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ΤΗΣ ΠΟΙΟΤΗΤΑΣ ΣΤΗΝ ΑΝΩΤΑΤΗ
ΕΚΠΑΙΔΕΥΣΗ

HELLENIC REPUBLIC

H.Q.A.

HELLENIC QUALITY ASSURANCE
AND ACCREDITATION AGENCY

EXTERNAL EVALUATION REPORT

**Programme in Black Sea Cultural Studies
International Hellenic University**



European Union
European Social Fund



MINISTRY OF EDUCATION & RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS, CULTURE & SPORTS
MANAGING AUTHORITY

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

The External Evaluation Committee

Introduction

I. The External Evaluation Procedure

- Brief account of documents examined, of the Site Visit, meetings and facilities visited.

II. The Internal Evaluation Procedure

- Comments on the quality and completeness of the documentation provided and on the overall acceptance of and participation in the Quality Assurance procedures by the Department .

A. Curriculum

APPROACH

- Goals and objectives of the Curriculum, structure and content, intended learning outcomes.

IMPLEMENTATION

- Rationality, functionality, effectiveness of the Curriculum.

RESULTS

- Maximizing success and dealing with potential inhibiting factors.

IMPROVEMENT

- Planned improvements.

B. Teaching

APPROACH:

- Pedagogic policy and methodology, means and resources.

IMPLEMENTATION

- Quality and evaluation of teaching procedures, teaching materials and resources, mobility.

RESULTS

- Efficacy of teaching, understanding of positive or negative results.

IMPROVEMENT

- Proposed methods for improvement.

C. Research

APPROACH

- Research policy and main objectives.

IMPLEMENTATION

- Research promotion and assessment, quality of support and infrastructure.

RESULTS

- Research projects and collaborations, scientific publications and applied results.

IMPROVEMENT

- Proposed initiatives aiming at. improvement.

D. All Other Services

APPROACH

- Quality and effectiveness of services provided by the Department.

IMPLEMENTATION

- Organization and infrastructure of the Department's administration (e.g. secretariat of the Department).

RESULTS

- Adequateness and functionality of administrative and other services.

IMPROVEMENTS

- Proposed initiatives aiming at improvement.

Collaboration with social, cultural and production organizations**E. Strategic Planning, Perspectives for Improvement and Dealing with Potential Inhibiting Factors**

- Short-, medium- and long-term goals and plans of action proposed by the Department.

F. Final Conclusions and recommendations of the EEC on:

- The development and present situation of the Department, good practices and weaknesses identified through the External Evaluation process, recommendations for improvement.

External Evaluation Committee

The Committee responsible for the External Evaluation of the Department MA Programme in Black Seas Cultural Studies of the National Hellenic University consisted of the following three (3) expert evaluators drawn from the Registry constituted by the HQA in accordance with Law 3374/2005 :

1. **Professor Dr. Kyrill Pavlikianov**, University of Sofia “St. Kliment Ohridski”, Bulgaria (Coordinator)
2. **Professor Dr. Timothy Duff**, University of Reading, United Kingdom
3. **Dr. Gina Salapata**, Massey University, New Zealand.

Introduction

I. The External Evaluation Procedure

- Dates and brief account of the site visit.
- Whom did the Committee meet?
- List of Reports, documents, other data examined by the Committee.
- Groups of teaching and administrative staff and students interviewed
- Facilities visited by the External Evaluation Committee.

II. The Internal Evaluation Procedure

Please comment on:

- Appropriateness of sources and documentation used
- Quality and completeness of evidence reviewed and provided
- To what extent have the objectives of the internal evaluation process been met by the Department?

I. The External Evaluation Procedure

The External Evaluation Committee (EEC) conducted their review between 10 and 15 February 2014. After initial briefing at the HQAA office, the three members of the committee travelled to Thessaloniki, and spent two full days on-site at the International Hellenic University (IHU) (Monday to Wednesday, 10-12 February). On the Monday afternoon, after a brief orientation meeting with the Dean of the School of Humanities, the Dean of the School of Science and Technology, and the Head of Education Administration, there were presentations on:

1. The recruitment process.
2. The university's Quality Assurance Unit, which involved an explanation of the impressive procedures the university has for monitoring student satisfaction.
3. The library and its services, including a tour of the library.

There was also a tour of the buildings and teaching rooms, and a short meeting via Skype with the Chairman of the Governing Board of the university, Professor Costas Grammenos.

During the next two days the EEC were given well-organised and informative presentations on:

1. The School of Humanities
2. The School's organisation and administrative structures.
3. The School's research activities.
4. The MA programme in Black Sea Cultural Studies.
5. The Summer Schools organised by the School of Humanities.
6. The extra-curricular activities available to students of the IHU.
7. The IHU Careers Office.
8. The IHU Computer Services Department.
9. The IHU Special Account and Research Funds Management Committee.

There was also a brief meeting with the Vice President of the University and Chairman of the Special Account Committee, Professor Nicolas Moussiopoulos. There was a limited amount of time for questions after each presentation. The EEC also held separate meetings with two groups of students and with a number of the adjunct teaching staff, and examined a sample of coursework, examination question papers and scripts, and dissertations. We also had the opportunity to sit-in briefly on two classes. The programme was extremely well organised and comprehensive, though the EEC would have liked slightly more time than was allowed for meeting with students.

II. The Internal Evaluation Procedure

Despite the short notice given to the School of the dates of the evaluation, the very full documentation provided to the EEC both before and during the visit, including but not limited to the Internal Evaluation Report for 2010-11, was of the highest standard, and reflected an institutional culture in which a continual process of internal evaluation is already embedded.

An impressively full and clearly organised dossier was provided to the EEC at the start of the visit, including all the slides used in presentations, and providing full information on the programme of studies, on research, on the decision-making and committee structures, on research and research grant applications, on the services provided by the wider university, and on much else besides. On the few occasions when the EEC requested additional information or statistics, either during the visit or subsequently, this was provided immediately.

The School's website, which is comprehensive and up-to-date, and the e-learning portal, to which access was provided, also assisted the EEC greatly.

The EEC is fully satisfied that both School and University have robust procedures for internal evaluation, and that the EEC were provided with all the information which they needed.

A. Curriculum

To be filled separately for each undergraduate, graduate and doctoral programme.

APPROACH

- What are the goals and objectives of the Curriculum? What is the plan for achieving them?
- How were the objectives decided? Which factors were taken into account? Were they set against appropriate standards? Did the unit consult other stakeholders?
- Is the curriculum consistent with the objectives of the Curriculum and the requirements of the society?

- How was the curriculum decided? Were all constituents of the Department, including students and other stakeholders, consulted?
- Has the unit set a procedure for the revision of the curriculum?

The objectives of the curriculum are:

1. To provide specialised education in subjects relating to the Black Sea region, such as archaeology, history, ethnography, historical geography, art, religion, mythology, politics, diplomacy and economics. 2. To enable students to develop skills in critical thinking, in argumentation and academic writing, and in the use of English.

The curriculum is multi-disciplinary and covers all periods from antiquity to the present day. It is taught entirely in English, and may be taken either full-time over 14 months or part-time over 26 months.

The objectives are met through a well-designed curriculum, which provides students with both a core body of knowledge and allows specialisation in areas of students' interest. All students take 2 core modules on the historical geography of the Black Sea region from ancient to modern times (9 ECTS each = 18), and 7 elective modules out of a choice, in 2013-14, of 13 (6 ECTS each = 42). All students write a dissertation (30 ECTS) on a subject of their choice.

The MA in Black Sea Cultural Studies is one of only two postgraduate programmes in Greece covering this area of study, and is the only one worldwide to be taught in English. Its curriculum meets the best international standards and is entirely suitable for the objectives of the programme. The curriculum is regularly reviewed and revised; there is a stream-lined and efficient committee structure for this. In the short time since the programme has been running, the curriculum has once been substantially revised by abolishing the need for students to specialise in one of two streams (archaeology/history or politics/economy), and the list of available courses has been thereby altered; standardisation has also been implemented across all courses in the relative weighting of coursework and exams.

Both the programme as a whole and all the individual courses in particular are regularly evaluated by the students at fixed points in time. This is done online through the use of standardised forms and is anonymous. The results of these evaluations are scrutinised and action taken where appropriate.

IMPLEMENTATION

- How effectively is the Department's goal implemented by the curriculum?
- How does the curriculum compare with appropriate, universally accepted standards for the specific area of study?
- Is the structure of the curriculum rational and clearly articulated?
- Is the curriculum coherent and functional?
- Is the material for each course appropriate and the time offered sufficient?
- Does the Department have the necessary resources and appropriately qualified and trained staff to implement the curriculum?

The School of Humanities, and more specifically the MA in Black Sea Cultural Studies, is

very small in terms of the number of staff employed. The Dean of the School, who is also the Programme Director of the MA, is a full-time professor in the Aristotelian University of Thessaloniki, and, despite his enormous contribution, paid on only an ad hoc basis. There is only one member of staff employed on a regular academic contract, at the rank of Assistant Professor. There are two Academic Associates, whose duties are mainly in research, though in fact they contribute greatly to the running of the programme and to the student experience by acting as mentors and running the course on academic writing and methodology. Key figures, whose efficiency, helpfulness and flexibility are valued by both staff and students, are the Programme Manager and Course Officer. The students with whom the EEC met expressed particular satisfaction with the approachable and helpful manner of all members of the teaching staff, and of the Course and Programme Officers, whose efficiency and kindness was much appreciated.

The MA programme in Black Sea Cultural Studies works extremely well. The curriculum meets all international standards. Its structure is entirely rational and is clearly articulated in the Student Handbook, a document of more than 70 pages, which gives not only clear and detailed information about the programme structure and about each course, but also a great deal of other information about regulations and policies, and the facilities available to students in the university.

Each course consists of 39 contact hours, giving a total of $(2+7) \times 39 = 351$ contact hours (not counting dissertation supervision). This is more than sufficient. Course materials are entirely appropriate. Class schedules and bibliographies for every course are printed in the Student Handbook, which students receive at the start of the academic year.

The staff teaching on the MA programme in Black Sea Cultural Studies are appropriately qualified. It is important to state, however, that of the 17 courses offered, only 4 are taught by staff employed on continuing teaching contracts by the institution (in fact, by the single Assistant Professor); the others are taught by visiting or adjunct staff. However, all external teaching staff are well qualified; all have PhD's, and the visiting staff hold positions at other universities, in some cases senior positions as full professors. All external staff teach courses which fall within their own areas of expertise.

In addition to the courses which they follow for credit, students on the programme take a non-credit-bearing compulsory course in Academic Writing and Methodology, which includes topics such as referencing, understanding plagiarism, and research-proposal writing, which are intended to prepare students for their dissertation.

Both School and University, rightly, take very seriously the need to prevent plagiarism, and have a strict policy of zero tolerance, which is communicated to students in the Course Handbook. The Academic Writing and Methodology seminars educate students about correct academic practice and how to avoid plagiarism.

RESULTS

- How well is the implementation achieving the Department's predefined goals and objectives?
- If not, why is it so? How is this problem dealt with?

- Does the Department understand why and how it achieved or failed to achieve these results?

The goals and objectives of the programme are implemented very successfully. The School of Humanities, which is responsible for the MA programme in Black Sea Cultural Studies, is very much aware of the strengths of the programme and the reasons for its success.

IMPROVEMENT

- Does the Department know how the Curriculum should be improved?
- Which improvements does the Department plan to introduce?

The School is aware of the need to monitor the success of the programme and to make appropriate changes: in the short time since the programme has been running (it is now in its fourth year) at least one major change of curriculum structure has been made (see above). There has also been a striking rise in student satisfaction with various aspects of the programme and the support services since the programme began, as documented in the results of student questionnaires, a fact which demonstrates that the School and University are responding to student concerns.

No major changes are planned to the programme in Black Sea Cultural Studies at the current time, and, in the judgement of the EEC, none are needed. But the School has plans to introduce three new MA programmes: an MA in Eastern Mediterranean Archaeology and an MA in Cultural Environment and Technology in the Ancient Greek World, both of which are pending approval by the Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs, Culture and Sports, and an MA in Classics (with special focus on Macedonia).

B. Teaching

APPROACH:

Does the Department have a defined pedagogic policy with regard to teaching approach and methodology?

Please comment on :

- Teaching methods used
- Teaching staff/ student ratio
- Teacher/student collaboration
- Adequacy of means and resources
- Use of information technologies
- Examination system

The teaching methods used are appropriate. Class sizes are small and there is a high degree of interaction between staff and students in the classroom, a fact which students greatly appreciated. Attendance is required at all classes (an unusual feature in the Greek Higher Education System), and is closely monitored. Penalties are imposed for students who miss more than 25% of classes. To assist students who work in the mornings, classes are conducted only in the afternoon and evening.

Each student is also assigned to one of the two Academic Assistants as mentor, whom they may approach for guidance on academic or pastoral matters. The mentoring system provides an additional level of interaction between staff and students. Students are satisfied with how approachable members of the staff are, and with how well organised each course and the

programme as a whole are. They also appreciate the advice they receive for their research at the thesis level.

It is not possible to give an exact staff/student ratio, as most courses are taught by visiting or adjunct staff, and the 2 Academic Associates employed in the School do not teach credit-bearing courses themselves, though they offer methodological seminars and are active in student support. Since according to Greek law dissertations may be supervised only by staff of the rank of Assistant Professor or above, all students are formally-speaking assigned to the one member of staff who meets this criterion; in practice, however, the School is active in arranging additional informal supervision by relevant experts at other universities or even in students' home countries. It is potentially problematic that so much of the teaching is done by adjunct or visiting staff; but the EEC saw no evidence that this had any adverse effect; on the contrary, it appeared to be a strength that students had access to such a range of well-qualified teachers.

Information technology (powerpoint, video, skype, etc.) is fully integrated into all parts of the programme. Classrooms are extremely well equipped. The e-learning platform is well exploited for all courses. Students are also provided with access to a large number of PCs, and to generous IT support.

Teaching and learning resources are excellent. The e-learning platform is extensively used and provides students with the opportunity to download all essential material relating to each course, or to the methodological classes, even before the semester begins. It also gives students access to useful documents relating to the programme as a whole (e.g. handbook, past papers, extenuating circumstances form, essay coversheets, etc).

Teaching rooms are well-equipped and more than adequate in size. The library provides good access to online resources, both on campus and off, via VPN. The main weakness is in the provision of books (hard copy or e-book); this is to be expected in such a new university, and the committee were confident that the university is making efforts to rectify this. The library has impressively long opening hours (9am to 8pm on weekdays, 9am to 5pm on Saturdays, 10am to 3pm on Sundays). There is generous provision of computers for student use in PC-rooms, which are open to students 24 hours a day.

Examination and assessment:

Courses are examined through a coursework essay (30% of the course mark) and an end-of-semester exam (70%). Students felt that the present weighting did not give sufficient recognition to the work done for the coursework essay, a view with which the EEC has some sympathy. The EEC recommends that the School consider whether, for a programme at MA level, there may be too much emphasis on exams, and whether increasing the weighting given to coursework might better achieve the curriculum goals, as coursework allows students to practise and demonstrate skills in research, in academic writing, and in the presentation of in-depth analysis. The completion of more substantial essays might also provide a better training for the dissertation.

The School might also like to consider whether there is room for greater standardisation in the setting of exam papers, especially as regards the number and type of questions set, and the rubric used. The EEC noticed a few cases of ambiguity in the wording of exam questions,

and considered that some questions, especially one-word answer or multiple choice questions, may be less appropriate at Masters' level, or at least less appropriate if they form a large percentage of the marks available. The School could consider whether more open-ended questions which elicit a more analytical approach might be more appropriate. The EEC also noted a few cases where there appeared to be a misalignment between the content of a course and the content of the exam, which had the potential to disadvantage students. Many of these issues concerning the setting of exams could be dealt with by instituting a system of internal scrutiny of exam question papers, and by having some standardisation in both the rubrics used and the format and structure of exams. A system of scrutiny and clear guidance to those setting exams is particularly desirable given that most courses are taught by adjunct staff.

The EEC noted some inconsistencies in the marking of exams, and recommends that consideration be given to instituting a degree of internal moderation, so as to ensure that best practice is maintained in relation to all courses and all exams. The School might also consider whether there ought to be some guidance as to what students ought to expect in terms of feedback on exams and on drafts of coursework and dissertations.

The EEC wishes to make clear that the standards of examining are already high; the measures recommended would simply bring it more into accordance with best practice internationally.

IMPLEMENTATION

Please comment on:

- Quality of teaching procedures
- Quality and adequacy of teaching materials and resources.
- Quality of course material. Is it brought up to date?
- Linking of research with teaching
- Mobility of academic staff and students
- Evaluation by the students of (a) the teaching and (b) the course content and study material/resources

Teaching procedures, materials and resources are of the highest standards. Course material given to students, both in the Student Handbook, online and in class, is excellent and up to date. Most courses are taught by experts who are active in research in that field. The staff as individuals are highly motivated; and the institutional culture is one that values innovation and flexibility.

Mobility of students is naturally limited by the fact that the programme lasts only 14 months, though there have been several Erasmus exchanges, both incoming and outgoing. There is also a high number of international students (roughly 20-40% of the student body), which contributes to an international atmosphere, and guest lectures are frequently provided by scholars from abroad. The fact that all teaching, and all support services, are conducted in English is undoubtedly a key factor in explaining the high numbers of international students. Teaching staff attend conferences and present papers abroad; generous funding is provided for this for those on continuing contracts.

The School offers a number of Summer Schools, which are attended by its own students, as well as students from elsewhere in Greece and from a range of other countries. In 2014 four 12-day Summer Schools will take place: Nationalism, Regionalism and Violence; Ancient

Technology and Crafts; Ancient Macedonia; Hellenic Culture and History (in association with McGill University in Canada, and to be attended by 60 McGill students). These Summer Schools, which were vastly over-subscribed, raise the international visibility of both School and University. The School might also consider offering an optional study tour in the Black Sea area in order to enrich the experience of students and add some context to their studies.

The University has an impressive and well-organised system by which students evaluate each course and the programme as a whole, through both a Student-Staff Liaison Committee and the completion of anonymous questionnaires, which are completed for each course and upon completion of the programme ('exit questionnaire'). The results of these evaluations are tabulated and scrutinised, and action taken as appropriate. From the information provided to the EEC and from its discussions with students, it is clear that students have a very high degree of satisfaction with the teaching, the course content and the study materials and resources. Their main suggestions were that the library does not have enough relevant books, and that exams may be weighted too heavily in comparison with coursework – an observation with which the EEC agrees.

RESULTS

Please comment on:

- Efficacy of teaching.
- Discrepancies in the success/failure percentage between courses and how they are justified.
- Differences between students in (a) the time to graduation, and (b) final degree grades.
- Whether the Department understands the reasons of such positive or negative results?

The teaching is successful. There is an almost 100% pass rate and no students overrun the 14 months allowed for the programme. There appear to be no major differences between student results across different courses, nor in final degree grades. However, given the large number of external teaching staff employed, the EEC recommends that the School continues to monitor this issue carefully.

IMPROVEMENT

- Does the Department propose methods and ways for improvement?
- What initiatives does it take in this direction?

The School has no immediate plans to change its teaching.

C. Research

For each particular matter, please distinguish between under- and post-graduate level, if necessary.

APPROACH

- What is the Department's policy and main objective in research?
- Has the Department set internal standards for assessing research?

The MA programme in Black Sea Cultural Studies does not itself perform research, but the 4 members of the academic staff of the School of Humanities, which provides the programme,

are extremely active in research, which they intend to be of international significance. Their research is assessed internally through annual, individual staff appraisals.

IMPLEMENTATION

- How does the Department promote and support research?
- Quality and adequacy of research infrastructure and support.
- Scientific publications.
- Research projects.
- Research collaborations.

Research is supported by the university with generous funding for travel to conferences, with excellent IT resources, and with access to e-journals and databases. Staff who publish in highly-rated international journals are rewarded with additional research funds.

The library, however, is still developing, and researchers rely on accessing the libraries of other institutions.

RESULTS

- How successfully were the Department's research objectives implemented?
- Scientific publications.
- Research projects.
- Research collaborations.
- Efficacy of research work. Applied results. Patents etc.
- Is the Department's research acknowledged and visible outside the Department?
Rewards and awards.

The research of the School is most impressive. All three staff on continuing contracts, and the Dean, are engaged in research of an international standard, and publish frequently in international journals or in the form of monographs, edited books, or contributions to volumes or conference proceedings. Adjunct staff are also research-active. An impressive number of public lectures, workshops, and round-table discussions contribute to the research culture.

The School is active in seeking external funding for large, collaborative projects. Two major research projects funded by external sponsors are underway: The first "The heroes of the Hellenes. The politics of war veteran rewards", has received funding from the Foundation of the Hellenic Parliament as well as the University, and involves a team of 7 researchers. The second project, "Mines, olives and monasteries: Towards an environmental macrohistory of Halkidiki", which entails the collaboration of almost 30 researchers from a range of disciplines, was evaluated as number 1 out of 156 applicants nationally to the Greece's General Secretariat for Research and Technology, and has been awarded €200,000 of Greek and EU public funding. It should be stressed that funding at this level is exceptional in the Humanities.

A grant application had been submitted to the Rothschild Foundation for funding for a third large-scale project "Escape, Endure, Survive: the wartime networks of the Greek-Jewish holocaust survivors", which would involve 4 researchers and 5 graduate students. There are

also plans to conduct an archaeological survey in the southern Black Sea area in collaboration with foreign institutions. In the medium-term, the School plans to establish a Centre for Black Sea Studies.

IMPROVEMENT

- Improvements in research proposed by the Department, if necessary.
- Initiatives in this direction undertaken by the Department .

The School's research activities are most impressive, and on an upward trajectory. The EEC has no wish to make further suggestions.

D. All Other Services

For each particular matter, please distinguish between under- and post-graduate level, if necessary.

APPROACH

- How does the Department view the various services provided to the members of the academic community (teaching staff, students).
- Does the Department have a policy to simplify administrative procedures? Are most procedures processed electronically?
- Does the Department have a policy to increase student presence on Campus?

The School views the support services provided at both university and School level as exceptionally good, and the EEC agrees with this assessment.

The support services are built around effective communication, efficiency, safety and pastoral care, enabling both students and staff to function efficiently and effectively. It was clear to the EEC that the support services are characterised by team work and a student-oriented approach. At the same time the firm rules, rigorous measures and high expectations establish a secure and organised environment in which students flourish.

A centralised electronic registration system manages many aspects of student records, including attendance at classes. Further automation is planned.

IMPLEMENTATION

- Organization and infrastructure of the Department's administration (e.g. secretariat of the Department).
- Form and function of academic services and infrastructure for students (e.g. library, PCs and free internet access, student counselling, athletic- cultural activity etc.).

Academic staff in the School are supported by the Programme Manager, who is responsible for the smooth daily operation of the Programme, and the Course Officer, who serves as a link between students, teaching staff and School. Course office services are available an impressive 12 hours a day in the teaching week, and whenever special events take place. The EEC was impressed by the office staff's enthusiasm, competence and personal touch. They carry out numerous tasks with great efficiency; in addition they have a policy of providing a 24 hour initial response to any student request, something unimaginable in most other Greek state universities. Their services are very much appreciated by both staff and students.

The two university buildings are very comfortable, modern and well equipped and maintained. They are also extremely clean and tidy, and free of graffiti. Classrooms and computer laboratories are extremely well-equipped with state of the art facilities for effective teaching. The excellent auditorium, with a capacity of ca. 200, can host a variety of public activities. Offices, computer labs and auxiliary spaces, like the cafeteria and courtyard, are well equipped and very comfortable. The library provides a very pleasant work and study environment, and has long opening hours. Free wi-fi access is available throughout the campus. Access to buildings is controlled through a card scanner, and students can access both the building and the computer labs safely 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Pastoral care provided to the students includes good support and advice before arrival, assistance for international students in finding accommodation and very useful seminars on Academic Writing and Methodology. Particularly commendable are the Student-Staff Liaison Committee, which ensure good communication between students and teaching staff and identifies areas where improvements can be made, and the mentoring scheme, undertaken by the Academic Associates, which provides academic and other advice. The web and Facebook sites of the School are well designed, clear and informative, and are regularly updated with news and information on relevant activities.

High quality services are provided by the Library, including an exceptional "Ask a Librarian" service. There are multiple copies of key books and digital resources are adequate. As noted earlier, the library has thin holdings, especially in politics and economics as they relate to the Black Sea region, but there is continuing effort to address this problem which is understandable in view of the very young age of the university.

The programme is further supported by excellent University services, such as IT, Careers Office and recruitment services, the last two being highly innovative in a Greek context at least for humanities. There is also an alumni association set up by the students and a variety of social clubs providing an enriching environment for students and staff.

Rigorous financial planning and the aim to become financially independent are commendable.

RESULTS

- Are administrative and other services adequate and functional?
- How does the Department view the particular results?

The administrative and other services provided by the university and the School are exceptionally good. The academic staff of the School are rightly satisfied with them. Structures and procedures are fit to be expanded to a much larger number of programmes and much greater student numbers.

IMPROVEMENTS

- Has the Department identified ways and methods to improve the services provided?
- Initiatives undertaken in this direction.

The School is aware that improvement of library holdings in the area is essential. The School administrators are actively seeking to streamline and standardise administrative processes.

The IT systems at university level are being constantly expanded and renewed.

Collaboration with social, cultural and production organizations

Please, comment on quality, originality and significance of the Department's initiatives.

The School makes a conscious effort to reach out to the local and wider community. Academic staff are actively involved in the cultural life of Thessaloniki and organise a variety of events, including public lectures and seminars by visiting scholars, visits to museums, galleries and archaeological sites, and Summer Schools. There is also faculty presence in traditional and new social media.

The School has relationships with the embassies of some Black Sea countries, and with relevant organisations and institutions from which they have secured some sponsorship.

E. Strategic Planning, Perspectives for Improvement and Dealing with Potential Inhibiting Factors

For each particular matter, please distinguish between under- and post-graduate level, if necessary.

Please, comment on the Department's:

- Potential inhibiting factors at State, Institutional and Departmental level, and proposals on ways to overcome them.
- Short-, medium- and long-term goals.
- Plan and actions for improvement by the Department/Academic Unit
- Long-term actions proposed by the Department.

The EEC was fully satisfied that the School, and the wider university, is forward-looking and ambitious, and that strategic planning in the short-, medium- and long-term is strong. There are plans for expansion both of student numbers and of the MA programmes offered within the School, with two new programmes pending approval from the Ministry and a third planned, and for the introduction of a PhD programme, all of which are feasible. The School also has plans to develop a distance-learning programme. There are ambitious research plans. All new ventures and expansion plans are carefully costed; all Masters programmes have five-year financial plans, with the aim of reaching financial self-sufficiency.

The IHU is relatively young, and there is great potential for its visibility within Greece and internationally to be increased, an aim which the School and university are working towards meeting.

The most important inhibiting factor is the bureaucratic workings of the Greek state, which *inter alia* makes the process for approval of new programmes cumbersome.

F. Final Conclusions and recommendations of the EEC

For each particular matter, please distinguish between under- and post-graduate level, if necessary.

Conclusions and recommendations of the EEC on:

- the development of the Department to this date and its present situation, including explicit comments on good practices and weaknesses identified through the External Evaluation process and recommendations for improvement
- the Department's readiness and capability to change/improve
- the Department's quality assurance.

The School of Humanities at the International Hellenic University is small and, like the University, has existed for less than 10 years. It offers only postgraduate education, an advantage which frees it from many of the constraints imposed on other Greek public universities; it is also well-funded, as the University receives substantial EU funds. The School is highly energetic and efficient, and the education it offers, in the form of the MA programme in Black Sea Cultural Studies, meets all international standards of excellence and is exemplary within the Greek public university system. In addition, the School's research is impressive and of international significance, and the School, despite its size, has a record of winning external research funding.

Particularly exemplary are the design of the curriculum, which is multi-disciplinary and introduces students to a geographical area of increasing geopolitical and economic importance; the full Programme Handbook; the measures taken to elicit student evaluation and feedback; the very rigorous provision for quality assurance of the programme at School and University level; the support offered to students through the mentoring system and by all staff; the efficient administrative procedures at both School and University level, including use of the latest IT; the e-learning platform; the long opening hours of the library and the 24-hour access provided to computer rooms; the modern, up-to-date and pleasant facilities. The fact that the programme is taught in English is also an unusual feature within the humanities in the Greek Higher Education system, but has proved enormously positive, for both the learning, personal development of Greek students and for the formation of a truly international student body.

The School has a clear vision for future expansion, and a clear set of goals in the short-, medium, and long-term. These goals are ambitious but entirely attainable.

In light of the above, the EEC has few recommendations:

1. That the University continue to provide funds for the expansion of library holdings in areas relevant to the Programme and to future programmes of the School of Humanities
2. That consideration be given to introducing more standardisation and a system of internal moderation in both the setting and marking of examinations and coursework, and to reducing the relative weighting of examinations.
3. That the School press forward with its plans for the introduction of further MA programmes.

The Members of the Committee

Name and Surname	Signature
1. Prof. Dr. Kyrill Pavlikianov	
2. Prof. Dr. Timothy Duff	
3. Dr. Gina Salapata	