

Accreditation Report for the Undergraduate Study Programme of Theatre Studies

University of the Peloponnese
May 18, 2019

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



Report of the Panel appointed by the HQA to undertake the review of the Undergraduate Study Programme of **Theatre Studies** of the **University of Peloponnese** for the purposes of granting accreditation

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PART A: BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT OF THE REVIEW

I. The Accreditation Panel

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

1. Professor **Stratos Constantinidis** (Chair)
The Ohio State University, Ohio, USA
2. Professor **Caterina Carpinato**
Universita Ca Foscari Venezia, Venice, Italy
3. Dr **Stella Baraklianou**
University of Huddersfield, U.K.
4. Dr **Pantelis Michelakis**
University of Bristol, U.K.

II. Review Procedure and Documentation

The Accreditation process was explained to the members of the Accreditation Panel (AP) by HQA over skype on Wednesday 8 May 2019, before the arrival of the Panel in Athens. The AP members met at the Alexandros Hotel in Athens with Mrs Charikleia Dimopoulou of ADIP. The AP members went over the materials that were given to them prior to their arrival in Greece. Some of the members have had previous experience with the accreditation process.

The materials received through ADIP Dropbox included, among other documents: the Department's proposal for Accreditation; Templates and results of student evaluations; statistical data; study guides and detailed outlines of modules; institutional and departmental policies, the Internal Periodic Review Report (2018) and the External Evaluation Report (2014).

AP arrived at Nafplion on Monday 13 May 2019 at 12.30 pm. The first meeting began promptly at 1 pm, and included administrative and secretarial staff of the Department of Theatre Studies at the University of Peloponnese. At 2 pm AP met with Prof. Asterios Tsiaras (Chair of MODIP, Vice-Rector of Academic Affairs) and Prof. Christos Kardaras (Head of Department of Theatre Studies and Dean of the School of Arts). This was followed by a meeting with OMEA and MODIP academic staff (Asterios Tsiaras, Angeliki Spiropoulou, Vassiliki Gionna, Anna Papastratakou, Anthi Papaporfiriou, Sofia Kyriakopoulou, Christos Kardaras, Maria Velioti, Athanassion Blessios, Yiannis Leontaris). At 4.45 pm AP had its first debriefing at the Aion Hotel at Nafplion.

On Tuesday 14 May 2019 at 9.30 am AP met with teaching staff members (Vassiliki Barbousi, Angeliki Spyropoulou, Varvara Georgopoulou, Antonia Mertiri, Maria Mikedaki, Kostoula Kaloudi, Eleni Papalexidou, Eftychios Pyrovolakis). At 10.30 am AP met with 14 undergraduate students and at 11.30 am with six alumni of the Department. At 12.45 AP were given a tour of the Departmental facilities (classrooms, lecture halls, library, and other facilities as well as the proposed new building of the Department). After lunch, AP met with 10 employees, social partners and other shareholders. At 4 pm AP met again with OMEA and MODIP representatives and this final meeting ended with a few short provisional statements made by the AP members about some of their key findings.

III. Study Programme Profile

AP was given an overview about the history of the Department of Theatre and in-depth presentations about some of its functions. AP learned that the Department was founded in 2003, as part of the Faculty of Fine Arts of the University of Peloponnese, and is the youngest in the country. The Department offers two pathways of study, theoretical and practical. The Department consists of 14 tenure or tenure-track members, 8 special and laboratorial members, 2 technical staff members, and its overall strategic goal is to promote and provide education in the theory, practice and pedagogy of theatre.

AP was briefed around the key strengths and weaknesses of the Department's operations and infrastructure. The following issues were introduced: relations with other institutions such as the Athens Festival and the Center for Hellenic Studies (Harvard University); the Epidaurus Lyceum (and International Summer School of Ancient Drama); the general characteristics of the programme of study; the challenges around staff-student ratios; the framework of required, specialized, optional courses; links with alumni; problems around the collection of student evaluation questionnaires; the strengths of the Erasmus programme; the benefits of the 2014 Evaluation Report to the Department (e.g. changes to the programme of studies and increase in non-temporary teaching staff); the prospect of a new Department in Performing and Digital Arts as part of the Faculty of Fine Arts; and the merits of the accreditation exercise for departmental self-reflection.

AP was informed that, in recent years, the recommendations made by the 2014 Evaluation Panel in their report were fruitful in three major ways: first, in terms of securing employment of staff initially hired on temporary contracts; second, in terms of allowing the Department to hire experts in the field; third, in terms of redesigning the Programme and reducing the number of modules taught.

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

The Department of Theatre Studies at the University of Peloponnese has a well-defined quality assurance policy for its programme. The relevant document (Accreditation Policy for Internal Quality Assurance, dated 19 October 2018, 2nd edition) covers a range of areas that show commitment to continuous improvement, and provides evidence of all applicable requirements. The document addresses all areas of QA strategy, KPIs, IQAS, and their operating policy.

The quality assurance policy is communicated to all members of the department via departmental website (<http://ts.uop.gr/gr/tmim/politiki-poiotitas>) and electronic means (e-mail). All relevant information is thus easily and publicly accessible to all stakeholders as well as to members of the public.

Continuous improvement is promoted through the following three key strategic aims (KPI's):

- 1) Education/Teaching
- 2) Research
- 3) Continuous education (lifelong learning)

These areas involve the following twelve areas of focus:

- 1) Institutional activities to ensure QA policies are met
- 2) Teaching staff and human resources
- 3) Student issues
- 4) Infrastructure
- 5) Under-graduate studies programme
- 6) Post-graduate programme
- 7) Research and publishing activities of the Department
- 8) Development of life-long and continuous learning programmes
- 9) Support the co-operation and engagement with local community
- 10) Linking and collaboration with other University departments in Greece and abroad
- 11) Contribution to the cultural and artistic development of the local community
- 12) To increase the number of graduates in the workforce.

Implementation of QA relies on two organizational committees, QUA/MODIP and the Internal Evaluation Groups (IEGs/OMEA), as well as the Senate.

Quality assurance is achieved through the re-alignment of the mission of the Department to the above KPIs. This is mainly supported by the distinct educational identity of the Department which:

- encourages research in teaching through innovative courses that utilize new findings
- encourages interdisciplinary work through the collaborative work of the faculty and external stakeholders
- develops collaborations with other universities, research bodies, established researchers
- equips students with the necessary skills to pursue postgraduate studies

The QA policies and procedures have proved to be useful to the Department in improving communication and implementing more effective procedures.

Panel judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

AP found the Department in full compliance with HQA requirements.

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 Department of Theatre Studies aims to provide both theoretical and practical skills. Undergraduates can specialize from the 3rd year of study either in theatre theory or theatre practice. Students are required to either complete 52 compulsory, electives, and specialized modules or 48 compulsory, electives, and specialized elective modules. The Student Guide is comprehensive and provides a clear allocation of taught modules and ECTS credits for the entire four-year programme.

The Department's programme for the undergraduate degree totals 240 ECTS (30 ECTS per semester) and is similar to comparable programmes in other European Universities. In this Department, students are required to choose their pathway in their third year of study. The degree equips students to pursue a career in either a practical path in stage direction, acting, set, lighting and costume design or a theoretical path in playwriting, criticism, and teaching, or to pursue postgraduate research. AP was able to see that the programme has taken on board the

growing needs for a practical direction within theatre studies, and that the Department welcomes students who already have a Drama School Certificate (Diploma) who seek an additional degree in theatre studies. It is advantageous for the Department that certain modules are offered in English as this motivates students to develop their language skills. The Department has a robust mechanism for the design and approval of teaching-related matters based on regular meetings where teaching staff and students have the opportunity to reflect, assess, and modify the existing curriculum.

AP was pleased to find that the Department maintains connections with other educational institutions and organizations that allow its students to gain valuable work-experience through internships. These include the local primary and secondary Schools of the Argolis prefecture, Theatre organizations like the Piraeus Municipal Theatre, the National Theatre in Athens, the Benaki Museum, and many other independent and not for profit organizations within the Argolis prefecture, as well as in Athens and beyond. Of particular note is the Department’s collaboration with the Epidaurus Lyceum (International Summer School of Ancient Drama), now officially part of the Athens and Epidaurus Festival annually. It offers a unique opportunity for the students of the Department to work directly with a large organization at this level. Workshops are offered to students as well as the opportunity to perform their own work. So far these have included practical and specialized workshops from distinguished international and Greek visiting scholars from the world of theatre and performance (e.g. Theodoros Terzopoulos and the Attis Theatre). Another notable collaboration is with the Harvard Center for Hellenic Studies at Nafplion. This collaboration offers exchange and study opportunities for students and academic staff to conduct research utilizing the facilities and the digital library of the Harvard Center for Hellenic Studies. The Erasmus Exchange Programme is a very active part of the curriculum, which also provides students the opportunity to travel and study abroad.

Panel judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

AP found the Department in full compliance with HQA requirements. The Department is in the process of signing a Memorandum of Understanding for a number of collaborations with external stakeholders. This is an excellent practice and AP would recommend that the Department adopts it more systematically.

Principle 3: Student- centered 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 Department has a variety of teaching methods, many of which are student-centered and provide opportunities for different types of learning. AP was able to determine that there were many examples of good practices in this area. For instance, the module "Theatre Practice" which is on the Practical Pathway is taught using both theoretical and practical components. Students work both collaboratively and individually for this module. They are asked to form smaller groups to discuss the research and production results of a theatrical ensemble. At the end, students

present their work in the context of the local festival at Nafplion (“Festivalaki”) which was established through the Department’s initiative. They are also asked to submit a portfolio of their research and other materials to be assessed on an individual basis. A lot of exciting work in this area is accessible via short video documentation on YouTube.

As part of the Erasmus Exchange programme, the Department offers the module “Interdisciplinary Approaches to Ancient Greek Drama” in English. The module is co-taught by 3 academic staff members who take their students to the numerous archaeological sites of the region.

Academic staff have pointed out that they have tailored their educational and research activities to the specific needs of the course of study, with a special focus on topics related to ancient Greek drama, Modern Greek drama, and international drama. Academic staff and support teams also pointed out that the activity of drafting the material in preparation for the QA exercise was an excellent opportunity for self-analysis and reflection. Their commitment to undertaking the exercise provided them with a good platform for self-assessment and for establishing an operational framework within EU guidelines.

A minor weakness was identified, namely the limited participation of students in student satisfaction surveys. As it was discussed, much feedback is provided verbally and through informal channels, rather than through surveys conducted via the electronic portal. A better balance between the two methods should be sought if the Department is to be able to document, analyze and communicate relevant data.

AP could not find a formal regulation for student appeals in the Student Guide. Unless AP has somehow missed the relevant information, a provision must be made for the student appeal process in the Guide at the departmental level.

Panel judgement

| Principle 3: Student- centered Learning, Teaching an Assessment | |
|--|----------|
| Fully compliant | |
| Substantially compliant | X |
| Partially compliant | |
| Non-compliant | |

Panel Recommendations

AP found the Department substantially compliant with HQA requirements. However, there are two minor issues that need the attention of the academic teaching staff. First, as far as student satisfaction surveys are concerned, the Department should provide a mentorship scheme at Undergraduate level to encourage more students to complete the online survey. Such a scheme could have other benefits as well. Alumni input on this matter could also help change the attitude of the undergraduate students about taking the student satisfaction surveys online. Second, as far as student appeals are concerned, if the University already has a formal procedure in place, AP would recommend that this procedure is also spelled out in the Departmental Study Guide.

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

The Department's programme of studies is on a par with other comparable European undergraduate four-year programmes of studies. Procedures concerning the award and certification of the degree, the duration of studies, rules ensuring students progression, terms and conditions for student mobility are all based on clearly defined regulations. Upon graduation, students receive documentation listing the qualifications earned, including the level, content, and status in their field of study.

The Programme of Theatre Studies consists of compulsory modules, specialization elective modules and free elective modules. Additionally, there is the Final-Year Dissertation which corresponds to 4 elective modules. Students are required to either take a total of 52 modules or 48 modules plus the Final Year Dissertation (Thesis). Those students who opt out of a Final-Year Dissertation are required to pass 52 modules in total. In the third and fourth years, students are expected to undertake "practical training", which is organized in collaboration with cultural or educational institutions outside the university. Practical training is equivalent to two (2) elective modules and corresponds to ten (10) ECTS credits. A lot of guidance is provided to the students through the Student Manual and online (<http://ts.uop.gr/gr/fititika/egxeiridio-foititi>) regarding the external partners for the Practical Course.

Admission to the programme is carried out either through the Panhellenic exams for entry to Higher Education or through placement exams. The placement exams are for students who come from Schools of Dramatic Arts or who have an undergraduate degree from another discipline. First-year students are introduced to the structure of the curriculum and the modules that are

taught through a welcome presentation and induction workshop. AP was pleased to see that the student manual offers all the necessary links, telephone numbers and contact details for student support such as administrative services, free meals, lodging, ID cards and transportation passes (<http://ts.uop.gr/gr/fititika/egxeiridio-foititi>).

The final year includes two types of assessment to ensure each student’s degree of progress: 1) A 10,000-word theoretical thesis; or 2) a 5,000 word thesis along with a major practical project which requires a public performance. The requirements for both the thesis and the final-year project are clearly defined in the Student Guide. AP considered this to be a good practice for assessing a student’s progress in the programme. The public nature of the final-year project motivates the students to pass the exam by producing high-quality work. As mentioned above, AP was provided with samples of relevant portfolios and videos (e.g., Festivalaki) uploaded on the YouTube channel.

Panel judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

AP found the Department in full compliance with HQA requirements. However, AP has identified three areas where the Department may wish to rethink its practices and procedures. First, currently the Diploma Supplement appears to be issued only after request. It would make sense that it be issued automatically. Second, currently there is no Thesis Handbook as such. Although there is a clear set of quantitative and qualitative requirements in place (and evidence that the requirements are clearly met in the samples of dissertations and portfolios inspected), it may be worth considering a more formal approach to this important step in the students’ education. Third, the Department should consider the possibility of reducing the overall number of optional modules in order to make the teaching staff workloads more manageable and to allow them more time for research and outreach activities.

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

AP concluded that the quality of the academic teaching staff is exceptionally high, and there is a high level of expertise both for theory and practice. Teaching staff come from either strictly academic background (theory) or professional backgrounds (practitioners/artists that are active in theatre). Their profiles and CVs are available online (<http://ts.uop.gr/gr/dinamiko/didaktiko>).

Recruitment and opportunities for the professional development of teaching staff are of the appropriate standard. Teaching mobility is demonstrated through opportunities for research leave, collaboration with local, national and international institutions and organizations, and involvement in the management of different aspects of the Department. AP commended the active Erasmus exchanges of the teaching staff and the theatrical productions that they had carried out- such as the translation of a work by Shelley, of constructive relations with the Municipality of Nafplion, and of the various educational activities they held in the prison of Nafplion.

The programme has three directions which all reflect the research areas of expertise of its teaching staff: theatre theory, practice and pedagogy. Research-led teaching is the norm, rather than the exception, and it is evident in all three areas. A good sample of publications of research projects was on display during AP's visit to the Department.

The teaching workload comes across as heavy but manageable, transparent, and fair. The majority of teaching reflects the research expertise and priorities of staff members. Teaching staff are evaluated regularly through surveys but also in other ways, including face-to-face communication and discussion of issues through student representatives and meetings of the Department's various committees.

Panel judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

AP found the Department in full compliance with HQA requirements.

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

AP concluded that the teaching staff and administrative team, librarians and technicians are the greatest asset of the Department. They ensure the smooth running of the Department with their enthusiasm and commitment. AP was impressed by the small but well-organized undergraduate library which appears to be used by both students and teaching staff.

AP was given a guided tour of the departmental facilities, including buildings marked for renovation and upgrading for future use. The Department's material infrastructure and support are its greatest weakness because they do not enhance its daily operations and could negatively affect its future development:

(a) Classrooms, rehearsal rooms, lecture halls, etc. are limited and scattered in different locations within walking distance around the city. Their usage is heavy, but AP concluded that these spaces are barely adequate for the day-to-day running of the Department and for its development. However, the programme rents extra space for the acting and directing classes, a scenography room, and staff offices. All of them are located two city blocks away from the main teaching building and meet the current educational requirements of the Programme. In addition, the Ministry of Labor has granted to the

programme the free use of four new rooms and one amphitheater in one of the state-owned buildings in Nafplio for fifteen years. AP is convinced that the relocation of the programme to one building (the tobacco storehouse) in the near future will solve most of the programme's needs for extra space.

(b) The cultural venues (such as the Trianon Theatre) to which the Department has access for its many artistic and research activities are also very limited and in dire need of upgrading.

(c) Educational and technical equipment is also limited - this is particularly acute when it comes to the practical aspects of the programme. A larger budget would allow teaching staff and students to be more ambitious. AP also noted the lack of free wireless internet (such as eduroam).

(d) Another area where there is room for improvement has to do with dormitories and similar facilities which are very limited and inadequate for students in need. However, the lack of student lodging for the use of low income students is a university-wide problem and it is not a problem specific to this programme. The Greek state provides eligible students of low income with a yearly allowance of 1000 euros towards their rent; and the National Scholarship Fund (IKY) offers an annual grant of 3,400 euros for nine months to diligent and low-income students. In addition, free meals are provided to all eligible low-income students and the in-coming Erasmus students.

(e) The overall budget of the Department is extremely low and limiting for its needs.

Panel judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

AP found that the overall budget is inadequate for the smooth running of the Department. There appear to be bureaucratic procedures in place that make funding cumbersome and dysfunctional. A holistic approach is needed on the issue of space as it affects all aspects of the daily life and future development of the Department, from teaching and research to outreach and the well-being of students. AP is of the opinion that, on this wide-ranging issue, decisive and concrete progress needs to be made as a matter of urgency. For instance, AP would expect:

- (a) a specific and realistic timeframe to be set out for relocating the Department to an upgraded and fully functional new building.
- (b) the issue of student lodging to be addressed in ways that will immediately ease the financial pressure that is on low-income students.
- (c) all relevant planning to be communicated to all parties concerned both within the Department and beyond in a timely manner.

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

AP saw evidence that the Department operates an information system for collecting and analyzing data concerning students, faculty, modules, teaching, and service to the students and the academic community (Data collection and analysis, Annual Reports, 2015-16, 2016-17). The data collected is easily accessible through the internal reports circulated in the Department. In addition to data collecting surveys, the Department has other mechanisms for the systematic collection and analysis of information including direct face-to-face communication and discussion.

The student satisfaction surveys are conducted regularly at the end of each semester. The former hard-copy surveys have been replaced by online surveys (E-class). The low percentage of students responding to these surveys is a matter of concern. AP has identified two reasons why student participation is low: (a) students prefer direct face-to-face communication with teaching staff for feedback; and (b) students find the process of logging in on the departmental website and taking the survey to be cumbersome, time-consuming, and ultimately pointless. Despite the low number of responses, the information obtained from the student satisfaction surveys is always

analyzed by the appropriate faculty committee, and the results are communicated to the teaching staff. After discussion with the academic staff, AP found evidence that the results of the student satisfaction surveys are incorporated into the General Committee discussions and are further utilized to improve both the quality of the modules and the quality of teaching. Additional data are collected and evaluated concerning the availability and accessibility of resources- such as equipment and IT facilities- in ways that allow interpretation and comparison through proper presentation of the facts.

Panel judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

AP found the Department in full compliance with HQA requirements. However, the Department should consider (a) pursuing a more in-depth analysis of the collected data through the use of graphs; (b) formalizing the mentoring of the undergraduate students by advising them in all matters, including the option available to them for completing the student satisfaction surveys; (c) developing further links between informal but effective mechanisms for the collection of data currently in place and the increased prioritization of graphs and other IT-related types of information; (d) adding ISSN and doi identifiers to the peer-reviewed journal *Theatre Polis* in order to be catalogued in print and online databases.

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

AP found that the website of the Department is well structured, clear, concise, and user friendly. All information is made public. AP attests to the fact that key information about the Department is available online. The departmental website provides information about the structure of its program, the qualifications of its faculty, the criteria used for assessing the work of its students, the degrees awarded, etc. All module outlines are complete and available online. The Policy for Quality Assurance is also available online (<http://ts.uop.gr/gr/>). The website is both in Greek and English (<http://ts.uop.gr/en/gr/>). Further it provides all the relevant information regarding the Erasmus Scheme (<http://ts.uop.gr/en/gr/erasmus>) and is an excellent first port of call for anyone who wishes to undertake Erasmus at the Department. The main website offers further links to e-class (<https://eclass.uop.gr/>), making it very easy to access all the necessary information which is related to teaching modules, assessment, calendar, and exams.

Panel judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

AP found the Department in full compliance with HQA requirements. However, AP notes that the policy for quality assurance of the Department is available only in Greek. It would be advisable to provide a translation (or least a synopsis) of the policy in English.

Principle 9: Ongoing 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

Regular monitoring and review of study programmes contribute positively to improving the level of educational provision and creating a favorable and effective learning environment. Students are actively involved in expressing their point of view through available venues such as online questionnaires. The teachers have worked hard to make their educational programme responsive to the role of theater in the social, pedagogical, cultural and public spheres. Their strategic choices have enhanced the quality of their educational programmes and prepared their students to become more competitive in meeting the needs of the labor market.

The outcomes of the self-assessment are recorded and submitted to the QAU/ MODIP of the Department for further analysis and implementation. The General Assembly is responsible for assessing the work of the 12 area committees and it is its responsibility to determine, communicate, and oversee the implementation of relevant action plans. It is through discussion in the General Assembly that annual reviews take place in the presence of both the academic staff and the student representatives (both undergraduate and postgraduate).

The module outlines (which are available online in a 604-page document) reflect all the areas of expertise offered by the academic staff of the Department and include the exam codes, number of credits, the type of assessment (mandatory or optional), and the corresponding e-class

address. They also explain which modules can be taken by ERASMUS students. Furthermore, the objectives and expected results are indicated. The teaching modules and bibliographic support that are required to integrate the information received during the lessons are described in a clear and concise manner. The applied teaching methods, the organization of the timetable, the procedures for the assessment of the course by the students are also detailed. The basic bibliography and the methods of evaluation of the students are also indicated.

The contents of the modules demonstrate attention to the most recent artistic and scholarly trends in theatrical production. In most cases, the modules also pay attention to the changing needs of society. They require a manageable workload for the students, and generally allow for the progression and maturation of the students.

Panel judgement

| Principle 9: Ongoing Monitoring and Periodic Internal Review of Programmes | |
|--|----------|
| Fully compliant | X |
| Substantially compliant | |
| Partially compliant | |
| Non-compliant | |

Panel Recommendations

AP found the Department in full compliance with HQA requirements. Although the procedures for assessing students are explicitly indicated, AP recommends that, in cases where the number of students is not very high, the Department should introduce oral examinations to allow students to display the necessary linguistic skills required by the labor market.

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 administrating 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 programme of study follows closely the guidelines proposed by HQA, utilizing the expertise of the teaching staff and addressing the pedagogical and broader cultural needs of Nafplion and the region, while also engaging with the most recent national and international cultural and socio-economic developments.

The Department of Theatre has undergone an external evaluation in 2014 which was in compliance with HQA as well as the accreditation process carried out by the current AP in 2019. Much has changed for the better since the last evaluation report in 2014 when the teething problems of a new department met the broader issues of the Greek economic crisis and created an adverse working environment. AP saw evidence of greater confidence (including participation in larger research projects such as CREARCH, ARGOS, ARIADNE, mPPACT, EPEAEK II) and promise for further successful development for the Department within the university.

AP can attest that the Department's academic staff are aware of the importance of the internal and external reviews and their contribution to the improvement of the Department's national and international profile. AP is not aware if the Department has recently undergone any external reviews by agencies other than HQA. However, the ongoing collaboration with local, national, and international stakeholders and the enthusiastic feedback that some of them have provided as part of AP's visit are particularly encouraging.

Panel judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

AP found the Department in full compliance with HQA requirements. However, AP suggests that the existing informal channels of planning with shareholders can become more standardized in Memoranda of Understanding.

PART C: CONCLUSIONS

I. Features of Good Practice

AP has identified the following as good practice in the Department:

- excellent collaboration across teaching staff, students, and administrative staff (librarians, technicians, secretarial support)
- commitment to achieve and improve teaching and research standards
- well-developed network of stakeholders locally, nationally and internationally
- effective balance between theoretical and practical research and teaching

The teaching staff have a great work ethic and a solid understanding of the educational and social importance of theater. As a consequence, they strive to bring their professional activity to the local community and to give an international dimension to their work which is equivalent to that of many of their European counterparts. For example, in April 2019 some of the academic staff of the University of Peloponnese participated in an international meeting on *Humanities and Arts: Creative Industries and Cultural Democracy* which was held at the Byzantine Museum of Athens and was also attended by colleagues of the Universities of Macerata, Southampton, Birmingham, Edinburgh, Manchester and other international research centers.

It is notable that, alongside the local council involvement, there is now a longer list of external stakeholders at local, national and international level, both private and public, including the Harvard Hellenic School in Nafplion, the annual Athens and Epidaurus Festival (extending to the Lyceum of Epidaurus), as well as local primary and secondary schools. The Department of Theatre studies is also involved in assisting with educational activities at the prison of Nafplion. As a further example of internationalization, the Department has formed partnerships with institutions, stakeholders and students in China. During AP's stay in Nafplion, there was an interesting activity ("Experience the essence of Chinese Culture") which was presented by Miao Bin, a postgraduate student in the Department, and representative of China Study in Greece.

The Department has a remarkable list of public events and public performances. Apart from the students, these also attract other participants (such as "lifelong learners") who are auditing individual modules. Some initiatives, which are held regularly in collaboration with other institutions at local, national and international level, could be included in specific memoranda of understanding, which could allow the Department to benefit from more consistent support in terms of scientific and economic synergies.

AP feels that the Department's energies are effectively channeled to address contemporary issues such as immigration and integration. Other initiatives demonstrate the central role that the Department plays in creating awareness of Nafplion's recent history, culture and architecture

(e.g. Venetian domination, Evangelia Protonotariou-Deilaki) and of the region's mythological significance. The Department in this way offers a cultural alternative to the mass tourism of the region and of Nafplion.

II. Areas of Weakness

AP has identified the following issues as areas of weakness:

- infrastructure (buildings including classrooms, rehearsal rooms, staff offices, student dormitories, Wi-Fi, etc) needs to be brought up to par as soon as possible in order to maximize the programme's great potential
- bureaucratic delays in large-scale decision-making processes that undermine the smooth operation of the Department
- *Theatre Polis*, the current publication of the Department, needs improvement in order to be officially catalogued and published as an academic journal.
- the lack of participation in student satisfaction surveys impedes the systematic assessment of modules and their teacher
- collection and analysis of data needs to be more systematized

III. Recommendations for Follow-up Actions

Recommendations for follow-up actions that would address the weakness listed above have been made throughout this report. However, AP repeats these recommendations for follow-up actions here.

- 1) AP would recommend that the Department continue to sign Memoranda of Understanding with external stakeholders, but it should do so more systematically and more formally by standardizing the process.
- 2) AP would recommend that the student appeals procedure be also spelled out in the Departmental Study Guide assuming that the University of Peloponnese already has a formal student appeals procedure in place.
- 3) AP would recommend that the Diploma Supplement be issued automatically instead of only after request.
- 4) AP would recommend that the Department create a Thesis Handbook (online or in print) for the students, even though there is already a clear set of quantitative and qualitative requirements in place.
- 5) AP would recommend that the Department consider the possibility of reducing the overall number of optional modules in order to make the teaching staff workloads more manageable and to allow them more time for research and outreach activities.
- 6) AP would recommend that the Department be given a larger annual budget for the smooth running of the theoretical and practical aspects of its curriculum.

- 7) AP would recommend that a specific and realistic timeframe be set out for relocating the Department to an upgraded and fully functional new building, and that all relevant planning be communicated to all parties concerned within the Department and beyond in a timely manner.
- 8) AP would recommend that the issue of student lodging be addressed in ways that will immediately ease the financial pressure that is on low-income students.
- 9) AP would recommend that the Department consider formalizing the mentoring of the undergraduate students by advising them and encouraging them in all matters, including the option that is made available to them for completing the student satisfaction surveys.
- 10) AP would recommend that the Department consider developing clearer connections between the collection and the interpretation of data – i.e., between the formal use of graphs (including other IT-related formats) for the interpretation of data and the use of informal (but effective) mechanisms that are currently in place for the collection of data. A more in-depth analysis of the collected data is strongly recommended.
- 11) AP would recommend that the Department consider adding ISSN and doi identifiers to the peer-reviewed journal *Theatre Polis* in order to be catalogued in print and online databases.
- 12) AP would recommend that the Department consider providing a translation (or at least a synopsis) of the policy for quality assurance of the Department in English. The policy is currently available only in Greek.
- 13) AP would recommend that, in cases where the number of students is not very high, the Department consider introducing oral exams, in addition to the student assessment procedures which are already explicitly indicated, in order to allow students to display the necessary linguistic skills required by the labor market.

IV. Summary & Overall Assessment

The Principles where full compliance has been achieved are: **1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9 and 10**

The Principles where substantial compliance has been achieved are: **3 and 6**

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 | |

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