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HELLENIC REPUBLIC
H Q A
HELLENIC QUALITY ASSURANCE
AND ACCREDITATION AGENCY

Accreditation Report
for the Undergraduate Study Programme of:

BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

Institution: UNIVERSITY OF PIRAEUS

Date: October 7, 2019

Report of the Panel appointed by the HQA to undertake the review of the Undergraduate Study Programme of **Business Administration** of the **University of Piraeus** for the purposes of granting accreditation

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PART A: BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT OF THE REVIEW

I.   The Accreditation Panel

The Panel responsible for the Accreditation Review of the Undergraduate Study Programme of **Business Administration of the University of Piraeus** comprised the following four (4) members, drawn from the HQA Register, in accordance with the Law 4009/2011:

1. Prof. Emeritus Spyros Economides (Chair)
    California State University, East Bay, California, USA

2. Prof. Emeritus Pantelis Ipsilantis
    University of Thessaly, Larissa

3. Mr. Panayotis Konstantopoulos
    European Parliament, Brussels, Belgium

4. Mr. Emmanuel Kapizionis
    Economic Chamber of Greece

II.   Review Procedure and Documentation

The Accreditation Panel (AP) visited the premises of the University of Piraeus on September 30 and October 1, 2019 and conducted a series of meetings as part of the Accreditation review process of the Department of Business Administration.

The AP was greeted by the university Rector, Professor Angelos Kotios and held its first meeting and discussion in the Department conference room with Vice Rector and President of MODIP Pantelis Pantelidis and the Department chair Athanasios Kouremenos.

The Vice Rector and the Department President jointly gave an overview of the history of the institution, its evolution and its profile, related information which can also be found on the Departmental website. Professor Kouremenos continued with a discussion about the Academic Program of the Department in relation to the departmental staff composition, such as number of faculty members and other types of academic staff, administrative staff, number of students in all three academic levels (undergraduate, graduate and doctorate) as well as in an Executive MBA Program that is being offered. He enumerated some of the strong points of the department, such as the mix of disciplines of the faculty, the low rate of attrition of faculty due to their high commitment to the goals and mission of the department, as well as some of the good and effective learning approaches such as the student internships with private industry or government. He also talked about some areas of concern in the departmental affairs and operation, such as the large number of incoming students imposed by the Ministry of Education in relation to the departmental resources and facilities. In-spite of these concerns, the Department personnel handles the situation very well because of its dedication.

It is worth mentioning that the Department in 1998 undertook a professional survey conducted by ALCO on a sample of 486 business professionals and practitioners in the discipline, including many graduates, with the intent to redefine the undergraduate Program of Studies, taking into account professional activities, experiences and responsibilities. A similar survey would be extremely useful to be conducted at the earliest opportunity.

The second meeting of the first day was with 5 members of OMEA, 2 members of MODIP and one member of the MODIP staff. It was an all-afternoon meeting until the closure of the day. These two groups are responsible for all aspects and phases relating to Quality Assurance (QA) issues of the Department and overall Quality Policy of the institution.

All information presented to the AP and all interactive discussions that took place were based on the material included in the Proposal for Accreditation prepared with the support and guidance of OMEA and MODIP and submitted by the department. The OMEA/MODIP presentation of the Accreditation Proposal was in the form of an extensive and well-prepared presentation. There was ample time to explore and assess the departmental compliance ADIP Quality guidelines and standards, as described in its Accreditation manual. The AP members felt that this session, which placed emphasis on Design and Approval of Programs, Student-Centered Learning, Teaching and Assessment, was very productive and informative, and generated a good number of ideas and suggestions.

The first meeting of the second day was with a group of faculty members of the Department. The AP explored how the Student-Centered policy is implemented by the faculty. In this context

the AP was informed about the various activities that the Department engages in to attract and recruit good quality high school students, the incorporation of Internships and Practical training of students, support provided for students to attend seminars and conferences, resources devoted to student services such as faculty advisors, access to health care facility, career day activities, visits to industry, participation in Erasmus+ program. Overall, it was noted by the AP that the faculty is involved in many activities considering the amount of resources available to them and are doing a commendable job.

The second meeting was with a group of undergraduate students in different semesters of their studies. All of them without exception had complimentary comments for the department, their relations with faculty and administrative personnel as well as for the support received. Worth noticing is their perception of the Department and the university overall as "family", something that further underpins the Student-Centered culture of the department. They were satisfied with the new Study Program, recently streamlined with fewer courses, and their overall academic knowledge experience, which they view as very relevant to their future professional career. They view the internship experience as a very positive professional step for employment after graduation. They generally consider the use of technology in their learning activities satisfactory and encourage the continuous upgrading of the technological platforms and systems. They appreciate the opportunity of inviting professional practitioners in their classes, to introduce the practical dimension to their learning experience. Similarly, they would like to see an increase in the number of industry visits.

Next, the AP took a tour of the facilities and support systems. Even though the institution owns seven buildings, the department's needs are served by the central building facilities, while space for PhD students is provided by an additional administrative building in proximity. All facilities were found to be in good condition. Student dining facility is housed in a neo classic architecture style building, in addition to a cafeteria in the central building. The central building houses also the computer laboratories, the lecture amphitheaters, including one of large capacity, the library and a well-kept amphitheater for conferences and graduation ceremonies.

Following the visit of the facilities, the AP met with a group of graduates of the department, employed at known companies and businesses. One of them interacted via SKYPE from the Netherlands. Like the undergraduate students, the graduates did not have any negative comments. They all felt that they were well equipped to perform in the workplace. They felt that the Career Office is effective and serves as a good channel of communication, information and contact development for students during their study program. They concurred with the opinion of the undergraduates regarding the friendly, family like, student-centered atmosphere that continues even after graduation. They commented that the English language instruction merits to be further expanded and strengthened.

The next meeting was with a group of Business Executives / Stakeholders of the Department some of whom were graduates of it. The AP was impressed by the professional background of accomplished businessmen representing the sectors of Management Consulting, Banks, Financial Institutions, Insurance, Construction Development, Retail Market and the Chamber of Commerce. All of them commended very positively their involvement with the Department and their experience with the graduates whom they all employ. Those who were also graduates of the program were especially appreciative for the opportunity to have been educated in the

Department or the Institution. The AP detected a very positive attitude of the stakeholders for involvement with the Department for mutual support and benefits.

The last meeting of the day was a follow-up meeting with the OMEA and MODIP representatives during which additional comments and clarifications were brought up, all of which related to Quality Policy and undergraduate Program of Studies. The Vice Rector and the Department Chair joined at the end of the meeting. The AP gave a preliminary, short verbal report about their impressions and findings of the visit. The AP thanked everyone for their participation, cooperation and hospitality.

III.   Study Programme Profile

The Department of Business Administration is one of the four departments in the School of Business, Economics and International Studies of the University of Piraeus. It is one of the older departments and its present identity was formally established in the academic year 1971-1972, as a result of a Department of Ministry decision.

In terms of human resources, as of 2018, it has:

- 1,985 Undergraduate students active up to 4+2 years of study
-779 Active post graduate students
- 47 Doctoral candidates
- 23 Faculty / Research members in all ranks
- 1   Laboratory instructor
- 2   Class instructors
- 3   Technical Laboratory assistants
- 6   Administrative support personnel

The undergraduate Program of studies was revised in 2016. The number of courses needed for graduation are 50 (36 required, 3 mandatory electives, 3 free choice electives, 4 electives from one of three specific tracks (specialization), and 4 foreign language courses). Overall the Department offers 88 courses. The 50 courses typically can be undertaken in 4 years and are equivalent of 240 ECTS units.

The Department is committed to the University wide Quality Policy, has instituted all mechanisms and processes required for Quality Assurance and Continuous Improvement of its Program of Studies. It ranks in the top 5 or better among the similar 15 Greek university departments.

In addition to the information provided in this report, one can find a wealth of information regarding all aspects of the departmental Academic and Research endeavors, Programs of Study, Administrative Services, Student Support mechanisms, Facilities and Infrastructure, on the departmental website https://www.unipi.gr/unipi.

PART B: COMPLIANCE WITH THE PRINCIPLES

Principle 1: Academic Unit Policy for Quality Assurance

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD APPLY A QUALITY ASSURANCE POLICY AS PART OF THEIR STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT. THIS POLICY SHOULD EXPAND AND BE AIMED (WITH THE COLLABORATION OF EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS) AT ALL INSTITUTION'S AREAS OF ACTIVITY, AND PARTICULARLY AT THE FULFILMENT OF QUALITY REQUIREMENTS OF UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMMES. THIS POLICY SHOULD BE PUBLISHED AND IMPLEMENTED BY ALL STAKEHOLDERS.

The Quality Assurance policy of the academic unit is in line with the Institutional policy on quality, and is included in a published statement that is implemented by all stakeholders. It focuses on the achievement of special objectives related to the Quality Assurance of study programmes offered by the academic unit.

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

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

a)   *the suitability of the structure and organization of the curriculum;*
b)   *the pursuit of learning outcomes and qualifications in accordance with the European and the National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education;*
c)   *the promotion of the quality and effectiveness of teaching;*
d)   *the appropriateness of the qualifications of the teaching staff;*
e)   *the enhancement of the quality and quantity of the research output among faculty members of the academic unit;*
f)   *ways for linking teaching and research;*
g)   *the level of demand for qualifications acquired by graduates, in the labour market;*
h)   *the quality of support services such as the administrative services, the Library, and the student welfare office;*
i)   *the conduct of an annual review and an internal audit of the Quality Assurance system of the undergraduate programme(s) offered, as well as the collaboration of the Internal Evaluation Group (IEG) with the Institution's Quality Assurance Unit (QAU);*

Study Programme compliance

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

The organisation of the curriculum has undergone a major review in 2016, resulting in the sharpening of its focus (reduction of the overall number of degree courses to 50 from 65). The Program of Studies (PS) compares favorably to accepted standards both in its structure and in outcomes.

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

The Quality Assurance policy is made public through the Department's webpage and the goals are monitored and updated as appropriate during the annual review cycle.

The Student Handbook is comprehensive (93 pages) including a mission statement, a description of the organisation of the department, a description of the individual courses and is also available in English, which is relevant for Erasmus students.

Panel judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

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

Principle 2: Design and Approval of Programmes

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD DEVELOP THEIR UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMMES FOLLOWING A DEFINED WRITTEN PROCESS WHICH WILL INVOLVE THE PARTICIPANTS, INFORMATION SOURCES AND THE APPROVAL COMMITTEES FOR THE PROGRAMME. THE OBJECTIVES, THE EXPECTED LEARNING OUTCOMES, THE INTENDED PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS AND THE WAYS TO ACHIEVE THEM ARE SET OUT IN THE PROGRAMME DESIGN. THE ABOVE DETAILS AS WELL AS INFORMATION ON THE PROGRAMME'S STRUCTURE ARE PUBLISHED IN THE STUDENT GUIDE.

Academic units develop their programmes following a well-defined procedure. The academic profile and orientation of the programme, the objectives, the subject areas, the structure and organisation, the expected learning outcomes and the intended professional qualifications according to the National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education are described at this stage. The approval or revision process for programmes includes a check of compliance with the basic requirements described in the Standards, on behalf of the Institution's Quality Assurance Unit (QAU).

Furthermore, the programme design should take into consideration the following:

- *the Institutional strategy*
- *the active participation of students*
- *the experience of external stakeholders from the labour market*
- *the smooth progression of students throughout the stages of the programme*
- *the anticipated student workload according to the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System*
- *the option to provide work experience to the students*
- *the linking of teaching and research*
- *the relevant regulatory framework and the official procedure for the approval of the programme by the Institution.*

Study Programme compliance

The AP's extensive meetings with the members of OMEA, MODIP, students, graduates and external stakeholders of the Department confirmed the Department's compliance with the objectives and the requirements as set by ADIP.

The study program is designed on appropriate quality standards, pursuant to the findings of the last external evaluation in June of 2013. The QAU and OMEA responded to the recommendations and proceeded to a fundamental revision of the Study Program taking also seriously a 'sense check' from professionals with extensive business experience.

The structure of the program has a rational nature and is clearly articulated and communicated to all the involved groups. The induction of principles such as planning and organizing, decision making, analytical thinking, problem solving, teamwork, and creative thinking increase the reliability of the study program that is associated with the employers' requirements as this reflected by the research of the National Association of Colleges and Employers. There is an ongoing process with annual revisions of the curriculum including procedures of consultation with all the stakeholders (internal and external) and update the students' guide in these annual reviews.

The Department and the Institute has open doors with external stakeholders, and it is important to maintain this good relationship with their Global Professional Partners such as the ACCA (Association of Chartered Certified Accountants), ICAEW (the Institute of England and Wales) and CFA (Certified Financial Advisors), in order not only to have a peer review but also to align their study program with the latest trends and developments.

The Accounting courses included in the Program of Studies conform with universally accepted standards and are approved and accepted by Professional Bodies such as ACCA and ICAEW

The AP is made aware that the Department plans to introduce 1-2 courses that will be taught in English in the immediate future. Consideration should be given to synergies with other departments in order to develop a list of selected courses in English that will enable the offering of a full semester to incoming Erasmus students. Resident students could also be given the option to take these courses in order to develop language skills. This will enhance the international dimension of the program to the benefit of the students.

Panel judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

- Increase the level of co-operation with Professional bodies as to further enhance the quality of the Program of Studies.

- The Department is encouraged to introduce courses in Ethics and Data Analytics to improve the Program's value.

- A list of selected courses now offered by the Department should be taught in English, in cooperation with other departments, to enable Erasmus students to take a full-semester ECTS.

Principle 3: Student- centred Learning, Teaching and Assessment

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD ENSURE THAT THE UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMMES ARE DELIVERED IN A WAY THAT ENCOURAGES STUDENTS TO TAKE AN ACTIVE ROLE IN CREATING THE LEARNING PROCESS. THE ASSESSMENT METHODS SHOULD REFLECT THIS APPROACH.

Student-centred learning and teaching plays an important role in stimulating students' motivation, self-reflection and engagement in the learning process. The above entail continuous consideration of the programme's delivery and the assessment of the related outcomes.

The student-centred learning and teaching process

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

    In addition :
- *the academic staff are familiar with the existing examination system and methods and are supported in developing their own skills in this field;*
- *the assessment criteria and methods are published in advance;*
- *the assessment allows students to demonstrate the extent to which the intended learning outcomes have been achieved. Students are given feedback, which, if necessary is linked to advice on the learning process;*
- *student assessment is conducted by more than one examiner, where possible;*
- *the regulations for assessment take into account mitigating circumstances;*
- *assessment is consistent, fairly applied to all students and carried out in accordance with the stated procedures;*
- *a formal procedure for student appeals is in place.*

Study Programme compliance

The AP met with students, graduates, academic staff and other business partners of the Department in order to explore how the Student-Centered policy is implemented by the faculty. In this context the AP was informed about the various teaching approaches used by the Department.

Despite the large number of students, academic staff uses multiple learning activities in class. Lab exercises and/or tutoring in smaller groups, case studies, and individual or group written assignments are used in more than half of the courses overall, vast majority in specialization

courses. Quality Performance indicators monitor the activity and set targets for increasing the use of active learning in the program.

Student support is also provided in terms of student advisors (introduced as of 2019-2020), access to health care facility including a medical doctor, nurse and psychologist, career counseling, visits to industry, participation in Erasmus+ program, opportunities for attending seminars and conferences, etc.

Course descriptors provide information regarding methods of teaching and learning, assessment and evaluation methods and bibliography, and are available on the web site.

The development of e-class facilitates the students to adopt flexible learning paths having access to the courses' material and presentations enhancing the variety of pedagogical methods. Students are free to develop their skills by having direct access to all members of the teaching staff and share a positive culture of open communication and promote a continuous interaction between students and instructors.

Students are invited to complete a comprehensive course-evaluation questionnaire for each course at the end of the semester, which is part of the QA process. Currently the survey takes place in-class with an average participation rate of about 20%. IEG/OMEA and MODIP process and analyze the survey results and inform the department administration accordingly. OMEA members and teaching staff consider ways to further improve the process of development and design of the survey questions in order to support their survey approach.

Overall, there is a quite good picture and our perception is that the Department adopts a student-centered procedure that promotes and enhances the mutual respect.

Panel judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

- The AP recommends to explore the usefulness of making available the transmission of courses via web-streaming, to facilitate their access for students who face transportation problems, combine studies with work activities and/or to alleviate the pressure on the use of facilities (classrooms).

Principle 4: Student Admission, Progression, Recognition and Certification

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

Institutions and academic units need to put in place both processes and tools to collect, manage and act on information regarding student progression.

Procedures concerning the award and recognition of higher education degrees, the duration of studies, rules ensuring students progression, terms and conditions for student mobility should be based on the institutional study regulations. Appropriate recognition procedures rely on institutional practice for recognition of credits among various European academic departments and Institutions, in line with the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention.

Graduation represents the culmination of the students´study period. Students need to receive documentation explaining the qualification gained, including achieved learning outcomes and the context, level, content and status of the studies that were pursued and successfully completed (Diploma Supplement).

Study Programme compliance

Student admission to the program is regulated by the ministry of Education in terms of number of positions and students are admitted based on their performance in the University Entrance Exams and their stated preference regarding study programs. Students admitted to the program are of high caliber (the program is ranked 2nd among all programs in Business Administration offered by Greek Universities) and 5th among all programs in Business and Economics in Greece. It is worth noticing that the number of students who put the program among their top 3 preferences is constantly increasing over the last 3 years. Evidence from interviewed students and alumni shows that the program is preferred because of its locality (Athens metropolitan area), and quality. The Department actively promotes the program and informs interested senior high school students. School visits are welcomed, during which, lyceum students meet academic staff and have an opportunity to experience university teaching.

The number of admitted students far exceeds the accepted capacity of the Department. Thus, for the current year, while the Department admission limit was set at 235 students, the number of admitted students reached almost 500. This places more stress to the program resources and adversely affects the scholastic aptitude of incoming students.

The department's practice is to divide students in smaller groups for practical and laboratory work and use large amphitheaters equipped with audio / video equipment for lectures. This creates excessive demand in staff resources, mainly by increased teaching load, who should be praised for coping with those conditions. The Department should also consider providing additional academic support to weakest students (tutoring, introductory courses, etc.) to upgrade their level of basic skills in areas such as mathematics.

The Department uses an index "lowest achieved entrance grade" to monitor the quality of the admitted students. However, since the entrance exams are not standardized in terms of level of difficulty, a more sensible index could be a relative measurement against the highest among same programs. Alternatively, another useful index could be the number of students that put the program among their first 3 choices.

Specific guidelines exist for the smooth progression of the students through the four years of study. Courses are divided in Mandatory, General electives, Free electives and Specialization courses and allocated through the 8 semesters in a way that serves the gradual building of knowledge and skills. Course descriptors are compatible with international standards and include course Learning Outcomes (LOs), content, methods of teaching and learning, assessment and evaluation methods and bibliography, and are available on the web site. A clear procedure for syllabi modifications exists. Student options at each semester are clearly described. Since the program was recently modified, clear guidelines exist for students who entered the program before 2016 to ensure smooth progress and completion of the program.

Credits earned during student mobility are recognized according to Erasmus policies and in line with the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention.

The program includes four (4) English language courses that prepare students in business English. Interviewed students, even those who had a proficiency certificate in English, were positive about the need of the English language courses. English language courses, while they are fully accounted in the program's total credit load, corresponding grades are not reflected in the Grade Point Average, which is something that needs revision.

The Program of Studies gives the opportunity to interested students to further develop their research skills through the offering of two (2) optional courses entitled "Research Project". Likewise, students are offered the opportunity to get practical experience through summer internships at selected companies and organizations as an optional course. Clear procedures for selecting students exist, although the Department has managed to accommodate all interested students thanks to the involvement of the members of academic staff.

About 50-60% of the students graduate within a year after the four years of the program, while 70-80% within two years. Non-active students reach large numbers (about 5000) which is rather misleading since it accounts for students who enrolled in the program even decades earlier and remain in the registry. This situation, mainly caused by the lack of legal provisions for removing student status, does not seriously affect or cause any burden to the Department or the University.

All students receive the European Diploma Supplement upon graduation.

Panel judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

- Student grades in English language courses should be included in the calculation of their overall graduation grade (GPA).

Principle 5: Teaching Staff

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD ASSURE THEMSELVES OF THE QUALIFICATIONS AND COMPETENCE OF THE TEACHING STAFF. THEY SHOULD APPLY FAIR AND TRANSPARENT PROCESSES FOR THE RECRUITMENT AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE TEACHING STAFF.

> *The Institutions and their academic units have a major responsibility as to the standard of their teaching staff providing them with a supportive environment that promotes the advancement of their scientific work. In particular, the academic unit should:*
>
> - *set up and follow clear, transparent and fair processes for the recruitment of properly qualified staff and offer them conditions of employment that recognize the importance of teaching and research;*
> - *offer opportunities and promote the professional development of the teaching staff;*
> - *encourage scholarly activity to strengthen the link between education and research;*
> - *encourage innovation in teaching methods and the use of new technologies;*
> - *promote the increase of the volume and quality of the research output within the academic unit*
> - *follow Quality Assurance processes for all staff members (with respect to attendance requirements, performance, self-assessment, training etc.);*
> - *develop policies to attract highly qualified academic staff;*

Study Programme compliance

The Program of Studies is supported by 23 members of Academic staff (14 Professors, 1 Associate and 8 Assistant professors). Academic staff is heavily involved in the delivery of the undergraduate program; limited assistance is provided by 4 member of "special teaching staff", who mainly assist in the lab and practical activities of certain courses and the teaching of foreign language courses and 3 members of "special technical staff", and some of the department's Ph.D. students.

There is a strong relationship between academic staff and industry that helps in bringing valuable real-life experiences into the classrooms. Association of the program with business partners can be enhanced through joint actions like drawing up case studies reflecting the Greek business environment and inviting industry experts to deliver case studies as part of the curriculum. Recently, (2017), the Department managed, after several years of freeze on new hires in public sector, to hire two new members of staff, while recruitment in another position is in process. New hires are reflecting the Department goals for further strengthening important fields to the program like data analytics.

Procedures for new faculty positions are clear since the Legal Framework for Higher Education mainly prescribes the process in exhaustive detail. The reputation of the University and the networking of academic staff through their research and professional activities facilitate the attraction of well-qualified candidates for current and future job openings.

Promotion of Academic staff to higher academic level takes place through an open invitation call, according to the same procedures as the one for new hires. In this case, the level of the incumbent's contribution to teaching, research and administrative activities in the Department is also taken into consideration. The entire process is fully described in the University's internal QA system.

Overall, the student to staff ratio is 74, far too high of the corresponding index at OECD countries (about 12 to 18) and it is not expected to fall at those levels as long as funding for new positions is limited and/or the number of admitted students is set by the ministry at such high levels (see previous sections).

The AP noted the high levels of student satisfaction with the quality of teaching procedures and the dedication of teaching staff. However, under the current constraints and the real pressure of very high student to staff ratios, the main driver behind such success is the devotion and the level of engagement of academic staff who perform "too much" with "too little".

Staff research activities are measured and monitored by a series of indices. The Department focuses in publishing in highly rated scientific journals and relative statistics were presented to AP. Accordingly, the departmental Quality Performance Indicators should monitor and measure quality of research output, based on international classification standards, and on an annual basis.

The teaching activity of academic staff is evaluated by students at the end of each semester. A smart scheme of identifying "outlier performance" in each evaluation criteria has been devised by MODIP. Currently, staff members can get their evaluations by the Department chair. The AP suggests that a formal process should be in place where OMEA (or MODIP) is delivering the evaluation summary report to each of the academic staff that should also include relative position of the individual (percentile) in the Department (or university) total. In addition, OMEA should provide the Department head with an exception report that identifies "outlier" cases that need to be investigated regarding the causes so proper action is taken.

Personal development plans of academic staff should take into consideration results of student evaluation. In addition, the Department should consider introducing a peer evaluation review for promotion of best practices.

A transparent process exists for administrating funding for staff development opportunities regarding their participation in conferences and other scientific events. Interviews with staff showed their satisfaction regarding the support they receive for staff development.

Panel judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

- Device a workload measurement system that provides information regarding individual academic staff workload (teaching, research, student support, administrative) as part of the annual assessment process. The AP recommends including in the annual assessment the allocation of time spent on various activities (teaching, research, student support and administrative tasks) involving Academic staff.)

- Departmental Quality Performance Indicators should monitor, and measure quality of research output based on international classification standards and on an annual basis.

- Introduce peer evaluation review for promotion of best teaching practices. Use results of student evaluation for personal development of academic staff.

- Enhance teaching with participation of industry experts and/or development of case studies

Principle 6: Learning Resources and Student Support

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD HAVE ADEQUATE FUNDING TO COVER TEACHING AND LEARNING NEEDS. THEY SHOULD –ON THE ONE HAND- PROVIDE SATISFACTORY INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES FOR LEARNING AND STUDENT SUPPORT AND–ON THE OTHER HAND- FACILITATE DIRECT ACCESS TO THEM BY ESTABLISHING INTERNAL RULES TO THIS END (E.G. LECTURE ROOMS, LABORATORIES, LIBRARIES, NETWORKS, BOARDING, CAREER AND SOCIAL POLICY SERVICES ETC.).

> *Institutions and their academic units must have sufficient funding and means to support learning and academic activity in general, so that they can offer to students the best possible level of studies. The above means could include facilities such as libraries, study rooms, educational and scientific equipment, information and communications services, support or counselling services.*
>
> *When allocating the available resources, the needs of all students must be taken into consideration (e.g. whether they are full-time or part-time students, employed or international students, students with disabilities) and the shift towards student-centred learning and the adoption of flexible modes of learning and teaching. Support activities and facilities may be organised in various ways, depending on the institutional context. However, the internal Quality Assurance ensures that all resources are appropriate, adequate, and accessible, and that students are informed about the services available to them.*
>
> *In delivering support services the role of support and administrative staff is crucial and therefore they need to be qualified and have opportunities to develop their competences.*

Study Programme compliance

The collegiate, respectful, supportive, and collaborative relationship between staff and students was noticeable. Interviews with administration, academic staff, students and alumni showed that students receive excellent support during their studies which in several cases continues after graduation. As of this year, the Department established the role of student counsellors designating members of academic staff as counselors; one for each study-year and on for each specialization.

Facilities are mainly managed by the University. Certain spaces including offices, meeting rooms and some computer laboratories have been allocated and are used exclusively by the Department of Business Administration. A university service allocates the use of lecture halls, teaching rooms and computer rooms to different departments on a semester basis taking account of their teaching needs (courses and number of students). The allocation process works in a fair and transparent way as confirmed by academic staff and students. All teaching rooms are equipped with multimedia projectors available to teaching staff; large lecture halls are equipped with audio / video facilities.

Specific processes to maintain the functionality of the equipment are in place and reporting of problems is done through an electronic platform centrally provided by the University. In

addition, the Department uses funds from its postgraduate studies to provide proper maintenance of the equipment that has exclusive use of.

Students have full access to printed and electronic materials of the library as well as software provided by the University and the Department either on-site (Wi-Fi service throughout the whole campus) or from home (via VPN). The Department has subscription to special databases (e.g. Bloomberg, Athens Stock Exchange Companies database, etc.) and students of the Department have privileges to use all Microsoft Imagine Premium Suite software.

The "e-Class" learning platform is used for most of the courses to support the learning process (additional learning material, course information, self-assessment quizzes, submission of assignments, etc.). According to the relevant Quality Performance Index, the use of the learning platform by the teaching staff is at 80% level; Interviewed students confirmed that most of the academic staff uses the platform and expressed the wish for its full use.

Administrative support is provided by 6 administrative staff members. Academic staff felt that administrative staff is very competent, and the working relationship is excellent. Several administrative processes have been computerized, and students are satisfied with the level of service, access to faculty and administrative services and support.

Other University services provided to students by the Welfare Office (Meals, Accommodation, Housing allowance, Healthcare coverage, European Health Insurance Card), Career office, Medical center, Counselling center and International relations office. Interviewed students seemed aware of the offered services. Detailed information to interested students is available on the University Web site.

International mobility of students is high (about 40 per semester) almost 40% of the total university mobility. However, inbound mobility is low because the courses are not offered in English and incoming students are taught almost individually by academic staff, resulting in increased teaching load and minimal interaction with resident fellow students.

The Career office acts as a liaison between the University and Businesses. The Department has strong ties with the liaison office, which is headed by a member of academic staff and ex-rector, and its role is greatly acknowledged by alumni, employers and academic staff.

Panel judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

- Target value for using TPT in courses should be set at 100% since there is no reason that it should not be achievable within a year.

Principle 7: Information Management

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

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

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

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

- *key performance indicators*
- *student population profile*
- *student progression, success and drop-out rates*
- *student satisfaction with their programme(s)*
- *availability of learning resources and student support*
- *career paths of graduates*

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

Study Programme compliance

The AP ascertained the establishment of a comprehensive system for the collection of large set of data from various sources concerning amongst other, the student body, the completion of studies and students' employability, etc. The procedure for the collection of data combines data from the information system of the Registrar's office, the information systems of ELKE, ATLAS and the Student Career Office. It noted the good organization and presentation of relevant data collected and graphical displays, which facilitates the analysis and the interpretation of the information.

Student evaluation of individual courses is conducted at the end of every semester and provides also the opportunity for free written comments. The evaluation includes information related to the Program of Studies, in terms of various factors and indicators such as ECTS, learning outcomes, workload and Faculty member performance. The evaluation includes a quality assessment of the available teaching material and resources, it's adequacy to the stated academic goals and its accessibility (IT equipment, library, academic support). It is also possible to submit written complains anonymously via the Institution's webpage.

The evaluation and eventual remarks are examined by the IEG/OMEA and submitted to the Department chair who may raise individual issues with Academic staff concerned. Students

confirmed the responsiveness of the Department to their comments and the corrective measures taken. Nevertheless, the AP observed that that the results of student evaluation regarding individual course are not automatically communicated to the corresponding faculty member.

The data collection, processing, analysis, and the derivation of information is well established and functioning. However, it is not evident yet that the entire QA PDCA (Deming's quality cycle) is completed with the development of an implementation action plan based on the derived information. This is perhaps due to the early stages of the Internal Quality Assurance System and processes now under implementation by the Greek universities.

The AP noted the considerable efforts deployed by Academic staff to provide counseling and support to students. These efforts are not measured nor assessed, although they constitute one of the core strengths of the Department. At the same time, the allocation of time to each of the activities relating to teaching, research and student support is not clearly indicated.

Panel judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

- Devise a workload measurement system that provides information regarding individual academic staff workload (teaching, research, student support, administrative) as part of the annual assessment process.

Principle 8: Public Information

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD PUBLISH INFORMATION ABOUT THEIR TEACHING AND ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES WHICH IS CLEAR, ACCURATE, OBJECTIVE, UP-TO-DATE AND READILY ACCESSIBLE.

> *Information on Institution's activities is useful for prospective and current students, graduates, other stakeholders and the public.*
>
> *Therefore, institutions and their academic units provide information about their activities, including the programmes they offer, the intended learning outcomes, the qualifications awarded, the teaching, learning and assessment procedures used, the pass rates and the learning opportunities available to their students, as well as graduate employment information.*

Study Programme compliance

The AP ascertained the availability of extensive, complete and up to date information on the Department's website, relating to the mission, study programme, the teaching staff and Quality Assurance policy.

The Department has deployed considerable efforts in upgrading its website and the IEG/OMEA in cooperation with the QAU/MODIP control the available information on academic programmes, activities and services to students which are made public, to ensure compliance and Quality Assurance. The IEG/OMEA and the Secretariat of the Department are tasked with controlling the content of the website 3 times a year, ahead of each semester and the examination periods.

The Department provides for the use of clear criteria for the evaluation of the website referring to its reliability, completeness, user friendliness, accessibility and uniformity, amongst other. The website is also available in English in all the subject-fields.

The Department's website has the dual role of an information tool, available to students, and of an access portal to applications such as e-Secretariat and e-Class.

The web application of the electronic-secretariat allows students to seek information regarding courses offered in the curriculum, instructors, suggested reading and other course related issues, register for courses for each semester, access grades for courses in which they have been enrolled, receive a confirmation of studies instantly in electronic format, and obtain a variety of other documents related to their academic endeavors. Access to this application is available using the student username and password, ensuring its confidentiality.

Currently a major upgrade of the website is scheduled that will permit easier access and content update.

Panel judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

Principle 9: On-going Monitoring and Periodic Internal Review of Programmes

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

Regular monitoring, review and revision of study programmes aim to maintain the level of educational provision and to create a supportive and effective learning environment for students.

The above comprise the evaluation of:
- *the content of the programme in the light of the latest research in the given discipline, thus ensuring that the programme is up to date;*
- *the changing needs of society;*
- *the students' workload, progression and completion;*
- *the effectiveness of the procedures for the assessment of students;*
- *the students' expectations, needs and satisfaction in relation to the programme;*
- *the learning environment, support services and their fitness for purpose for the programme*

Programmes are reviewed and revised regularly involving students and other stakeholders. The information collected is analysed and the programme is adapted to ensure that it is up-to-date. Revised programme specifications are published.

Study Programme compliance

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

QAU/MODIP has designed a set of questionnaires addressed to students and graduates to ensure the gathering of data, substantiating the adequacy of the Program of Studies and of services offered to students and aimed at continuously improving its quality. The resulting internal assessment by QAU/MODIP and eventual recommendations are communicated to the IEG/OMEA. This process is enriched by the informal feedback solicited from stakeholders, social partners, as well as faculty (based on their research activity and interaction with public sector or private enterprises).

Based on the written recommendations received by QAU/MODIP, which may entail the improvement of the Study Program and/or of support services to students, or the establishment of new quality goals, the IEG/OMEA may submit proposals as to the above.

A formal decision for the substantial revision of the Program of Studies is taken by the Faculty Assembly and an Ad Hoc Committee is formed with the participation of Faculty members, including students' representatives.

The proposal for Accreditation submitted to the AP describes the process in a concise well-organized manner covering all issues that need to be addresses relative to the periodic review of the Program of Studies. However, no evidence of implementation of the entire process is reported.

Panel judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

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

Principle 10: Regular External Evaluation of Undergraduate Programmes

PROGRAMMES SHOULD REGULARLY UNDERGO EVALUATION BY COMMITTEES OF EXTERNAL EXPERTS SET BY HQA, AIMING AT ACCREDITATION. THE TERM OF VALIDITY OF THE ACCREDITATION IS DETERMINED BY HQA.

> *HQA is responsible for administering the programme accreditation process which is realised as an external evaluation procedure, and implemented by a committee of independent experts. HQA grants accreditation of programmes, with a specific term of validity, following to which revision is required. The accreditation of the quality of the programmes acts as a means of verification of the compliance of the programme with the template's requirements, and as a catalyst for improvement, while opening new perspectives towards the international standing of the awarded degrees.*
>
> *Both academic units and institutions participate in the regular external Quality Assurance process, while respecting the requirements of the legislative framework in which they operate.*
>
> *The Quality Assurance, in this case the accreditation, is an on-going process that does not end with the external feedback, or report or its follow-up process within the Institution. Therefore, Institutions and their academic units ensure that the progress made since the last external Quality Assurance activity is taken into consideration when preparing for the next one.*

Study Programme compliance

The Department was evaluated by an External Evaluation Committee (EEC) in July of 2013. Based on the ADIP guidelines, the external evaluation focused on the following areas as they relate to the QA of the Undergraduate Program of Studies (as well as the Graduate Programs):

- Curriculum

-Teaching

- Research

- All other Services

- Strategic Planning

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

The AP feels that the Progress report submitted by the Department is organized in a useful, informative format, well written and its content deals thoroughly and extensively with each one of the suggestions or recommendations present in the External Evaluation Report in each of the above-mentioned areas. More specifically, the tabular format of the Progress Report, for each recommendation or suggestion includes:

- The anticipated Results upon the implemented improvement

- The action plan to follow for the accomplishment of the improvement

- The entity or individual for managing the process of improvement

- The timetable for the implementation of the improvement

- The resource requirements for the improvement task

Relative to the anticipated improvement implementation, the timetable includes the target dates for completion and the percent completion of the improvement as of the time of this report dissemination, both of which were deemed reasonable for a sample of recommended improvements examined by the AP.

The result of this follow up and implementation process of the EEC recommendations was for the Department to undertake some extensive modifications in its undergraduate Program of Studies (as well as in its Graduate programs) and operations such as:

- The revision of the undergraduate Program of Studies

- The reduction of the requirements and number of courses required for graduation

- The introduction of additional laboratory-based courses

- The revision of learning outcomes

- The development of extensive syllabi for all courses

- The incorporation of more research knowledge and results in the course instruction

- The improvement of Internships / Practical training in the sense of increasing the number of both student participants and employer sponsors

- The initiation of establishing additional research laboratories, now in progress

In a broader sense, a byproduct in the pursuit for implementation of the EEC recommendations, was the reevaluation and rethinking of the Departmental vision and mission with new defined goals to track in some areas and activities, such as innovation, internationalization, local community or industry relations.

Overall, the AP feels that the follow up and implementation of the comments, suggestions and recommendations of the EEC are not only being managed well but that they also have resulted in some tangible results and implementation of the suggested improvements.

Panel judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

PART C: CONCLUSIONS

I.   Features of Good Practice

- The Department actively promotes the Study Program and informs interested senior high school students. School visits are welcomed, during which lyceum students meet academic staff and have an opportunity to be informed about university teaching.

- Establishment of Career Days event annually.

- The collegiate, respectful, supportive, and collaborative relationship between staff and students.

- Well organized and very informative Student Handbook.

- Dedication of teaching staff to the goals of the Department, Quality of teaching and Student support.

- Strong interaction of the Department with the business community.

II.   Areas of Weakness

III.   Recommendations for Follow-up Actions

- It is recommended that the Department finds or solicits sources, e.g., stakeholders, to secure some funding to conduct a follow up professional survey similar to the one undertaken by ALCO on its behalf back in 1998, so that it can gain some valuable insights about its Program of Studies as well as its strengths and weaknesses in relation to the professional market within which its graduates are employed.

- The Department should embark on an on-going documentation and compilation of key, repeatable ongoing operating procedures and processes which are deemed to be of importance in an easy to follow graphical form, such as a flow chart. Such a collection of documents would standardize these procedures and serve as a "standards manual" that can be followed to ensure consistency of implementation (execution).

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

- Devise a workload measurement system that provides information regarding individual academic staff workload (teaching, research, student support, administrative) as part of the annual assessment process.

- Enhance the informal contacts and information flow with stakeholders through their systematic actions that may include:

- o Establishment of an Industrial Advisory Board that will provide input in program design and development.
- o Drawing up case studies, jointly by academic staff and industry experts, reflecting the challenges of the Greek business environment.
- o Participation of industry experts for interactive discussion of a specific case in the stakeholder's field of activity with students, within the context of a course or as visiting speakers.
- o Establishment of student excellence awards sponsored by the stakeholder community.

- Enhance the participation of alumni in quality improvement activities:
  - o Maintain updated records about alumni (contact data, employment).
  - o Actively pursue periodic feedback regarding matching skills to business needs and trend.
  - o Support the eventual creation of an alumni society by providing resources such as internet access and support by the Career Office.

- Departmental Quality Performance Indicators should be expanded to monitor, and measure quality of research output based on international classification standards.

- Introduce peer evaluation review for promotion of best teaching practices.

- Explore the usefulness of making delivering courses via web-streaming, to facilitate the access for students who face transportation problems, those who combine studies with work activities and/or to alleviate the pressure on the use of facilities (classrooms).

- The Department in cooperation with other departments should develop a more extensive list of courses in English that will enable the offering of a full semester to incoming Erasmus students.

IV.   Summary & Overall Assessment

The Principles where full compliance has been achieved are: 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 8, 10

The Principles where substantial compliance has been achieved are: 5, 7, 9

The Principles where partial compliance has been achieved are:

The Principles where failure of compliance was identified are:

Overall Judgement	
Fully compliant	**X**
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

The members of the Accreditation Panel for the Undergraduate Programme Business Administration of the University of Piraeus

Name and Surname   Signature

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

- **Prof. Emeritus Pantelis Ipsilandis**, University of Thessaly, Larissa, Greece

- **Mr Panayotis Konstantopoulos**, European Parliament, Brussels, Belgium

- **Mr Emmanuel Kapizionis**, Economic Chamber of Greece, Greece