



ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ
HELLENIC REPUBLIC



Εθνική Αρχή
Ανώτατης Εκπαίδευσης
Hellenic Authority
for Higher Education

Αριστείδου 1 & Ευριπίδου 2 • 10559 Αθήνα | 1 Aristidou str. & 2 Evripidou str. • 10559 Athens, Greece
T. +30 210 9220 944 • F. +30 210 9220 143 • E. secretariat@ethaee.gr • www.ethaee.gr

Accreditation Report for the Postgraduate Study Programme of:

Acoustic Design and Digital Sound

School: Applied Arts and Sustainable Design (former Applied Arts) Institution:
Hellenic Open University

Date: 25/07/2025



Με τη συγχρηματοδότηση
της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης



Πρόγραμμα
Ανθρώπινο Δυναμικό και
Κοινωνική Συνοχή



Report of the Panel appointed by the HAHE to undertake the review of
the Postgraduate Study Programme of **Acoustic Design and Digital Sound**
of the **Hellenic Open University** for the purposes of granting
accreditation

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Part A: Background and Context of the Review	4
I. The External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel	4
II. Review Procedure and Documentation	5
III. Postgraduate Study Programme Profile	6
Part B: Compliance with the Principles.....	8
PRINCIPLE 1: QUALITY ASSURANCE POLICY AND QUALITY GOAL SETTING FOR THE POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES OF THE INSTITUTION AND THE ACADEMIC UNIT	8
PRINCIPLE 2: DESIGN AND APPROVAL OF POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES.....	13
PRINCIPLE 3: STUDENT-CENTRED LEARNING, TEACHING, AND ASSESSMENT	17
PRINCIPLE 4: STUDENT ADMISSION, PROGRESSION, RECOGNITION OF POSTGRADUATE STUDIES, AND CERTIFICATION.	21
PRINCIPLE 5: TEACHING STAFF OF POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES	25
PRINCIPLE 6: LEARNING RESOURCES AND STUDENT SUPPORT	27
PRINCIPLE 7: INFORMATION MANAGEMENT	31
PRINCIPLE 8: PUBLIC INFORMATION CONCERNING THE POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES	34
PRINCIPLE 9: ON-GOING MONITORING AND PERIODIC INTERNAL EVALUATION OF POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES	38
PRINCIPLE 10: REGULAR EXTERNAL EVALUATION OF POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES	41
Part C: Conclusions	42
I. Features of Good Practice	42
II. Areas of Weakness.....	43
III. Recommendations for Follow-up Actions.....	44
IV. Summary & Overall Assessment	45

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 programme of Acoustic Design and Digital Sound of the **Hellenic Open University** comprised the following five (5) members, drawn from the HAHE Register, in accordance with Laws 4009/2011 & 4653/2020:

1. TZANETAKIS GEORGE (Chair)

(Title, Name, Surname)

Department of Computer Science, Faculty of Engineering, University of Victoria

(Institution of origin)

2. ECONOMIDOU STAVROU NATASSA

(Title, Name, Surname)

Department of Music and Dance, School of Education, University of Nicosia, Head of the Department (2016-2018)

(Institution of origin)

3. KOZARIS DIMITRIOS

(Title, Name, Surname)

Ελεύθερο Επάγγελμα

(Institution of origin)

4. LITOS IOANNIS

(Title, Name, Surname)

University of Macedonia

(Institution of origin)

5. Tahinci Anna

(Title, Name, Surname)

The Glassell School of Art

(Institution of origin)

II. Review Procedure and Documentation

Brief reference to the Panel preparation for the postgraduate study programme review, as well as to the documentation provided and considered by the Panel. Dates of the review, review, meetings held, and any additional information regarding the procedure, as appropriate.

In preparation of the external review of the graduate study programme the panel reviewed the documentation provided to us through the Hellenic Quality Assurance Agency accreditation website by the academic unit delivering the programme. This documentation included the accreditation report, the summary provided by the quality assurance unit of the university, sample questionnaires, the quality assurance policy of the university, the study guide of the program, various statistics and indicators, and various other documents describing in detail the operation, policies and planning of the graduate programme.

The external review took place remotely using video-conferencing on July 14 and July 15, 2025. During these two days, the panel had the chance to conduct productive discussions with faculty, administration, staff, students, and collaborating organisations and learn about the programme. The review of provided materials continued after the visit was concluded and during the writing of this accreditation report. Decisions regarding compliance and the writing of the accreditation report were made with equal participation from each panel member and were unanimously agreed upon through a consensus-building process. The academic unit fully collaborated with the panel during the accreditation process and provided any additional information and clarifications that were requested in a timely and professional manner.

III. Postgraduate Study Programme Profile

Brief overview of the postgraduate study programme with reference to the following: history, academic remit, duration of studies, qualification awarded, employment opportunities, orientation challenges or any other key background information. Short description of the home Department and Institution, with reference to student population, campus or any other related facts.

The post-graduate program (PSP) “Acoustic Design and Digital Sound” is a renaming of the program “Acoustic Design and Multimedia” that was approved in 2009 and started operating in the 2014-2015 academic year (ΦΕΚ ίδρυσης 990/Β/26.05.2009 και ΦΕΚ επανίδρυσης 2029/Β/2018). The PSP has a focus on the in depth study of topics related to acoustic science that are used in both theory and practice as well as acoustic design and digital sound technology.

Emphasis is given to the use of state of the art methods for managing, measuring, analysis, and processing sound using digital technology and computers.

Graduates of the program are able to conduct research or work in industry in the wider field of sound technology, acoustic, and acoustic design of buildings, facilities and noise protection. The PSP offers comprehensive and state-of-the-art interdisciplinary scientific knowledge in these fields so that the graduates of the program can support corresponding applications and projects that frequently arise in their professional or artistic activities to which they are already engaged (the program mostly targets adult working professionals).

The PSP consists of 120 ECTS (European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System) units of teaching. The minimum duration of studies is 2 academic years. According to the ISCED-2011 standard of Unesco the PSP is classified in the education sector 21:Arts with a level of studies 7.

It is classified according to the ISCED-2013 standard of Unesco in the education sector: 0788 Inter-disciplinary programmes and qualifications involving engineering, manufacturing, and construction. The inter-disciplinary program consists of the following topics:

0211 Audio-visual techniques and media production

0521 Environmental Sciences

0619 Information and Communication Technologies not elsewhere classified

0712 Environmental protection Technologies

0714 Electronics and automation

0732 Building and civil engineering

Open systems of tertiary education are based on the principle that education is a right for all throughout their lives. The appeal to a wide range of stakeholders and address a different educational need that traditional in-person academic institutions. They provide flexible

programs in which the students have more flexibility in where they study, their pace of their studies and there are no entrance examinations. Frequently, students are working full-time in addition to studying. The PSP is part of the School of Applied Arts and Sustainable Development.

The Hellenic Open University for the operation of which Law 2552 was passed in 1997 (Government Gazette 266/24-12/1997), was established to meet the need for Tertiary Education in Greece, similarly to Open Universities in almost all European countries, which began to be established in the 1970s. Today, Open Universities services hundreds of thousands of students (for example the Open University of Great Britain has 250,000), the Open University of Spain 150,000, and Germany 70,000. The first cohort of students were admitted in 1999. In 2017 it was estimated that around 47,000 students were registered in the Hellenic Open University.

PART B: COMPLIANCE WITH THE PRINCIPLES

PRINCIPLE 1: QUALITY ASSURANCE POLICY AND QUALITY GOAL SETTING FOR THE POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES 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 PROGRAMMES 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 programmes 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 programme (PSP), its purpose and field of study; it will realise the programme's goals and it will determine the means and ways for attaining them; it will implement appropriate quality procedures, aiming at the programme'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 programmes*
- 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 Programme Compliance

I. Findings

With respect to quality assurance the post-graduate program Acoustic Design and Digital Sound, was founded on a philosophy of broad quality that is based on the regulations that are followed by all graduate programs of the School of Applied Arts and Sustainable Design of the Hellenic Open University. The goal of the program is to offer knowledge and skills in topics related to digital sound technology, acoustics, acoustic design of buildings and spaces, as well as protection from noise. The graduate program offers comprehensive and current scientific knowledge in these fields so that the graduate of the program can conduct research or support applied projects that arise frequently in their professional or artistic activities.

The quality assurance policy of the post-graduate program follows the quality assurance policy of the host institution (the Hellenic Open University) and continuously adjusts to the current conditions and demands. The institution ensures that the quality assurance policy is implemented and compliance is achieved with respect to the funding of the unit, the appropriateness of facilities and organisation of the graduate program, the support personnel, and the quality of the teaching faculty.

The School of Applied Arts and Sustainable Design commits to work with the director of the graduate program and all the teaching faculty to use quality assurance principles in order to monitor:

The organisation of the Post-graduate study program (PSP)

The establishment of learning outcomes and skills according to the national and European frameworks for higher education

The high qualifications of the teaching faculty

The continuous improvement of the PSP through the setting of quality goals on a yearly basis

The market demand for the skills provided by the PSP

The efficient utilisation of the funding provided to the PSP

The conduct of a yearly internal review

The promotion and support of research conducted by the teaching faculty

The connection of research to teaching

The encouragement of outside collaborations with other institutions and organisations.

These areas of quality assurance apply to all post-graduate programs at the Hellenic Open University. In addition, the PSP Acoustic Design and Digital sound focuses on the following quality assurance goals:

Offering thematic units that cover both the fundamentals and theory of acoustics and digital sound as well as applications of acoustics, modern recording technology, and acoustic measurements

The use of state of the art digital analysis and processing tools for sound using specialised software

Emphasis on the interdisciplinary of acoustic design and digital sound that

combined sciences, electrical and mechanical engineering, structural mechanics, media, computer science, and music technology.

Creation and specialisation of scientist capable of conducting research or applying sound engineering principles as professionals in the broader field of acoustic design and digital sound

Creation and showing of research and innovation in the corresponding fields and the wider interdisciplinary area of Acoustics and Sound.

The quality assurance policy of the PSP Acoustic Design and Digital Sound, is approved by the School of Applied Arts and Sustainable Development of the Hellenic Open University, it is binding, and gets published on the website of the PSP and the central website of the institution. It is regularly updated by consultation with all stakeholders including faculty, students, and administrative and support staff. The implementation, monitoring, and update follows the procedures established by the quality assurance unit of the institution, the Hellenic Open University.

The PSP has established strategic goals and associated actions for the following areas:

Education

Research

Connection with society

Internationalisation

Academic environment

Quality assurance

The actions are evaluated using regularly collected metrics. In the yearly information collection of the PSP these metrics are established and measured. If needed, new goals are set and developed. The actions have the goal of continuous evolution of the PSP in concert with the strategic plan for the Hellenic Open University. The quality assurance policy of the PSP is available at the website of the program for access by all members of the academic community and the public:

<https://www.eap.gr/education/postgraduate/annual/acoustic-design-and-digital-sound/>

All content provided has been discussed and approved by the appropriate committees at the program, school, and institutional level.

II. Analysis

The panel affirms that the post-graduate program in Acoustic Design and Digital Sound at the Hellenic Open University has effectively implemented a quality assurance process. Both the PSP and the University have established comprehensive quality assurance objectives. The application documents also demonstrate that the University places significant emphasis on quality assurance

in its strategic planning and vision. Furthermore, there are well-defined processes and institutional bodies (such as MODIP and OMEA) responsible for monitoring and managing these objectives. The documents within the program's accreditation portfolio reveal that the PSP and the University are committed to a continuous review process. The Quality Assurance policy is appropriately communicated to both internal and external stakeholders through the PSP website and updated regularly by consulting all appropriate stakeholders.

The PSP has a regular process of setting goals and associated actions and evaluating their effectiveness through the collection of metrics. This has resulted in modifications to the program that respond to changes in the academic context in which it operates. For example the term multimedia was dropped from the name in 2014-2025 in order to have a more focused academic program. Another change was initiated to reduce the minimum duration of studies to two years as this was something that was asked by some students even though the majority of students take longer to complete the program as they typically are full time working professionals. The need for hiring a technical support staff member has been identified as a goal in order to support the use and maintenance of the audio measurement and analysis equipment that the PSP has purchased but not been able to use.

The application documents also demonstrate that the University places significant emphasis on quality assurance in its strategic planning and vision. Furthermore, there are well-defined processes and institutional bodies (such as MODIP and OMEA) responsible for monitoring and managing these objectives. The documents within the Department's accreditation portfolio reveal that the PSP and the University are committed to a continuous review process. The Quality Assurance policy is appropriately communicated to both internal and external stakeholders through the PSP website.

III. Conclusions

The PSP aligns well with the university's strategic goals and promotes an innovative academic vision. However, its long-term success and sustainability depend on addressing current weaknesses in enrollment and technical support services. Focused investment in these areas is essential to support future growth, maintain high academic standards, and fully achieve the PSP's mission.

Panel Judgement

Principle 1: Quality assurance policy and quality goal setting for the postgraduate study programmes of the institution

and the academic unit	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

- Hire technical support staff in order to utilise the audio measurement equipment
- Improve enrollment by better outreach - for example by highlighting career paths on the website and social media leverages the graduates of the program that are working in relevant jobs

PRINCIPLE 2: DESIGN AND APPROVAL OF POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES

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

The academic units develop their postgraduate study programmes following a well-defined procedure. The academic profile and orientation of the programme, 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 programme, 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 programmes 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 Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The Master of "Acoustic Design and Digital Audio" is a renaming of the "Acoustic Design and Multimedia" program that was approved in 2009 and operated for the first time during the academic year 2014-15 (Government Gazette of establishment 990/B/26.05.2009 and Government Gazette of re-establishment 2029/B/2018).

The purpose of the program is to specialise mostly engineers, sound designers, musicians and architects, capable of engaging in research or practicing professional activity in the broader field of sound technology, sound engineering, acoustic design of buildings and facilities, as well as in noise protection issues. "Acoustic Design and Digital Audio" is a postgraduate program that was designed taking into consideration current trends in the field of acoustics and sound teaching and learning, in schools and in the community, opening new career pathways to artists, architects, and engineers. Emphasis is placed on training in modern digital audio technologies as well as familiarisation with computer analysis and design tools.

The learning outcomes for program graduates concern comprehensive knowledge and skills in the above cognitive area, so that they are able to support similar applications that often arise in the professional or artistic activity they already practice.

The PSP was designed with a balanced relationship between scientific and professional orientation in mind. Its educational role is to provide a wide range of undergraduate graduates with the additional knowledge they need to apply and specialize in the topics of acoustic science and digital sound technology.

For the formation of the PSP and within the framework of the scientific body "Hellenic Institute of Acoustics (ELINA)", data from the Greek reality were utilised, which came from groups of building-structural acoustics consultants, companies dealing with sound insulation materials and devices, interior acoustics, measuring devices, etc. Professionals in the field of audio technology were also utilised, as recording technicians and/or engineers, sound coverage, companies dealing with modern digital audio equipment. Finally, the knowledge and opinions of a number of academics and scientists active in University Departments and Laboratories as well as Research Centers were greatly utilised.

There is a student guide of the EAP with the latest update 2022-23 where

interested parties can obtain information about the PSP "Acoustic Design and Digital Audio" on pages 815-823.

The courses are well-designed and developed and the course outlines, in their majority, present well-written objectives and specific and measurable learning outcomes and list a variety of teaching methods and assessment tools.

II. Analysis

Society's perception of distance learning programs has now changed. Both due to the credibility of the institution and the pandemic that imposed modern distance learning, prospective students have become familiar with the way studies are organised, while also creating a framework for the university's flexibility towards new realities.

Given the different mission of the Hellenic Open University of Greece as an institution solely providing distance learning compared to the country's traditional institutions, comparative evaluation with other study programs in the country and abroad is not directly applicable.

There is increasing participation of students and graduates of the PSP in the Greek National Acoustics conference which is organised every two years from the Hellenic Institute of Acoustics. This is one of the ways that the PSP communicates with professionals in the field and with the academics and researchers in the field.

Identifying some basic differences between the PSP and corresponding programs at traditional institutions in the country, the PSP, like all HOU (Hellenic Open University), is differentiated by offering a detailed study schedule on a weekly basis, self-assessment exercises, exercises and assignments of small and large extent.

Furthermore, the possibility of direct and indirect (asynchronous) communication with the lecturers who are "professor advisors" is encouraged, thus adopting the model of international educational institutions that invest in the professor-student relationship at every level of study, and not only in postgraduate studies.

This is precisely the reason that explains the limited number of students per teacher, an element that contributes significantly to the university's efficiency indicators. The small number of students per teacher at the Hellenic Open University (approximately 24) is also an indicator of high quality in the provision of educational services.

III. Conclusions

The Hellenic Open University, operates an internal evaluation system which records the opinions of students and professors on a set of critical factors of its operation (teachers, educational materials, administrative staff, infrastructure, etc.) and presents results in a hierarchical manner (class, TE, PS, School, Institution).

In addition, a set of indicators related to attendance, exams, teaching and student demographics complement the internal evaluation. All of these elements can be presented in a comparative manner so that each MS has an idea of its position in each evaluation axis in relation to the other MSc programs of the School or Institution.

Identifying some basic differences between the MS and corresponding programs at traditional institutions in the country, the PSP, like all MScs of the Hellenic Open University, is differentiated by offering a detailed study schedule on a weekly basis, self-assessment exercises, exercises and assignments of small and large extent.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

More in-person sessions to work with equipment

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

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD ENSURE THAT POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES 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 programme's delivery and the assessment of the related outcomes.

The student-centred learning and teaching process

- *respects and attends to the diversity of students and their needs 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 Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The postgraduate programme Acoustic Design and Digital Sound is fundamentally built upon a student-centred approach to learning, as evidenced by the documents provided to the panel, aligned with the principles of Distance Education. This educational model empowers students to take active ownership of their learning journey, critical engagement, and reflective study. The learning environment is structured to support self-paced study while fostering meaningful interaction with academic staff. A core element of this model is the role of the teaching staff, who function not only as instructors but also as academic advisors and mentors. These professors provide guidance, motivation, and personalised support, ensuring that students remain engaged and effectively navigate the academic demands of the programme.

Student-centred teaching is implemented through the systematic organisation of Group Advisory Meetings (ΟΣΣ), where the professor and students engage in academic dialogue, share perspectives, and clarify the course content. These sessions are tailored according to the students' responses and needs, reflecting a pedagogical flexibility that lies at the heart of the student-centred approach. Professors are trained specifically in the Distance learning methodology through seminars, ensuring that they are equipped to guide students within this distinctive educational framework.

Assessment methods are also aligned with student-centred principles. Criteria and methods of assessment are communicated to students in advance, promoting transparency and trust in the evaluation process. Students are invited to provide feedback regularly, often through brief questionnaires distributed during meetings, which serve to identify any immediate difficulties and contribute to the ongoing refinement of both teaching practices and course structure. Moreover, there is an established system for managing student complaints and appeals, implemented through a dedicated digital platform. This mechanism ensures that student concerns are formally acknowledged and addressed, further reinforcing the ethos of partnership and mutual respect between learners and educators.

The programme's internal evaluation process, conducted annually, incorporates student feedback as a key component. Students' evaluations of courses, instructors, and academic support feed into the broader quality assurance system of the university, resulting in actionable insights aimed at improving the programme at every level. Overall, the postgraduate programme is delivered in a student-centred learning environment that promotes active engagement, individualised support, academic integrity, and continuous quality improvement.

II. Analysis

The evidence gathered through documentation and interviews confirms that the PSP embraces a student-centred learning model in both design and delivery. The structure of the programme, at the moment, allows students to tailor their learning based on their schedules and personal engagement levels. Teaching

methods prioritise independent work, complemented by regular structured interactions during five scheduled Group Advisory Meetings (ΟΣΣ) and very often ad hoc communications via digital tools (email, video calls, social media). This allows students to feel continuously supported, and the faculty's willingness to be "on standby" and arrange informal meetings fosters an inclusive and responsive academic culture.

However, there is no flexibility at all in the academic pathway since all courses are compulsory for all students. This came up several times in the interviews and is something that both students, alumni and faculty seem to acknowledge and would like to have the possibility to see the programme enriched with either electives or concentrations, but due to low enrolments this is not possible at the moment. If this is possible in the future, it would greatly support the programme towards student centered learning.

In addition, the committee observations highlight a significant gap in opportunities for structured peer interaction and collaborative learning. While students reported that they generally navigated their studies independently, it became evident to the committee that the programme could benefit greatly from more interactive elements. There is currently minimal scaffolding for peer collaboration, no opportunities for peer review, and a lack of structured group assignments or student presentations to their peers. Despite the existence of forums and informal peer groups (such as on Viber), these are not actively integrated into the curriculum. As a result, opportunities for shared learning, meaningful peer interaction, critical peer dialogue, and the development of teamwork skills remain underutilised. The committee recognises that these limitations diminish the programme's potential to foster deeper engagement and learning from fellow students, an essential element in postgraduate education. In our view, collaborative tasks and student-led presentations should be considered as enhancements that would not only reduce the sense of isolation but also develop students' interpersonal and communication competencies in professional and academic contexts.

While students value the detailed individualised feedback provided by instructors and the clarity of assessment procedures, integrating more interactive activities and in the cases where this is possible, some face to face seminars and workshops, would add further depth to their learning experience and enrich it with a more practical perspective. Moreover, practical application, through the use of updated tools and industry-relevant software, remains an area for growth, as indicated by students.

III. Conclusions

In conclusion, while the programme is demonstrably compliant with student-centred principles, the committee believes that meaningful enhancements can be achieved by embedding structured collaboration, interactive activities, and better

integration of student services into the learning experience.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

The panel recommends that the programme integrate more structured opportunities for student-to-student interaction, both within the framework of the 5 group advisory meetings as well as through complementary activities, as part of its commitment to student-centred learning.

- The faculty is encouraged to utilise the existing digital platforms more actively to promote peer engagement and academic dialogue, beyond administrative communication or faculty-led exchanges.
- The panel suggests that clearer communication be provided to students and faculty regarding the pedagogical value of peer interaction within an open and distance learning environment. The faculty is encouraged to further develop its approach to fostering collaborative learning by incorporating practices that support interaction among students, without compromising the flexibility of the distance learning model.

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 Programme*
- *Research Ethics Regulation*
- *Regulation of studies, internship, mobility, and student assignments*
- *Degree certificate template*

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The postgraduate programme at the Hellenic Open University demonstrates full alignment with Principle 4 by maintaining comprehensive, transparent, and publicly accessible regulations covering all phases of study, from admission to graduation. Student admission procedures are clearly defined and communicated, including the required documentation and selection criteria. Upon enrolment, students receive timely communication through digital channels and are supported in their initial transition by academic staff through early Group Advisory Meetings. These meetings introduce students to the institutional

structure, support services, academic expectations, and the overall learning model of the university, helping them to articulate their personal goals and commit to their academic journey through what is described as a “learning contract.”

Student progression is systematically monitored using digital platforms that track academic performance, submission of coursework, and overall engagement. Professors, in coordination with the teaching teams of each thematic unit, regularly review students' progress to ensure consistency and intervene where necessary to support students facing challenges. The internal quality assurance system produces annual reports and statistical indicators that capture trends in academic performance, allowing the institution to assess the effectiveness of its programmes and support mechanisms over time.

As part of its academic and ethical framework, the university has adopted a code of research ethics applicable to all postgraduate work, including theses. The thesis component of the programme follows a structured and monitored process. Students are guided in their thesis development from the selection of the topic to the final presentation. This process includes the appointment of supervisors and additional evaluators through transparent procedures, adherence to formal submission deadlines, and evaluation based on both the written thesis and oral defense. The institution ensures uniformity in the quality of assessment through general and programme-specific regulations, and the standards for thesis writing and presentation are published and accessible to all students.

Certification is handled with equal rigour and transparency. All graduates receive a diploma supplement automatically and free of charge, in both Greek and English, detailing their academic performance and the corresponding ECTS credits. The recognition of postgraduate studies is further reinforced by the inclusion of all programme requirements and learning outcomes in the diploma documentation. Through these comprehensive mechanisms, the Hellenic Open University ensures that students experience a well-supported academic pathway from admission to certification, underpinned by institutional accountability, quality assurance, and student-centred policies.

II. Analysis

The programme exhibits compliance with the standards related to student admission, progression, recognition, and certification. Admission procedures are clearly defined and systematically implemented, while orientation activities such as early Group Advisory Sessions help establish expectations and a sense of community among students. Students generally feel well-informed at the outset, although some noted that more targeted briefings about available student services—particularly the digital library—would enhance their academic preparation.

The monitoring of academic progress is comprehensive. Professors keep detailed records, and multiple points of interaction ensure that no student is left unsupported. Despite this, the student workload is perceived as demanding, and many students and alumni indicated that completing the programme in the standard two-year timeline is often unrealistic for those who are employed full-time. This suggests a need to reconsider pacing expectations or more explicitly promote flexible study pathways from the outset.

The structure of the thesis process meets all formal requirements and is well-received by students. However, the faculty is encouraged to introduce opportunities for students to share work-in-progress and engage in constructive peer feedback that would enhance both the academic culture and the depth of research experience. Currently, such exchanges are informal and optional. Mobility and certification procedures are well established and align with European standards. However, the growing emphasis on applied knowledge suggests that a revision of thesis options or inclusion of practice-based projects may further enhance graduate preparedness.

Finally, while the programme offers ECTS-aligned recognition and degree certification, the committee believes that introducing elective pathways—emphasising either technical or creative dimensions of the field—could provide students with better alignment to career goals. This flexibility could be especially valuable for professionals working across diverse sectors of acoustic design and digital sound.

The committee also notes that several students seemed to be unaware of available student support services, particularly digital resources and the library. This suggests a need for stronger orientation and integration of support structures from the outset.

III. Conclusions

In sum, the programme demonstrates full compliance with Principle 4, supported by transparent regulations and effective implementation. Nevertheless, refinements in terms of flexibility in the academic pathways and more practical elements addressed through face-to-face workshops or visits, could further optimise the student experience and educational outcomes.

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 panel suggests that both MA and MSc postgraduate degree designations should potentially be provided in the future depending on the specific background and interest of the graduates with more flexibility in terms of electives.

PRINCIPLE 5: TEACHING STAFF OF POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES

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 Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The four mandatory modules of the PSP (ASP50 Acoustic design, ASP51 Sound design, ASP51 Sound installation – sound protection, and ASP60 Room acoustics, and ASP61 Digital sound) are taught by Adjunct Teaching Staff (SEP), who are either tenured academics from other Greek universities or experts in their fields, and who are hired for teaching the PSP on an adjunct non- permanent contract. Teaching staff also advise students and supervise the ASPDE (Master's Thesis). Other PSPs at the Hellenic Open University have a regular full-time employed faculty member that supports the program and is able to provide continuity and leadership. For future growth and development of the program it would be helpful to have such a regular faculty member.

II. Analysis

The selection of the teaching staff of the PSP is transparent and with merit-based criteria, according to law 4957/2022 for the postgraduate programmes of study. These merit-based criteria relate to the candidate's command of the topic to be taught, the quality and the number of publications, and teaching and research experience. The PSP ensures a level of knowledge and skills of their teaching staff and applies transparent and merit-based processes for faculty recruitment, training, and further development. The PSP supports the research activities of its faculty and some funding for conferences is provided. Staff mobility is supported by allowing short-term visits to foreign universities with the Erasmus+ programme. The workload is essentially chosen by the staff itself and teaching staff are very generous with their time and resources. There is a constant link of teaching and research: students study research papers along the standard textbooks, as reading material, and are encouraged to write research papers to present them at conferences and to publish them.

The instructor's evaluation by the students is accomplished via electronic surveys within a special platform. These electronic surveys are activated by the instructors, during the last weeks of the course, and the students can anonymously evaluate the instructor, and the course per se by filling the survey. The participation rate for student surveys for the academic year 2023-2024 was 61%.

III. Conclusions

We conclude that the PSP is fully compliant with the requirements of Principle 5.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

Hiring one HOU Tenured Teaching Staff (DEP) is strongly recommended for the sustainability of the programme and its future success.

PRINCIPLE 6: LEARNING RESOURCES AND STUDENT SUPPORT

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD HAVE ADEQUATE FUNDING TO COVER THE TEACHING AND LEARNING NEEDS OF THE POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMME. 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, 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 Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The Hellenic Open University (HOU) runs the Postgraduate Study Programme (PSP) “Acoustic Design and Digital Sound” which is part of the School of the Applied Arts and Sustainable Design. The PSP follows an open and distance education (ODE) model, primarily based on asynchronous learning techniques. Specifically, the Moodle educational platform (<http://study.eap.gr>) supports students in all their activities — from studying the learning material to submitting assignments and reviewing the evaluation results provided by their professors. The Moodle platform is well-designed and regularly updated, enabling students to easily access all necessary information, including articles, online exercises,

presentations, and collections of practice activities. Recommended literature is also provided and can be accessed either through the interlibrary loan service for printed materials or via the university library's electronic resources (<http://lib.eap.gr>). Furthermore, asynchronous discussion forums are used for resolving questions and discussing assignments, while synchronous teleconferencing sessions, conducted through ICT tools such as Skype for Business and Webex, support live discussions and course delivery. The HOU maintains adequate infrastructure, with classrooms that meet teaching requirements in terms of space quality, capacity, and equipment (seating, boards, projectors, and computers), which are available for the needs of the PSP.

Furthermore, the PSP services extend beyond academic provisions with a variety of online and on site services and makes good use of university's agencies for students personal, social and professional development. In particular, the HOU has developed a wide range of student support services, including the "Counseling and Psychological Support Center" (KESYPSY) (<https://kesypsy.eap.gr>), the "Erasmus Office" (<https://erasmusplus.eap.gr>), and the "Student Advocate" (<https://www.eap.gr/to-eap/student-advocate/>). Additional services include the "Career Office" (<http://career.eap.gr>), the "Alumni Office" (<http://alumni.eap.gr>), and the "Committee for Equality and Inclusion" (<https://www.eap.gr/epitropi-isotitas>), as well as the "Teaching and Learning Support Center" (KEDIMA) to enhance academic and teaching quality. Finally, one of the most useful resources for the PSP is the "Distance Library and Information Center" offers an extensive print collection of more than 32,000 titles related to the university's fields of study. These resources can be searched through the Library's Online Catalog and delivered directly to the student's place of residence via a simple electronic loan request process (Print Book Lending Service). The Library has also developed partnerships with other academic institutions, providing access to their collections through an Interlibrary Loan Service. In addition, a wide range of reliable scientific electronic resources is available, including databases, e-books, e-journals, thematic portals, industry reports, the institutional repository, and resources from Heal-Link. Access to these materials is provided via the Library's website using the personal login credentials issued by the HOU for digital education services.

In addition to its academic facilities, the PSP is supported by a well-organised administrative framework. A specialised office oversees all aspects of student support, from enrollment and record-keeping to the coordination of educational activities. The staff, equipped with appropriate expertise and experience, regularly participate in seminars, briefings, and professional development activities and ensure the program runs efficiently by managing student communications, processing official documents, and providing guidance on academic procedures.

II. Analysis

The accreditation panel affirms that the PSP “Acoustic Design and Digital Sound” possesses sufficient resources and long-term planning to effectively support students’ learning and academic activities. During interviews, faculty members, students, and alumni highlighted the program’s approach to software use and licensing. While the university’s limited funding prevents the provision of licenses for proprietary software, faculty members actively integrate open-source alternatives whenever possible. This strategy, however, is not solely driven by financial constraints but is also consistent with the program’s philosophy: to cultivate students’ ability to adapt to evolving software environments rather than train them exclusively on specific applications that may soon become outdated. Faculty members emphasised that the focus remains on core concepts, methodologies, and critical thinking, enabling students to assess, select, and transition between different software solutions as required. Despite these strengths, faculty members acknowledged that financial constraints pose ongoing challenges, often making it difficult to secure even the most basic resources. The most significant weakness identified was the lack of a dedicated technical team responsible for maintaining and continuously upgrading the digital platforms and on-site equipment that support both synchronous and asynchronous learning. Finally, most of the students interviewed were not fully aware of the available support services, and none appeared to make use of them.

III. Conclusions

The panel concludes that the PSP “Acoustic Design and Digital Sound” at HOU functions within a well-structured academic ecosystem that ensures both material adequacy and robust institutional support. The program operates in an environment that adheres to high standards of teaching and learning, with the institution demonstrating a strong commitment to providing the necessary resources, infrastructure, and administrative backing to guarantee the quality of the educational experience.

By combining academic rigor with technological innovation and creative practice, the institution remains dedicated to cultivating the next generation of professionals in acoustic design and digital sound. The PSP’s services reflect a holistic approach to student well-being, ensuring that all participants—regardless of academic or professional background—can fully benefit from the program. The panel encourages faculty members to continue actively supporting students by ensuring that they are fully informed about the program’s available resources and opportunities. Including course activities and homeworks that engage the program’s resources such as online library materials is one way to achieve this goal.

Furthermore, faculty are urged to make the most effective use of resources and tuition fees to address student needs. Despite financial limitations, the PSP is fully compliant with this Principle.

Panel Judgement

Principle 6: Learning resources and student support	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

Additional funding sources should be explored to enhance resources, ensure proper equipment maintenance, and expand the availability of software licenses for remote student access, particularly given the online nature of the program.

The recruitment of a dedicated technical team is recommended to oversee the maintenance and continuous upgrading of digital platforms and on-site equipment, supporting both synchronous and asynchronous learning.

The faculty should try to make the students more aware of the available resources such as the online library. For example, activities and homeworks could be designed to leverage the program's resources and make the students aware of their availability.

PRINCIPLE 7: INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

INSTITUTIONS BEAR FULL RESPONSIBILITY FOR COLLECTING, ANALYSING AND USING INFORMATION, AIMED AT THE EFFICIENT MANAGEMENT OF POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES 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 programmes 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 programmes*
- *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 Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The HOU uses an information system for the collection, management, and analysis of data related to its academic and administrative operations. This data concerns students, staff, and teaching in general. The operation of QA related information systems is the responsibility of the university's MODIP, OMEA, Student Registry, HR Department, and the Educational Material and Methodology Laboratory.

The overall information system used by the PSP involves a number of individual systems with distinct functions. These functions involve the processing of assignment and exam marks, individual student performance and progression,

certificates of study, statistics on student performance etc. Educational platforms such as www.courseseap.gr and www.study.eap.gr facilitate the management of course material and student-staff communication.

Other systems manage the evaluation of the PSP's courses by students and coordinators. Several procedures are in place that feed data into the information systems. One of the key inputs, as far as the PSP is concerned, refers to the student and coordinator evaluations of the PSP's courses. These are collected and analysed by OMEA. The subsequent analysis of this information by the PSP feeds into the QA process.

II. Analysis

Through a centralised information system, the PSP collects and analyses reliable and relevant data. This information is then used to ensure the smooth operation of the PSP, for instance by identifying areas of best practice as well as areas for improvement. Student performance seems to be monitored from registration to graduation. Student evaluation surveys constitute one of the key inputs to the system. These are conducted anonymously across all courses. The results are then analysed by the OMEA who is mainly responsible for the PSP's QA process. It should be noted that the student participation rate in the evaluation surveys is relatively high (61% for the academic year 2023-2024).

III. Conclusions

The PSP has in place an appropriate and efficient system for collecting, managing, and analysing information concerning students, staff, teaching, and other academic activities.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this principle.

PRINCIPLE 8: PUBLIC INFORMATION CONCERNING THE POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD PUBLISH INFORMATION ABOUT THEIR TEACHING AND ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES RELATED TO THE POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES 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 department 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 Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The Postgraduate Study Programme (PSP) in “Acoustic Design and Digital Sound” maintains its own webpage, which is hosted within the main website of the Hellenic Open University (HOU). The website is bilingual and offers detailed information about the program’s structure and requirements. Also, the postgraduate program regularly communicates with stakeholders via email, providing updates on its initiatives, key information regarding the operation and activities of the PSP, as well as guidance related to the study of the course modules. Specifically, the PSP’s website (<https://www.eap.gr/education/postgraduate/annual/acoustic-design-and-digital-sound/>) contains the following sub-menus:

Aim – Description
Learning Outcomes
Admission requirements
Structure
Teaching Staff
Financial Contribution
Contact

Overall, the PSP’s website offers details about:

Aim and description of the program
Quality Policy and quality target of 2025
The learning outcomes and objectives of the program
The admission requirements
The program’s structure, the outline of each module, the selection and evaluation

process of the modules

The director of the program and coordinators of the thematic units

Financial requirements and changes from last year's admission process

The evaluation process in general

Contact details with administration office

The PSP does not maintain its own social media accounts. Instead, it leverages HOU's communication channels, including the monthly newsletter Open2U (<https://www.eap.gr/to-eap/efimerida-eap-open2u/>), the HOU Webradio (<http://webradio.eap.gr/>), and the university's official social media platforms on Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, and X.

Information regarding the university's certifications (ISO, QMS, IQAS), its units and services, announcements (for students, faculty, the public, Erasmus), calls for tenders, events (conferences, seminars, third-party activities), newsletters, and the Service Newsletter is provided exclusively through the university's main website (<https://www.eap.gr/>) and not through the PSP's dedicated webpage.

It is noteworthy that during student interviews, no one mentioned hearing about the postgraduate program directly from its website. Everyone stated that they learned about the program either from a fellow student or co-worker, or through a random Google search.

II. Analysis

The information provided by the postgraduate program's website is both comprehensive and applicative. The program's website provides comprehensive, clear, and objective information, along with a structured process for maintaining, updating, and renewing content to ensure accuracy and relevance. Students have access to their semesters program, info about their classes and teaching staff, contact details with the postgraduate program's secretariat. The academic unit ensures that key information regarding the PSP—including the program structure, mode of attendance, assessment criteria, degree awarded, and teaching staff CVs—is fully available online. This information is provided in both Greek and English to accommodate a diverse audience. The Department's website features sections for promoting their PSPs, where all course outlines are complete and accessible. Additionally, the academic unit's Policy for Quality Assurance is published on the PSP website. All information presented is kept up-to-date, clearly written, and easily accessible to students and other stakeholders.

However, certain areas could be further improved to enhance the public information available specifically for the PSP. For example, providing future students with more detailed and easily accessible information about available online and on-site resources—such as library access, software availability, laboratory facilities, counseling and remote access to academic journals—would be highly beneficial. Additionally, the PSP collaborates with distinguished social and professional partners, and these partnerships should be more prominently highlighted on the website, with clear and detailed descriptions of their

significance. Finally, the impressive achievements of enrolled students—such as conference presentations, published papers, and creative projects—should be showcased online, serving as both a testament to the program’s quality and a valuable branding tool for the PSP.

III. Conclusions

The committee considers that some improvements are necessary for the postgraduate program’s administrators to enhance the visibility and clarity of public information. The website content should be presented in a straightforward, transparent, and easily accessible manner. Strengthening the program’s online presence through promotional videos and active engagement on social media platforms would help attract prospective students, showcase student work more effectively, and highlight the program’s achievements to a broader audience. Furthermore, the use of information brochures, posters, and invitations—distributed within the Department and sent directly to potential candidates via email by faculty members—would significantly enhance the program’s outreach efforts. It is also essential that all websites and social media channels remain synchronised, regularly updated, and presented in a visually appealing and user-friendly format. Lastly, regular newsletters should be distributed to all relevant stakeholders to ensure they remain informed about the program’s activities, updates, and future initiatives.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

The program should establish dedicated social media pages and develop well-designed brochures to promote its activities and keep stakeholders informed. Ensure that students receive clear and comprehensive information about the resources, supports, and rights associated with the postgraduate program directly through the PSP website, rather than relying solely on the university’s main website.

PRINCIPLE 9: ON-GOING MONITORING AND PERIODIC INTERNAL EVALUATION OF POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES

INSTITUTIONS AND ACADEMIC UNITS SHOULD HAVE IN PLACE AN INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM FOR THE AUDIT AND ANNUAL INTERNAL REVIEW OF THEIR POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES, 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 programmes 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 programme 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 programme*
 - f) the learning environment, support services, and their fitness for purpose for the PSP in question*
- Postgraduate study programmes are reviewed and revised regularly involving students and other stakeholders. The information collected is analysed and the programme is adapted to ensure that it is up-to-date.*

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 Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The program uses the internal system for quality assurance that is followed by all academic units and programs. This system is developed and implemented by the quality assurance unit (ΜΟ.ΔΙ.Π). The goal is to ensure the high quality of the program offered and the continuous improvement of its educational and research mission. The process follows international practices, especially within the higher education sector of the European Union, and is guided by the processes specified by the Hellenic Quality Assurance Agency (HQAA). For example there are regular internal and external reviews as well as accreditations.

The Units/Offices that collaborate and carry out actions for the operation of the PSP's evaluation are:

The Internal Evaluation Unit (MEA)

The Strategic Planning and Development Office

The EAP's Quality Assurance Unit (MODIP)

The program has followed a clearly specified internal review process from when it was established. This review encompasses evaluation of the courses offered in terms of content in order to reflect current developments in the field of study, the course workload and completion rates, the satisfaction of the graduate students with the program as well as the provided services and supports. This review is conducted by all stakeholders involved in the program operation such as faculty members, graduate students, as well as technical and administrative staff. Course surveys are conducted at the end of each term and are also used to inform the internal review process.

The results of the internal review process are collected in a report that also includes suggested actions, an implementation timeline, the required resources, and who will be involved in their implementation. This report is discussed in a meeting chaired by the Director of the graduate program and including faculty, student representatives, technical staff, and administrative staff. This process is also informed by the preparation of accreditation materials, changes in higher education regulations, shifts in employment, and any suggestions by faculty and students about how the program can improve and become more effective.

The results produced constitute the basis on which statistical and qualitative analyses are carried out with the ultimate goal of creating useful information on the quality of the educational process from the class-group level, to a thematic unit, up to the overall assessment of a Curriculum, the Dean's Office and the entire Hellenic Open University.

In the electronic evaluation, students as well as the coordinators of the courses have the right to evaluate - only for the evaluation of the teachers - in the modules they coordinate. In addition, all teachers can evaluate the educational material.

Student evaluation is done by completing a questionnaire using one of the common web browsers (Internet Explorer, Firefox, etc.).

II. Analysis

Overall, the accreditation panel was well satisfied by the department's performance and efforts in this principle. It is evident that the mechanisms in place work well and that all stakeholders are committed to actively participate. The system is dynamic and is reviewed regularly and methodically.

III. Conclusions

The graduate program is fully compliant in this Principle as well. The self-assessment procedure of the programme takes place annually with provisions for the outcomes of the self-assessment to be properly recorded and submitted to the QAU/MODIP of the Institution. The PSP clearly values the process and is planning to take concrete actions to address any of the issues raised by the internal evaluation process.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

The PSP is fully compliant with Principle 9. The institution fully embraces quality assurance mechanisms and reviews and revises these on a frequent and regular basis. We encourage the PSP to continue on this trajectory of self-reflection and development. In the future it will be important to keep track of how the internal review process leads to concrete actions and provide examples for future accreditation reviews.

PRINCIPLE 10: REGULAR EXTERNAL EVALUATION OF POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES

THE POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES 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 programmes, 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 programme 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 programme.

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 programmes

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The external review of the institution (Hellenic Open University) took place in 2016 and the final accreditation report was received in 2018. The majority of recommendations were addressed with a percentage of 70% as was documented in the progress report submitted to the Hellenic Quality Assurance Agency (HQAA) in 2020 as part of the accreditation of the internal quality assurance system of the Hellenic Open University. In addition, the university informed by the original recommendations of the external evaluation is in a regular process of evolution and development by taking actions for further improvement. The external evaluation of the internal quality assurance system of the Hellenic Open University took place in 2020 and the final report was received in 2021. The final conclusion of the external report was that the quality assurance system was fully compliant with the principles of accreditation of the Hellenic Quality Assurance Agency as well as the quality assurance principles of the European Higher Education sector (ESG 20125). The period of accreditation for the quality assurance system was set to 4 years from 2021 until 2025. In the provided file "A18 Progress Report", the recommendations of the external evaluation of the University and the quality assurance system with respect to the educational process and the post-graduate programs are provided. A description of how these recommendations were taken into account by the PSP is also provided.

II. Analysis

The PSP is undergoing their first external review. The host institution has a good track record of external review in 2018 and quality assurance process review in

2020. This has informed the quality assurance process for the PSP and is shown in the careful preparation of the material for this accreditation review.

III. Conclusions

The PSP is fully compliant to this principle given that this is the first external review it has received. We encourage the PSP and the university to continue engaging with the process of external review and accreditation.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

None

PART C: CONCLUSIONS

I. Features of Good Practice

The program is very well received by the current students, graduates, and collaborating organisations that we spoke with. They told the accreditation panel that they found the quality of the teaching faculty excellent, they learned a lot during their degree, and they are frequently using what they learned in their professional practice.

The PSP addresses a focused area for which there is market demand that enhances existing undergraduate knowledge that the students have.

The interdisciplinary nature of the programme enables students from a variety of backgrounds to be admitted and although occasionally extra work is required depending on the student's background they are able to graduate and acquire the necessary knowledge.

The faculty are willing to communicate with the students regularly beyond formal meeting times and are able to provide personalised guidance to the students.

The PSP and the Hellenic Open University even though target mostly distance learning students who are full time professionals they provide internationalisation opportunities such as Erasmus study placements.

The thematic teaching units are well thought out and coherent. They are supported by a learning management system (Moodle) and the associated teaching materials and notes are very well received by the students (a few graduates mentioned that they still regularly consult that material during their professional activities after graduation).

Information about the program is clear and presented through the PSP's website which is current and regularly updated.

Information gathering for accreditation purposes is taken seriously and used to inform decision making.

There are clear procedures for admission, student progression through the program, and graduation, following standard practice in Greece and the European Union more generally.

II. Areas of Weakness

The PSP's long-term success and sustainability depend on addressing current weaknesses in enrollment. The increase in use of distance learning during the Covid pandemic by all universities in Greece has resulted in more post-graduate programmes being offered remotely competing with the Hellenic Open University which until recently was the only university offering distance learning in Greece. This has resulted in significant decreases in enrollment not just in the PSP under review but the entire academic institution.

There is existing technical equipment for acoustic measurements and analysis that the students are not able to use due to the lack of dedicated technical support staff and space.

Teaching is individual focused and there is a lack of group projects, peer interaction and other collective activities.

Some limited in-person instruction especially with respect to technical equipment would enhance the program and is something that students asked for during our conversations.

Even though there are various student resources and supports such as the library the students are vaguely aware of them and do not utilise them as much as they could.

III. Recommendations for Follow-up Actions

Hiring technical support staff in order to utilise the audio measurement and analysis equipment would significantly enhance the current educational offering by providing a in-person, hands-on educational component. We encourage the PSP and the university to explore potential synergies and collaborations between programs (for example the PSP in lighting design) to share the cost of such a technical person.

More in-person sessions to work with technical equipment and network with peers and professionals

Improve enrollment by better outreach - for example by highlighting career paths on the website and social media that leverages the graduates (some very successful) of the program that are working in relevant jobs

Integration of more structured opportunities for student-to-student interaction.

The faculty is encouraged to utilise the existing digital platforms more actively to promote peer engagement and academic dialogue, beyond administrative communication or faculty -led exchanges

The panel suggests that clearer communication be provided to students and faculty regarding the pedagogical value of peer interaction within an open and distance learning environment.

The faculty is encouraged to further develop its approach to fostering collaborative learning by incorporating practices that support interaction among students, without compromising the flexibility of the distance learning model.

Hiring one HOU Tenured Teaching Staff (DEP) is strongly recommended for the sustainability of the programme and its future success. A regular faculty member that is responsible for the PSP would help with leadership, future growth, and continuity. This was also recommended for all programs in the institutional accreditation review.

Better formalise a research seminar that supports technical writing

Additional funding sources should be explored to enhance resources, ensure proper equipment maintenance, and expand the availability of software licenses for remote student access, particularly given the online nature of the program.

The recruitment of a dedicated technical team is recommended to oversee the maintenance and continuous upgrading of digital platforms and on-site equipment, supporting both synchronous and asynchronous learning.

The faculty should try to make the students more aware of the available resources such as the online library. For example, activities and homeworks could be designed to leverage the program's resources and make the students aware of their availability.

The program should establish dedicated social media pages and develop well-designed brochures to promote its activities and keep stakeholders informed.

Ensure that students receive clear and comprehensive information about the resources, supports, and rights associated with the postgraduate program directly through the PSP website, rather than relying solely on the university's main website.

IV. Summary & Overall Assessment

The Principles where full compliance has been achieved are:

1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10

The Principles where substantial compliance has been achieved are:

None

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

TZANETAKIS GEORGE

Signed by TZANETAKIS GEORGE - 25/07/2025
19:04:10 +03:00

ECONOMIDOU STAVROU NATASSA

Signed by ECONOMIDOU STAVROU NATASSA -
25/07/2025 19:04:10 +03:00

KOZARIS DIMITRIOS

Signed by KOZARIS DIMITRIOS - 25/07/2025
19:04:10 +03:00

LITOS IOANNIS

Signed by LITOS IOANNIS - 25/07/2025 19:04:10
+03:00

Tahinci Anna

Signed by Tahinci Anna - 25/07/2025 19:04:10
+03:00