course outlines to understand the content and structure of their studies, making this a crucial aspect of program information.

## Policy for Quality Assurance

A comprehensive PSP should include a policy for quality assurance to ensure that academic standards are maintained. Transparency in quality assurance policies is vital for building trust among prospective students. MODIP is the quality assurance unit of the Program. The MO.DI.P. of the Hellenic Open University was established within the framework of the ongoing evaluation of the educational and research work, as well as the operation and performance of the institution, with the aim of ensuring and improving the quality of the above, following international practices and the principles and guidelines of the Authority for Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Higher Education (ADIP). The MO.DI.P. serves as an advisory body to the university administration and a coordinating body in shaping policies and related procedures aimed at Quality Assurance and effective Evaluation in accordance with the current institutional framework.

## Up-to-Date, Clear, and Accessible Information

Clarity and up-to-dateness are essential to ensure that potential applicants can easily find relevant information and make well-informed decisions about their academic journey. The website does offer clarity and up-to-date information but after the EEAP's interviews to the students and mainly to the alumni, it was found that there is lack of clarification regarding the teaching experience. According to the alumni of the Program, it was stated that any teaching experience and employment to the respective field, that is, teaching German in schools, is necessary while the students claimed that it was optional and desirable. However, no such information was spotted on the website.

## **Analysis of Judgement**

Based on the information provided in the document, it is evident that key information about the Postgraduate Studies Program (PSP) in "Didactic of German as a Foreign Language" is available online. This information includes details about the Program's curriculum, structure, mode of attendance, criteria for assessment, degree awarded, and information about the teaching staff, such as their CVs.

The language of instruction for this Program is exclusively German, and this is prominently mentioned in the document. It is essential for prospective students to be aware of the language requirements and the level of competency expected in German. This aligns with the Program's aim of providing specialized knowledge in teaching German as a foreign language.

## **Conclusions**

In conclusion, the document provides some insight into the availability of key information regarding the Postgraduate Studies Program (PSP) in "Didactic German as a Foreign Language." This information is accessible online and includes details about the Program's structure, mode of attendance, criteria for assessment, degree awarded, and the teaching staff's CVs. Moreover, it emphasizes that the language of instruction for the Program is German.

**Panel Judgement**

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

**Panel Recommendations**

None.



## **PRINCIPLE 9: ON-GOING MONITORING AND PERIODIC INTERNAL EVALUATION OF POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMS**

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

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

The above comprise the evaluation of:

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

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

### **Documentation**

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

### **Study Program Compliance**

#### **Findings**

The quality of the postgraduate program of Didactic of German as a Foreign Language is monitored and evaluated by Internal Quality Assurance System, in order to ensure its compliance with the applicable legislation, and its currency in accordance with the developments in the discipline. The self-assessment reports of the Program are prepared annually on the platform of the MODIP. These are discussed and items are identified and agreed upon for improvement. At the end of each spring semester the Department starts the planning of the courses that will be offered in the next academic year. When the process is completed, the list is approved (together with the teaching assignments) by the Assembly.

### **Analysis of Judgement**

It should be emphasized that the Program's action plan includes attempts to improve the curriculum, to upgrade educational and research work carried out by faculty, to support the students and faculty staff, and finally to improve its community/character as a whole.

Based on the results obtained, the quality assurance office submits recommendations to the director and the academic personnel of the Program and interventions are planned if necessary. The Program's evaluation process includes both academic and administrative staff from different structural units providing university services. The EEAP had the opportunity to meet the staff involved in it. As a result of the interviews, it was identified that they actively participate in the process of program implementation and development, the roles are distributed according to their competencies.

### **Conclusions**

There is a regular monitoring, review, and revision of study program from the Program, which aims to maintain the level of educational provision and to create a supportive and effective learning environment for students and to meet the students' expectations, needs and satisfaction in relation to the Program. The information collected is analysed and the Program is adapted to ensure that it is up to date.

The Program is reviewed and revised regularly with the participation of students and faculty members. The information collected is analysed and the Program is modified according to the internal evaluation data. The student evaluations are a major part of the quality monitoring procedure.

### **Panel Judgement**

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

### **Panel Recommendations**

The EEAP recommends as following:

- In order to continue to provide high quality education, the EEAP suggests that recruitment of at least one faculty member DEP is necessary. Additionally, even though the Program has a high number of bilingual academic staff, it would be useful to have one or more native speaker.

## **PRINCIPLE 10: REGULAR EXTERNAL EVALUATION OF POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMS**

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

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

### **Documentation**

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

### **Study Program Compliance**

#### **Findings**

This is the first external evaluation that is conducted for the Program. As such there are no prior recommendations to be followed. The Program has a process for reviewing the findings and recommendations of such external evaluations. This includes a preliminary review by the Director of the Program and notification of the evaluation to all faculty and staff for their review. A faculty meeting should be scheduled to discuss the findings and recommendations and identify next steps of action.

In February 2014 an external evaluation has been conducted for the School of Humanities of the Hellenic Open University. At that time the Program has not been evaluated.

#### **Analysis**

The EEAP reviewed all available documents and the website of the Program and conducted online interviews with the Head of the Program and the teaching staff. The EEAP found that the Program has undertaken a multidimensional activity in creating the digital modules. The Program has also provided information to the EEAP about its activities, including the postgraduate program, the intended learning outcomes, the degree awarded, the teaching, learning and assessment procedures used and the learning opportunities available to their students.

#### **Conclusions**

This is the first external evaluation of the Program, so there is no track record of prior recommendations. The discussions with the faculty indicated that they understand and value the importance of such external reviews, are receptive to recommendations to improve their Program and showed an attitude of addressing such suggestions.

**Panel Judgement**

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

**Panel Recommendations**

The EEAP recommendations for the next external evaluation are presented in part C.

## **PART C: CONCLUSIONS**

### **I. Features of Good Practice**

- Regular communication, forums, direct cooperation, and guidance to the student from the professors; the support of the students in self-study, so they can learn the material and solve questions, is a good practice of the program.
- The surveys that have been carried out to identify students' needs (for internships, for orientation Program and for absorption into the labour market) at Program level have been taken into consideration in order to adjust and enrich the program.

### **II. Areas of Weakness**

- The lack of practicum for a program that educates teachers of German as a foreign language is to be considered for the development of the program.
- A stronger representation of students and professional bodies in the design process of the postgraduate program is vital for the program.
- The student participation in mobility Program is low.

### **III. Recommendations for Follow-up Actions**

- The EEAP recommends that this Postgraduate Program could be improved by providing a more thorough background in the field of didactics, adding two modules in the program with content consistent with the latest trends in the field of language acquisition, didactics psycholinguistics, and multilingual/intercultural approaches in teaching languages, while shortening the existing modules. The EEAP feels that this would make a valuable addition to the postgraduate program and position it as a unique program in its field. The EEAP also suggest that a more complete foundation of knowledge is needed for both the quantitative and qualitative analyses of research data for the thesis, in the module Methodology of Research.
- The EEAP recommends the inclusion of a practicum which will significantly strengthen the curriculum. The students, in their field of expertise, can make use of their experience with in-school training and publishing Portfolios or Teaching methods/ materials with new data. These documents can be presented to the Program, to their educational community, to their schools or other educational structures they are working in. Practicum sites should also be identified for students with no working experience.
- The EEAP suggests that a tuition utilization plan would offer transparency in financial matters related to student support. This, coupled with efforts to bolster awareness and

accessibility, can collectively contribute to the university's mission of providing an integrated, effective, and easily accessible support system for postgraduate study programs.

- The EEAP recommends the addition of more meetings during each semester in order to help the students with their needs and to attend to the diversity of students by adopting flexible learning paths. The EEAP also recommends that further measures that will strengthen the nature of this Program should be taken. A proactive approach in the online program, will benefit the students. Some ideas towards this end are the following: make the deadlines for submitting assigned work more flexible, use more creative assessment methods such as analysis of video-recorded case studies, micro-teaching applications etc).
- The EEAP recommends that faculty hires would have to be re-envisioned and fulfilled appropriately. At least one DEP member must be hired for the program.
- The Certificate of Pedagogical Competence for the students of the PSP GEM, and all students in Education fields, is an important goal and the EEAP encourages the School in this direction.

#### IV. Summary & Overall Assessment

The Principles where full compliance has been achieved are: **1, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10.**

The Principles where substantial compliance has been achieved are: **2 and 3.**

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 External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel

**Name and Surname**

**Signature**

- 1. Assoc. Prof. Georgia (Gina) Ioannitou-Valavanidou**  
Le Mans Université, Le Mans, France (Chair)
- 2. Assoc. Prof. Eka Tchkoïdze**  
Ilia State University, Tbilisi, Georgia
- 3. Ms. Eleni Kioura, Postgraduate Student**  
Department of English Language and Literature, Aristotle University of  
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- 4. Dr. Katerina Papatheu**  
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