ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ
HELLENIC REPUBLIC

Εθνική Αρχή
Ανώτατης Εκπαίδευσης
Hellenic Authority
for Higher Education

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ΑΠΟΦΑΣΗ ΠΙΣΤΟΠΟΙΗΣΗΣ

Το Συμβούλιο Αξιολόγησης και Πιστοποίησης της Εθνικής Αρχής Ανώτατης Εκπαίδευσης (ΕΘΑΑΕ)

Έχοντας υπόψη:

1. Τις διατάξεις του Ν. 4653/2020 (ΦΕΚ 12/Α΄/24-01-2020) «Εθνική Αρχή Ανώτατης Εκπαίδευσης. Ειδικοί Λογαριασμοί Κονδυλίων Έρευνας Ανώτατων Εκπαιδευτικών Ιδρυμάτων, Ερευνητικών και Τεχνολογικών Φορέων και άλλες Διατάξεις», όπως ισχύει.

2. Την υπ΄ αριθμ. 18135/Ζ1/7-2-2020 Απόφαση της Υπουργού Παιδείας και Θρησκευμάτων (ΦΕΚ 94/τεύχος ΥΟΔΔ/7-2-2020), περί διορισμού του Προέδρου του Ανώτατου Συμβουλίου της Εθνικής Αρχής Ανώτατης Εκπαίδευσης (ΕΘΑΑΕ).

3. Την υπ΄ αριθμ. 16384/Ζ1/15-2-2024 απόφαση του Υπουργού Παιδείας, Θρησκευμάτων και Αθλητισμού (ΦΕΚ 137/τεύχος ΥΟΔΔ/19-2-2024), περί παράτασης της θητείας του Προέδρου του Ανώτατου Συμβουλίου της Εθνικής Αρχής Ανώτατης Εκπαίδευσης (ΕΘΑΑΕ).

4. Την υπ΄ αριθμ. 88986/Ζ1/1.08.2024 απόφαση του Υπουργού Παιδείας, Θρησκευμάτων και Αθλητισμού (ΦΕΚ 846/Υ.Ο.Δ.Δ/7.8.2024) περί της ανανέωσης της θητείας του Προέδρου του Ανώτατου Συμβουλίου της Εθνικής Αρχής Ανώτατης Εκπαίδευσης (ΕΘ.Α.Α.Ε.).

5. Την υπ΄ αριθμ. 15650/23-04-2020 Απόφαση του Προέδρου της ΕΘΑΑΕ (ΦΕΚ 329/τ.΄ ΥΟΔΔ/04-05-2020) «Ορισμός των μελών του Συμβουλίου Αξιολόγησης και Πιστοποίησης (ΣΑΠ) της Εθνικής Αρχής Ανώτατης Εκπαίδευσης (ΕΘΑΑΕ)», όπως ισχύει.

6. Την υπ΄ αριθμ. 45087/31-07-2024 Έκθεση Πιστοποίησης της Επιτροπής Εξωτερικής Αξιολόγησης & Πιστοποίησης του ΠΜΣ Εφαρμοσμένη Κινησιολογία στις Ένοπλες Δυνάμεις και τα Σώματα Ασφαλείας του Πανεπιστημίου Θεσσαλίας.

7. Την 42η/12-09-2024 συνεδρίαση του Συμβουλίου Αξιολόγησης και Πιστοποίησης, θέμα 2 «Έγκριση εκθέσεων πιστοποίησης ΠΠΣ – Χορήγηση πιστοποίησης».

ΠΙΣΤΟΠΟΙΕΙ ΟΤΙ

το Πρόγραμμα Μεταπτυχιακών Σπουδών

**Εφαρμοσμένη Κινησιολογία στις Ένοπλες Δυνάμεις και τα Σώματα Ασφαλείας
του Πανεπιστημίου Θεσσαλίας**

συμμορφώνεται πλήρως με τις αρχές του Προτύπου Ποιότητας για την Πιστοποίηση των Προγραμμάτων Μεταπτυχιακών Σπουδών της ΕΘΑΑΕ και τις Αρχές και Κατευθυντήριες Οδηγίες για τη Διασφάλιση Ποιότητας στον Ευρωπαϊκό Χώρο Ανώτατης Εκπαίδευσης (ESG), για το επίπεδο σπουδών 7 του Εθνικού και Ευρωπαϊκού Πλαισίου Προσόντων.

Η διάρκεια ισχύος της πιστοποίησης ορίζεται για πέντε έτη, από 12-09-2024 έως 11-09-2029.

Ο Πρόεδρος της ΕΘΑΑΕ

Καθηγητής Περικλής Α. Μήτκας

ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ
HELLENIC REPUBLIC

Accreditation Report
for the Postgraduate Study Programme of:

Military Fitness & Wellbeing

Department of Physical Education & Sport Sciences
University of Thessaly
16 June 2024

Report of the Panel appointed by the HAHE to undertake the review of the Postgraduate Study Programme of **Military Fitness & Wellbeing** of the **University of Thessaly** for the purposes of granting accreditation.

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PART A: BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT OF THE REVIEW

I.   The External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel

The Panel responsible for the Accreditation Review of the postgraduate study programme of **Military Fitness & Wellbeing** of the **University of Thessaly** comprised the following five (4) members, drawn from the HAHE Register, in accordance with Laws 4009/2011 & 4653/2020:

1. **Prof. Ktistakis Nicholas (Chair)**
   Babraham Institute, Cambridge UK

2. **Prof. Soultanas Panagiotis**
   University of Nottingham, UK

3. **Prof. Panayiotou George**
   European University Cyprus, Cyprus

4. **Ms Tzimogianni Valentini PhD candidate**
   School of Medicine, University of Patras, Greece

II.   Review Procedure and Documentation

Prior to the online visit, the assessment panel (AP) received from the Post Graduate Study Programme (PSP) a long list of documents that contain the proposal for accreditation, information on student and faculty characteristics, aims of the PSP and examples of course assignments etc. Overall, the AP notes that these documents were sufficient in number and quality to proceed with the accreditation.

Meetings and discussions were held online on 11/06 and 12/06 2024.

11/06/2024

15:00-16:00 The AP met privately to discuss the PSP and to distribute the load of writing the report (different members were the lead for the different principles)

16:00-17:00 The AP met with the head of the Department Professor Nikos Digelidis, head of the PSP, Professor Andreas Flouris, as well as MODIP staff/members: Prof. Nikolaos Strimpakos (MODIP member), MODIP Coordinator Ms Eleni Tsironi, and MODIP staff member Ms Dimitra Manou. From OMEA in attendance were Professor Athanasios Papaioannou and Professor Ioannis Theodorakis. In attendance were also the members of the PSP steering committee Professor Athanasios Tziamourtas and Professor Ioannis Giakas.

17:00-17:30 At the end of the meeting with the leadership of the department and PSP, the AP met privately to discuss first impressions of the presentations and the ensuing discussions.

12/06/2024

15:00-15:45. Meeting with faculty of the PSP as follows: Professor Panagiotis Tsaklis, Professor Christina Karatzaferi, Associate Professor Giorgos Sakkas, Assistant Professor Konstantinos Sotiropoulos, Assistant Professor Athanasios Mouratidis, Assistant Professor Chariklia Deli and Assistant Professor Dimitrios Draganidis. During this meeting, the AP discussed with the faculty their impressions of the PSP, how the syllabus is decided, what is the motivating factor for them to teach in the programme and how this affects their professional development.

16:00-16:45. Meeting with 4 students of the PSP, all of them connecting to the meeting remotely (outside of the department). The objective of the discussion was to hear how the students feel about the PSP, what are potentially strong and weak points, their relationship with the faculty and the time it normally takes to finish the PSP. The AP would have liked to see a larger representative group of the student body.

17:00-17:30. Meeting with Professor Flouris, Professor Tsaklis, Associate Professor Sakkas and Assistant Professor Draganis to discuss the facilities of the PSP in conjunction with a video that had been prepared before. The AP spent the majority of the time finding out the consequences of the storm Daniel that had struck the region previously, which caused massive damage to some of the facilities of the PSP, and how the programme tried to cope with this disaster.

18:00-18:45. Meeting with graduates of the programme as follows: Giorgos Papaggelis (Hellenic Armed Forces staff), Ioanna Fliouka, Hellenic Armed Forces staff, Spiros Zamantzas, doctoral researcher, Institute Josef Stefan, Slovenia, Stavros Petmezas, Hellenic Armed Forces

staff, Panagiotis Asimoglou, former Hellenic Police staff. Discussions centred around the experience of the graduates from the PSP, how the PSP helped them in their next professional steps, and what things they may want to see changed now that they see the PSP in hindsight.

19:00-19:45. Meeting with stakeholders (employers, social partners) of the PSP as follows: Vasilios Tzeremakis, representative from the Permanent Non-Commissioned Army Officers School, and Dimitrios Mitrenas, representative from the Hellenic Police. The objective of this meeting was to discuss with the stakeholders their impressions of the academic background of the graduates of the PSP and their employability, ways that the PSP can have continuous interactions with the armed forces and the police and finally what the armed forces and the police can do to make the PSP stronger.

20:00-20:30 The AP met privately to formulate a short summary of the feedback to be given to the officers of the PSP in the final session.

20:30-21:30 The AP met in conclusion with the head of department Professor Nikos Digelidis, the head of the PSP Professor Andreas Flouris, steering committee members Professor Athanasios Tziamourtas and Professor Ioannis Giakas, representing MODIP Professor Nikolaos Strimpakos, Ms Eleni Tsironi and Ms Dimitra Manou, and representing OMEA Professor Athanasios Papaioannou and Professor Ioannis Theodorakis. The AP thanked the PSP for a very good programme, presented some preliminary findings from the visit and clarified a few items that were unclear from the discussions and the submitted documents.

III.   Postgraduate Study Programme Profile

The PSP Military Fitness & Wellbeing (Greek title which is substantially different: Εφαρμοσμένη Κινησιολογία στις Ένοπλες Δυνάμεις και τα Σώματα Ασφαλείας) was established in 2014 and re-established in its current form in 2022. The main aim of the PSP is to equip members of the armed forces and the police with theoretical and practical knowledge pertaining to good physical condition and overall quality of life. As such, it is a unique PSP in Greece, and likely internationally.

The duration of studies is 3 semesters with an elective thesis element during the last semester. Historically, 20% of the students elect to do a thesis, while for the rest there exist several additional elective courses that they can take instead. Total tuition for the PSP is 3900 euros.

Students are admitted to the PSP on the basis of well-defined criteria which include a CV, proof of previous degree, certificate of English language knowledge, personal interview etc. On average, 50% of the students originate from the armed forces and police whereas the rest are graduates from departments of physical education and fitness in Thessaly and other parts of Greece. On the average, 14 people are admitted each year, mostly as many as they apply. Capacity for student admission is up to 30, with stated aim for at least 20 each year.

The faculty of this PSP is comprised of 24 members; most are part of the faculty of the Physical Education and Sport Science Department of the University whereas some others are external partners or faculty from other Departments/Universities.

The professional prospects of the graduates are primarily connected with a continuation of their career in the armed forces or the police, although there are some which elect to follow a private profession. In all cases, because of the reputation of the programme as well as its subject area and connection to government departments, prospects for the graduates have been historically excellent.

The language of the PSP is Greek, but some courses are given partly in English. In addition, when foreign students visit the PSP teaching is in English.

PART B: COMPLIANCE WITH THE PRINCIPLES

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

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

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

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

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

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

Documentation

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

Study Programme Compliance

I.   Findings

The Quality Assurance Policy and Quality Goal Setting at the PSP have been successfully developed and effectively communicated to all stakeholders. Aligned with the Institutional Quality Policy framework, these initiatives are dedicated to enhancing the curriculum and its

educational, research, and administrative performance. The objectives and quality indicators are meticulously defined, and their achievement indicators are realistic, reflecting the success of the current system.

The PSP staff members' extensive engagement with the PSP is a testament to their dedication and willingness to develop, implement, and optimise the PSP's Quality Assurance Policy. Their efforts have not gone unnoticed, as all objectives are being successfully accomplished, reflecting their commitment and competence.

Although effective and reasonable, the Quality Goal Setting at the PSP leaves room for further development. This could involve the addition of more Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) or introducing new Strategic Goals. Such expansion would ensure the high-quality delivery of instruction, the alignment of all Learning Outcomes (LOs), instructional approach and assessment format with the European and National Qualifications Framework (EQF and NQF) for Higher Education - level 7. Including a specific strategic objective regarding the PSP's societal contribution would also be beneficial, aligning with the academic institutions' mission.

II.   Analysis

Since the first year of its operation, an Internal Evaluation Group (IEG) committee has been established at the PSP, the main objectives of which are to conduct the evaluation process of the courses by the students, the preparation of the annual and quadrennial evaluation reports of the Department as well as the submission of annual evaluation reports to the Institution's Quality Assurance Unit (QAU). In particular, the objective of the QAU is to recommend to the competent bodies of the Department procedures for improving the quality of the education provided to students, to evaluate the level of the research process and the administration of the Department and the PSP, and to monitor the achievement of the SMART objectives set for the development of the Department and the PSP. It is the opinion of the SCE that the IEG could be more actively involved in assuring the quality of each course of the PSP in addition to students' evaluation. The IEG could be engaged in evaluating the design, delivery and evaluation of the courses' Learning Outcomes (Los) in compliance with the EQF and NQF – level 7 and in addition, it could support the avoidance of possible content overlapping.

Based on the content of the PSP's Quality Assurance Policy, it is clear that the policy is appropriate for the postgraduate level, demonstrating the suitability of the structure and organisation of postgraduate study programmes and includes a clear commitment of the academic unit towards its implementation and continuous improvement. The policy is published on the academic unit website and timely disseminated to the academic staff. The qualifications and expertise of the PSP's teaching staff are appropriate for the postgraduate level, and the level of demand for the graduates' qualifications in the labour market is successfully met. An efficient utilisation of the PSP's financial resources is evident, whereas an annual review and audit of the PSP's quality assurance system are taking place.

The main objectives of the PSP are related to continuous improvement of quality in education and research, the improvement of the quality of processes and services and working conditions, transparency at all levels, and promotion of the scientific work carried out in the

Department to society and the scientific community. The above-mentioned goals are approached through clearly defined Strategic Objectives which relate to the following:

Strategic Goal A. "Monitoring and improvement of the provided education".

The first Strategic Goal is approached through two Quality Objectives (QO), which relate to monitoring students' progress and performance (Quality Index A1: QI-A1) and recruiting students with a strong interest in the scope of study of the MSc (Quality Index A2: QI-A2). Concerning QI-A1, the increase in the frequency of meetings with Academic Advisors per academic semester from the current one (1) to two (2) per semester (KPI-A1.1) and the reduction of the percentage of graduates with a duration of >n+1 years from 30% to 10% were recorded as KPs (KPI-A1.2). About QI-A.2, the increase in the average number of applications to enrol in the programme from 20 to 30 is set as a KPI.

The AP feels that an increase in assessment activities within courses (e.g. mid-term exam, Laboratory Portfolio) could be introduced as an additional KPI so that student progress is not only assessed at the final exam. In this way, it is considered that the more effective acquisition of the LOs of each course will be supported. Moreover, the AP believes that increasing the number of applications from interested parties can be achieved by adopting a targeted promotion strategy with the assistance of specialised consultants. The possible option of offering the programme also in English, since it is the only one offered worldwide of its kind, provides a further perspective. Finally, the possible availability of the programme in a part-time format in addition to the full-time format currently in force (despite the time accommodations provided through the granting of extensions) is likely to remove various personal, professional, and geographical barriers that hinder a considerable number of interested individuals from joining the programme.

Strategic Goal B. "Strengthening research activities and the dissemination of scientific work".

The second strategic goal is approached through two QOs, which relate to increasing the research output (Quality Index B1: QI-B1) and enhancing the recognition of the research work produced (Quality Index B2: QI-B2). In relation to QI-B.1, the increase in the average number of scholarly publications per faculty member (Scopus / Google Scholar) (KPI-B1.1) from 69/114 to 72/117 was recorded as KPI. Concerning QI-B2, the increase in the average h index (Scopus / Google Scholar) from 29/34 to 30/35 (KPI B2.1), the increase in the average number of citations per faculty member (Scopus / Google Scholar) from 2012/3921 to 2050/4000 (KPI B2. 2), the increase in the ratio of the number of final dissertations completed / number of graduating students from 0.1 to 0.2 (KPI B2.3) and the increase in the average value of the h index (Google Scholar) from 24 to 25 (KPI B2.4).

Additional KPIs could consider the participation of PSP researchers in a certain number of high-level international research groups and the submission, coordination, and participation in local and internationally funded research projects (Horizon in particular). Recruitment of permanent technical laboratory staff in all the PSP laboratories is particularly important to successfully meeting and enhancing the current strategic goal. With regards to the average number of citations per faculty member (Google Scholar), the set target of 4000 citations (4754 until 16/06/2024) has already been reached so an adjustment is required.

Strategic Goal C. "Evaluation of courses".

The third Strategic Goal is approached through a quality objective to increase the number of students who evaluated the courses (Quality Index C1: QI-C1). Concerning QI-C1, the Key Performance Index recorded an increase in the percentage of responses in the total number of questionnaires sent in the courses assessed in the previous academic year from 50% to 70% (KPI C1.1).

The AP considers that additional actions can be introduced for course assessment. In particular, international academic practice includes further good practices concerning evaluating course instruction by peers and committees of teaching excellence, through which constructive feedback can be provided. This significantly contributes to improving teaching quality and better organisation of courses, particularly the setting up, delivery, and acquisition evaluation of appropriate LOs.

Strategic Goal D. "Strengthening Extroversion".

The fourth Strategic Goal is approached through a Quality Objective, which concerns the increased number of invited speakers (Quality Index D1: QI-D1). Concerning QI-C1, the rise in the average number of invited speakers per academic year from 8 to 12 is recorded as a KPI (KPI D1.1).

Given that students' mobility through Erasmus to international universities or other research centres is limited, the AP considers that inviting academic guests from abroad would further contribute to enhancing international extroversion and creating conditions for strengthening students' interest in moving abroad within the Erasmus network or expanding their studies at the doctoral level abroad.

A more structured and effective cooperation with the Military and Security forces can also enhance extroversion. In particular, during the discussion with the stakeholders, it became clear that there is a strong intention to facilitate students' internships in the military and security forces. At the same time, it was suggested that the Department's laboratory facilities be utilised by the Military and Security Forces to receive physical fitness and functional capacity assessment services. The above matches the students' demand for more field and laboratory applications since they could actively participate in these activities.

Moreover, the PSP Quality Agenda lacks three important key components to incorporate and accomplish as soon as possible. These relate to ensuring that learning outcomes and qualifications follow the European and National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education - level 7 (deviations have been identified in some courses) and that there is a clear and firm interconnection with the content and methodology of instruction, as well as the assessment format and content.

Also absent from the Quality Agenda is the objective of promoting the quality and effectiveness of instruction at the PSP through structured actions addressing compulsory induction and continuous vocational training in the instruction competence of academic staff and external collaborators.

Finally, the AP considers that "Service to the Community" should also be included in the PSP's Quality Agenda through specific initiatives and activities, as this constitutes one of the core pillars of the academic institutions' mission (in addition to excellence in teaching and research).

III.   Conclusions

A defined Quality Assurance Policy and Quality Measures (KPIs) for the PSP have been developed to cover the Institutional Quality Assurance Policy. The quality target and the degree of achievement of the KPIs are reasonable and appear to be achieved to an extremely satisfactory degree. The addition of further Strategic Goals and objectives and certain KPIs within the existing Objectives are deemed necessary to cover additional aspects of Quality and further enhance the PSP's overall quality level.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

- Collaborate with expert consultants to establish a solid promotion strategy for the PSP (in addition to the initiatives already being taken).
- A possible increase in the number of assessed activities within courses is considered to facilitate more effective monitoring of student progress. Potential inclusion of mid-term evaluation and other activities to suit the nature of each module (e.g. Laboratory Portfolio, Quizzes, case studies, Forums, etc).
- Promote the participation of each PSP researcher in a certain number of high-level international research groups.
- Consider expanding PSP funding opportunities, particularly through submission, coordination, and participation in local and internationally funded research projects.
- Consider the establishment of a framework for initial and continuous professional development of PSP staff, with an emphasis on advanced pedagogy and teaching methodology, as a strategic goal to further enhance the quality of instruction.
- Adopt international academic good practices regarding quality and excellence of teaching/ instruction promotion through peers and/ or a pertinent committee (e.g. IEG) evaluation in addition to students' evaluation.
- Establishment of a framework for supporting and monitoring the setting up, delivery and assessment of appropriate Learning Outcomes in all modules according to the European and National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education - level 7.
- Consider increasing the number of international visiting academic guests to promote the PSP's international extroversion and enhance students' international mobility.
- Expand the collaboration scheme with the military and Security Forces to include students' internships and expertise exchange (e.g., scientific support of military personnel with the participation of PSP students).
- Consider establishing a quality goal to promote community service within the PSP's academic operation framework.

PRINCIPLE 2: DESIGN AND APPROVAL OF POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES

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

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

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

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

In addition, the design of PSP must consider:

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

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

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

Study Programme Compliance

I.   Findings

The PSP was founded in 2013 (Gazette publication 1686/9-7-2013) and re-established in 2020 (Gazette publication 4693/23.10.2020) as a result of joint efforts between the School of Physical Education, Sports and Dietetics of the University of Thessaly and the School of Permanent Non-Commissioned Officers (NCOs), to meet the challenges of the current operational environment and to maximise the operational capability of Military and Security Forces personnel.

The orientation of the PSP is educational (acquisition of specialised knowledge), scientific (research and methodological resources) and professional (offering professional perspectives). The PSP aims to provide Military, Security Forces and civilian personnel with in-depth knowledge for the optimal physical fitness, performance and quality of life of Military and Security Forces personnel through an emphasis on the critical analysis of scientific practices used internationally for the graduates to be able to meet the challenges of the modern operational environment. It is structured in one (1) year and six (6) months (3 academic semesters), including courses and the possibility of a Thesis. The minimum completion period is 1 year and 6 months, and the total required credits (ECTS) is 90 ECTS. A possibility of temporary study suspension is provided, which cannot exceed two (2) consecutive semesters.

The PSP design, module distribution, and student load appear adequate and follow international practices.

The Learning Outcomes (LOs) of modules need to be partially revised to better correspond to level 7 according to the UNESCO ISCED-2011 code. At the same time, the coupling of the LOs with teaching and examination activities is not particularly evident. Some courses have no assignments, and many proposed textbooks seem outdated. The Study Guide and the Course Outlines are of a satisfactory standard and are available to students on time. There is a need to create and implement defined and detailed rubrics to evaluate the PSP's assignments, including the Thesis, which should be made available to students at the commencement of each module.

The PSP is staffed by permanent departmental faculty members, scientific collaborators, faculty members from other academic institutions, an emeritus professor and academic fellows. The majority have exceptional/excellent research portfolios related to the topics covered in the curriculum. For a few PSP staff members, there is room for further quality research engagement to attract further recognition of their scientific endeavours and to better connect postgraduate instruction with quality research. PSP staff academic and research activity is not entirely presented on the PSP's website, as in nearly half of the cases, a description in the PSP Staff section is missing. In other cases, a full CV is unavailable or not completely updated.

The PSP is offered with tuition fees and is the only one of its kind worldwide. Its structure and organisation are deemed adequate, but some concerns exist regarding possible overlapping with the content of undergraduate modules and LOs set-up, delivery and justification of achievement. Moreover, there is no obvious evidence of using rubrics in assessing and

articulating specific components and expectations for assignments. Most respondents, including students and graduates, show high satisfaction levels in most aspects of the PSP, with some concerns about laboratory experience and practical applications.

Finally, the PSP does not implement structured internships, which would contribute positively to adequately achieving the LOs.

II.   Analysis

The purpose of the PSP is (a) to train qualified Military / Security Forces and civil personnel to provide effective consultation on physical fitness and applied psychology for health promotion, (b) to develop a critical analysis of literature and research related to Military and Security Forces personnel and (c) cooperate with research, Military and Security Forces and social institutions in Greece and abroad. The PSP also aims to establish a framework for cooperation with universities abroad, to enhance the mobility of students and teaching staff, and to attract students and teaching staff from abroad.

Admission of students:

The Postgraduate Students Selection Committee (PSSC) evaluates and ranks applicants according to the points accumulated in the applications submitted by those candidates who meet the formal and substantive requirements. A non-credited interview process also takes place with each applicant. The General Assembly of the Department ratifies the decision taken by the PSSC. The number of students admitted to the PSP is a maximum of thirty (30) annually; on average, twelve to fourteen (12-14) people enrol in the PSP each year. Concerning the attraction of international academics and students, the AP does not expect that this objective is likely to be achieved due to the exclusive use of the Greek language in teaching in the PSP, whereas, as foreseen by the programme's re-establishment decision (Gazette publication 4693/23.10.2020), the English language of instruction could also be used if interested parties are available. Another possible limitation is that any efforts to attract students to the programme are restricted to the Greek territory without any targeted effort to attract foreign students being identified.

Admission requirements

Based on the studies regulation supplement, students' admission is based on specific criteria (Bachelor's degree grade: 30%, Undergraduate Thesis: 5%, Professional Experience:15%, Scientific publications: 15%, Presentations in Scientific conferences: 15%, Participation in Research Projects or professional experience: 10% Certified knowledge of English language (Lower or equivalent) 6%). Additional credits are provided in case of a second degree: 15% and/or Postgraduate degree: 30% possession. A credit mistake exists as the admission criteria weight does not sum up to 100% (both in the studies regulation supplement and on the PSP website). In any case, the admission criteria are considered comprehensive, with the only remark that proficiency in English should perhaps be a prerequisite instead of just being a graded criterion.

Successful completion of the PSP

To complete the PSP, the student must have completed all the modules and presented the Master's Thesis or succeeded in four (4) elective courses. The total number of ECTS required for the Postgraduate Diploma of Specialisation award is nineteen (90).

Design of the PSP

The PSP design, module distribution, and student load appear adequate and follow international practices. The PSP consists of eighteen (18) courses (3 major and 15 electives), and the degree is awarded based on eight (8) courses (3 major and 5 electives) and a postgraduate thesis, or twelve (12) courses (3 major and 9 electives). The courses of the PSP are divided into three (3) semesters of study of thirty (30) ECTS each. During the first two (2) semesters, ECTS credits are obtained by attending and completing courses (4 each semester), whereas two (2) options are available for the third (3rd) semester, either a Master's thesis (30 ECTS) or attendance of four (4) courses (30 ECTS). Each semester lasts thirteen (13) full weeks and corresponds to a workload of thirty (30) ECTS credits distributed between the modules and the Thesis. The teaching hour is forty-five (45) minutes, followed by a fifteen (15) minute break. Each course in a semester includes twelve (12) two-hour lectures with a combination of face-to-face lectures and workshops, as well as synchronous and asynchronous distance learning lectures limited to twenty-five per cent (25%) of the credit hours of the PSP. All courses must attend at least seventeen per cent (70%) of the lectures delivered each semester. The PSP is currently offered entirely in Greek. However, in the case of enrolled foreign students, instruction in English is also allowed (Gazette publication 4693/23.10.2020). The AP suggests that the PSP teaching staff carefully review all the modules' content under the supervision of the Coordination Committee to avoid repeating undergraduate-level material (partial overlap was reported during interviews with students). Understandably, Military and Security Forces students may not possess basic knowledge at the same level as sports science graduates. In these cases, the AP encourages enabling the possibility of offering preparatory courses, as also foreseen by the PSP Study Guide and Regulations.

Expected LOs according to the EQF

The PSPs LOs should be classified at the higher levels of the Bloom & Krathwohl (1956) taxonomy and fall within the Dublin Descriptors for Master's Level. The modules' LOs of the current PSP need to be revised to justify their classification at level 7 according to the UNESCO ISCED-2011 code and guarantee the ability of the PSP graduates not to possess and recall information but to apply knowledge and demonstrate critical thinking and problem-solving skills. In addition to the above, it is not entirely clear to the AP how the LOs of each Course are attained and linked to teaching and examination activities based on the content of some courses.

Regarding the assessment criteria of assignments and the Final Thesis, it is worth noting that no references to rubrics were noted, at least for the course assignments.

Based on the evaluation of the PSP by the students, most declared satisfaction with almost all criteria to which they replied. Some concerns were noted regarding their level of satisfaction with their laboratory experience. AP understands that recent unforeseen circumstances (COVID, the Daniel floods) have fully constrained the students' ability to utilise the labs.

However, apart from demonstrating laboratory tests and techniques in some modules, only minor targeted laboratory exercises have been identified in the Course Outlines for students to collect, analyse and interpret data. AP believes that including laboratory exercises in the courses in the form of Research Portfolios will significantly contribute to a deeper comprehension of the theoretical knowledge and the acquisition of valuable research skills. As the laboratories are not currently staffed with technical staff, it is felt that the whole operation could be supported by PhD students' supervision and a booking system (e.g. Microsoft Bookings) to avoid potential crowding in the laboratories. At the same time, such a procedure, as well as all laboratory applications involving humans, requires insurance coverage against civil liability as well as ensuring the completeness of the required preliminary health screenings that are required to be conducted and compliance with research ethics rules (e.g. Informed Consent, GDPR).

It is worth noting that although graduates were satisfied with the PSP, the professional prospects, and the skills acquired, only 15% responded to the pertinent survey. The PSP steering committee must explore more ways to increase graduates' response rate to the satisfaction survey.

Course and Thesis Outlines

The PSP consists of several compulsory and elective courses and an optional Master's Thesis presented in detail through specific course outlines. In particular, the PSP Study Guide describes procedural instructions regarding the Thesis in detail. Structural instructions for writing the Thesis are available in the pertinent Course Outline; however, a detailed Thesis Guide is missing from the PSP website or the Students' Study Guide. It is worth noting that the publication of the Thesis is not required in Greek or international journals. It was noted that in many course outlines, the recommended textbooks concern editions that were published several years ago and, therefore, need to be updated.

Students' Evaluation.

The assessment methods for students remain at the discretion of each instructor. Based on the Course outlines, assessment methods include the following activities:

• Individual Assigned Assignments

• Group Assigned Assignments

• Applications Portfolio

• Weekly reports

• Written midterm examination

• Written final examination

• Laboratory assignments

For a student to sit the course exams, he/she must have covered 70% of the attendance for each Course; otherwise, he/she must repeat the Course. In the event of failure in part or all of the Course at the initial or repeat examination, the student must repeat the Course. In the case of three (3) failures in the same Course, the student may request to be evaluated by a

three-member committee without the participation of the Course instructor. It is unclear, however, when the student is withdrawn from the PSP and how long the student may maintain examination backlogs in the Course.

The Course Outlines describe how the individual assessment criteria are made known to students from the beginning, presumably by posting them on the course platforms. The AP considers that the PSP Steering Committee should take special care to ensure that each examination activity within each Course contains detailed assessment criteria accompanied by rubrics (in particular concerning oral laboratory examinations and oral and written assignments), which should be posted from the launch of the semester on the PSP's online course platform. Below, a sample relevant table is provided.

Students workload

This aligns with the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) for level 7.

Teaching staff

The PSP thematic modules are covered by fifteen (15) full-time faculty of the Department, one (1) full-time faculty from another Department, one (1) Emeritus Professor and seven (7) Academic Fellows. All faculty staff's field of expertise seems to be consistent with the thematic module allocations. Based on the impact of their research work as revealed during the evaluation period by the Google Scholar Profiles platform, the following distribution is obtained:

- >20000 citations: one (1) PSP staff member

- 15000-19999 citations: one (1) PSP staff member

- 10000-14999 citations: two (2) PSP staff members

- 5000-9999 citations: five (5) PSP staff members

- 2500-4999 citations: two (2) PSP staff members

- 1000-2499 citations: five (5) PSP staff members

- 500-999 citations: four (4) PSP staff members

- <500 citations: four (4) faculty members

Based on the above distribution, some PSP Staff members demonstrate exceptional research activity, whereas most possess significant research portfolios.

Internship

An internship is not available within the PSP framework.

International Mobility

These opportunities are underutilised, not contributing to the diverse exposure and benefits of students' and faculty's experience of best educational and research practices from direct contact with different cultures and academic functions. ECC couldn't gain access to the

Erasmus Plus framework and promotional activities as the provided link didn't lead to any content.

III. Conclusions

The purpose and content of the PSP are completely satisfactory. The numbers and the criteria for admission of students to the PSP are clearly stated and leave no room for bias. The graduation of the PSP requires the completion of 90 ECTS and the submission of the Thesis or enrolment in four (4) elective courses. Regarding the modules' description of the PSP, there seems to be ground for specific improvements (see recommendations). The possibility of attracting international students by offering the programme also in English, introducing laboratory exercises and including guided internship in the PSP needs to be considered.

Clarification is needed on handling students who fail their assessment by a Three-Party Committee after having three previous failures in the same Course.

Incorporating a detailed Thesis Handbook into the PSP Study Guide is also necessary.

The faculty includes academics with excellent high impact in terms of their research work, which is necessary to support high-quality research-oriented teaching in the PSP. For the same reason, there seems to be considerable scope for promoting high-quality research activity among other faculty in the PSP, especially those with low recognition of their research output. Finally, seeking ways to overcome obstacles to international students and faculty mobility is necessary.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

- The Steering Committee, in collaboration with all the faculty in the PSP, needs to ensure that the course content does not include already covered undergraduate-level material.
- Offering preparatory courses, especially for non-sports science graduates, is believed to be important to follow the studies course successfully.
- It is proposed to evaluate the necessity of adding graded assignments to more PSP modules.
- Outdated proposed textbooks must be replaced or updated to newer editions.
- The Steering Committee needs to ensure that the LOs in each Course of the PSP are consistent with the PSP LOs and in full conformity with the classification at level 7 according to the UNESCO ISCED-2011 code and the Bloom & Krathwohl (1956) taxonomy and that there is a proven match with the teaching content and assessment activities.
- Consider including laboratory exercises in the courses as Research Portfolios.
- Promoting the research portfolio of PSP teaching staff with low impact on their research work is expected to enhance the research orientation of their instruction at the PSP.
- Developing and publicising rubrics to students on the scoring criteria of individually evaluated activities seems necessary.
- The possibility of introducing the English language in instruction is believed to contribute to the attraction of foreign students to the PSP.
- It is proposed to explore the introduction of an internship in the PSP, which is believed to contribute to a better interconnection of the learning process with contemporary educational needs and will create professional opportunities for graduates.
- The Study Guide and PSP website must include the Thesis Guide and a general guide for the assignments in the individual courses.
- Updated CVs of all PSP teaching staff and their Google scholar profile must be on the Program's website.
- It is necessary to find ways to effectively promote the international mobility of both teaching staff and students to benefit from good international practices in their field and promote intercultural experience and interaction.

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

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

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

The student-centred learning and teaching process

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

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

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

Study Programme Compliance

    I.   Findings

The PSP offers a well-established student-centred educational process with various teaching methods.

Since many students are military personnel, who are employed either in Trikala or in other cities all over Greece, the programme is flexibly offered concerning the in-person lessons and lectures. A 6-day practical part with lectures and hands-on experience is provided in person at the laboratories of the Department at Trikala twice per semester (at the beginning and the end of each semester). These in-person lessons correspond at ~40% of the total teaching hours offered. The rest of the lectures take place online via zoom meetings organized in one weekend per month during the semester. All lectures are available online, as well as additional educational material for the students. External experts are often invited to give specific lectures regarding new techniques, methods, products, and processes that are developed internationally.

The duration of this program is 3 semesters. Students are evaluated at the end of the first two semesters. The evaluation methods reported are written or oral examinations, presentation of papers, written works, case reports, or multiple-choice online tests. During the third semester, the students must choose between working on their master's thesis or attending 4 elective courses. The programme encourages students' continuous effort and improvement by providing scholarships to the best-performing students each year.

The teaching staff of the program currently consists of 24 members including 6 external associates and 1 teacher under academic scholarship with great experience in teaching at the master's level and mentoring young researchers. They teach subjects relevant to the research they are conducting or the field in which they are working. Most of them are distinguished scientists with many publications in their field.

There is an internal evaluation system by both the students and the instructors. The students evaluate the courses through anonymous online questionnaires which include questions about the courses, the teachers, and the workshops. Although fewer students seem to respond to these questionnaires, there is a strong desire on their part for more workshops and hands-on experience.

II.   Analysis

The PSP uses diverse teaching methods including both in-person lectures and workshops, and online lectures with accompanying online material. Student evaluations are also diverse, including written or oral examinations, writing, presentation of papers, case reports, or multiple-choice online tests.

Students are highly encouraged to conduct a research thesis. In many cases though, a research thesis is difficult to carry out because of the military structure and organization, and the difficulty of recording research data from people therein.

Teaching staff and their methods are assessed, by students with anonymous questionnaires who strongly mentioned their desire for more workshops. Of course, one cannot overlook the major destruction of the laboratory equipment caused by the terrible floods in the region, during the last autumn, which did not allow the implementation of many workshops in person.

III. Conclusions

The PSP offers an in-person and diverse way of teaching. It complies with transparency through its predefined rules and regulations. Further improvement based on students' questionnaires can be implemented.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

- More workshops, hands-on and in-person lessons are suggested.
- Spreading the lessons on more weekends might be a strong motivation to improve the student's learning outcomes and their continuous contact with the subject.
- The participation of more students in the evaluation procedure would be very helpful for the improvement of the programme.

PRINCIPLE 4: STUDENT **A**DMISSION**, P**ROGRESSION**, R**ECOGNITION **O**F **P**OSTGRADUATE **S**TUDIES**,
A**ND **C**ERTIFICATION**.**

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

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

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

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

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

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The PSP was established in 2014 and has a 3-semester duration (30 ECTS per semester) with
tuition fees of 3900 euros. Scholarships are available to be awarded to students with specific
needs or to the students with the highest scores per year. The admission to this programme
takes place transparently and objectively after the announcement of available places by the
Department. All announcements are available on the website of the programme in Greek. Yet
the English version of the website needs to be systematically updated.

The selection of the applicants is based on their study scores, English language diplomas,
recommendation letters research experience, etc. These procedures are clearly described in
the required supporting documents. On average 10-15 students are admitted each year (who
are 90% of the total number of applicants). Approximately 40% of them are graduates of the
Department of Physical Education and Sport Science, 50% are graduates from Armed Forces
Schools, 6% from Police Schools, and the rest of the places are covered by other categories of
professionals.

The PSP combines in-person lectures and workshops for 6 days at the beginning and at the end
of each semester and online lectures one weekend per month. The attendance of all lectures
and workshops is compulsory.

Students are evaluated in diverse ways at the end of the 2 first semesters. During the third semester, they have the opportunity to choose between a research thesis or 4 extra courses. Usually, the students do require additional time to finish their PSP.

Although terms and conditions for students' Erasmus+ mobility and Erasmus+ traineeships are described in the related documents of the University of Thessaly, these mobility platforms are not used by the PSP yet. At the same time, there is currently no possibility for practical training.

Upon completion of their studies, the students are awarded a diploma certificate which shows their academic achievement. This can be used for further studies or future careers. This programme helps graduates to advance professionally and salary-wise in terms of the military and security forces. It also allows them to further develop their knowledge in the field by applying what they have learned to their daily work.

The AP meeting with current and past students left the impression that the communication between students and staff is excellent. The panel had a very positive impression of the quality and level of courses given by the faculty of this PSP. However, most of the students reported that they would like more workshops and/or an internship.

II. Analysis

The unique characteristic of the PSP is that it connects the University with the Military, thus fulfilling an important need for further education and professional development for the staff. According to the opinion of current students and recent graduates, this Programme offers them enhanced opportunities to acquire scientific knowledge in the field and to further develop their professional skills.

Alongside their studies, most of the students are serving in military and police organisations. Undoubtedly, online lectures are an alternative that helps many students to attend this programme. However, the Committee suggests more in-person sessions and workshops.

The length of PSP studies (3 semesters) is appropriate. The Programme highly encourages the students to select a research thesis, although it is not mandatory. This is justified, because, in many cases, the preparation of a thesis is very difficult due to the obstruction of bureaucratic procedures for recording and extracting research data from Military structures.

The courses are delivered in Greek. However, providing courses and seminars in English could significantly increase the visibility and the importance of the present PSP. This could also be attractive for foreign students to attend the PSP.

Students' mobility through Erasmus+ and Erasmus+ Traineeships as well as the lack of internships is an issue to be considered. Although the difficulties are reasonable, PSP staff should explore and harness any opportunity to promote students' mobility.

III. Conclusions

The PSP offers a great opportunity to connect the Military with the Universities and provide postgraduate studies to professionals who wish to improve their academic and employment competencies. The research level of the teaching staff is high. The students expressed high satisfaction regarding the Programme, the teaching staff, the knowledge achieved, and their professional benefits.

The panel suggests providing more workshops, hands-on experience, and internships. The panel believes that providing courses in English would attract many foreign students to attend the PSP.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

- It is recommended for the PSP staff to deliver their courses in English.
- It is recommended to add more workshops and in-person lessons.
- The English version of the website should be up to date.
- The possibility of carrying out an internship or an Erasmus+ mobility would be a very beneficial addition to the Programme.
- The panel suggests considering a decrease in tuition fees.

PRINCIPLE 5: TEACHING STAFF OF POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES

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

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

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

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

Study Programme Compliance

I.   Findings

The PSP benefits from a 24 strong staff, including 6 external associates and 1 teacher under academic scholarship, mainly from the University of Thessaly. Staff are highly trained and specialised in their respective teaching areas, aligning with the PSP's aims and mission. None of the staff is paid additionally for teaching in this PSP.

The selection process for teaching staff appears to be based on clear, meritocratic, and transparent criteria, emphasizing excellence and scientific expertise in relevant subject areas being the primary criterion. The PSP appears to be committed to excellence in recruitment, training, and development and this ensures a certain level of quality assurance.

The PSP supports continuous personal training and development of staff mainly through the newly established Teaching and Learning Support Centre (KEDIMA) and other ad hoc activities including educational seminars and presentations. The PSP appears to encourage scholarly activity, innovation in teaching methods, and the use of new technologies, although these were not made explicit and clear, enhancing the link between education and research. Specific policies regarding staff development, mobility schemes, and educational leaves could be

further elaborated for clarity. Furthermore, it is not clear whether external teaching contributors possess the necessary teaching/educational qualifications and/or experience appropriate for the teaching needs of this PSP.

Staff are annually assessed by students for every course they teach primarily through electronic questionnaires provided by MODIP that students fill in at the end of the course. There is no formalized peer review of teaching mechanism.

II.   Analysis

The PSP benefits from a pool of highly trained and experienced 17 strong teaching staff drawn from the University of Thessaly with 6 external associates and 1 teacher under academic scholarship. The teaching staff of the academic unit produce excellent scientific research either individually or in collaboration with other researchers from within the University of Thessaly or national and international universities and research institutes. This is evident from an impressive number of publications, rewarded with many citations in the national and international scientific literature based upon the Scopus and Google Scholar data bases. It is notable that the academic unit is ranked at the top of equivalent academic units within Greece and occupies a very respectable 101-150 ranking globally. There is clear effort to link this PSP to research but on occasions this is hampered by restrictions and confidentiality imposed upon making research data open access by the military. The EEAP established a generally favourable assessment of teaching staff by students past and present during our interviews.

The PSP appears to have enough staff members to meet the needs of its student population. Teaching distribution varies widely among staff, with some taking on heavier teaching loads in terms of teaching hours compared to lighter teaching hours by others. From the interviews of the AP with staff they appeared to be content with their teaching loads and general responsibilities.

The selection process for teaching staff appears to be based on meritocratic and transparent criteria, emphasizing scientific excellence in their relevant subject areas, which is the primary criterion. This ensures that highly qualified and competent staff are recruited to teach in the PSP.

The PSP supports continuous personal training and development of staff mainly through the newly established Teaching and Learning Support Centre (KEDIMA). However, this is restricted to staff from the University of Thessaly and does not seem to cover external contributors. Furthermore, participation of staff in courses delivered by the KEDIMA appeared to be ad hoc rather than structured. Despite the considerable teaching experience of staff, it is important to ensure continuous personal development in the pursue of excellence through learning and applying modern and effective teaching tools, resources and methods. This can be done through a structured annual programme of staff personal development plan rather than relying on an ad hoc system without monitoring by management. Staff mobility schemes and educational staff leaves, albeit voluntary, should also be structured rather than ad hoc.

Teaching staff are assessed by students for every course they teach mainly through electronic questionnaires that students complete at the end of each course. There appears to be adequate but low questionnaire completion rate (~20-30%) by students. Data are collected, processed, analysed by MODIP then sent to the relevant teachers and the PSP director for their information and any actions that may be necessary. Student feedback is overall positive with the exception of laboratory related teaching. Students expressed some concerns with laboratory equipment which they find it to be insufficient. They also think that the basic principles of experimental work are not explained sufficiently well, and the laboratory handbooks need improving.

Staff will benefit from a formal peer review of teaching schemes. This can be in the form of a "teaching buddy" pairing staff to observe one lecture from each other's lectures and provide confidential feedback to each other through a face-to-face discussion. Teaching buddies may not be the same each year but should change for transparency and quality assurance. This will be particularly useful in the case of external teaching contributors who may not have appropriate teaching qualifications and/or experience and are not able to benefit from personal development opportunities offered by the University of Thessaly.

III.   Conclusions

The PSP teaching staff demonstrate strengths in experience, expertise, and commitment to professional development, although there is room for improvement in formalizing/clarifying continuous staff development policies to further enhance quality assurance in the continuous pursue of excellence. Developing structured personal development plans for individual staff supported by feedback mechanisms can provide valuable insights to management for staff evaluation and improvement.

It is not clear how quality assurance of teaching is achieved in the case of external teaching contributors who might not have the appropriate teaching qualifications and/or experience.

The current student evaluation of teaching mechanisms through questionnaires for each course ensures consistent teaching quality and continuous improvement, but the academic unit and the PSP should also consider a formal peer review of teaching system to ensure continuous improvement and pursue of excellence. Staff will benefit from a formal peer review of teaching scheme in the form of a "teaching buddy".

More effort should be made to increase the completion rate of student questionnaires with regards to the student evaluation of teaching. The aim should be to increase the completion rate to at least 50-60%. The larger the completion rate the more reliable the statistical data become.

The PSP seems to encourage scholarly activity, innovation in teaching methods, and the use of new tools, resources, and technologies in teaching, but specific policies regarding this could be further elaborated for clarity. Clear guidelines on this issue can enhance teaching quality and in the pursue of continuous improvement and excellence.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

- Introduce a formal annual personal development plan for each staff, offering a variety of structured opportunities for staff development, including participation in conferences, workshops, and training programmes relevant to their areas of expertise.
- Introduce a formal peer review of teaching scheme in the form of a "teaching buddy".
- Encourage and formally monitor scholarly activity and innovation in teaching methods to foster a culture of continuous learning and improvement.
- Ensure that external teaching contributors have appropriate teaching qualifications and/or experience and provide relevant training if necessary.
- Conduct regular reviews of staff development procedures to ensure alignment with evolving educational trends, institutional goals, and regulatory requirements.
- Increase the completion rate for student evaluation of teaching questionnaires.

PRINICPLE 6: LEARNING RESOURCES AND STUDENT SUPPORT

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

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

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

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

Documentation

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

Study Programme Compliance

I.   Findings

Funding for this PSP comes from the tuition fees as well as from a small budget available through the faculty research activity. In general, the resources for the students both in terms of equipment as well as consumables required for research is considered adequate. The PSP is part of a larger University Department, and this is helpful in the effort to find some additional resources from the overall resources of the Department.

The main teaching area for this PSP is a dedicated room that can hold up to 30 students, whereas laboratory work takes place not in a dedicated room but in laboratories of the Department that are used for both undergraduate and graduate work.

Other facilities available to the students of the PSP, such as library, secretariat, computer terminals are shared with other students of the Department and of the local University of

Thessaly offices. (The University of Thessaly has campuses in several cities; in Trikala, Larisa, Volos, Karditsa and Lamia).

Upon entering the PSP, each student is assigned a student advisor who is responsible for monitoring the progress of the students and serves as a point of contact of any problems that may arise. The position of the student advisor is a relatively new addition in Greek universities and their role is still not as widespread as it should be.

A very significant problem for the facilities of this PSP occurred as a result of storm Daniel that devastated large parts of Thessaly fairly recently. As a result of flooding and other damage, several buildings of the university of Thessaly in several cities including Trikala were not available for teaching or research for many months, and some continue up to this date to be non-functional. The AP was very upset to know this and considers that full reconstruction of all damaged buildings should be a very top priority for the ministry of education and the prefecture of Thessaly.

II.   Analysis

The infrastructure of this PSP is at a very high level, and the care given to the students during their studies is excellent. From the discussions of the AP with current and former students it was very clear that, although the PSP is demanding, the students are treated with respect and their wellbeing – academically and personally – is a top priority.

If the PSP increases it student size above 30, it may need additional space. It would also be desirable although not absolutely necessary to have a dedicated set of laboratories that could be used primarily by the students of this PSP for their lab training and perhaps during their thesis work.

From all documentation seen by the AP, and in response to questions during our meetings, it is clear that the students entering the PSP are well-informed on the academic expectations of the course work, and on the career options once they graduate.

At this point there is no alumni association for the graduates of the PSP, and no organised way exists for their continued contact with the programme. However, ad hoc interactions between faculty and graduates are plentiful.

Storm Daniel has degraded some of the excellent facilities of this PSP, and their restoration with additional external funding by the state is a top priority.

III.   Conclusions

The PSP provides an excellent environment for the training of its students, and their job prospects once they graduate are significantly enhanced. Restoring the damage caused by storm Daniel is a top priority.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

- Restore as soon as possible the infrastructure of the PSP following the damage caused by storm Daniel. This should be a responsibility of the state.
- Consider establishing an alumni association.
- In an ideal scenario, this PSP would have many more applicants than positions so that it can be selective in those it chooses.

PRINCIPLE 7: INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Study Programme Compliance

    I.   Findings

The PSP has developed an effective information management system for current and past students. Suitable key performance indicators (KPIs) have been established and there is good application of learning resources and availability of student support, both formally and informally. Student population profiles, progression, success, dropout rates and student satisfaction rates are monitored, and relevant detailed data were provided to the EEAP. Therefore, reliable data are available to provide accurate information aiding decision making in the pursue of continuous improvement.

The academic unit maintains a centralized information system to manage the Quality Assurance process. Course evaluation surveys are conducted meticulously by MODIP and there is a clear process for collecting, curating, analysing data, and acting upon the evaluation results. The evaluation of the courses is performed at the end of each semester for all courses and faculty in that semester.

The Internal Evaluation Unit (OMEA) is mainly responsible for the operation of the QA associated systems. Information and data on faculty performance analysis, administrative support, funding, etc. is also under regular monitoring.

II.   Analysis

Actionable suggestions/follow-ups from student surveys are taken by teaching staff to the PSP steering committee for approval. Once approved, they are then actioned for the following academic year, but it is not clear whether this is communicated clearly to the students. Student evaluations of courses take place in a clear way using questionnaires with well-formulated questions, but the percentage of questionnaire completion by (20-30%) can be improved. Student population profiles, progression, success, dropout rates and student satisfaction rates should be made publicly available on the PSP website. Students appeared to be satisfied with the PSP, albeit a small number of students were interviewed, but some concerns were raised with laboratory related activities that may need more attention to improvement by the PSP. The EEAP fully understands the impact of recent catastrophic storms in the wider area of Thessaly that caused immense distraction to infrastructure and accepts that full recovery will take a long time.

III.   Conclusions

The PSP has an excellent Information Management System. The EEAP finds that, overall, the programme fully complies with Principle 7. The soft recommendations below are intended to improve further and enhance continuous pursue of excellence.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

- The PSP needs to enhance student participation in course evaluations by reminding students to submit questionnaires, highlighting positive changes resulting from the process and emphasizing the importance of the evaluation process to students. Greater attention is required for student evaluations of staff to increase awareness among students about the significance of the evaluation process in improving programme quality and delivery.
- A clear strategy related to the flow of information must be developed and implemented. It was unclear to the EEAP whether all the analyses were communicated or indeed utilized by all faculty to the benefit of the PSP.
- A dedicated alumni portal could be developed to promote post-graduation interactions that can facilitate important networking activities among graduates and further collaborations within the department and the PSP.

PRINCIPLE 8: PUBLIC INFORMATION CONCERNING THE POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES

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

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

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

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

Study Programme Compliance

I.   Findings

The PSP in its current form is addressed primarily to Greek students and therefore most publicly available information is written in Greek. The website has both a Greek and an English section. Whereas the Greek section is fairly complete (but with some limitations, see below) the English version was updated during the AP visit.

Additional means of making the PSP known to a wide audience, such as fliers and other material, was not shared with the AP.

One outreach activity to make the PSP known was when the leader of the programme gave a talk at the nearby military training school.

A very widely seen activity of the PSP is its participation in a research project examining how a bronze age armour would hold up under current battle conditions. This project, which was coordinated from faculty of the PSP with the participation of elite members of the armed forces, was highlighted in a large number of news organisations, both domestic (first page of Kathimerini) and international (NYT, Telegraph, Le Monde, Newsweek, Stuttgarter Zeitung and many more).

II.   Analysis

The PSP is addressed to a domestic audience, and even in this form it does not have as many activities as one would wish to ensure that it attracts student applicants in large numbers.

The Greek language website was very recently updated, and it has useful information. The course descriptions are at a good level of detail to inform [prospective applicants and the short descriptions of the faculty members is of good quality. However, the welcome message video is from a previous PSP leader and there is no section to advertise the activities of the PSP to

prospective applicants from Greece or (at a later time) from abroad. For example, the recent publicity on the research project examining the bronze age armour (which was shown during the presentation of the PSP to the AP) was nowhere to be seen on the website.

The English version of the website became better as the AP visit took place, and at the time of writing is of good lever with similar limitations as the Greek version.

III.   Conclusions

It is clear that although this is an excellent PSP overall, there is not yet strong desire to make its accomplishments more widely known. This has consequences on the number of applicants and admitted students.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations
- Update both Greek and English versions of the website with information on the activities of the PSP.
- Consider printing some fliers highlighting the accomplishments of the PSP to distribute to places where its potential students may be (military and police academies, other departments of physical education, gyms etc)

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

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

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

The above comprise the evaluation of:

a) *the content of the programme in the light of the latest research in the given discipline, thus ensuring that the PSP is up to date*
b) *the changing needs of society*
c) *the students' workload, progression and completion of the postgraduate studies*
d) *the effectiveness of the procedures for the assessment of students*
e) *the students' expectations, needs and satisfaction in relation to the programme*
f) *the learning environment, support services, and their fitness for purpose for the PSP in question*
Postgraduate study programmes are reviewed and revised regularly involving students and other stakeholders. The information collected is analysed and the programme is adapted to ensure that it is up-to-date.

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

Study Programme Compliance

I.   Findings

The PSP is well organized and delivered by the University of Thessaly. It aims to provide specialist, quality education and training to military and police personnel to maximize the operational capacity of the army and police. It attracts mostly students from the army and police (56%) with the rest coming from TEFFA (41%) and others (3%).

The PSP applies all procedures required by the institution for internal and external systematic evaluations, and improvement of all educational and research work carried out within the PSP, as well as implementation of required certification procedures. MODIP evaluations appear to be systematic and on an ongoing basis via electronic questionnaires. There appears to be ad hoc revisions of the content of the PSP curriculum and courses, as the PSP appears to be

committed to monitoring and adjusting the PSP content to reflect latest scientific progress and military needs. The AP did not see any evidence of systematic evaluation of the relative staff teaching/administration workloads, although staff were content as assessed by the AP interviews.

Internal evaluation process by MODIP aims to identify strong and weak elements of the PSP, establish new goals, and match them with the desired quality levels. The results of the last internal evaluation in 2022 were recorded in a special report drawn up by MODIP and published in Jan 2024. It described in detail its findings and its recommendations addressed two major issues, increasing the extrovert nature of the PSP through linking better with society, and increasing the number of enrolling students from 20 to 30 per annum.

There has not been an external evaluation of this PSP before, this is the first external evaluation being undertaken.

Feedback from students is mainly through formal electronic questionnaires completed at the end of each course and informally through discussions with teaching staff. The panel noted that all students (current and past) and stakeholders were enthusiastic and supportive of this PSP. The learning environment and support services are good, but some concerns were expressed for laboratory related teaching activities.

Mentoring for each student is provided by dedicated personal tutors and by the diploma thesis supervisors. Students also have access to a range of supporting resources within the University of Thessaly, if needed.

The panel noted that all students (current and past) and stakeholders were enthusiastic and supportive of this PSP. They all mentioned that this PSP met their expectations and professional/educational needs thus helping them in their professional development.

II.   Analysis

PSP courses address current issues in the field of Military Fitness & Wellbeing, so that students obtain good knowledge and expert training to apply their skills in their future careers.

There are appropriate evaluation processes that ensure substantial feedback to the PSP director and organizing committee. The organization of internal evaluation by the MODIP aims to ensure and improve quality. In particular, the monitoring of the structure and organization of the curriculum, student satisfaction with the courses and their teachers, as well as the evaluation of the level of demand of graduates, the use of financial resources and the qualifications of teaching staff contributes to the continuous improvement of quality. The 2023 MODIP report provided two recommendations to the PSP which should be addressed in the near future.

From the discussion of the AP with current students, it was clear that they were satisfied with their engagements with academic tutors and felt that their feedback was considered.

Student workload, progression and completion are satisfactory with the impressive 77% of students completing in 3-4 academic terms. The vast majority of students (98%) complete their studies within 6 academic terms. Exam assessments include a combination of traditional

exams with essay and problem-solving questions, oral presentations, multiple choice questions, analyses of case studies and literature reviews. This is a good range of variable assessment methods that appear to be effective, evidenced by 54% of students achieving final mark of 8 and above out of 10, 42% achieving a mark between 7-7.9 out of 10, and only 4% achieving a mark between 6-6.9 out of 10.

As this PSP is intimately linked to the military and police, attention should be placed at the ever evolving physical, psychological and technological demands as well as complex skills required by such personnel. This should be reflected with regular content updates based upon accurate data emerging from internal and external assessments as well as continuous literature reviews to identify points of improvement and change.

III.   Conclusions

The PSP is very well managed, organized and run. The curriculum includes excellent and topical courses with emphasis on applications, and final diploma research training. The structure and organization of the internal evaluation is satisfactory and aims at a multi-faceted evaluation of the PSP contributing to its continuous update and relevance.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations
- Close monitoring of actions based upon MODIP mediated internal assessment recommendations and student feedback should be implemented in a more structured manner communicating back to the students the implemented curriculum changes.
- Regular course uptakes to keep up with the fast-evolving demands of the military and police forces.

PRINCIPLE 10: REGULAR EXTERNAL EVALUATION OF POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES

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

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

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

Study Programme Compliance

I.   Findings

The current external evaluation is the first of its kind for the programme in consideration; therefore, any assessment of the progress of the PSP based on recommendations from a previous external evaluation is not applicable in this case.

However, the willingness of all those involved in the current evaluation to contribute productively to the whole process is recorded. The AP also notes the commitment of the PSP stakeholders to take immediate action to fulfil the AP recommendations upon the current external evaluation.

II.   Analysis

As the current external evaluation is the first to which the PSP is being submitted, any references concern the process that has taken place.

The AP's understanding was that all the PSP teaching staff members were well aware of the importance of the external evaluation and its contribution to improvement. They cooperated productively in preparing the material included in the accreditation proposal, and they participated enthusiastically and with a positive spirit in the meetings with the AP. Where clarifications or additional material were needed, there was a prompt and decisive response.

In addition, all stakeholders of the academic unit (PSP Steering Committee, Departmental Quality Assurance Committee, Institutional Quality Assurance Committee, Faculty, Students, Graduates and Labour Market Representatives) were actively engaged in the preparation of

the external evaluation of the PSP and showed commitment to support all the follow-up actions.

III.   Conclusions

The process followed both for the preparation of the proposal and accreditation material and during the AP meetings with PSP stakeholders and other participants was very productive, showing the commitment of the PSP to respond to the AP's suggestions for optimising the quality of the PSP.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

The AP encourages the PSP personnel to consider the comments and suggestions provided, following the plan of action proposed in the accreditation proposal, to make timely and optimal use of the content of this evaluation for the benefit of the quality upgrade of the PSP.

PART C: CONCLUSIONS

I.   Features of Good Practice

- The PSP has a good track-record of success in enabling graduates to develop their future careers.
- The PSP is well-designed with clearly defined aims and objectives with excellent links to the military and police. It is structured clearly and developed over the years to accommodate modern topics in military fitness & wellbeing, linking teaching/research to actual military and police needs.
- There is clear evidence of continuous improvement of the PSP and a quality policy that supports the academic profile and orientation of the PSP, students, and participating teaching and administrative staff.
- Current students, postgraduates, faculty, and stakeholders have positive experience with the PSP.
- Wide range of learning resources are available and student support is excellent in this PSP.
- The department collects and analyses detailed data related to Quality Assurance.
- The PSP staff members' extensive engagement with the PSP is a testament to their dedication and willingness to develop, implement, and optimise the PSP's Quality Assurance Policy.
- The majority of the PSP faculty have exceptional/excellent research portfolios related to the topics covered in the curriculum.
- The PSP uses diverse teaching methods including both in-person lectures and workshops, and online lectures with accompanying online material. Student evaluations are equally diverse.
- From the discussions of the AP with current and former students it was very clear that, although the PSP is demanding, the students are treated with respect and their wellbeing – academically and personally – is a top priority.
- The PSP has developed an effective information management system for current and past students.

II.   Areas of Weakness

- A more structured and effective cooperation with the Military and Security forces can enhance extroversion.
- Staff development opportunities are not structured and monitored by management.

- There is no peer-review of teaching.
- No assurance that external teaching contributors have appropriate teaching qualifications and/or experience.
- Higher number of applications from interested parties are needed for the long-term success of the PSP.
- Activities that advertise the accomplishments of the PSP online and in person are required.
- Weak participation of students in the evaluation activities.
- Low level of hands-on and experimental work is noted by the students.
- The amount of tuition and fees may be unaffordable for the salary available to junior army and police personnel.

III. Recommendations for Follow-up Actions

- Listed are main recommendations; for a more detailed list please see each principle.
- Collaborate with expert consultants to establish a solid promotion strategy for the PSP (in addition to the initiatives already being taken).
- Introduce a formal annual personal development plan for each staff, offering a variety of structured opportunities for staff development, including participation in conferences, workshops, and training programmes relevant to their areas of expertise.
- Introduce a formal peer review of teaching scheme in the form of a "teaching buddy".
- A dedicated alumni portal could be developed to promote post-graduation interactions that can facilitate important networking activities among graduates and further collaborations within the department and the PSP.
- Consider increasing the number of international visiting academic guests to promote the PSP's international extroversion and enhance students' international mobility.
- Updated CVs of all PSP teaching staff and their Google scholar profile must be on the Program's website.
- More workshops, hands-on and in-person lessons are suggested.
- Spreading the lessons on more weekends might be a strong motivation to improve the student's learning outcomes and their continuous contact with the subject.
- The possibility of carrying out an internship or an Erasmus+ mobility would be a very beneficial addition to the Programme.
- Increase the completion rate for student evaluation of teaching questionnaires.
- Restore as soon as possible the infrastructure of the PSP following the damage caused by storm Daniel. This should be a responsibility of the state.
- Consider printing some fliers highlighting the accomplishments of the PSP to distribute to places where its potential students may be (military and police academies, other departments of physical education, gyms etc).

IV. Summary & Overall Assessment

The Principles where full compliance has been achieved are:

1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, and 10.

The Principles where substantial compliance has been achieved are:

8.

The Principles where partial compliance has been achieved are:

None.

The Principles where failure of compliance was identified are:

None.

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

The members of the External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel

Name and Surname   **Signature**

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2. **Prof. Soultanas Panagiotis**
   University of Nottingham, UK

3. **Prof. Panayiotou George**
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