



ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ
HELLENIC REPUBLIC



Εθνική Αρχή
Ανώτατης Εκπαίδευσης
Hellenic Authority
for Higher Education

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Αθήνα, 31/10/2024

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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), την υπ' αριθμ. 16384/Ζ1/15.02.2024 απόφαση του Υπουργού Παιδείας, Θρησκευμάτων και Αθλητισμού (ΦΕΚ 137/τ. ΥΟΔΔ/19-02-2024), περί παράτασης της θητείας του Προέδρου του Ανώτατου Συμβουλίου της ΕΘΑΑΕ, καθώς και 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 (ΕΘΑΑΕ).
3. 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.
4. Την υπ' αριθμ. 43321/11-6-2024 Έκθεση Πιστοποίησης της Επιτροπής Εξωτερικής Αξιολόγησης & Πιστοποίησης του ΠΜΣ Μεσογειακή Υδατοκαλλιέργεια του Τμήματος Γεωπονίας, Ιχθυολογίας και Υδάτινου Περιβάλλοντος του Πανεπιστημίου Θεσσαλίας.
5. Την 41η/24-7-2024 συνεδρίαση του Συμβουλίου Αξιολόγησης και Πιστοποίησης, θέμα 2 «Έγκριση εκθέσεων πιστοποίησης ΠΜΣ – Χορήγηση πιστοποίησης».

ΠΙΣΤΟΠΟΙΕΙ ΟΤΙ

το Πρόγραμμα Μεταπτυχιακών Σπουδών

Μεσογειακή Υδατοκαλλιέργεια

**του Τμήματος Γεωπονίας, Ιχθυολογίας και Υδάτινου Περιβάλλοντος
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 24-7-2024 έως 23-7-2029.



Ο Πρόεδρος της ΕΘΑΑΕ

Καθηγητής Περικλής Α. Μήτκας



Με τη συγχρηματοδότηση
της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης



Πρόγραμμα
Ανθρώπινο Δυναμικό και
Κοινωνική Συνοχή





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Accreditation Report
for the Postgraduate Study Programme of:
Mediterranean Aquaculture
Department of Ichthyology and Aquatic Environment
University of Thessaly
Date: 1 June 2024



Με τη συγχρηματοδότηση
της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης



Πρόγραμμα
Ανθρώπινο Δυναμικό και
Κοινωνική Συνοχή



Report of the Panel appointed by the HAHE to undertake the review of the Postgraduate Study Programme of **Mediterranean Aquaculture** 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 **Mediterranean Aquaculture** of the **University of Thessaly** comprised the following four (4) members, drawn from the HAHE Register, in accordance with Laws 4009/2011 & 4653/2020:

- 1. Prof. Andreas Katsiotis (Chair)**
Cyprus University of Technology, Limassol, Cyprus
- 2. Prof. Thomas Panagopoulos**
University of Algarve, Faro, Portugal
- 3. Prof. Emeritus Ioannis Vlahos**
Hellenic Mediterranean University, Heraklion-Crete, Greece
- 4. Mr. Ioannis Chatzieffraimidis**
PhD Candidate, University of Western Macedonia, Florina, Greece

II. Review Procedure and Documentation

In preparation for the review and assessment of the PSP **Mediterranean Aquaculture** of the **University of Thessaly**, the External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel (EEA Panel) reviewed a multitude of materials provided by the Hellenic Authority of Higher Education (HAHE), which included background information and guidance on the review and accreditation process, detailed material and data related to the programme under evaluation, such as the programme accreditation proposal and associated appendices.

The programme review was conducted via teleconference, organized and coordinated by HAHE and the University of Thessaly (UTH). The schedule and agenda of the review were as stated below.

Monday, 27/05/2024:

- a) Preliminary private meeting of the EEA Panel. Discussion of the programme under review; assignment of writing parts of the draft accreditation report to the members of the EEA Panel.
- b) Welcome meeting and short overview of the two PSPs: a) with the Vice-head of the Department of Ichthyology and Aquatic Environment Prof. Ioannis Boziaris, the Director of the PSP Mediterranean Aquaculture (PSP1) Prof. Panagiota Panagiotaki, the PSP1 Steering Committee member Assoc. Prof. Eleni Golomazou, the PSP1 Steering Committee member Assoc. Prof. Ioannis Karapanagiotidis, the Member of the OMEA of the DIAE Prof. Dimitrios Ventzas, and b) the Head of the Department of Forestry, Wood Sciences & Design Prof. George Ntalos, the Director of the PSP Multifunctional Management of Forest Ecosystems and Bio-economy (PSP2) Prof. Michail Vrachnakis, the PSP2 Steering Committee member Prof. Periklis Birtsas, the member of the OMEA of the Department of FWSD, the MODIP member of UTH Prof. Nikolaos Tsiropoulos, the MODIP Coordinator Ms Eleni Tsironi, and the MODIP staff Ms Konstantina Founta. Presentation of UTH quality assurance policy, current status and future developments, as well as presentations and discussion of both Departments and their corresponding PSP1 and PSP2 history, academic profile, current status and future developments, strengths and areas of concern, degree compliance to the quality standards for accreditation, internal procedures, course examinations, review of students' progress, course/instructor evaluations, etc.
- c) On-line tour of classrooms, lecture halls, library facilities, laboratories. All facilities were presented in videos produced for this purpose. During the presentation of PSP1 Administrative staff members Asimenia Koromilli (PSP1/DIAE Secretary), Asimo Panagou (PSP1 Secretary) and teaching staff member Assoc. Prof. Ioannis Karapanagiotidis were present, and during the presentation of PSP2 Administrative staff members Athanasios Kyriakis (PSP2/DFWSD Secretary), Vasileios Aretos (PSP2 Secretary), and teaching staff members Prof. Ioannis Papadopoulos and Assoc. Prof. Ioannis Aretos were present.
- d) Private debriefing meeting (EEA Panel members only).

Tuesday, 28/05/2024:

- a) Meeting and discussion with PSP1 Mediterranean Aquaculture teaching staff members Profs. I. Karapanagiotidis, E. Golomazou, F. Parlapani, and external teaching staff Profs. E. Mente, E. Malandrakis, Drs. G. Rigos, I. Papadakis, and N. Vlachos.
- b) Meeting and discussion with five (5) current PSP1 students.

- c) Meeting and discussion with seven (7) recent PSP1 graduates.
- d) Meeting and discussion with employers and PSP1 social partners: K. Lytra, fish pathologist, Scientific Director, Hellenic Aquaculture Producers Organization (HAPO), I. Bogdanou, Communication and Public Reaction Director, Hellenic Aquaculture Producers Organization (HAPO), Dr. S. Adamidou, Ichthyologist, Director of R&D PHILOSOFISH SA, D. Dimopoulos Ichthyologist Senior Production Director, PHILOSOFISH SA, C. Spyrou, ZOONOMI SA, C. Kravariti, Human Resources, BIOMAR SA, Ms Kapelaki, PRAXIS AQUACULTURE, Dr. M. Chatzieustathiou, Head of Department of Common Fisheries Policy, Ministry of Rural Development and Food, and E. Tzavella, Ichthyologist, Head of Fisheries Dept. Prefecture of Magnesia.
- e) Private debriefing meeting (EEA Panel members only): Discussion of the outcomes and findings of the PSP1 virtual visit; preparation of oral report.
- f) Closure meeting with the Vice-head of the Department of Ichthyology and Aquatic Environment, PSP1 Director and Steering Committee faculty, and OMEA member of DIAE: Informal, oral presentation of the EEA Panel PSP1 key findings and clarifications.

Wednesday, 29/05/2024:

Teleconference meetings related to PSP2 Multifunctional Management of Forest Ecosystems and Bio-economy of the Department of Forestry, Wood Sciences and Design of the University of Thessaly.

Thursday 30/05/2024 to Saturday 01/06/2024:

Draft report writing. EEA Panel virtual meetings. Review and finalization of PSP1 & PSP2 accreditation draft reports.

Throughout the review and evaluation process, the EEA Panel was in close communication with the University UTH staff, which were very accommodating in providing additional information requested by the EEA Panel. The EEA Panel found that both Departments and the PSP1 and PSP2 administrations, as well as the faculty, staff, current students, and recent graduates interviewed were eager and helpful in our discussions, providing valuable additional information.

III. Postgraduate Study Programme Profile

The University of Thessaly was founded (along with the Aegean and Ionian Universities) in 1984 with the Presidential Decree 83/1984, which was modified in 1985 with the P.D. 302/1985 and P.D. 107/1986. The city of Volos was designated as the central location of the University of Thessaly. Nowadays, the University's main campus is located in Volos, and regional campuses are located in Karditsa, Larissa, Trikala and the city of Lamia.

The post-graduate study programme (PSP) 'Mediterranean Aquaculture' is organized and offered by the Department of Ichthyology and Aquatic Sciences; University of Thessaly (UTH) located in Volos/Magnesia. The PSP was approved by the Senate of the UTH in 2018, published in the Official Gazette 2832/16-07-2018, and operates with the latest Graduate Programme Regulations updated in 2023 (Official Gazette 1697/20-03-2023) based on law 4957/2022.

The objective of the PSP is to provide, at the post-graduate level, training in aquaculture science with emphasis on 'Mediterranean Aquaculture'. Graduates of the programme should gain experience and know-how training for the adoption of optimal solutions and applications in new technologies, and production and management systems, from farming to processing and marketing of fish species found in the Mediterranean basin. More specifically, the mission of the PSP is: a) High level provision of postgraduate studies; b) Promote modern approach methods on Mediterranean aquaculture; c) Development of technological innovations, methodologies, methods, as well as use of environmentally friendly techniques; d) Educating competent scientists, with the required skills, for a successful career in the private, public and academic field; and e) Preparation of the graduates to follow studies at the doctoral level.

Teaching in the PSP is provided by faculty and teaching staff of the Department of Ichthyology and Aquatic Sciences (UTH), as well as external specialized scientists from academic and research Institutions. Specialized technical staff and administrative staff assist the PSP.

The programme has set the maximum number of admitted students at thirty (30) per academic year. During the last five years a total number of 102 students were enrolled, while the number of students completed all requirements and graduated from the PSP is fifty-eight (58) (success rate 57%); however, 80% of those (46 students) graduated within 18 months of attendance.

The PSP is a one academic year programme (two semesters); during the first semester students have to take five (5) courses (all compulsory), and during the second semester students prepare and complete a diploma thesis. To graduate, the student must have successfully completed a total of 60 European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) credits. The five courses offered contribute 30 ECTS credits and another 30 ECTS credits are contributed by the diploma thesis. All five courses include lectures and laboratory training. Elective courses are not offered. All courses are offered in-person on campus (attendance is mandatory), and up-to 35% remotely and synchronously. Final examinations are administrated in-person on campus. The PSP awards a Diploma of Graduate Studies (Δίπλωμα Μεταπτυχιακών Σπουδών).

The department also support doctoral studies.

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 University has developed and implemented its Quality Assurance Policy as part of its broader strategy (<https://qa.uth.gr/quality-assurance-committee/> ; https://qa.uth.gr/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/MODIP_Politiki_Diasfalis_Poiotitas_2022_1097625350.pdf). The

Department of Ichthyology and Aquatic Science, in collaboration with the Quality Assurance Unit (QAU) of the UTH, has harmonized the quality policy of the PSP 'Mediterranean Aquaculture' with that of the University. According to the documents submitted, an annual evaluation of the PSP is carried out by 2 members of the QAU of the university, which leads to a report with recommendations for the improvement of its educational and research process, through feedback from the students and the QAU of the university.

The Quality Assurance Policy of the PSP is publicly accessible from the Department website (<https://diae.uth.gr>; https://diae.uth.gr/Home/Texts?link=axiologiseis_5) and includes the accreditation of the Bachelor's Program of the Department, its internal annual evaluations, along with the university's quality assurance guide of studies and functions (https://diae.uth.gr/docs/files/uploads/axiologiseis/Odigos_Diasfalis_Poiotitas.pdf). However, although internal annual evaluations of the PSP in Mediterranean Aquaculture have been performed, they are not included in the corresponding website of the PSP.

The processes and procedures used for the monitoring and continuous improvement of the quality of the PSP are as follows: a) utilization of the evaluation results, both at level of the PSP and the Department, along with teachers' evaluations reports; b) improving the quality of the graduate teaching methods; c) introduction of modern teaching methods; d) set clear academic goals, by improving research strategies, research outputs, and increase publication record; e) introduction of electronic service at the Secretariat level; f) promote relationships with productive and related management bodies at local, regional, national, European and international level; g) increase mobility of academic staff/community, to and from domestic and foreign institutions, and i) develop lifelong training for graduates working in related businesses.

The quality and effectiveness of teaching at the PSP is monitored through the course/instructor evaluation by the students, that is submitted electronically by the students centrally at the website of the QAU Information System of the university (<https://qa.uth.gr/en/modip-information-system/>). The Information System can also be accessed even outside the university's network through VPN. In the Information System the Course Evaluation and the Teacher's Report Card can be accessed.

II. Analysis

The structure and organization of the PSP is solid and well designed. The goals set by the programme are achieved through the courses offered (theory and lab exercises), the compulsory thesis and the continuous interaction between students and academic staff. Learning outcomes and qualifications of PSP graduates in Mediterranean Aquaculture are consistent with Level 7 of the European Qualification Framework. The Study Guide is published annually, including the Scope of the PSP, the learning outcomes, and the offered courses. The courses are well structured and delivered in class and, up to 35%, remotely, taking advantage of the synchronous teaching e-class technology. All exams are in class. The diploma thesis is written either in Greek or English (after consulting the supervisor).

The targets set by the Quality Assurance Policy of the PSP has three pillars: a) improvement of the structure and organization of the program; b) improvement of students' performance, and

c) increase of outreaching and connection to society. In each pillar there are specific targets and actions that are connected to each target. Altogether, there are ten (10) targets. However, the base score for each target is either low (25%) or null (0). The targets set are on the right track, including a) increase the number of graduating students on time, b) motivate students; mobility, c) graduates contact info and creation of alumni association, d) teaching quality enhancement (through the Centre for Teaching and Learning provided by UTH), e) attract collaborating young scientists, f) increase field laboratory trips. Some of those targets have also been proposed by the QAU of the university. The outline for each course is well structured and informative. The instructors are mainly academic staff of the department, but whenever necessary specialists are also invited for guest lectures, after obtaining a positive decision of the Department's Assembly. Suitable key performance indicators (KPIs) are missing. Since the beginning of the programme (2018-2024) only two manuscripts in a high impact factor (4.5) journal have been published with PSP students as co-authors, even-though a large number (25) of presentations in national and international conferences have been presented. During the interviews with the PSP graduates and the stakeholders, a strong connection with aquaculture companies was revealed, indicating very strong outreaching ties with companies and society.

III. Conclusions

Overall, although the PSP is a one-year program, is very well structured and balanced. It seems that this PSP covers needs directly linked to production. Most of the students are already working in relevant companies and all of them expressed positive opinion about the program. The University is monitoring and evaluating annually the PSP through the QAU and communicates back to the PSP their findings and results. All parties are committed for implementing recommendations, leading to a continuous process of improvement. However, more ambitious targets and corresponding scores need to be set.

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

R 1-1: Include at the website of the PSP the annual Internal Assessment Evaluations.

R 1-2: Increase students' participation in evaluations.

R 1-3: Use the expertise provided by the Centre for Teaching and Learning of UTH for supporting and advising the teaching staff of the PSP.

PRINCIPLE 2: DESIGN AND APPROVAL OF POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES

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

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

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

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

In addition, the design of PSP must consider:

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

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

Documentation

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

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The PSP Mediterranean Aquaculture begun accepting graduate students in 2018 and is one of six postgraduate programs within the Department of Ichthyology and Aquatic Environment (four of them are interdepartmental). The main objective of the programme is to provide graduate training in the aquaculture science, with emphasis in Mediterranean aquaculture. All courses taught are compulsory dealing with types of fish farming, fish nutrition and fish feed, fish well-being and health management, fish processing technology, quality and safety, and marketing of aquaculture products. Thus, in a very structured and balanced curriculum, students are exposed in a wide range of activities all of which are found in a production fish farming company, and actually this is exactly the scope of the PSP. Its graduates gain specialized knowledge and experience relevant to its subject matter.

II. Analysis

The programme comes to fill in a gap in applied aquaculture, providing knowledge and experience in the whole spectra of production, from fish feed and well-being, to processing and marketing. The majority of the students are already working in fish farming companies or are involved in the production/processing chain. Most of them were seeking up-to-date information and training in the latest technologies in the field. Thus, a one-year PSP is a reasonable time to dedicate for the gain of such knowledge. All of the stakeholders were in favour of the programme and some of them have employees that either graduated or are currently enrolled in the program. The program is more practical oriented rather than research oriented, although some of its graduates are now pursuing a PhD.

The curriculum could be further improved from the following suggestions:

- Motivate students with mobility opportunities,
- Include lectures regarding the possible effects of climate change in the fish farming production,
- Include lectures on production unit management,
- Include lectures about the National and European framework and legislation on fish farming production,
- Non-employed students could benefit from practical training.

Overall, the current structure of the PSP is reasonable, and it fulfils the goals set. There are strong ties with production companies and their R&D departments. A formal association of alumni would benefit the contact among them and the department.

A more comprehensive Study Guide could be more helpful for the enrolled students. Also, the website of the programme can be improved by adding more details about the program, the courses, providing guidelines for the thesis, helpful hints and comments regarding access to bibliography, presenting research activities in the department etc. Allocation of ECTS should be according to the actual workload of each course and not all courses having the same credits.

III. Conclusions

Overall, the EEA Panel considers that the purpose of the programme as was described in the Official Gazette 2832/16-07-2018, stating that “the main purpose of the programme is for its graduates to acquire a strong scientific knowledge background, training and expertise in all stages of the production process, from farming to processing and marketing, of the species reared in the Mediterranean basin”, is fully covered. There are strong ties with the stakeholders, and the program is oriented in providing expertise in all of the above-mentioned subjects.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

R 2-1: Continue and further promote collaboration with stakeholders.

R 2-2: Include practical training for non-working students.

R 2-3: Include lectures in climate change effects in fish production, in production unit management, and in National and European framework and legislation.

R 2-4: In future restructuring of the program ECTS for each course should represent actual course load

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 'Mediterranean Aquaculture' follows a student-centred learning path. The courses are held mainly online with only a few on-site sessions. The Study Regulation states that 35% of the PSP curriculum is taught via distance learning; however, the actual percentage is

significantly higher, as indicated on the website and revealed during the interviews with the students. Specific course attendance on-site, along with semester assignments and exams, are mandatory.

Course lectures are primarily conducted on weekdays, especially after 16:00. The rights and privileges of the students, including excellence awards for outstanding academic performance, are detailed in the PSP Study Guide. The lecture halls are well-equipped. Student complaints are processed online.

Course evaluations by students are conducted at the end of the first semester, but participation in the evaluations has been minimal.

Also, each student is supported by an Academic Advisor who provides personal, academic, and career advice. For any issues, students can also communicate with the PSP secretariat.

II. Analysis

Courses are conducted in the evening to accommodate working students, who constitute the majority according to the data collected by the EEA panel.

Each course includes mandatory assignments, and a peer-review evaluation system is followed to enhance understanding of the subject matter. The personalized teaching approach is achieved through the way courses are selected, the full functionality of the distance learning platforms and tools, and the adoption of alternative teaching methods by the teaching staff.

The availability and role of the Academic Advisor are described in detail in the internal study guide. For each postgraduate student, the Coordinating Committee appoints a faculty member as an advisor and another as a supervisor. The advisor is responsible for monitoring and overseeing the general progress of the student's studies. The supervisor has scientific responsibility for students' Diploma Thesis and is appointed by the Coordinating Committee upon the student's request, which includes the proposed thesis title, the proposed supervisor, and a summary of the proposed thesis.

Students are well satisfied with the PSP, and some of them found employment through the PSP after graduation. All students interviewed by the EEA panel reported that they acquired advanced skills upon completion the PSP.

III. Conclusions

The EEA Panel finds that, in general, the PSP functions effectively in terms of student-centred learning, teaching, and assessment. The program's careful design, particularly tailored for working students, allows them significant flexibility in choosing the skills they will acquire, thereby facilitating the achievement of individualized learning outcomes. All interviewed students and graduates expressed full satisfaction with the PSP and the teaching staff.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

To further enhance adherence to Principle 3, the EEA Panel recommends the following:

R 3-1 Establish an Alumni Association. Create an alumni association to foster a sense of community among graduates and to facilitate ongoing professional networking.

R 3-2 Strengthen Collaboration with Industry Partners. This can be achieved through joint projects, internships, guest lectures from industry professionals, and collaborative research opportunities.

R 3-3 Increase Faculty Encouragement for Student Participation in Evaluations.

PRINCIPLE 4: STUDENT ADMISSION, PROGRESSION, RECOGNITION OF POSTGRADUATE STUDIES, AND CERTIFICATION.

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

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

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

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

Documentation

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

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

Every year, a call for applications is announced for the admission of students to the PSP. The PSP Committee selects students based on various criteria, primarily on their average grade in specific undergraduate courses, degree grade, relevance of their thesis, mandatory knowledge of the English language (with points awarded based on proficiency level), computer skills, professional and research experience, and two recommendation letters. The student selection process also includes interviews for candidates who meet the necessary criteria. The total points accumulated by the candidates are compiled into a table and submitted to the department assembly for approval. All necessary information is adequately described in the PSP Internal Operating Regulation.

The duration of study is one year, as clearly defined in the Study Regulation. This PSP includes one semester of courses (five in total) and one semester dedicated to the postgraduate thesis. ECTS credits are applied equally across the curriculum in the first semester, and 30 ECTS credits are awarded for the postgraduate thesis. Postgraduate students have access to all on-site and digital facilities of the department.

Teaching methods primarily include synchronous distance learning and a few on-site workshops. Students' mobility is partially encouraged, but so far, no students have taken advantage of this option.

At the end of the year, the PSP awards three scholarships based on student academic performance and criteria from the Hellenic Organization of Aquaculture Producers (ΕΛΟΠΥ).

The total ECTS credits required to obtain the Postgraduate Diploma amount to sixty (60) ECTS. The preparation of a postgraduate thesis is mandatory. Along with the Postgraduate Diploma, a Diploma Supplement in Greek and English should be provided. No practical training is included.

The Study Guide is considered very poor (only four pages long) by the EEA panel. All information regarding the program, the thesis, the curriculum and other necessary and important student-life related university information are missing.

II. Analysis

The Diploma Supplement should be in both Greek and English. The EEA panel didn't receive an issued reliable Diploma Supplement as requested. Graduating from this PSP students are granted license to practice as ichthyologist.

All matters concerning the completion of the required postgraduate thesis are defined in the Study Guide. However, the information provided is not sufficiently detailed and should be enriched.

Although students' mobility is partially encouraged, the majority cannot take advantage of this opportunity due to their commitments in the private sector.

The Internal Operating Regulation of the PSP does not currently mandate a practical training requirement. However, it is noted that there is an intention to change this in the future.

III. Conclusions

After consulting the provided documentation, the EEA panel considers that the PSP 'Mediterranean Aquaculture' functions properly concerning student admission, progression, and recognition of postgraduate studies. On the other hand, the Panel believes that enhancing student mobility, increasing the participation of academic staff from abroad, and the establishment of practical training can offer added value to the existing PSP.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

To further enhance adherence to Principle 4, the EEA Panel recommends the following:

R4-1 Increase the Number of Admitted Students. Given the small number of applicants, implement strategies to attract more students.

R 4-2 Introduce Practical Training. Since aquaculture is an applied science, it is essential to incorporate practical training into the curriculum.

R 4-3 Increase In-Person Meetings and Field Workshops.

R 4-4 Study guide should be improved and provide more details about the programme.

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 Mediterranean Aquaculture organized by the Department of Ichthyology and Aquatic Environment (DIAE) is supported by a team of 21 permanent and external teaching staff members from other Universities, Research centres and other Public organizations. The team is comprised of 4 permanent staff, 9 teaching staff from other institutions, 5 post docs, 2 from public organizations and 1 researcher from industry.

All staff members have been selected through well based and open procedures set by the Department. All teaching staff are holders of PhD degree and carry out research projects in their Institutions. The criteria used for hiring teaching staff include a PhD in related subject area, teaching experience and proven records of research and publications.

The selection of staff is based on the proposal of the coordinating committee approved by the Senate of the department. Thus, it is ensured that the external teaching staff is well qualified and capable to provide students with the best and up to date education in the field. The list of

teaching staff with their subject areas, their department of origin and other relevant information are shown in the website of the programme.

The Department has set out specific rules regarding the allocation of courses taught by the staff as well the lecture time per week. The reimbursement of the staff is also defined by the DIAE, however when asked during the interview, all present staff stated that due to financial restrictions of the program, they were not paid for their teaching.

Five members of the permanent staff act as coordinators of the programme responsible for selecting the teaching staff and supervising the process of courses during the semester.

The Department asks students to evaluate the staff at the end of the semester with questionnaires formulated by the MODIP of the University. However, student participation is very low.

Even though the Department provides opportunities for participation in international and European programs of exchange the participation of staff is very limited.

II. Analysis

The recruitment of teaching staff is done according to the rules and procedures set by the Senate of the Department/University taking into account the prescribed criteria. It was not determined if there is an open call for the recruitment of staff as it seemed most of the staff were qualified people but mostly known to the department's staff.

The mobility of staff was found to be very limited mainly due to the workload undertaken and /or family conditions and other limitations. Enhancing participation of staff to such mobility will be beneficial for the program as it will help promote collaborations with partner institutions that will create opportunities for research projects and new teaching methodology.

Research activity is unevenly distributed among members of the staff but those involved have participated in projects of national and European level that contribute to the funding of the program.

The results of the questionnaires although limited show general satisfaction with the teaching staff. The results of the survey are made known to the lecturers in order to take it into consideration for any improvements. Students and alumni interviewed expressed their overall satisfaction with the program and the level of communication with the faculty

III. Conclusions

The PSP is supported by competent and qualified personnel. The professional development and involvement of staff in mobility and research is not at the desired level due to the understaffing of the Department.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

R 5-1: Encourage and Increase mobility of staff

R 5-2: Increase student participation in questionnaires by making it clear how important it is

R 5-3: Find ways of increasing the income of the program, with donations and financial support from other sources and thus to be able to compensate the teaching staff for their work and travel expenses.

PRINCIPLE 6: LEARNING RESOURCES AND STUDENT SUPPORT

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

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

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

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

Documentation

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

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The DIAE is housed in the School of Agricultural Sciences and the PSP is utilizing its premises for its teaching and research. These include a lecture room for 50 persons, a PC laboratory for 20 persons, 5 offices for the teaching staff and 1 for administrative support. Additionally, there are 5 rooms used for the two licensed research laboratories and a well-equipped Experimental Station for Aquacultures.

The Experimental station and the other laboratories include facilities for the farming of fish and other aquatic organisms with the use of a Recirculating Aquaculture system and all other necessary equipment for cultures under controlled conditions.

The PSP has also access to other experimental stations that belong to cooperating industries (Philosofish), and pilot cultures of microalgae under greenhouse conditions.

The students of the PSP are able to practice and get hands on experience using the above-mentioned facilities during their study period and for their thesis projects.

They can also use all other facilities of the University of Thessaly, such as the central Library and there is also provision for individuals with disabilities.

Lectures are held through distant learning online as most of the students of the program are working and some live at a distance from the campus, and in campus lectures are held two days during the week.

Students also make use of the information technology of the University (Open e –Class) platform for the lectures delivered.

The funding of the PSP program comes from the tuition fees which is 2000 euros per student. Some students get tuition fees waived either because they meet economic or social criteria, or they show academic excellence. However, the tuition fees is not enough for covering all the operational costs of the program. Further funding is required, and this may become possible either by donations of companies or from other research projects that are currently carried out by the faculty.

II. Analysis

Based on the interviews with faculty, students, and alumni and the other information provided to the EEAP, such as PP presentations and a virtual tour of the facilities utilized by the students of the PSP, it became evident that all necessary equipment and support services are considered satisfactory for the implementation of the program. The students are able to use all services used by the undergraduate students of the Department. It is recommended, as stated also by the coordinator of the PSP, that teaching staff recruitment should increase as transfers or retirement of faculty in recent years have made it necessary.

III. Conclusions

The PSP has adequate infrastructure for a successful training in aquaculture systems and provides well trained graduates that can meet the demands of the industry. Nevertheless, further improvements are needed, and the faculty seems to be aware of these needs and should try to find ways to meet them.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

R 6-1: Try to find financial sources for establishing an experimental small-scale pilot aquatic environment in nature.

PRINCIPLE 7: INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

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

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

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

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

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

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

Documentation

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

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

Through the application of respective information technology services provided by the University (e.g., eUniversity, Open e-Class, MS-Teams, information system of quality assurance body), a comprehensive information system of data collection and recording has been developed regarding the overall operation of the institution. The data refer to the academic faculty, the administration, and the students. Further data have been collected by the research financial services and the library.

The information obtained from the satisfaction surveys by the students and the graduates databank is limited. Key Performance Indicators of the students and staff are limited. Graphical display of student numbers evolution and success to visually display trends was not presented. Additionally, limited data were provided for student satisfaction during several years. The

EEAP was provided with a table of long-term targets for the programme but without performance indicator as the length of the targets runs to the end of the calendar year.

II. Analysis

The Department maintains an integrated information system, in collaboration with MODIP, for the collection and analysis of internal and external evaluation data. The PSP annually collects data related to the research activity of faculty, available funds, student mobility, and academic records. The information obtained from the satisfaction surveys by the students and the graduates is very limited. Staff satisfaction and teaching method surveys are not conducted.

Key Performance Indicators should be presented for several years, and the information should be analysed annually and targets for improvement should be established.

The EEAP believes that the Programme has made efforts to achieve students' participation in the evaluation of the teaching staff. Unfortunately, the level of participation is low. The EEAP feels that there should be further incentives in order to collect a representative sample of feedback.

III. Conclusions

The PSP evaluate the data collected and present some of the results in quantifiable measures in terms of the programme, and key performance indicators. The data should assist in the preparation of internal evaluation reports and related improvement proposals. The development of an alumni body has also been welcomed by the graduates of the programme in their meeting with the EEAP members.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

To enhance adherence to Principle 7, the EEA Panel recommends the following:

R7.1. The University, with the help of the PSP, should organize an alumni network to systematically gather and analyse information regarding the graduates of the PSP. This should include data on career trajectories, current locations, and to inform on program improvement.

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

Public information regarding the PSP 'Mediterranean Aquaculture' is primarily accessible through the relevant website, specifically <http://mscmedaqua.diae.uth.gr>. However, the content is currently available only in the Greek language.

Additionally, there is a separate section on the department's website about Postgraduate Studies, which includes a description of the PSP. This information is provided in both Greek and English.

While the PSP website offers comprehensive information about the teaching material, ECTS credits, study guide, and even the thesis handbook, there is a notable absence of information regarding the academic unit's Policy for Quality Assurance.

II. Analysis

All relevant information about the PSP, encompassing learning outcomes, courses, curriculum details, and teaching staff, is meticulously presented on the dedicated webpage. The content published on the website is current and readily accessible, although navigation could be improved for enhanced user experience. Furthermore, comprehensive details about the PSP are also available on the Department's website, ensuring broader access to pertinent information. There is no English version for the PSP on the website.

III. Conclusions

The Department's websites direct users to the PSP's webpage. However, the PSP website currently offers information about teaching and departmental activities exclusively in Greek. To enhance its utility, the PSP website could also provide additional information regarding alumni, job placements, and the quality assurance policy.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

To further enhance adherence to Principle 8, the EEA Panel recommends the following:

R 8-1: Enhance website navigation, allowing users to find information quickly and efficiently.

R 8-2: Provide information in both Greek and English to cater to a wider audience, including international students, researchers, and stakeholders.

R 8-3: Create Alumni and Job Finding Sections. Introduce a dedicated section on the website for alumni and job findings. This section can include information about alumni achievements, career paths, job opportunities, and networking resources.

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 self-assessment of the programme is based on procedures and continuous improvement of the level of educational offerings along with supporting the learning environment, ensuring the current character of the programme, and the strategic goals of the Institution. Factors considered for the assessment include the student's workload, students' expectations, and the assessment of the students. Also, scientific and technological developments, societal and job market needs, and national, European, and international environmental policies are considered. The programme director collects information from the delivery of the programme along with scientific, technological, business, and societal developments. The Director collects all requests for changes to the programme, such as changes to the course content, course schedule and calendar, faculty workload, proposals for new courses, etc. Using the student course/instructor evaluations along with requests related to suggested changes, a proposal is submitted to the Department assembly. The annual report is submitted to MODIP for review,

and recommendations are shared with the Department general assembly. Decisions are made at the end of the academic year and are implemented at the beginning of the following academic year.

II. Analysis

Through the process of internal review and continuous improvement plan, the positive aspects of the programme are reinforced by adding new topics based on scientific developments. The collected information is analysed, and the programme is adapted to ensure that it is up-to-date. There is a strategically designed consideration for improving courses using the course evaluations by students. Programme weaknesses are immediately addressed when problems are identified with the programme in students' evaluation. Remediation of knowledge gaps of the students was achieved through special seminars, extended office hours for the faculty to assist students, in addition to the availability of the academic advisor.

The PSP is reviewed and revised but without the direct involvement of students and other stakeholders. Extension of collaborations with international sectors and further involvement in external activities such as conferences should be common practice.

III. Conclusions

The self-assessment procedure of the programme is frequent but does not involve a systematic participation of the students and the external stakeholders.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

R 9-1: There should be an organized formal inclusion of alumni and stakeholders in the process of the annual internal self-assessment.

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 PSP has not undergone an external evaluation before. Following the instructions of HAHE to this Principle, the EEAP utilised the IQAS Accreditation Report (2019) of the University of Thessaly. Also, the EEAP used information from the external evaluation of the University of Thessaly in 2015. The response to the recommendations from the previous External Evaluations was brief and not specific.

II. Analysis

The PSP provided a response about the previous external evaluations, and the Programme has taken into consideration those relevant recommendations and is willing to proceed with the implementation of all recommendations for the PSP.

The recommendation of development of procedures for the sustainable and continuous engagement of stakeholders has not yet been implemented.

The recommendation about uniform format of Biographies for all Faculty members was not fully implemented.

The recommendation to include alumni and students in continuous improvement was not fully implemented.

The English version of the PSP website should be improved to incorporate most of the features and information included in the Greek version.

III. Conclusions

The recommendation from the previous external evaluations of the University were not fully considered. The EEAP concurs with the previous recommendations. A point-by-point response to the previous evaluations and a time schedule about when they will be fulfilled should also be mentioned.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

R 10-1: The PSP should act upon the recommendations of the previous Institutional external evaluations.

PART C: CONCLUSIONS

I. Features of Good Practice

- Strong ties with stakeholders and society have been developed.
- Very good collaboration between students and academic staff
- Very good infrastructure, supporting the PSP
- After graduating from the PSP, graduates are granted the professional permit of an ichthyologist

II. Areas of Weakness

- Lack of student and staff mobility
- Lack of integration of certain topics and lectures that need to be added to the program.

III. Recommendations for Follow-up Actions

- Elaborate the quality targets including implementable and realistic KPIs
- Advertise the PSP to a wider pool
- Include at the website of the PSP the annual Internal Assessment Evaluations.
- Increase students' participation in evaluations.
- Use the expertise provided by the Centre for Teaching and Learning of UTH for supporting and advising the teaching staff of the PSP.
- Continue and further promote collaboration with stakeholders.
- Include practical training for non-working students.
- Include lectures in climate change effects in fish production, in production unit management, and in National and European framework and legislation.
- Establish an Alumni Association.
- Increase the Number of Admitted Students.
- Introduce Practical Training. Since aquaculture is an applied science, it is essential to incorporate practical training into the curriculum.
- Increase In-Person Meetings and Field Workshops.
- Study guide should be improved and provide more details about the programme.

- Encourage and Increase mobility of staff and students
- Find ways of increasing the income of the program, with donations and financial support from other sources and thus to be able to compensate the teaching staff for their work and travel expenses.
- Try to find financial sources for establishing an experimental small-scale pilot aquatic environment in nature.
- Easy Navigation to the PSP Website, allowing users to find information quickly and efficiently.
- Provide information in both Greek and English to attract a wider audience, including international students, researchers, and stakeholders.
- There should be an organized formal inclusion of alumni and stakeholders in the process of the annual internal self-assessment.
- The PSP should act upon the recommendations of the previous Institutional external evaluations.
- In future restructuring of the program ECTS for each course should represent actual course load

IV. Summary & Overall Assessment

The Principles where full compliance has been achieved are: **1, 2, 3, 5, 6, and 7.**

The Principles where substantial compliance has been achieved are: **4, 8, 9, and 10.**

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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