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HELLENIC REPUBLIC



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Accreditation Report

for the Postgraduate Study Programme of:

**Criminological and Penal Law Perspectives to Corruption,
Economic and Organised Crime**

Department: Social Sciences

Institution: Hellenic Open University

Date: 21 October 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 Programme of **Criminological and Penal Law perspectives to Corruption, Economic and Organised Crime** of the **Hellenic Open University** for the purposes of granting accreditation.

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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 **Criminological and Penal Law perspectives to Corruption, Economic and Organised Crime** 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. Professor Apostolis Papakostas (Chair)**
Södertörn University, Stockholm, Sweden

- 2. Professor Dimitris Michailakis**
Linköping University, Sweden

- 3. Dr. George Panayiotou**
European University Cyprus

- 4. Mr. Konstantinos Vagiatis, PhD Student**
University of the Aegean, Mytilene, Greece

II. Review Procedure and Documentation

In reviewing the Postgraduate Study Programme of “Criminological and Penal Law perspectives to Corruption, Economic and Organised Crime” of Hellenic Open University (hereafter the “Programme”), the objectives of the Panel, as described in the Guidelines for the Members of EEAP, are:

- to establish whether the data provided from the various resources is consistent among one another and reflect the actual situation
- identify strengths and areas of weakness
- engage in a constructive dialogue with the Institution, leading to reflection and continuous enhancement of the study programme

Following a well-prepared schedule provided by HAHE, the Panel held several separate interactive virtual (by electronic means, ZOOM platform) meetings and visits for two days as follows:

On Monday, 16/10/2023, the following virtual meetings took place:

- with the Dean of the School of Social Sciences
- with the Director of the Programme
- with the Head of the Department
- with MODIP members and staff, and Steering Committees/OMEA members
- an online tour of virtual classrooms, online platforms, and other facilities related to the Programme. The online tour was followed by a discussion about the facilities in which teaching and administrative staff participated.

On Wednesday, 18/10/2023, the following virtual meetings took place:

- with teaching staff of the Programme
- with current students of the Programme
- with Programme graduates
- with employers and social partners of the private and public sector
- meeting with the Director of the Programme, the Head of the Department, members and staff of MODIP, and members of Steering Committees/OMEA members.

During the above virtual meetings, the Panel had the opportunity to meet, talk, and interact with all the participants of all meetings. All the participants were encouraged to express their views and talk freely about their overall learning experience. They welcomed the opportunity to talk to the Panel and to voice their views. The discussions were very constructive and fruitful and were conducted in a cooperative manner and attitude. All the meetings included presentations, discussions, and question-and-answer sessions. During the last meeting, some clarifications were provided, and the Panel made an informal presentation of some initial key findings.

The internal evaluation report and other extensive material were made available to the Panel electronically in advance through HAHE. More information and materials were made available during the meetings. The Department worked diligently in preparing the internal evaluation report and other relevant materials and organizing and hosting the virtual meetings. It is the feeling of the Panel that the Department has performed an excellent job throughout the internal evaluation process and that the objectives of the process have been fully met. The efficiency and eagerness of the Department to answer questions and provide additional information and clarifications during the meetings are worth noting. The Panel wishes to express its thanks and appreciation to the Department and the University administration for their co-operation and professionalism.

This Accreditation Report is based on information collected and views expressed during the virtual meetings and on information contained in the internal evaluation report and other documents submitted before and during the virtual meetings.

III. Postgraduate Study Programme Profile

The Postgraduate Study Programme “Criminological and Penal Law perspectives to Corruption, Economic and Organised Crime” has been offered since the academic year 2018-19. It has an interdisciplinary nature, and its structure and courses offered are consistent with the Department’s overall objectives. The Programme’s objective is to train students in the study, theoretical deepening, scientific research, application of the law and the design of anti-crime policy programmes regarding the phenomena of economic and organised crime with a focus on the phenomenon of corruption, especially in the public sector.

More specifically, the programme aims to:

- a) provide specialized scientific and in-depth theoretical knowledge of its subject,
- b) provide the students with the skills to familiarize themselves with the methods of systematic study, scientific research and analysis of the criminological and criminal aspects of corruption, serious economic and organized crime and, in particular, the social conditions that produce them,
- c) provide the basic skills required for students to be able to follow international trends and developments in the field of corruption and organized crime,
- d) provide the students with the basic skills required to be able to follow international trends and developments in corruption and organized crime and, in particular, the social conditions that produce them,
- e) provide the students with the basic skills required to be able to follow international trends and developments in corruption and organized crime and, in particular, the social conditions that produce them.
- f) provide the students with the basic skills required to be able to follow international trends and developments in corruption and organized crime and, in particular, the social conditions that produce them.

Programme completion requires 120 ECTS, equally distributed over four semesters (30 ECTS per semester). The programme is structured in nine thematic courses, all of them compulsory. During the last semester, a thesis will be completed. All courses are given at a distance following the policies of the Hellenic Open University. The fee for the whole programme is 3 600 Euros.

The Programme is supported by academic staff from other Departments and other Universities, as no full-time academic staff is employed. All teaching staff are Ph.D. holders who are active scholars and researchers in diverse areas such as criminology, law, and other related disciplines.

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

Based on the accreditation proposal, a defined Quality Assurance Policy and a Quality Targeting for the PSP are developed and sufficiently communicated to all parties involved.

The Quality Policy of the Post Graduate Programme (PSP) in Criminological and Penal Law perspectives to Corruption, Economic and Organised Crime (PED), as this is described in the accreditation proposal and Institutional/ Program websites, seems to be in line with the Quality Policy of the Institution and seeks to adapt to current conditions and requirements.

To implement this policy, the Institution, among others, is committed to adopting procedures that will demonstrate the adequacy and quality of the Program's resources, the appropriateness of the structure and organization of the PSP, the promotion of the quality and effectiveness of teaching at the PSP and the quality of the support services of the School/Departments/Offices/Units and their staffing with appropriate administrative personnel.

However, beyond the recorded quality commitments, the successful implementation and delivery of the quality policy requires a minor revision and supplementation of the quality objectives and their respective KPIs. Still, whether these goals are duly monitored and updated based on the progress completed is unclear. In particular, the quality objectives require minor supplementation to fully cover the quality policy both quantitatively and qualitatively to support the Institution's policy smoothly and timely.

Concerning learning outcomes, it is noted that a minor number of modules are not fully aligned or entirely relevant for level 7, according to the European and National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education.

II. Analysis

Based on the content of the Quality Policy, it is clear that the policy:

- is appropriate for the PSP
- includes a commitment of the academic unit to its implementation
- consists of a commitment towards continuous improvement
- commits to the efficient use of the financial resources that may come from the tuition fees

Several points and aspects of good practice or requirements for improvement have been identified, as follows:

*Quality Objective 1. " **Improvement of the quality of the provided instruction by subject area of the PSP.**"*

The quality objectives set seem to satisfy the above strategic objective substantially.

*Quality Objective 2. "**Broadening the recognition of the PSP.**"*

The qualitative objectives that have been set solely focus on promotional actions on the internet the press rather than actions related to international research partnerships, and other strategic alliances or actions of social responsibility and contribution to the content of the

Programme, participation in internationalization actions through the Erasmus framework for students and faculty.

Quality Objective 3. " Strengthening PSP Student Support Services".

The quality objectives appear to be in the right direction, although there is potential to incorporate more objectives and KPIs. For example, during the interview with teaching staff, it was found that the perception of teaching staff on students with learning difficulties is limited to accommodating disabled students concerning accessibility matters and smoothing their learning experience or providing extra examination time for people entitled to it. However, there is no provision for assessing students with learning difficulties by a designated expert panel within the Programme/Institution and targeted case-by-case guidance for faculty members on personalised learning management.

Quality Objective 4. "Enhancing PSP's Academic Development".

Participation in staff training processes in distance education methods seems to be offered as an optional activity and not as a prerequisite for the participation of teaching staff in the PSP.

Quality Objective 5. "Further collaboration with external bodies".

Collaboration with external bodies and establishments is solely limited to strengthening links with the alumni network and not with state and social partners and with other institutions and research centres or experts in the context of Advisory Boards, which, although not foreseen by law, are not prohibited from being set up and operating.

"PSP Research Activity".

PSP has not considered any objective related to strengthening the research activity of the teaching staff members. In particular, no key measures are identified which would relate to KPIs on the number and impact of peer-reviewed publications by the Programme's teaching staff through personal research activity, students' dissertations or tangible participation of teaching staff members in funded research projects and other related activities and the establishment of research collaboration groups.

It is also not fully understood how the research activity of the PSP could be strengthened while 100% of the teaching staff is employed on an annual contract basis without a single member of the teaching staff being a full-time Faculty Member. It should be noted that the Program's teaching staff has full-time employment (100%) in other academic institutions, making it extremely difficult for them to contribute to any research development effort in the Programme.

Moreover, there does not seem to be a provision for the coverage of a small number of quality measures which are listed in the quality policy, such as:

- the pursuit of learning outcomes and qualifications in accordance with the European and National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education,
- the level of demand for graduates' qualifications in the labour market,
- the effective use of the financial resources of the PSP,
- to conduct an annual review and audit of the quality assurance system of the PSP,

- the ways of linking teaching and research,
- strengthening the extroversion of the MSP.

Furthermore, based on the Accreditation Proposal, the academic unit does not seem to have set specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and timely objectives for the PSP, particularly concerning teaching methods, student satisfaction, learning outcomes and research output.

Concerning the learning outcomes, although the majority of the modules are aligned with postgraduate level learning outcomes (PED51, PED52, PED54, PED61, PED62), it is noted that a minor number of modules learning outcomes are not fully harmonized or aligned with level 7 according to the European and National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education (e.g. PED53, PED60, PED63). In particular, a number of learning outcomes are limited to knowledge involving the recall of specific and universal elements, recall of methods and procedures, models, structures and frameworks. It is expected to be included in all modules and successfully monitor the acquisition of learning outcomes that will extend from factual knowledge to conceptual, procedural and metacognitive knowledge.

III. Conclusions

A defined Quality Assurance Policy and a Quality Targeting for the PSP are developed and sufficiently communicated. The Quality Assurance Policy seems to be in line with the Quality Policy of the Institution and seeks to adapt to current conditions and requirements.

The Institution, among others, is committed to adopting procedures that will demonstrate the adequacy and quality of the PSP.

A minor revision and pair of quality objectives with appropriate KPIs seem to be required. Even though part of the quality objectives is paired with the appropriate KPIs, it is unclear whether these goals are duly monitored and updated based on the progress completed.

Regarding the students with learning difficulties, no provision exists for individual evaluation by a designated expert panel within the Programme/Institution and targeted case-by-case guidance for faculty members on personalised learning management.

As far as research is concerned, PSP was not considered any objective related to strengthening the research activity.

Regarding learning outcomes, it is noted that minor subjects are not fully aligned or entirely relevant for level 7, according to the European and National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education.

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	
Substantially compliant	X
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

- It is proposed to make minor adjustments to the quality objectives to fully satisfy the Programme's and institutional Strategic Goals on Quality Assurance.
- Compulsory participation (with possible certification) of all teaching staff in structured training activities related to distance learning before assigning teaching duties is highly recommended to enhance the quality of teaching and student support.
- Consider developing KPIs relevant to international research partnerships and other strategic partnerships or actions of social responsibility. Erasmus's participation of staff and students should be encouraged to broaden the recognition of the PSP.
- Consider developing KPIs related to the number and impact of publications by the Programme's teaching staff through personal research activity or by publishing students' dissertations, tangible participation of teaching staff members in funded research projects and other related activities and the establishment of research collaboration groups.
- Consider establishing a Program Advisory Board as an ad hoc committee to discuss and exchange Quality Assurance ideas and good practices with experts from the broader spectrum of the state, local academia, industry, foreign academics, stakeholders, alumni, current students and others.
- Develop strategic goals, outcomes and KPIs to successfully meet the Quality Assurance quality measures that have not been included in the Quality Targeting of the PSP (see pertinent list in "Analysis" above).
- Revise the learning outcomes of a minor number of the courses (see "Analysis" above) to make them appropriate for level 7, according to the European and National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education. To this end, it would be useful to use Bloom's Taxonomy. Extension of learning outcomes from factual knowledge to conceptual, procedural and metacognitive knowledge should be established.
- A provision for assessing students with learning difficulties by a designated expert panel within the Programme/Institution is strongly recommended.
- Recruitment of full-time academic staff is highly recommended. Ideally, full-time academic staff should comprise most of the teaching staff.

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 PSP was founded in 2018 (Government Gazette 2184/B/12-06-2018) under the title "Criminological and Penal Law perspectives to Corruption, Economic and Organised Crime" based on the provision of article 32 of Law No. 4485/2017 at the meeting of the Steering Committee of the Hellenic Open University (number 377/3.1.a.k. 23.04.2018)

The PSP is unique in Greece, and its structure and organisation is adequate and comprehensive. According to the analysis of the accreditation proposal and the interviews conducted by the evaluation panel, there is no evidence of involvement or consultation from any Advisory Board, stakeholders, external experts, students or graduates during the PSP establishment, even though the employment and professional development of the graduates is well documented.

Students are admitted to the PSP with no examinations based on defined criteria, with a bachelor's degree in a relevant discipline being the most important. Graduation requires the completion of 120 ECTS, which are evenly distributed in 11 thematic modules within two years of minimum attendance. Regarding the learning outcomes, both for the PSP in general and as far as the thematic modules are concerned, it appears that they correspond to level 7 according to the UNESCO ISCED-2011 code. At the same time, the coupling of the learning outcomes with the learning and examination activities of the PSP is not particularly evident, so emphasis should be placed on finding ways to ensure this aspect.

As regards the Study Guide and the Course Outlines, they are of a satisfactory standard. However, there is a need to create and implement rubrics to evaluate the PSP's assessed activities, and these should be made available to students at the commencement of each module.

Notably, full-time personnel do not staff the PSP, making achieving all the program's strategic objectives difficult.

Finally, the PSP does not implement internships, which would contribute positively to an adequate achievement of the learning objectives of the PSP, and the active participation of students and teaching staff in Erasmus activities does not seem to be popular.

II. Analysis

Purpose and nature of the PSP

The Master's Degree (MA) Distance Learning Program in "Criminological and Penal Law perspectives to Corruption, Economic and Organised Crime" (PED) aims at training students in the study, theoretical deepening, scientific research, law enforcement and the design of anti-

crime policy programmes, on the phenomena of economic and organised crime, with a focus on the phenomenon of corruption, especially in the public sector.

According to the UNESCO ISCED-2013 code, the PSP is classified in the educational fields: 0388 - Inter-disciplinary programmes and qualifications involving social sciences, journalism and information/ 0388. It is also considered an interdisciplinary programme in the following fields: 0314 - Sociology and Cultural Studies, 0421–Law.

Students' Admission

The admission of students is conducted without examinations, following application by the candidates to the HOU, within the deadlines set by the Senate for each academic year.

The Senate allocates and determines the percentage of the above total number of places offered and further specifies the requirements for application to the programmes of study of the HOU. If the number of candidates per Programme of study exceeds the number of places offered, the following applies for selecting candidates. A draw shall be made between them if their number exceeds the number of places offered. b) If places remain available after the preceding order of preference has been observed, the remaining candidates shall be selected by a new drawing of lots. The total number of places offered for undergraduate and postgraduate students may be fixed per academic year by a decision of the Steering Committee published in the Official Gazette. Based on the above provision, the number of places offered for the fall and spring semesters has been fixed at 110 per semester. There is a special provision for the admission of people with severe illnesses - at a rate of 5 % in addition to the places allocated for the bachelor's degree programmes. However, it is not known whether the same provision applies to postgraduate programmes.

Admission requirements

According to the Programme Guide, the program is open to applicants with a degree or diploma of higher education in a relevant discipline with proficiency in the Greek language. Knowledge of a foreign language and familiarisation with the use of computers, e-mail and the Internet are required for the smooth running of the Programme.

Successful completion of the Programme

To successfully complete the Programme, the student must have completed all the modules and presented the Master's Thesis. The total number of ECTS required for the Postgraduate Diploma of Specialisation award is 120.

PSP Design

The objective of the PSP is to provide students with education in the study, theoretical deepening, scientific research, enforcement of the law and the design of anti-crime policy programs on the phenomena of economic and organised crime, with a focus on the phenomenon of corruption, especially in the public sector. The PSP aims to provide knowledge

and training in theory, research, law enforcement and the design of anti-crime policy and ultimately to cultivate the professionalism of the students - professionals.

The structure of the PSP through its thematic modules seems to be quantitatively and qualitatively adequate. The courses of the postgraduate Programme (Thematic Units) are divided into semesters of study in which the first three semesters include three Thematic Modules of 10 ECTS each, while in the fourth semester, the Dissertation is carried out according to specific requirements listed in the study guide and on the University's website.

The orientation of the PSP is developed along two main axes, scientific and professional, at levels that concern both the understanding of criminal phenomena, which are examined in terms of their causes and formation conditions and the shaping of the official social reaction at the level of crime control, criminal response and the treatment of offenders, whether they are individuals or legal entities. The PSP has been designed taking into account the gaps in specialised training at the postgraduate level in specific objects and the needs of the professionals of the penitentiary system in Greece.

During the student interviews, some learning issues were mentioned which would be useful to be addressed by the programme management, such as:

- The need to enrich and strengthen the criminal, case law and legislative law was not reported as comprehensive as criminology.
- Insufficient linkage between criminal law and criminology
- Introduction of basic economic principles to form the basis for understanding economic crime.

The analysis of the Course Outlines shows that they are comprehensive. A possible observation would be to ensure no overlapping of the content of the following items, which exhibit quite a lot in common with each other:

- PED51 "The criminology of economic crime and corruption."
- PED54 "Organised crime and corruption - a criminological approach."

and partly of

- PED61 "Tackling economic and organised crime"

In the right direction would be establishing an Advisory Board of the PSP within which an exchange of ideas and provision of expertise on valuable aspects will take place, which would positively contribute to the qualitative upgrading of the PSP. In any case, the prospects for employment and personal-professional development from attending the current PSP are multi-dimensional and straightforward, and this is perhaps one of the reasons that makes it particularly popular in students' preferences.

Expected learning outcomes according to the EQF

The Study Guide describes 20 (including subcategories) learning outcomes (19 are listed in the accreditation proposal) of the PSP that students are expected to acquire on completion of the

Programme through the achievement of the learning outcomes of the Thematic Modules. The majority (>50%) refers to skills mainly related to the higher levels of the Bloom & Krathwohl (1956) taxonomy. A few learning outcomes need minor revision to fully justify their classification at level 7 according to the UNESCO ISCED-2011 code. In addition to the above, the learning outcomes of each thematic module appear to be linked and in line with the PSP learning outcomes.

Furthermore, based on the indicative feedback provided by instructors on assessed Thematic Modules activities, the link between these activities and the learning outcomes they state to address is not fully evident.

Concerning the feedback on assignments, this seems comprehensive and covers both technical and qualitative aspects. It is worth noting that no rubrics are available, at least for the course assignments, which account for 40% of the total grade in each module. In addition, there is no indication of the extent to which the learning outcomes of the individual modules are achieved through exams, which account for 60% of the total grade in each module.

Course and Thesis Outlines

The PSP has extensive and comprehensive Thematic Modules' and Thesis' Course Outlines in the study guide. In particular, for the Thesis, the General Regulations for Postgraduate Theses in a Master's Degree Programme are available, while concerning the Specifications - Useful Material for writing Postgraduate Theses and the submission of the Thesis to the HOU Repository, information is available in the Digital Education Space <http://courses.eap.gr> and especially in the section Programme of Studies. The teaching material is entirely digital and is provided through the HOU's Electronic Learning Spaces (courses platform).

Student's Evaluation

The student evaluation consists of two (2) Short Assignments with a weighting factor of 10% of the final grade, one (1) Semester Assignment with a weighting factor of 20% of the final grade and a final or a resit exam with a weighting factor of 60% of the final grade. It is worth noting that no rubrics have been identified that assess the achievement of the learning outcomes of each thematic unit through the assessment activities described above.

Concerning the Dissertation, the final grade of the Evaluation Committee is based on the evaluation of the written text submitted and the oral presentation. To this end, an indicative guide for grading rubrics has been developed and is posted on the Institution's website (along with a reference in the study guide), which, however, was not apparent during the interview with faculty that they were at least universally utilised.

Students' workload

Based on the Course outlines and their detailed analysis of the students' workload in each learning and assessment activity, a matching of the workload in each subject area and the declared ECTS is evident (approximately 30 hours of workload per ECTS) in line with the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) for level 7.

Teaching staff

The staff of the Programme, both quantitatively and qualitatively, is sufficient to cover all the Thematic Modules of the PSP. In particular, the programme's ten (10) thematic modules are covered by thirty-four (34) teaching staff members whose specialisation seems consistent with the thematic module allocations. It is noteworthy that among staff, not a single faculty member has a full-time employment relationship with the Institution, while all the faculty members are employed in an annual-long employment relationship. In addition, most instructors (if not all) seem to hold full-time positions in other academic institutions, suggesting their service time is already 100% committed. It is not evident whether the opportunity provided to them for parallel service in other academic institutions also implies a corresponding time reduction from their home institution in order to ensure their uninterrupted qualitative and quantitative contribution to the achievement of main strategic objectives in terms of Education, Research, Linking with Society, Internationalisation, Consolidation of the University Environment and Quality Assurance.

Cooperation with the PSP teaching staff is concluded following a transparent and predetermined procedure for their selection and ranking in the framework of a public call for applications carried out every three years. In addition to scientific, research and teaching experience, the recruitment criteria consider the candidate's experience in distance education and his/her evaluation from previous years, provided he/she has previously been teaching at the HOU.

During the Panel meeting with the students, the need to regularise the availability of program instructors for students to offer guidance and clarifications was raised. This issue is reasonable due to the non-full-time employment of faculty with HOU. However, it would be appropriate for the program management committee to address it.

Internship

An internship is not available within the framework of the PSP. As every academic Programme is designed and implemented in order to meet social needs and aspects of economic activity, it would be helpful to investigate through a feasibility study the possibility of implementing an internship as part of the learning activities of the PSP without distorting the character of the PSP as a distance learning programme. Such a possibility would benefit the Programme, which would respond to the social and economic needs. At the same time, it would link the graduates and potential future employers and partners, even if most are already employed in the private and public sectors.

Mobility opportunities

Regarding the mobility of students and teaching staff, the University operates an Erasmus office, which promotes and supports mobility. Based on the interviews conducted with teaching staff, students and graduates, it seems that this possibility is not sufficiently exploited, which does not contribute to the exposure and experience of students and faculty

to educational and research best practices from contact with other cultures and academic environments.

The Erasmus Office must conduct a study to investigate all the possible obstacles to the mobility of staff and students to find ways and targeted measures to overcome them, considering students' work commitments.

III. Conclusions

The PSP is considered adequate and the only one of its kind in Greece. The criteria and the admission process for students seem to be clear and compelling, as well as the requirements for successful studies completion. During the design of the PSP, however, there is no evidence of the involvement of an Advisory Board or consultation from stakeholders, external experts, students and graduates during the PSP establishment and re-establishment. Such a condition limits the extroversion of the PSP even though it is considered popular based on the high admission rates.

The student workload is deemed reasonable. Concerning the content of the PSP, it seems that thematic modules are comprehensive and multi-dimensional. Specific care should be taken to avoid possible content overlapping among modules, improve the content/ delivery of the criminal law-related modules, and establish solid interconnection with criminology. As far as the learning outcomes are concerned, the vast majority >50% are classified at the higher levels of the Bloom & Krathwohl (1956) taxonomy (more suitable for the postgraduate level of study).

At the same time, no rubrics are used by instructors apart from the Dissertation (Thesis), where a rubric is available. Feedback on students' assignments is coherent and addresses both technical and qualitative aspects.

The Programme needs direct full-time staff recruitment as it is unclear whether contract collaboration with teaching staff can effectively contribute to achieving its strategic objectives. In addition, special care should be taken regarding instructors' availability to students for guidance and support. Finally, the PSP should evaluate the possibility of introducing internships and creating conditions to motivate teaching staff and students to take advantage of the opportunities and benefits of international mobility through Erasmus.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

- Consider the establishment of an Advisory Board and the participation of stakeholders, external experts, students and graduates during the following PSP revision process.
- Consider ways of ensuring that content overlapping between thematic Modules is avoided.
- Revising some of the thematic modules' learning outcomes to better reflect level 7 according to the UNESCO ISCED-2011 code and the Bloom & Krathwohl (1956) taxonomy is proposed.
- With regards to linking learning outcomes with instruction and assessment activity, it is recommended that a template matrix be created, which will contain the expected learning outcomes of each Thematic Module and the respective examination activities within the module by which each learning outcome is addressed and assessed.
- The matrix referred to above and the assessment rubrics for each evaluation activity in each Thematic Module must be communicated to students at the beginning of the semester as an integral part of assignments instruction for transparency and identification of the exact learning and assessment demands.
- As far as the dissertation rubric is concerned, formulation of grading criteria and a qualitative update of the rubric is recommended to make it more specific and detailed regarding the expected outcome at each grading level.
- Full-time staff recruitment is necessary to achieve the PSP's strategic objectives effectively.
- Systematic availability of instructors for student support should be safeguarded.
- It is proposed to explore the introduction of an internship in the PSP, which is believed to contribute to a better interconnection of the learning process with contemporary corporate, social, state and educational needs and will create new professional/development opportunities for graduates.
- It is necessary to find ways to effectively promote the international mobility of both teaching staff and students to benefit from good international practices in their field and promote intercultural experience and interaction.

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

It was made evident through consideration of submitted documentation and the EEAP's interviews with faculty members and students that PSP provides the necessary conditions regarding the relevant principle.

Several characteristics of the distance learning methodology used in all the Programmes offered by the Open University (including the Programme under discussion) lead to the conclusion that student-centred learning is a priority. Students plan their work according to their individual needs and capabilities. They use the available technology to suit their schedules (i.e. asynchronous distance learning) and enjoy group discussions and assignments. Essential elements that characterize the student-centred learning mode of the program are the regular group advisory meetings with students for discussion and guidance, the frequent communication with students for question resolution and systematic support, the support of students in the preparation of assignments and throughout their study schedule as well as the correction of assignments and the individualized feedback of each student. However, students stressed the need for more face-to-face meetings, which would contribute to the cohesion levels and the sense of belonging of the members of the academic community.

Due to the adoption of the distance education mode, the teaching staff adopts the role of Academic Advisor. The Academic Advisor communicates regularly with students during the semester, intending to understand their individual characteristics, needs and expectations from their studies to adjust their teaching accordingly, encouraging and activating them in the educational process, promoting communication among students and recommending additional literature sources. Students informed us how easy and direct their communication with the faculty is. For example, how fast faculty responds to emails and that they are available beyond scheduled office hours. Moreover, students mentioned the personal relationships they develop with the faculty.

The assessment methods and evaluations vary, including formal ways at the end of each semester with written or oral exams for students with special educational needs and with assignments throughout the semester. Therefore, a special effort is made to ensure that students' final performance is determined not only by the final examination score but also by intermediate forms of assessment during the academic year. Grade components and assessment methods are published in advance and are available in the course syllabi. During the interviews with students, it was stressed that they receive continuous monitoring and feedback, which helps them to improve their performance.

The educational process is evaluated through questionnaires completed each academic semester. The technique assures anonymity, and since the system only generates average statistics for each question, it is impossible to identify particular students. Students are encouraged and supported to participate actively in the teaching and assessment process. At the same time, the PSP has undertaken initiatives to strengthen student participation in the assessment process so that its results allow safer conclusions to be drawn and more fully fuel decision-making to improve the operation of the PSP.

Finally, a process is in place for circumstances where students desire to make a formal complaint. The Student Advocate has been established at the institutional level under the pertinent laws now in effect (law 4009/2011). As for the educational complaints of the students, a process for managing and tracking student educational complaints is planned to be implemented pilot-wise through an electronic form.

II. Analysis

The PSP follows the principles of student-centred learning, teaching, and assessment. The findings underscore the significance of student-centred learning, where students are not passive recipients of knowledge but actively participate in their education. This active participation empowers students to construct their understanding, ask questions, engage in meaningful discussions and collaborate with peers. The role of the academic staff acting as advisor assists in the entire process. Moreover, the PSP

recognizes the importance of assessment methods that reflect the student-centred approach. It acknowledges that traditional assessment methods may not effectively measure the depth of understanding and critical thinking associated with active learning. The assessment strategies evaluate students' factual knowledge and ability to analyse, synthesize, and apply concepts in complex and practical scenarios, aligning with the holistic educational goals of a student-centred approach. The student feedback survey aligns with the principles of student-centred learning. It values students' perspectives, making them active participants in shaping their educational experiences. The PSP has established a proper process for student appeals through regulation.

III. Conclusions

The EEAP found that the PSP promotes the fundamental importance of student-centred learning and teaching in enhancing students' participatory capabilities, both in the course evaluation process and, more broadly, throughout all stages of the learning journey, as well as cultivates and promotes mutual respect between the students and the faculty and staff.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

The EEAP encourages the PSP to create opportunities for enhancing belonging and cohesion within the academic community.

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 Institution provides excellent administrative support to students, which is centrally managed and is substantially assisted through the role of the "Instructor-Advisor" to the extent that this can be performed considering the absence of full-time teaching staff at the PSP. The admission of students is conducted without examinations, whereas their progression is managed automatically and through the support of the "Instructor - Advisor" within the framework of statutory duties and responsibilities. Distinguished students are awarded scholarships based on specific criteria.

There is provision and support for the mobility of staff and students, mainly in the context of Erasmus, but this is not being exploited. It should also be noted that the PSP has not institutionalised internships as part of the PSP.

The PSP implements a credit transfer system (ECTS) where the Coordinators of the Thematic Modules collaborate with the Dean's Offices of the Faculties for the corresponding courses.

A complete and comprehensive Code of Research Ethics is available, as well as a Student Guide, which includes, among others, the provisions for elaborating a Thesis, supplemented by

General Regulations. Finally, all graduates are awarded a Diploma Supplement in Greek and English.

II. Analysis

Availability of Services to Students

The administrative students' support is centralised. Through this system, the curricula management is carried out. Students are informed of the support services within the second week of the beginning of their studies. As part of the panel interviews with students and alumni, their satisfaction with the efficiency and willingness of HOU administrative staff in terms of service was expressed.

Students' Admission and Progression

The admission of students is conducted without examinations, following application by the candidates to the EAP, within the deadlines set by the Senate for each academic year. The number of places offered for the fall and spring semesters has been fixed at 150 per semester.

Progress is quantitatively recorded by the courses' learning platform through which instructors can monitor progress. The qualitative assessment of progress is carried out during sessions with the instructors, particularly the "Instructor-advisors". During the panel interviews with students and graduates, some dissatisfaction was expressed regarding the fact that some instructors are not readily available to them. It is noted that the duties of the faculty members include allocating three hours per week as part of their communication responsibilities with students. The difficulty in the availability of instructors is understandable due to the absence of full-time faculty at PSP whose time would be 100% dedicated to PSP's educational, research and administrative activities.

Faculty and Students' Mobility

It is carried out on two axes, the first of which concerns personal collaborations and participation in conferences, oral presentations, scientific committees, and electoral bodies, as well as research collaboration and teaching in departments of other university institutions. The second axis concerns mobility through Erasmus. Encouragement of students' mobility is part of the responsibilities of the "Instructor - Advisor". The Erasmus Office, the Erasmus Coordinators of the EAP Schools, and the online resources have an important role to fulfil. However, the response has been insufficient.

ECTS Implementation

A complete credit transfer system is applied. Specifically, for one semester of study transfers, 1 ECTS module is assigned; for one full year of study transfers, 2-3 ECTS modules are assigned. Course allocations are made in cooperation with the Course Coordinators and pre-approved by the Deans of the Schools.

Student Guide

The PSP has a complete, comprehensive and coherent Student Guide in which solid information is provided on all aspects of academic study and support for students during their studies.

PSP Thesis Requirements

The Institution has established and implements General Regulations for the Transparent Commissioning and Conduct of Postgraduate Theses. The Thesis corresponds to a specific Thematic Module of semester-long duration. There are indicative evaluation criteria to ensure uniform evaluation of Theses, while the Assessment Committee awards the final grade based on the evaluation of the written text submitted and the oral presentation. For this purpose, special rubrics have been developed and made available to assist in transparency and documentation of the grading process.

Practical Training and Scholarships granting

The PSP does not provide an established internship. This particular need should be evaluated based on a feasibility study by the PSP to determine whether such an internship would benefit the students by possibly acquiring supplementary skills. The fact that students are already employed in the private or public sector should not be considered a substitution for an internship, as the purposeful and reflective nature of supervised and guided internships based on acquiring specific learning outcomes and skills is not safeguarded.

According to HOU's scholarship regulations, institutional scholarships in all PSPs are awarded to students of postgraduate programmes based on specific transparent provisions.

Code of Research Ethics

The HOU operates an Ethics Committee whose responsibilities include compliance with the institutional code of ethics, which covers educational work, research and intellectual property rights. The Ethics Committee has five members and consists of three (3) members of the Senate and two (2) Deans, with an equal number of substitute members.

The Senate shall appoint the Chair and the full and substitute members of the Ethics Committee. The term of office of the Ethics Committee shall be two years, and its functioning shall be based on established principles described in detail in the Code of Ethics.

Diploma Supplement

The Department of Student Registry of the HOU grants a Diploma Supplement to all graduates, which indicates the courses of the PSP in which they were examined during their studies, as well as the credit points (ECTS) awarded for each module. The Diploma Supplement is available in both Greek and English.

III. Conclusions

The administrative services smoothly and efficiently manage student admission, progression, recognition of postgraduate studies, and certification, the teaching staff and the "Instructors-

Advisors". Particular care is needed in the availability of teaching staff to support students. It is necessary to recruit full-time staff to assist effectively in administrative, educational and research tasks. Finally, a feasibility study on introducing an internship at PSP is necessary.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

- A feasibility study is proposed to be carried out to examine the possibility of implementing an internship.
- Ways of better and systematic accessibility of students to instructors for academic support purposes need to be sought.
- It is necessary to promote procedures for recruiting full-time teaching/research staff in the PSP to meet permanent needs.

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 EEAP lacks the necessary factual data in order to pronounce itself on whether recruitment is transparent and impartial. Another set of input and inquiry would have been necessary to examine this specific feature. However, for the recruitment of the teaching staff, the university announces – every three years – positions for one-year employment with the possibility of renewal for three consecutive years. The announcement invites prospective members to provide detailed information about teaching and research experience and other information specified in the announcement. The selection, the EEAP was told, is merit-based and transparent. For the renewal of the contract, the results of the evaluation by students conducted after each module and the evaluation of the coordinators of the program is taken into account.

The Hellenic Open University and the “Criminal Approaches to Corruption, Financial and Organized Crime” PSP organize or participate in scientific conferences, presentations and

other research activities. Career prospects are provided through collaborations with various universities in Greece and abroad. Moreover, the existence of the Hellenic Open University in Greek academic life has been an attraction in itself, as it provides the opportunity for additional funding for faculty members of other universities, as well as the opportunity/challenge for a professor to work in a distance education model, different from the traditional educational model.

The workload of the teaching staff is deemed appropriate, although instructors unfamiliar with distance learning must spend some time learning new techniques. Regular discussions with students and detailed feedback on various assignments and papers are time-consuming. Instructors are also obliged to prepare assignments, update digital learning space, support students in preparing assignments throughout their study schedule (14 weeks), proofread assignments and provide individualized feedback to each student. It should be noted that the number of students in a class also affects the workload. This also substantiates the salary differentiation between professors (depending on the number of students). Thus, the workload is certainly higher than in conventional universities. It must also be noted that each thematic module corresponds to four written assignments or three assignments/activities per semester. Regular meetings are scheduled for students' assistance and guidance. Instructors participate in online Group Counselling Meetings - five meetings per year and intermediate meetings when deemed necessary. The duration of a regular meeting is four hours.

II. Analysis

The EEAPs impression is that there is an atmosphere of collegiality among instructors. For instance, we were told that they consult each other in the program's planning. In the annual review for each faculty member in which his/her performance is evaluated, only in exceptional cases has a teacher's contract not been approved by the university. Looking at the faculty members' CVs as they appear on the department's webpage, there is evidence of considerable scholarly work. Several students expressed admiration for the expertise of their teachers.

III. Conclusions

- The students were very positive about the curriculum organisation and the competence, help, and support they received from instructors.
- Students and postgraduates underline that the meticulous feedback they received from instructors had improved their assignments, reflected in the high rates they received at the exams.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

- The EEAP underlines the importance of substantial financial support by the State in order to ensure and increase research outputs.
- Solid research structures must be established since the research conducted is occasional, depending on those working at the time.

PRINICPLE 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, 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

PSP's students' teaching and learning needs are met through various infrastructure and services provided horizontally by the Institution. The evidence of this principle is apparent when examining the submitted documents and conducting interviews with faculty members and students.

Within the Postgraduate Studies Programme, an Online Library and Information Centre have been established under the oversight of the Library Committee, serving as a comprehensive solution to fulfil students' academic requirements. This initiative adopts a dual strategy by giving equal weight to electronic and printed resources, ensuring rapid access to essential information. The emphasis on electronic resources aligns with contemporary needs for quick

data retrieval. However, student feedback highlighted the lack of access to legal literature resources. Moreover, the PSP is supported through the courses' platform, where the students can enter and carry out all their activities, from studying learning material to submitting an assignment or being informed about the results of assessments. A proportion of students reported that the material with legal content on the platform was not regularly updated. Frequent changes in the legal framework were mentioned as a reason for this.

The Student Service Centre is responsible for processing all student affairs and handles all correspondence with students in combination with the Chatbot service, providing immediate assistance when the Institution's administrative services are not in operation. Other services offered to students are the Career Office aiming to provide comprehensive guidance and information on career and lifelong learning issues, the Erasmus+ Office which is responsible for managing student and teaching staff mobility issues. Additionally, the Institution operates the Centre for Counselling and Psychological Support and the office of "Student Advocate."

Feedback received from teaching staff and alumni suggests that the services are generally user-friendly. Administrative staff provide extensive guidance and offer assistance with technical matters through email or telephone (<https://www.eap.gr/en/helpdesk/>). Video tutorials offering step-by-step instructions for the PSP's online platforms are readily accessible.

All the above services and infrastructures rely on various financial resources, which are generally considered sufficient to achieve PSP's objectives. Finally, there is a tuition utilization plan which describes the percentage distribution of fees.

II. Analysis

Upon careful analysis, the EEAP has examined these findings and underscored the PSP's robust foundation for providing essential support services to its students. The emphasis on electronic resources in the library system aligns with contemporary educational requirements, ensuring swift access to critical information essential for academic success. The comprehensive range of support services underscores the university's commitment to holistic student development. Students and graduates were aware of the support activities and facilities provided by the Department and the program and expressed their satisfaction with the administrative, technological and academic support throughout their studies.

III. Conclusions

In conclusion, the PSP demonstrates a solid commitment to supporting its PSP students through various services and resources. Prioritizing electronic resources in the library system caters to the evolving needs of modern learners. The broad spectrum of support services, managed by dedicated administrative departments, significantly enhances the overall student experience. In essence, the PSP has made commendable progress 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

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

Panel Recommendations

The EEAP encourages the PSP to gain access to legal literature resources.

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

Since its establishment, the Hellenic Open University a set of information systems through which the data of students, teaching staff, the structure and organization of courses, and the provision of services to students and the academic community are managed and monitored. The nature of the educational mode used – distance learning – made it imperative that such mechanisms are well-functioning. The information-gathering procedures start from student registration (done electronically) to graduation. The university maintains all the necessary information to support the educational process.

For these purposes, the university has a number of software tools used for collecting information and processing it to draw conclusions. The IT system provides a special questionnaire for evaluating teaching and instructors by students, but also, the program coordinators use special forms for evaluation. The data of the above evaluation actions are

processed by specific software which incorporates appropriate analysis mechanisms and semi-automatic generation of evaluation reports.

The university provides information and support to incoming students by sending informative emails by means of information letters through the educational platform (course.eap.gr/study.eap.gr) with announcements and posts by the Directors, Coordinators and teachers and through discussion and question resolution during the advisory meeting held at the beginning of the semester.

In addition, student data such as demographic data, examination performance, and attendance of subjects are automatically collected by the Internal Evaluation Unit (MEA) and processed to create reports for the information of the institution's administrative and academic bodies. The main units handling such data are the Facilities Department, the Internal Evaluation Unit, the Quality Assurance Unit (QAU), the Student Registry, and the Personnel Department. The Internal Evaluation Unit provides a special questionnaire for the evaluation of the teachers by the students. The data of this evaluation are processed by special software of the Internal Evaluation Unit. In addition, students' data, such as demographics, exam performance, and attendance in the program, are automatically collected by the Internal Evaluation Unit and processed to generate reports for the information for the program's administrative and academic bodies. The results of the student evaluation of teachers are forwarded first to the teachers themselves and then to the Coordinators of the program, to the Dean and the Steering Committee. Initially, the responsible Coordinators investigate specific cases of evaluation that need attention, and if there is a severe problem of cooperation with a teacher, they take the matter to a higher level.

II. Analysis

The program has established procedures for collecting data regarding the student body, teaching methods, and student progression. Student evaluations are the primary tool in measuring the pedagogical performance of faculty. These are based on standardized questionnaires, collecting information about the teaching methods, the teaching competence, the syllabus, the adequacy of the administrative and support infrastructure, etc. The response ratio is about 45-50%, deemed satisfactory. When properly utilized, this information provides feedback for individual courses and the curriculum.

Many students and postgraduates witness that cooperative relationships are developed with teachers beyond the boundaries of the subject area. Teachers strive to create a direct, meaningful and personalized relationship with students.

III. Conclusions

Student evaluation is a well-established practice. However, there is no evidence that the collected data from the student evaluations are factored in changes in modular provisions' learning and teaching standards in the following year.

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 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 Institution has set up a thorough mechanism for public information, and it primarily disseminates it through its website (www.eap.gr) to all interested parties (current and future students, researchers, alumni, etc.). The website's main page provides comprehensive and accurate information about the institution, faculties, and studies, including contact details. All scientific events, collaborations and activities are announced on the website. Moreover, most of the Institution's units or services, such as the Library, Academic Unit Policy for Quality Assurance, Centre for Counselling and Psychological Support, and Erasmus office, publish detailed information on a special site as a subdomain of the main website. On the website, there is a dedicated segment containing detailed information about the PSP (www.eap.gr/education/postgraduate/biannual/criminological-and-criminal-approaches-to-corruption-economic-and-organized-crime-ped). In particular, the PSP section contains descriptive information about its structure, course outlines, learning outcomes, degree awarded, tuition fees, study regulations and admission procedures. Information on academic staff is also available, but not all faculty CVs. All information is provided both in Greek and English language.

Apart from the website, the members of the academic community of the PSP are further informed about its activities through the training platform (courses.eap.gr) and e-mails sent to their individual e-mail addresses. Additionally, on the official social media of the Institution, on the Institution's web radio and digital newspaper, a selection of activities carried out under the auspices of the PSP are disseminated.

Finally, various actions take place regarding advertising, participation or organization of workshops, conferences and other events about PSP. In this context, digital and printed information material has been created.

II. Analysis

The EEAP discussed with staff, students, and stakeholders, examined relevant materials and thoroughly studied the PSP’s public information system. The Department of Education, the Director and the Assistant Director of PSP, as well as the coordinators of courses, play a key role in monitoring, controlling, and ensuring the quality, validity and timeliness of public information concerning the PSP. The PSP distinguishes itself by ensuring that information is up-to-date, transparent and objective to interested parties in multiple ways, as described above. In addition, the PSP promotes transparency, accountability and relevance, providing comprehensive information about quality, regulations and admission issues. The analysis showed that the PSP has put much effort into presenting itself to its students and the public.

III. Conclusions

Overall, the EEAP believes that the PSP provides a wide array of complete and useful information for interested parties. This dedication is in line with the demands placed on Institutions to provide accurate and current information about their postgraduate study programs and benefits both the institution and the individuals, ensuring informed decision-making, accountability, and the overall quality of higher education.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

The EEAP encourages the PSP to update all faculty members CV’s.

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 curriculum undergoes an annual internal evaluation. The responsible Offices that cooperate and carry out actions for the operation are: The Internal Evaluation Unit, the Strategic Planning and Development Office, and the Quality Assurance Unit. There is an established practice of reassessing, revising, and updating the syllabus. The Internal Evaluation Unit must improve the operation of the university's internal control system to: a) enhance its effectiveness and efficiency, b) improve its reliability, and c) support the institution in achieving its strategic objectives through reasonable assurance as to the efficiency and effectiveness of its governance, risk management and control systems and processes.

A well-designed and informative website is offered. Information regarding the study program, courses, teaching, research staff, and internal regulations is available online (in Greek and English). Announcements are available on the homepage. The information is up-to-date, transparent, and accessible.

II. Analysis

The Department is constantly monitoring through its network of cooperation with the local stakeholders and societal partners the changing needs of society. However, there is a need to strengthen the relations with social partners as they are sporadic and occasional.

III. Conclusions

The self-assessment, the external evaluation, the MODIP indicators, the questionnaires of students and graduates, and the consultation of the committees of the Department are vital sources that contribute to the ongoing monitoring and periodic review of the Postgraduate Program. Each teaching staff member is responsible for updating the content, the bibliography, and the pedagogical methods of his course and reviewing the program's content in light of the latest bibliography, thus ensuring that the program is up-to-date.

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

- Provide clear information on how the self-assessments result in specific measures.
- The website must be enriched with links that direct students to additional information on similar programs in other EU universities.

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

This Programme has not been externally evaluated in the past. During the current external review, all stakeholders were actively engaged. The Department and the University worked diligently in preparing materials, and presentations and organising and hosting virtual meetings with the Panel. All the meetings included presentations, discussions, and question-and-answer sessions. The Panel had the opportunity to meet, talk, and interact with all the participants of all meetings. The discussions were very constructive and fruitful and were conducted in a cooperative manner and attitude. The efficiency and eagerness of the Department to answer questions and provide additional information and clarifications during the meetings are worth noting.

II. Analysis

Based on the materials submitted and the information gathered during the online presentations and discussions, it appears that all members of staff (teaching and administrative), as well as students, alumni and other stakeholders, are aware of the importance of external review, its usefulness and the contribution it can make in improving the Programme. The current external evaluation process showed that the University and the Department are committed to the letter, spirit and process of quality assurance and external review. There is already in place a step-by-step action plan for utilizing the findings and

recommendations of the external evaluation. As they pointed out during the meetings, it will help them improve by enabling them to identify problematic areas and find suitable solutions.

III. Conclusions

The panel's impression is that the Department and the University are committed to external evaluation as a vital component of a quality assurance system. They worked diligently to facilitate the current review and meet its objectives. Overall, their positive approach toward quality assurance and external review is expected to impact the Programme and contribute to its continuous improvement positively. However, more tangible results and a more meaningful assessment regarding this Principle will be possible when a second external evaluation is carried out.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

Maintain and enhance the positive attitude toward the external review process, findings, and recommendations.

PART C: CONCLUSIONS

I. Features of Good Practice

The orientation of the PSP is developed along two main axes, scientific and professional, at levels that concern both the understanding of criminal phenomena, which are examined in terms of their causes and formation conditions and the shaping of the official social reaction at the level of crime control, criminal response, and the treatment of offenders, whether they are individuals or legal entities. The PSP has been designed taking into account the gaps in specialised training at the postgraduate level in specific objects and the needs of the professionals of the penitentiary system in Greece.

An outstanding innovation of the Programme is that it seeks to be implemented through the cooperation of academic specialists from several universities and disciplines. All teaching staff should be praised for their firm commitment, concentrated effort, and enthusiasm to reach this point despite the obstacles and difficulties created by limited resources and other external factors. It is pointed out that the academic environment of the Programme has a cooperative atmosphere, mutual respect and collegial spirit that has made this possible.

The teaching staff has the appropriate qualifications, which are continuously cultivated by activities in their institutions. The curriculum is organized according to the latest trends in the scientific field. The Programme was praised by the social partners, students and alumni, and the leadership of the University supports it.

The Programme delivers a student-centred distance education that cultivates diverse perspectives and independence and prepares students for important roles in combating corruption and organized crime, a major issue in Greece's public life. It prioritizes transparent student selection and a full-time attendance model. The Regulation of Studies document provides comprehensive guidance.

The Programme encourages and values continuous student course evaluations to drive improvement.

II. Areas of Weakness

- The research environment that supports the Programme is not structured in terms of an institutionalized research profile in corruption studies/organized crime at the Hellenic Open University.
- Relying on external competence as regards the core themes of the Programme may be counter-productive in the long term.

- Insufficient linkage between criminal law and criminology. Some overlapping between thematic areas.
- Relations and interactions with stakeholders are sporadic and ad hoc.
- The sense of community among students and instructors is relatively weak due to the geographic distances of students' residences and the disparity of institutional affiliation of the teaching staff.
- Some Quality Policy and Implementation issues require special attention and action (more details are provided under the section Principle 1 of the report).

III. Recommendations for Follow-up Actions

General recommendations:

- Stable research structures must be established since the research conducted is occasional, depending on those working at the time.
- Full-time staff recruitment is necessary to achieve the PSP's strategic objectives effectively.
- Address the problem of linkages between criminal law and criminology in the Programme. Eliminate some overlapping between thematic areas.
- Consider establishing a Program Advisory Board as an ad hoc committee to discuss and exchange Quality Assurance ideas and good practices with experts from the broader spectrum of the state, local academia, industry, foreign academics, stakeholders, alumni, current students, and others.
- The EEAP encourages the PSP to create opportunities for enhancing belonging and cohesion within the academic community.
- It is proposed to make minor adjustments to the quality objectives to fully satisfy the Program's and institutional Strategic Goals on Quality Assurance.

Specific recommendations

- Compulsory participation (with possible certification) of all teaching staff in structured training activities related to distance learning before assigning teaching duties is highly recommended to enhance the quality of teaching and student support.
- Consider developing KPIs relevant to international research partnerships and other strategic partnerships or actions of social responsibility. Erasmus's participation of staff and students should be encouraged to broaden the recognition of the PSP.
- Consider developing KPIs related to the number and impact of publications by the Programme's teaching staff through personal research activity or students'

dissertations, the measurable participation of teaching staff members in funded research projects and other related activities and the establishment of research collaboration groups.

- Develop strategic goals, outcomes and KPIs to successfully meet the Quality Assurance quality measures that have not been included in the Quality Targeting of the PSP (see pertinent list in "Analysis", principle 1).
- Revise the learning outcomes of a few courses to make them appropriate for level 7, according to the European and National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education. To this end, it would be useful to use Bloom's Taxonomy. Extension of learning outcomes from factual knowledge to conceptual, procedural and metacognitive knowledge should be established.
- A provision for assessing students with learning difficulties by a designated expert panel within the Programme/Institution is strongly recommended.
- Consider ways of ensuring that content overlapping between thematic Modules is avoided.
- It is proposed to revise minor the learning outcomes to better reflect level 7 according to the UNESCO ISCED-2011 code and the Bloom & Krathwohl (1956) taxonomy.
- With regards to linking learning outcomes with instruction and evaluations, it is recommended that a template matrix be created, which will include the expected learning outcomes of each Thematic Module and the corresponding learning and examination activities within the module by which each learning outcome is addressed and assessed. The matrix and the assessment rubrics for each evaluation activity in each Thematic Module must be communicated to students at the beginning of the semester as an integral part of assignment instruction for transparency and identification of the exact learning and assessment demands.
- As far as the dissertation rubric is concerned, formulation of grading criteria and a qualitative update of the rubric is recommended to make it more specific and detailed regarding the expected outcome at each grading level.
- Systematic availability of instructors for student support should be safeguarded.
- It is proposed to explore the introduction of an internship in the PSP, which is believed to contribute to a better interconnection of the learning process with contemporary corporate, social, state and educational needs and will create new professional/development opportunities for graduates.
- It is deemed necessary to find ways to effectively promote the international mobility of both teaching staff and students to benefit from good international practices in their field and promote intercultural experience and interaction.

- The website must be enriched with links that direct students to additional information on similar programs in other EU universities.
- Ways of better and systematic accessibility of students to instructors for academic support purposes need to be sought.
- The EEAP encourages the PSP to gain access to literature resources in Law.
- The EEAP encourages the PSP to update all faculty members' CVs.

IV. Summary & Overall Assessment

The Principles where full compliance has been achieved are:

2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10.

The Principles where substantial compliance has been achieved are:

1

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

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- 2. Professor Dimitris Michailakis**
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- 3. Dr. George Panayiotou**
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