



**ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ**  
HELLENIC REPUBLIC



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# **Accreditation Report** **for the New Postgraduate Study Programme of:**

**Business Administration (MBA)**

**Business Administration**  
**University of Patras**

**26/10/2024**



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 New Postgraduate Study Programme of **Business Administration (MBA)** of the **University of Patras** 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 new postgraduate study programme of **Business Administration (MBA)** of the **University of Patras** comprised the following five (5) members, drawn from the HAHE Register, in accordance with Laws 4009/2011 & 4653/2020:

1. **Assist. Prof. Andreas Tsopanakis** (Chair)  
Cardiff University, UK
2. **Pr. Evangelos Dedousis**  
American University in Dubai, United Arab Emirates
3. **Pr. George Vozikis**  
Chaminade University of Honolulu, USA
4. **Assist. Prof. Kyriakos Neanidis**  
The University of Manchester, UK
5. **Ms Erasmia Aggelaki**  
Postgraduate Student, Hellenic Mediterranean University

## **II. Review Procedure and Documentation**

The present accreditation took place between 21/10/2024 and 26/10/2024. The accreditation panel consisted of seasoned university professors from abroad, with a postgraduate student completing the committee membership. On Tuesday, 22/10/2024, the External Evaluation and Accreditation Panel (EEAP) met with the PSP Director, the Head of the Department of Business Administration, members of the Steering Committee and OMEA, as well as MODIP staff. The Director of the PSP presented an overview of the MBA programme, while a Q&A session followed.

The EEAP members also met with the teaching staff, employees and social partners. There was also an online tour of facilities that was made available to EEAP members. Notice that there were no meeting with students or graduates, as this is a new postgraduate programme. The day concluded with a closure meeting with the Vice rector, the PSP director, the head of the department and the MODIP manager during which clarifications were given to committee's questions. THE EEAP head provided an overview of the committee's initial considerations for the programme, while the PSP representatives provided their own views on these considerations.

The EEAP has been provided with all necessary material from HAHE (Hellenic Authority for Higher Education); the material included the accreditation guidelines, acronyms, the European qualifications framework, the PSP standards, the mapping grid, the Report template, the Accreditation Guide and the Accreditation management system manual.

The University has also provided the EEAP a total of 19 files containing, among others, the proposal for quality assurance policy, programme study guide, course outlines, the teaching staff list, the progress report of PSP, and the diploma supplement. These documents, together with the discussions that took place during the visit, were used as input for preparing this report by EEAP members.

### **III. Postgraduate Study Programme Profile**

The PSP under review (Master in Business Administration - MBA) is a new postgraduate programme, aiming to replace the old MBA programme the department used to provide. It is organised and managed by the Department of Business Administration at the University of Patras.

Entry requirements consist of exams, which along with other criteria, determine whether the individual will be accepted to the programme. The PSP is offered mostly on a full-time basis across 2 semesters, while an additional one is devoted to the dissertation development stage of the postgraduate students. It consists of 8 core and 4 elective modules, with a dissertation project at the last semester. Students select one of the three specialisations, namely Marketing, Management and International Business and Economics. Students must complete 90 ECTS, 30 of which come from the dissertation. Attendance is compulsory and excessive absences result in dropping out from the programme. Most courses require the completion of individual or group assignments. Courses are offered in Greek and some in English.

The PSP admits 30 students per year, with rising popularity for the programme, as evidenced from the applicant trends. The student cohort is diverse, comprising of graduates of different disciplines (such as economics, business administration, engineering etc). In terms of demographics, the PSP has traditionally recruited students primarily from the local region, with students mostly coming from the University of Patras.

All courses are taught by resident faculty. The academic staff involved in the PSP are highly competent, comprising individuals with significant teaching and research experience.

## PART B: COMPLIANCE WITH THE PRINCIPLES

### Principle 1: Strategy, Quality Assurance Policy and Quality Goal Setting for the New Postgraduate Study Programmes

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD INCLUDE IN THEIR STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT THE DEVELOPMENT, ORGANISATION, AND IMPLEMENTATION OF NEW POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES (PSP) IN SPECIFIC SCIENTIFIC FIELDS AFTER INVESTIGATING THEIR FEASIBILITY AND SUSTAINABILITY. INSTITUTIONS SHOULD APPLY A QUALITY ASSURANCE POLICY FOR THE NEW POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES AS PART OF THEIR STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT.

THIS POLICY SHOULD EXPAND AND BE AIMED (WITH THE COLLABORATION OF EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS) AT THE PSP OF THE INSTITUTION AND THE ACADEMIC UNIT. THIS POLICY SHOULD BE PUBLISHED AND IMPLEMENTED BY ALL INTERESTED PARTIES.

*By decision/s of the Institutional Senate, the Institutions should adapt their strategy to allow for the provision of postgraduate study programmes, in addition to attending to the profile, vision, mission and strategic objectives of the Institution. In this strategy, the Institutions should anticipate the potential benefits, difficulties or risks from the implementation of new postgraduate study programmes and plan all the necessary actions to achieve their goals. The Institution's strategic choices should be documented through specific feasibility and sustainability studies, especially for new postgraduate study programmes.*

*In the case of PSP delivered by distance methods, the Institution prepares and applies an e-learning strategy. The Institution's e-learning strategy is integrated into its overall strategy and identifies educational goals while keeping up to the rapid technological changes and to the developments in pedagogical models. The Institution should include in its strategy the justification and feasibility as to why e-learning has been selected as the appropriate learning strategy for the particular programmes of study where it is applied.*

*In the context of e-learning, innovation strategies, the possibility of programme revision, the linking between learning and research (requiring knowledge of the latest innovations in order to select the most appropriate means to achieve the learning outcomes) should be taken into account.*

*The quality assurance policy of the academic unit for postgraduate study programmes should be in line with the Institution's strategy 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 postgraduate 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 continuous 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 and the availability 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 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 internal review and audit of the quality assurance system for the PSP through the cooperation of the Internal Evaluation Group (IEG) with the Institution's Quality Assurance Unit (QAU)*

#### **Documentation**

- *The Institutional strategy for postgraduate studies, which includes a special strategy for e-learning, as long as it is applied to the Institution's PSP*
- *Feasibility and sustainability studies for the new PSP*
- *Quality Policy of the academic unit for the development and improvement of PSP*
- *Quality Targeting of the academic unit for the PSP*

#### **Study Programme Compliance**

##### **I. Findings**

The MBA programme at the University of Patras operates under a comprehensive quality assurance policy that aligns with the overarching quality assurance framework of the institution. This policy is clearly articulated and publicly available, ensuring transparency and accountability among all stakeholders involved. The quality assurance policy focuses on several key areas, including the interdisciplinarity of the courses offered, the alignment to the job market requirements, the development of the employability of the students, the growing mobility of both staff and students to collaborative institutions abroad, the creation of a research culture, as evidenced in the research output produced by the academic staff and the dissertation projects of the MBA students.

The PSP had created a robust quality assurance policy, as indicated by the processes to conduct a regular review of the PSP academic quality and rigour. These processes pertain to teaching methods and approaches, student satisfaction, programme learning outcomes, the aim for high quality research output, ensuring a holistic approach to achieve academic excellence. The effort for a continuous improvement is evident through the systematic review and updating of quality goals and the regular actions as prescribed to the PSP action plan.



Furthermore, the Program ensures the suitability of its structure and organization, pursuing learning outcomes and qualifications in accordance with the European and National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education - Level 7. The teaching staff's qualifications are appropriate for the postgraduate level, contributing to the teaching quality and effectiveness.

## **II. Analysis**

The PSP demonstrates a well-defined commitment to maintaining high standards in postgraduate education. The Program's alignment with the institution's quality assurance policy ensures consistency and coherence in achieving the set quality goals. There is clear evidence that aim of the institution is the availability of the quality policy statement in the public domain, enhancing transparency and trust among stakeholders (students, faculty, external partners and wide community). There is a properly developed quality assurance policy, as indicated by the university overall strategy and its implementation from the department and the PSP relevant committees. The Program's structure is well-suited to achieving the intended learning outcomes, while faculty members of high caliber can guarantee the quality of the provided academic training, research and education. The original programme has a twenty year history and two years ago, it was overhauled to reflect more emphasis on quality and contemporary issues and trends in the business world. This is why their PSP is labelled NEW MBA programme.

## **III. Conclusions**

The PSP is fully compliant for Principle 1.

### **Panel Judgement**

<b>Principle 1: Strategy, Quality Assurance Policy and Quality Goal Setting for the New Postgraduate Study Programmes</b>	
Fully compliant	<b>X</b>
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

## **Panel Recommendations**

R1.1: Continue to implement robust and rigorous quality assurance policies, in order to maintain the PSP high quality contents and reputation.

R1.2: Consider an increase in the number of admitted students, given the PSP academic quality and the job market needs in highly skilled professionals.

R1.3: Consider the development of an international version of the MBA programme, offered in English for international students.

R1.4: Consider the introduction of online version of the PSP, in order to become more widely available to the international student market.

## Principle 2: Design and Approval of New 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 NEW POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES. THE OBJECTIVES, THE SPECIFIC SCIENTIFIC SUBJECT AND THE STREAMS OR SPECIALISATIONS, THE EXPECTED LEARNING OUTCOMES AND THE EMPLOYMENT PROSPECTS ARE SET OUT IN THE PROGRAMME DESIGN. DURING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NEW 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, the specialisations, the expected learning outcomes, the structure, the courses, the teaching and assessment modes, the teaching staff and the necessary resources 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. In particular, for each expected 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 for the 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 NQF, 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: teaching assignments per subject area and per course*

## **Study Programme Compliance**

### **I. Findings**

Understanding the way business and markets function at the national and international levels is the field of study of the revised, as per the 231/15/02/2024 Senate's decision, PSP Master in Business Administration (MBA) at the University of Patras. The PSP aims at imparting specialized knowledge to graduates so that they can manage private businesses and organizations within the ever more complex and dynamic national and international environments while also promoting knowledge and scientific research that focuses on the development of the region and the whole country. More specifically, the PSP aims to produce knowledge in the cognate areas, prepare graduates who will embark on an academic career, and cover the needs of the public and private sectors for highly qualified personnel who will lead organizations and private businesses.

The PSP take three academic semesters to complete and it is made up of 90 ECTS, including 8 required courses, 4 electives, and a 30 ECTS dissertation; there is provision for students to participate in Erasmus exchange programs for up to 12 months. The structure of the PSP, offering three specializations, is clearly articulated, rational, and comparable to similarly focused PSP's offered elsewhere. The combination of coursework and dissertation aims at achieving quantifiable learning outcomes targeting knowledge, understanding, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation of the material taught in the PSP as well as at developing a range of skills to graduates at level-7. The learning outcomes are assessed by several means including short tests, presentations, individual/group projects, and final examinations.

The feedback from employers in the private and public sectors, with whom faculty enjoy long-standing professional relationships, has been taken into consideration in designing and up-to-dating the PSP. Employers made highly positive comments regarding the achievement of learning outcomes by the graduates of the PSP during the discussion with the EEAP. However, the underdevelopment of "soft" skills such as communication, teamwork ability, and difficulty in handling a job interview among graduates was also pointed out by employers. According to a recent survey, 92% of graduates are employed of whom 64% in medium and upper level managerial positions. It is not clear, however, how many were already employed at the time they had entered the PSP and how many started employment upon completing it.

There are data referring to the position of the University of Patras according to well-regarded international rankings including THE, Shanghai rankings, and QS. Data are also available, though drawing on a dated survey, referring to the position of the Department in comparison to similar departments in a number of universities in Greece. No data are available comparing the place of the PSP to similar PSP's offered elsewhere.

Faculty teaching in the PSP are active researchers with publications in well-regarded refereed international journals and papers in international conferences. Their individual research interests are closely linked to the courses they teach and the aim of the PSP. However, it is unclear why, save a limited number of exceptions, such published research is not included in the bibliography of individual courses. One further note regarding bibliography is due at this point. That is, bibliography is often quite dated including material published 15-20 years back.

## **II. Analysis**

The PSP is a well-designed program offering a high value added education and specialization in the respective areas. There is strong demand for the PSP among qualified candidates in the local community and surrounding areas. This is evidenced by the high number of applications though demand may, at least partly, be attributed to the absence of any tuition fees. Four comments may be made:

- 1 Bibliography must reflect conditions in the ever changing business environment; hence the need to have updated bibliography.
- 2 Bibliography must include faculty published research in the area so that the link between research and teaching becomes clear.
- 3 Attention must be paid to the development of "soft" skills, indispensable in the modern workplace, among graduates.
- 4 Learning outcomes are not succinctly stated, or the way they are stated does not allow for easily measuring and quantifying them so that conclusions may be drawn whether and to what extent such outcomes were met.

### III. Conclusions

The PSP prepares highly qualified graduates in the cognate areas who are employed in the private and public sectors. The EEAP has found the PSP to be fully compliant with Principle 2.

#### Panel Judgement

Principle 2: Design and Approval of New Postgraduate Study Programmes	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

#### Panel Recommendations

R2.1: Use more updated and current bibliography and textbooks.

R2.2: Consider enhancing communication and interpersonal skills of students.

### **Principle 3: Regulations for 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).**

*The Institution should develop and publish the internal regulations prescribed by law which, among other things, should regulate all issues of postgraduate studies from the beginning to the end of the studies.*

*Indicatively:*

- *The students' 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*

*In case that the PSP is offered through distance learning methods, the Institution should have in place a regulation for e-learning, including in particular the following issues:*

- *Services of the Institution to support e-learning*
- *Methodology for the development and implementation of courses*
- *Ways of providing teaching and variety of teaching and assessment modes*
- *General standard of course structure*
- *Student support system*
- *Support of faculty/teachers with mandatory e-learning training for new staff members*
- *Technological infrastructures made available by the Institution*
- *Student identity confirmation system (student identity check, assignment and exam writing process, security and certification issues).*
- ❖ *The Institution should establish rules for the provision of appropriate access and for the assurance of the participation of students affected by disability, illness, and other special circumstances.*
- ❖ *Ethical issues, such as those concerning data protection, intellectual property rights and rules for protection against fraud are governed by the e-learning regulation.*

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

#### **Documentation**

- *Internal regulation for the operation of the postgraduate study programme*
- *Special regulation for the implementation of e-learning if the PSP is delivered through distance methods*
- *Research Ethics Regulation*

- *Regulation of studies, internship, mobility, and student assignments*
- *Degree certificate template and Diploma Supplement template*

## **Study Programme Compliance**

### **I. Findings**

Although the PSP is currently undergoing accreditation as a new programme, it has a history of 20 years in a prior form starting in 2004. The language of instruction is Greek and students are accepted into the programme so long as they satisfy the admissions criteria that include written entry exams, the UG degree classification, and appropriate work experience (plus knowledge of English).

Throughout the two taught semesters, student attainment and progression are monitored by the academic staff who teach on the units as well as by the assigned academic advisor. There is a policy whereby 3 PG students are allocated per academic advisor, allowing for a good balance and a manageable workload. The assessment mix comprises assignments and final exams, which allows students to demonstrate how well they have achieved the programme's learning objectives. During the summer period, students undertake a dissertation which has a very well-defined set of guidelines and requirements and can be written in Greek or English. In the event of student appeals, a formal process is in place to manage appeals and complaints.

Overall, there are appropriate procedures in place to manage all phases and aspects of studies, including admission, progression, recognition of studies, and certification.

### **II. Analysis**

The PSP has established well-defined and appropriate admissions criteria. These criteria are necessary as a filtering mechanism to manage the large number of applicants (about 100) for the 30 available placements. Part of the programme's popularity seems to emerge from the lack of tuition fees, a commendable practice. For this reason, the programme has no need to offer scholarships.

Students can find all necessary information about the structure of the programme, teaching staff, timetables, studies rules and regulations, and procedures in the website of the PSP. The programme recognises and applies the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) consistently across the curriculum. The total academic load is 90 ECTS units, 60 for units (8 compulsory and 4 elective units, each with 5 ECTS) and 30 for the dissertation. Students can participate in the ERASMUS+ exchange programme for up to 12 months.



### III. Conclusions

There are appropriate and well-designed procedures in place with respect to all aspects of studies, from admission to certification. Based on this, we conclude that the PSP is fully compliant with the requirements of Principle 3.

#### Panel Judgement

Principle 3: Regulations for Student Admission, Progression, Recognition of Postgraduate Studies, and certification	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

#### Panel Recommendations

None

## Principle 4: Teaching Staff of New 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 and scientific competence of the teaching staff at the PSP, the appropriate staff-student ratio, the proper staff categories, the appropriate subject areas, the fair and objective recruitment process, the high research performance, the training, 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, policy for attracting highly qualified staff, and PSP Obligation Regulation*
- *List of the intended for recruitment teaching staff including subject areas, employment relationship, Institution of origin, Department of origin and relevant individual achievements*

### Study Programme Compliance

#### I. Findings

The Master in Business Administration (MBA) Program PSP at the University of Patras was inaugurated in 1999, but it was overhauled about two years ago, and this is why it has the designation of NEW MBA. The twenty instructors of the new Master in Business Administration (MBA) Program PSP at the University of Patras consist of distinguished academicians from Greece as well as some practitioners with a rich experience and a stellar career in organizations in both private and public sector. Their accomplishments in the field consist of both instructional and research endeavors and accomplishments.

The selection of the teaching staff of the PSP is transparent and with strict merit-based criteria, according to law 4957/2022 for the postgraduate programs of study and the PSP operational manual (A12). These merit-based criteria relate to

the candidate's command of the topic to be taught, the quality and the number of publications, his/her teaching and research experience, his/her service to the department, and finally his/her standing in international fora. The PSP department is occasionally trying to enrich its teaching staff with adjunct instructors who are also subject to similar strict selection merit-based criteria according to law 4957/2023. In addition to the experience and knowledge of his/her field of study adjunct professors need to have teaching and research experience and a number of publications, as well as a European and/or international orientation.

The professional development opportunities for the faculty represent a very important element in the establishment of the program as a premier educational contribution for the University and the Department and has materialized through the Group of Internal Evaluation (OMEA) of the Department in collaboration with NKUA's Unit of Quality Assurance (MODIP). To that effect the Department showcases the scientific and instructional accomplishments that take place within the framework of PSP and are publicized on the website of the Department and the PSP. The Department supports the research activities of its faculty, which it deems as conducive to better instructional capabilities down the road. To that effect, it grants educational leaves of absence for scientific and instructional purposes in Greece or abroad and funding within the legislative framework. These funds along with the PSP's budget provides funds to the faculty for transportation, publicity and showcasing of PSP faculty research, organizing conferences with external stakeholders as speakers, seminars, etc. They also fund participation in scientific conferences and seminars, inter-university exchanges, presentations of seminars to other Universities, etc.

Staff mobility is also supported by allowing a short-term instructional period to foreign universities and in exchange programs with universities abroad for teaching or research collaborative purposes. The average workload of the departmental DEP members in the study program is approximately 6 hours a week which translates, according to the specific course and topic, into the range of 6 and 10 hours, without counting any lab work and grading. Finally, the average workload of the faculty teaching in the PSP has increased significantly, because of the mentoring of theses and doctoral dissertations, and also due to the large number of electives offered which results in spreading the faculty resources too thin. Finally, because of legal constraints, there is no faculty release time for extremely productive research faculty.

There is no specific linkage of teaching and research mentioned in the PSP report, but maybe the reason is that it is considered obvious and necessary. The prestige of the University of Patras, especially in the region, is such that does not allow any deviation from a direct, continuous, and permanent linkage between teaching and research, with the assumption being that excellent teaching cannot possibly be achieved without scientific and academic examinations into each instructor's field.

And conversely, excellent academic endeavors are destined to improve one's teaching abilities with the students being the recipients of the benefits.

The instructor's evaluation by the students is accomplished via electronic surveys within a special MODIP platform which contains both quantitative and qualitative open-ended questions. These electronic surveys are activated by the instructors and according to the directives of MODIP, during the last three weeks of the course, and the students can anonymously evaluate the instructor, and the course per se by filling the survey on the specific website at the end of the course. The faculty is also obligated to submit to the department a report on the state of the course, with suggestions for revision, addition, or elimination of specific topics.

1. The course (purpose, material organization, quality of teaching materials, difficulty level).
2. The tests, and term papers (topic, comments, and instructor guidance)
3. The instructor (organization and delivery of the lectures, responses to questions, professionalism, and availability to the students)
4. EDIP's contribution to the course
5. The labs (level of difficulty, notes, equipment)
6. The student (attendance and individual response to the academic obligations)

There is no defined research strategy as such for the PSP focusing on specific scientific areas, but throughout the references on the instructional staff the "relatedness" of the research undertaken to the main theme and field of study of the PSP is emphasized. This is expected not only during the tenure of the individual faculty within the PSP, but also expected from any new faculty and adjunct that is examined and approved by the PSP.

Finally, even though the department emphasizes excellence, innovation, and quality of both teaching and research there is no merit award and/or recognition within the department for such accomplishments to acknowledge the contribution of a faculty member in the areas of teaching, research, and service, but only at the university wide level.

## **II. Analysis**

It is obvious that the PSP of the new MBA at the University of Patras ensures a level of knowledge and skills of their teaching staff and applies transparent processes for faculty recruitment, training, and further development. This way there is a continuous improvement effort for quality enhancement but not additional fund procurement, and thus, sustainability of the program by supporting the professional development of the faculty to improve their teaching capabilities.

### III. Conclusions

There is evidence that the new MBA PSP is fully compliant with the requirements of Principle 4.

#### Panel Judgement

Principle 4: Teaching Staff of New Postgraduate Programmes	Study
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

#### Panel Recommendations

R4.1 To the extent it is feasible, the Department should try to establish a merit system to measure the contribution of each faculty member in the areas of teaching, research, and service. The PSP may consider adopting an incentive scheme for research active faculty to the extent that this is feasible legally and financially.

R4.2 It would be wise to investigate the possibility of charging tuition to ensure the viability of the program since it is quite popular in the region with many applicants every year for only 30 seats, and since employers highly regard the graduates they hire from the program.

## Principle 5: Learning Resources and Student Support

**INSTITUTIONS SHOULD HAVE ADEQUATE FUNDING TO COVER THE TEACHING AND LEARNING NEEDS OF THE POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES. 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, 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 and foreign students, students with disabilities), in addition to the shift towards student-centered 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 support structure and learning resources for the students in the new MBA programme consists of the following elements:

- Academic email
- E-learning application
- Library and Information Centre

- Department of Employment, Careers and Liaison
- Student Advocate
- Social Care Services

Staffing these services with specialised support and administrative staff:

The University of Patras' support and administrative personnel play a key role in providing high-quality services to students enrolled in the MBA programme. These employees are specialised and are given additional opportunity to improve their abilities. The MBA support activities within the Business Administration Department are constantly developed, and students are kept informed about the services available.

Assessment of resource adequacy.

The Department of Business Administration's logistical infrastructure meets the MBA's requirements. All essential meetings are held on the Department's premises (classrooms, seminar rooms, and labs equipped with microphones, laptops, projectors, and WiFi internet access). The Library & Information Centre of the University of Patras offers asynchronous e-learning (eclass) as well as electronic access to international journals, other Greek and foreign libraries, information banks, and so on.

Furthermore, the Department has full access to the University of Patras' physical resources (gym, library, conference center, etc.) as well as its advanced digital infrastructure, allowing it to transcend traditional teaching methods and foster student innovation.

The Master of Business Administration of the Department of Business Administration of the University of Patra has no tuition fees, which may have an impact on the learning resources and student support.

## **II. Analysis**

Overall, the provided learning resources and student support for the new MBA of the University of Patras is adequate. However, because of the lack of additional resources, either from tuition or government funding, could be improved.

### III. Conclusions

We conclude that the Postgraduate program (PSP) is fully compliant with the requirements of Principle 5.

#### Panel Judgement

Principle 5: Learning Resources and Student Support	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

#### Panel Recommendations

R5.1: The creation of an alumni network as a way of creating inter-cohort relationships and embolden the links with employers.



## **Principle 6: Initial Internal and External Evaluation and Monitoring of New Postgraduate Study Programmes**

**INSTITUTIONS AND ACADEMIC UNITS SHOULD HAVE IN PLACE AN INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM, FOR THE AUDIT, INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL EVALUATION OF THE NEW POSTGRADUATE PROGRAMMES, THUS ENSURING COMPLIANCE WITH THE PRINCIPLES OF THE PRESENT STANDARDS. ANY ACTIONS TAKEN IN THE ABOVE CONTEXT SHOULD BE COMMUNICATED TO ALL PARTIES CONCERNED.**

*The internal evaluation of the new PSP includes the assessment of the accreditation proposal, as well as the documentation in accordance with the Principles of the present Standards and the quality procedures of the Institution's Internal Quality Assurance System (IQAS). The internal evaluation of new postgraduate study programmes also aims at maintaining the level of educational provision and creating a supportive and effective learning environment for students. The Institution, through its Quality Assurance Unit (QAU) and the corresponding academic units, organise and support the external evaluation procedures of the new PSP, according to the specific guidelines and directions provided by HAHE.*

*The above comprise the assessment of:*

- the objectives, content, and structure of the curriculum, the knowledge offered and the level of science and technology in the given discipline, thus ensuring that the PSP is up to date, according to the relevant documentation listed in the decisions of the pertinent bodies*
- the entailed students' workload for the progression and completion of postgraduate studies*
- the satisfaction of the students' expectations and needs in relation to the programme*
- the learning environment, support services, and their fitness for purpose for the PSP in question*

*Postgraduate study programmes are designed and established in accordance with the provisions of the Institution's internal regulations, involving students and other stakeholders.*

### **Documentation**

- The Quality Assurance Unit (QAU) procedure for verifying whether the requirements of the Standards for Quality Accreditation of New PSP are met, as well as the procedure for organising and supporting their external evaluation procedures*
- Assessment and feedback mechanisms of the PSP strategy and quality targeting, and relevant decision-making processes (students, external stakeholders)*

## **Study Programme Compliance**

### **I. Findings**

The PSP has developed a robust internal process to collect, analyse and produce some strategic insights, based on the information and data collected during the academic year. Together with MODIP, the programme director, the PSP steering committee and OMEA will collect the necessary information and produce an annual periodic internal review report. The data collected consists of information regarding the academic staff, in particular their research and teaching performance, information about the students' performance and their prior academic background, while students evaluations on courses contents, assessment methods and teaching staff performance are also crucial at this data collection exercise.

Moreover, there is an appropriate strategy to draft an annual internal evaluation of the programme, based on students' background and overall performance on PSP, as well as on the academic staff performance. This annual internal report is discussed and validated within the departmental general meeting. OMEA is in charge of this evaluation, but MODIP will have the overarching supervision of the internal review process of the PSP and will maintain the necessary data from each academic year.

### **II. Analysis**

There is a robust process in place to take care of the internal periodic evaluation of the PSP. Each faculty has to submit a report on the state of the course to the OMEA, which turns their report to MODIP to verify that the process is in accordance with the institution's internal evaluation standards and to HAHE ones. There is clear evidence that the views of all interested stakeholders (teaching staff, students, departmental members) are taken into serious consideration in these monitoring exercises.

There is a clear plan for the further reinforcement of good practices of the PSP, as they are developed and assessed by annual OMEA reports, changes in the institutional regulations, HAHE instructions and decisions, the feedforward by the academic staff, PSP students and the programme graduates and the job market conditions.

### **III. Conclusions**

The PSP has set a number of mechanisms for its periodic internal and external evaluation. The internal evaluation is properly laid out and is structured in a way to benefit students and all relevant parties. However, the external evaluation is not up to par with the internal processes.

### Panel Judgement

Principle 6: Initial Internal and External Evaluation and Monitoring of New Postgraduate Study Programmes	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	<b>X</b>
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

### Panel Recommendations

R6.1: The establishment of an external stakeholder advisory board could further enhance the input and quality of another external feedback mechanism for the PSP.

## **PART C: CONCLUSIONS**

### **I. Features of Good Practice**

1. There is a robust learning process that is validated by employers, as evidenced by the enthusiasm and satisfaction with the MBA graduates that they have hired.
2. The full mentoring programme that is in place for each individual student.

### **II. Areas of Weakness**

1. There is absence of institutionalised feedback from external stakeholders and industry representatives.
2. There is no wider visibility of the programme in terms of reputation and activities in the region.
3. Disproportionate number of electives offered in relation to the number of students in the programme.

### **III. Recommendations for Follow-up Actions**

- R1: Consider an increase in the number of admitted students, given the PSP academic quality and the job market needs in highly skilled professionals.
- R2: Consider the development of an international version of the MBA programme, offered in English for international students.
- R3: Consider the introduction of online version of the PSP, in order to become more widely available to the wider regional and international student market.
- R4: Use more updated and current bibliography and textbooks in some courses, as appropriate.
- R5: Consider course content enhancing communication and interpersonal skills of students.
- R6: The PSP should try to establish a faculty merit system to measure the contribution of faculty members in the areas of teaching, research, and service.
- R7: Consider the introduction of tuition fees as a means to increase funding resources and ensure the programme's long term sustainability.
- R8: The establishment of an external stakeholder advisory board.
- R9: The establishment of an alumni network.

#### IV. Summary & Overall Assessment

The Principles where full compliance has been achieved are:**1,2,3,4,5**

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

The Principles where partial compliance has been achieved are:**None**

The Principles where failure of compliance was identified are:**None**

Overall Judgement	
Fully compliant	<b>X</b>
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

## The members of the External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel

**Name and Surname**

**Signature**

1. Andreas Tsopanakis
2. Evangelos Dedousis
3. George Vozikis
4. Kyriakos Neanidis
5. Erasmia Aggelaki