ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ
HELLENIC REPUBLIC

Accreditation Report
for the Internal Quality Assurance System
(IQAS)

Institution Name: University of West Attica
Date: 5 December 2020

Report of the Panel appointed by the HAHE to undertake the review of the
Internal Quality Assurance System (IQAS) of the **University of West Attica**
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 **Internal Quality Assurance System (IQAS)** of the **University of West Attica** comprised the following four (4) members, drawn from the HAHE Register, in accordance with Laws 4009/2011 & 4653/2020:

1. **Professor Konstantinos Kontis (Chair)**
   University of Glasgow, United Kingdom

2. **Professor Emeritus Spyros Economides**
   California State University, East Bay, Berkeley, USA

3. **Professor Dimitrios Kotzinos**
   CY Cergy Pontoise University (former: Université de Cergy-Pontoise), France

4. **Professor Nicholas Kyriakopoulos**
   The George Washington University, Washington, D.C., USA

II. Review Procedure and Documentation

The Panel reviewed the material provided by HAHE (Hellenic Authority of Higher Education) in advance of the evaluation week and briefing. The briefing by HAHE took place on 26/11/2020. Additional information and further documentation were provided regarding the HAHE mission, standards and guidelines of IQAS (Internal Quality Assurance System) accreditation process, and national framework of Higher Education Institutes (HEIs) including the Quality Measure Metrics. On 30th November 2020, the Panel met in private to discuss the accreditation report for IQAS, allocate tasks and list of issues for the virtual visit. The Panel started the virtual visit at the University of West Attica (UNIWA) on 01/12/2020. The first meeting was with the Rector and the Vice-Rectors for a short overview regarding its history, vision, mission, Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), and academic profile. Further presentations provided useful information about UNIWA current status, strengths and possible areas of concern. In the virtual meeting with the Quality Assurance Unit (QUA/MODIP) – Vice-Rector of Academic and Student Affairs and MODIP members – the Panel investigated the degree of compliance of the Internal Quality Assurance System with the Standards for Quality Accreditation.

The Panel received further documentation and supporting material related to the presentations given by QUA/MODIP to facilitate their decision for UNIWA Quality Accreditation. There was a meeting with the Deans of the Schools, Heads of Departments and Internal Evaluation Groups (IEGs/OMEA) representatives. This facilitated the understanding of the internal evaluation review process, adequacy of resources and possible areas of weaknesses. In addition, discussions took place about the formulation of relationships among the IEGs/OMEA with QUA/MODIP. The Panel received additional information and supporting material about the Schools, administrative, financial, IT and procurement services, Estate & Buildings, Library, External Relations and Affairs. In the evening, the Panel met in private to reflect on the discussions and prepare for the second day of the visit.

On 02/12/2020, the program consisted of meetings involving stakeholders and bodies associated with UNIWA QUA:

- Meeting with the Undergraduate (UGT) and Postgraduate (PGT and PGR) students to gain an insight of their study experience and campus facilities, and their input in quality control and decision making; discuss their priority issues concerning student life, welfare, grants, mobility, research and career opportunities, and their views on recruitment, learning, progression, assessment.
- Meeting with the UNIWA Chief Administration officers to discuss the role of Institutional strategic documents (strategic plan, QA manual etc.) in the development of the Institution, and special issues arising from the internal evaluation process.
- Meeting with the Graduates and Alumni to discuss their learning experiences at UNIWA and their career paths.
- Meeting with the external stakeholders to better understand their relations with the Institution.

In the evening, the Panel met in private to reflect on the discussions and prepare for the third day of the visit. On 03/12/2020, the program consisted of the following activities involving stakeholders and bodies associated with UNIWA QUA:

- On-line tour: overview of UNIWA, MODIP and other facilities, and discussion about the facilities presented in the videos produced for this purpose. This was an opportunity

to evaluate facilities and equipment, to ascertain that the Institution maintains all the necessary resources to ensure its smooth and proper functioning. Links to access the videos were also provided.

- Meeting with the Quality Assurance Unit (QUA/MODIP) members to review several points and findings. The Panel received further clarifications.
- A final meeting with the senior leadership of the UNIWA took place where the Panel briefly presented their key findings.

The Panel started the preparation of the report of the Internal Quality Assurance System (IQAS) of UNIWA following the procedures provided by HAHE.

III. Institution Profile

The University of West Attica (UNIWA) is a newly established university located in Athens. It was established in 2018 as a result of the merger of the Technological Educational Institute (TEI) of Athens and the TEI of Piraeus (also known as Piraeus University of Applied Sciences), while in 2019 the National School of Public Health (NSPH) joined the newly established university. The first two institutions have been in operation for 45 years since their establishment, of which almost 20 years in Higher Education. The National School of Public Health was originally founded by Eleftherios Venizelos as the Athens School of Health in 1929 and in 1994 took its current name. Today UNIWA is the third largest university in Greece with the aim to meet the highly increased demands of a modern society for the development of executives in science and technology.

It has 1,104 members of staff, 613 engaging with research/teaching, 147 facilitating laboratory activities and 344 for administrative duties. It also has 55,636 undergraduate students, 4,214 postgraduate students, 465 PhD candidates and 10 post-Docs. The staff to student ratio is 1:32. The University occupies 108,373.5 sq.m. with three campuses, 35 buildings, and teaching classrooms, laboratories, workshops, construction units. In addition, it has medical facilities, a Library & Information Service, 3 Conference Centers, restaurants and sports facilities.

The University comprises 6 Schools, 27 Departments, 69 Research Labs involved in 237 research programs. The administration consists of the Rector, 4 Vice-Rectors, the Senate, the Deans of the Schools and the Heads of Departments. It supports knowledge and research, provides highly-qualified education & research activities and facilitates the development of new tools and methodologies. It also strengthens the dialogue with society through the dissemination of achievements and good practices in sciences & funding, strengthens a dynamic EU citizenship and boosts multi-cultural dimensions.

The University offers 26 undergraduate programs, a large number of post-graduate programs, and high-level, accredited Lifelong Learning and Teaching Programs. The University maintains permanent partnerships with other domestic and foreign educational and research institutions, with the aim of continually improving the level of study. In addition, it is extensively involved in various European Union Programs aiming for international collaborations, development of innovation and dissemination of knowledge.

UNIWA is actively supporting Greece's strong commitment for the implementation of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 SDGs, as they provide an ambitious and transformative framework for a new, fair and sustainable development path, which ensures a balance between economic growth, social cohesion and justice as well as protection of the environment and of the country's unique ecological wealth. On the environmental pillar key institutional priorities include the shift towards a low carbon circular economy and improvement in waste reduction, reuse and recycling for creating new jobs and increasing resource efficiency.

Principle 1: Institution Policy for Quality Assurance

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD APPLY A QUALITY ASSURANCE POLICY AS PART OF THEIR STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT. THIS POLICY SHOULD BE DEVELOPED AND ADJUSTED ACCORDING TO THE INSTITUTIONS' AREAS OF ACTIVITY. IT SHOULD ALSO BE MADE PUBLIC AND IMPLEMENTED BY ALL PARTIES INVOLVED.

The quality assurance policy is the guiding document which sets the operating principles of the Internal Quality Assurance System (IQAS), the principles for the continuous improvement of the Institution, as well as the Institution's obligation for public accountability. It supports the development of quality culture, according to which, all internal stakeholders assume responsibility for quality and engage in quality assurance. This policy has a formal status and is publicly available.

The policy for quality is implemented through:
- *the commitment for compliance with the laws and regulations that govern the Institution;*
- *the establishment, review, redesign and redefinition of quality assurance objectives, that are fully in line with the institutional strategy.*

This policy mainly supports:
- *the organisation of the internal quality assurance system;*
- *the Institution's leadership, departments and other organisational units, individual staff members and students to take on their responsibilities in quality assurance;*
- *the integrity of academic principles and ethics, guarding against discriminations, and encouragement of external stakeholders to be involved in quality assurance;*
- *the continuous improvement of learning and teaching, research and innovation;*
- *the quality assurance of the programmes and their alignment with the relevant HAHE Standards;*
- *the effective organisation of services and the development and maintenance of infrastructure;*
- *the allocation and effective management of the necessary resources for the operation of the Institution;*
- *the development and rational allocation of human resources.*

The way in which this policy is designed, approved, implemented, monitored and revised constitutes one of the processes of the internal quality assurance system.

Institution Compliance

The UNIWA has a well-defined quality assurance (QA) policy that is reasonable and appropriate for the Institution strategic goals towards transparency of the procedures and communicating those to the different stakeholders. It provides access of the key performance indicators (KPI) to the UNIWA staff, with procedures that facilitate the review of those and set objectives based on the aim to maintain and improve quality. A commitment to continuous improvement of the existing procedures is included in UNIWA quality assurance policy and it is based on quality metrics to strengthen the review and update of the existing courses at all levels; undergraduate teaching (UGT), postgraduate teaching (PGT), and postgraduate research (PGR). The update of the courses is ensured through the internal quality procedural steps that aim to update all existing UNIWA courses in an annual base, to implement any required modifications. The

required modifications are identified by a quality assurance process engaging the students, local authorities and industry as well as academic research, which considers all timely feasible approaches and constraints on resources (academic, estates, finances, and policy).

The established system complies with the laws and regulations that govern the university. The quality assurance objectives are in line with the institutional strategy and aligned with the standards of IQAS manual. The institution has defined an information system supporting the IQAS processes available for the different status groups and public. The quality assurance policy and the procedures are clearly communicated to all parties. The Institution's internal quality assurance system (IQAS) is based on the internal regulations often published in the Government Gazette (FEK) and indicate the strategic goals of the UNIWA.

A closed loop of review starts with the students' questionnaire at each individual departmental OMEAs, communicated to MODIP and discussed at the general assembly. This presents a structured way for continuous improvement of quality assurance processes. The UNIWA has a handbook that describes the IQAS processes. The detailed information on membership for each process is described in MODIP's web pages allowing for their efficient and timely update (when required).

The policy supports, in a remarkable way, considering the extreme financial constraints, the organization of UNIWA services and infrastructure as well as the allocation of necessary resources for the successful operation of the IQAS.

The UNIWA leadership, schools, departments and organisational units (MODIP, OMEAs, and other QA committees), as well as, individual staff members and students, from all years and courses, have taken on strongly and very successfully their responsibilities in the IQAS to align with the relevant HAHE Standards and achieve the continuous improvement of learning and teaching, research and innovation. The established IQAS considers the integration of the students and staff in the local community and industry through social and training activities.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

- The QA policy statement needs to clearly state the remedial procedures and corrective actions in case of non-conformance with the quality requirements.

Principle 2: Provision and Management of the Necessary Resources

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD ENSURE APPROPRIATE FUNDING FOR LEARNING AND TEACHING ACTIVITIES, RESEARCH, AND ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES IN GENERAL. RELEVANT REGULATIONS SHOULD BE IN PLACE TO ASSURE THAT ADEQUATE INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES FOR TEACHING AND RESEARCH ARE AVAILABLE AND READILY ACCESSIBLE (E.G. CLASSROOMS, LABORATORIES, LIBRAIRIES, IT INFRASRTUCTURE, PROVISION OF FREE MEALS, DORMITORIES, CAREER GUIDANCE AND SOCIAL WELFARE SERVICES, ETC.).

Funding
The Institution ensures adequate funding to cover not only the overhead and operational costs (regular budget and public investment budget) but also costs related to research, innovation and development (Special Account for Research Funds, Property Development and Management Company). The financial planning and the operation of an effective financial management system constitute necessary tools for the full exploitation of the resources.

Infrastructure
Based on the requirements and needs arising during its operation, the Institution has determined ways to define, allocate and maintain all the necessary resources to ensure its smooth and proper functioning, i.e. teaching, research and auxiliary facilities, equipment and software, support facilities (cleaning, transportation, communication) etc. The scope of the IQAS should include a suitable managing and monitoring system to safeguard the infrastructure. Compliance to the internal regulations is also necessary.

Working environment
The Institution ensures -as far as possible- that the working environment has a positive effect on the performance of all members of the academic community (students and staff). Factors that are taken into consideration towards the creation of such a favorable environment are, among others, the sanitary facilities, the lighting/heating/ventilation system, the cleanliness and the overall appearance of the premises, etc. The scope of the IQAS should include an appropriate managing and monitoring system to promote a favorable working environment and to ensure compliance with the existing provisions.

Human resources
The Institution and the academic units are responsible for the human resources development.
The subject areas, as well as the competences and tasks of the staff members are defined by the corresponding job descriptions that are established within the operation scope of each academic or administrative unit. These posts are filled following the requirements set by the law, on the basis of transparent, fair and published processes. The continuous training and evaluation of the staff is considered necessary for the enhancement of the performance, which is recorded and monitored as provided in the context of the IQAS.
The Institution should acknowledge and provide the necessary resources for the implementation of the IQAS, its enhancement and the provision of services that assist the satisfaction of the quality assurance requirements. Moreover, the Institution (Quality Assurance Unit-QAU) should properly organise the administrative structure and staffing of the IQAS, with a clear allocation of competences and tasks to its staff members.

Institution Compliance

Funding

The funds for UNIWA are mainly provided by the State, and cover: salaries for the permanent staff and maintenance from the regular State budget and building construction and purchasing of equipment from the Public Investment Funds program. Other funding is collected through

the Special Accounts for Research (ELKE), which manages all the research and development programs of the University and charges a percentage as an overhead to all research and development activities carried out in the University and by its members.

The University has made an important effort to provide a system that manages the funds completely and thoroughly. The system in place allows the administration to have a view of the financial status of the Institution at all times. It also allows the individual members of the University to see their individual profile in terms of salary, leave of absence and manage their funded research activities.

The University has made a significant effort to put in place an efficient and transparent information system for fund allocation and monitoring. The processes that need to be followed for funding are published in the "Guide for Funding" of the University, which is publicly available. The members of the University can refer to the guide for details and can always ask a very open, supportive and well-trained staff for help. The guide is revised regularly, although the exact processes for each revision are not part of the guide. The University has also in place guidelines for the different Departments to request their funding and conduct their activities based on the funding received.

The University recognizes the need for efficient and transparent allocation of its funds and utilizes proper tools for their effective distribution and management. This is achieved by the use of proper economic management and information systems.

Infrastructure

The QAU/MODIP of the University has put in place a procedure for determining the necessary funds for the maintenance and good operation of the University campuses, including teaching rooms, amphitheatres, laboratories, equipment and other services. There is a regular maintenance schedule. Unfortunately, due to the existing COVID-19 situation, the EEAP (External Evaluation and Accreditation Panel) was not able to personally verify all this.

On the basis of the provided video presentations, the buildings of the campus seem to be well maintained, clean and allow the students and staff to function in a safe environment. The existing facilities along with the planned new buildings are deemed adequate for the needs of the University. No long-term plan was presented for the further expansion of the University, but this is reasonable given that the University is fairly new (less than 2 years old) and that it is already one of the largest in the country so its numbers at least in terms of students should remain stable in the near future.

An online system of reporting malfunctioning equipment, lighting, or any other infrastructure problems has been put in place and is working efficiently, as it was reported by interviewed staff members. Follow-up processes for handling the reported problems are also in place and part of the operating manual of the system and the University.

Working environment

The University provides conditions that create a safe and clean environment for the students and staff. This was reflected in all areas of the university as far as it was possible to be determined by the EEAP through the virtual visit and the discussions with the administration, staff and students.

There is an existing shortage of space according to the University presentation. The plans are to mitigate the shortage by the use of a new building, which unfortunately is in yet another location

from the existing ones, thus, increasing the number of locations that the University has to manage to four. Managing a multi-site university is not always a good practice and the plan for the development of the University in terms of space and location was not very clear. EEAP has favourably commented on the fact that the University will be housed in its own buildings.

The regular maintenance of the buildings contributes to the safety of the infrastructure. There is in place a satisfactory system for managing and monitoring the premises, the equipment and the rest of the infrastructure, which works well and integrates with the rest of the systems of the University.

The University also undertook the important initiative to equip all its members with laptops so as to be able to work from home. This shows a great commitment from all members to provide uninterrupted service for the faculty and students of the University during the COVID-19 situation.

Human resources

The University of West Attica is understaffed particularly in terms of academic staff but also in terms administrative staff in many areas. This is due to budgetary constraints imposed by the State. The University is trying to overcome this by relying on its own funds for hiring temporary staff (both academic and administrative) and expends considerable effort to attract the best possible candidates. This is of course not an ideal solution, but it is the only one possible.

The University has in place programs for the development and training of the staff. This includes support for participating in training activities, research work and ERASMUS+ exchanges. The University provides financial support for participation in conferences and workshops or publications in open access journals for both academic and administrative staff after specific requests and subject to internal review. The effort is highly commendable because it gives the opportunity to all members, even without their own funding that participate in research activities, to publish their research. The University did not present specific plans for supporting and evaluating different activities, but it has not designated specific areas of research focus in order to be able to better invest the limited funding. The development opportunities for faculty members, especially the junior ones, should be enhanced and further developed.

Panel Judgement

Principle 2: Provision & Management of the Necessary Resources	
2.1 Funding	
Fully compliant	**X**
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	
2.2 Infrastructure	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	**X**
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	
2.3 Working Environment	
Fully compliant	**X**

Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	
2.4 Human Resources	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	**X**
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Principle 2: Provision & Management of the Necessary Resources (overall)	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	**X**
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

- Develop a dedicated plan and related procedures for further improvement of the infrastructure involving buildings and grounds
- Improve the student to faculty ratio
- Develop a plan for mentoring and improvement of junior faculty
- Provide justification for distributing resources for publications for administrative staff
- Establish criteria for the allocation of research funds

Principle 3: Establishing Goals for Quality Assurance

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD HAVE CLEAR AND EXPLICIT GOALS REGARDING THE ASSURANCE AND CONTINUOUS UPGRADE OF THE QUALITY OF THE OFFERED PROGRAMMES, THE RESEARCH AND INNOVATION ACTIVITIES, AS WELL AS THE SCIENTIFIC AND ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES. THESE GOALS MAY BE QUALITATIVE OR QUANTITATIVE AND REFLECT THE INSTITUTIONAL STRATEGY.

The Institution's strategy on quality assurance should be translated into time-specific, qualitative and quantitative goals which are regularly monitored, measured and reviewed in the context of the IQAS operation, and following an appropriate procedure.

Examples of quality goals:
- *rise of the average annual graduation rate of the Institution's Undergraduate Programmes to x%;*
- *upgrade of the learning environment through the introduction of digital applications on ……….;*
- *improvement of the ratio of scientific publications to teaching staff members to …….;*
- *rise of the total research funding to y%*

The goals are accompanied by a specific action plan for their achievement, and entail the participation of all stakeholders.

Institution Compliance

The University has formulated clear and specific goals for assuring the quality of its educational and research activities as well as the operation of the institution and the required resources. These are:

- Excellence in Academic Instruction
- Strong emphasis on Research Activities
- Digital Transformation of Processes
- Improvement of Academic Environment
- Accountability and Transparency
- Outreach and Internalization
- Sustainability and Sustainable resource Management
- Quality Assurance

The University has established quantitative Key Performance Indicators for each of these goals, reference and target values, as well as target dates. It has also specified actions to be taken and responsible entities for achieving each of the goals. Some indicative examples are: Evaluation of undergraduate programs: Basis 0%, target 100%, target date 31.12.21, responsible entity: Department OMEA, MODIP; Average number of patents per faculty: Basis 0.1, target 0.15, target date 31.12.21, responsible unit: Vice Rector for Research and Continuing Education, MODIP.

Although the goals, Key Performance Indicators, target values as well as mechanisms for attaining them are clearly stated, is not clear how well the Quality Assurance System will perform. There are no data to ascertain the robustness of the system because it is relatively new. Nevertheless, it has the potential of being a very effective Quality Assurance System.

Panel Judgement

Principle 3: Establishing Goals for Quality Assurance	
3.1 Study Programmes/ education activities	
Fully compliant	**X**
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	
3.2 Research & Innovation	
Fully compliant	**X**
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	
3.3 Administration (funding, human resources, infrastructure management)	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	**X**
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	
3.4 Resources (funding, human resources, infrastructure)	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	**X**
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Principle 3: Establishing Goals for Quality Assurance (overall)	
Fully compliant	**X**
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

- The development of procedures for the sustainable and continuous engagement of stakeholders to enable long-term funding, human resources, and infrastructure opportunities.

Principle 4: Structure, Organisation and Operation of the IQAS

INSTITUTIONS SET UP AND ESTABLISH AN INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM, WHICH INCLUDES PROCESSES AND PROCEDURES COVERING ALL AREAS OF ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES AND FUNCTIONS. SPECIAL FOCUS IS GIVEN ON THE QUALITY OF TEACHING AND LEARNING, INCLUDING THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT, RESEARCH, INNOVATION AND GOVERNANCE.

The key goal of the internal quality assurance system (IQAS) is the development, effective operation and continuous improvement of the whole range of the Institution's activities, and particularly, of teaching, research, innovation, governance and relevant services, according to the international practices - especially those of the European Higher Education Area - and the HAHE principles and guidelines described in these Standards.

Structure and organisation

In each Institution, the Quality Assurance Unit (QAU) holds the responsibility for the administration and management of the IQAS. The QAU is set up according to the existing legislative framework and is responsible for:

- *the development of specialised policy, strategy and relevant processes towards the continuous improvement of the quality of the Institution's work and provisions;*
- *the organisation, operation and continuous improvement of the Institution's internal quality assurance system;*
- *the coordination and support of the evaluation process of the Institution's academic units and other services, and;*
- *the support of the external evaluation and accreditation process of the Institution's programmes and internal quality assurance system in the context of the HAHE principles and guidelines.*

The Institution's IQAS and its implementation processes are determined by the decisions of the competent bodies, as provided by the law, and are published in the Government Gazette, as well as on the Institution's website. The above are reviewed every six years, at the latest.

To achieve the above goals, the QAU collaborates with HAHE, develops and maintains a management information system to store the evaluation data, which are periodically submitted to HAHE, according to the latter's instructions. The QAU is responsible for the systematic monitoring of the evaluation process and for the publication of evaluation-related procedures and their results on the Institution's website.

The QAU structure has been approved by the Institution's competent bodies, as provided by the law, while all competences and tasks accruing from this structure are clearly defined.

Operation

The Institution takes action for the design, establishment, implementation, audit and maintenance of the Internal Quality Assurance System (IQAS), taking into account the Standards' requirements, while making any necessary amendments to ensure fitness to achieve its aims.

The above actions include:

- *provision of all necessary processes and procedures for the successful operation of the IQAS, as well as implementation of the above processes and procedures on all of the Institution's parties involved ;the Institution's areas of activity can constitute the IQAS processes, e.g. teaching, research and innovation, governance, services etc. An IQAS process is an area of activity including data input, data processing and outputs. A procedure defines the way an action is implemented and includes a course of stages or steps, e.g. the curriculum design procedure;*
- *determination of how the IQAS procedures / processes are audited, measured and assessed, and how they interact;*
- *provision of all necessary resources to enable the IQAS function.*

Institution Compliance

The Quality Assurance Unit of the University (MODIP) is in full agreement with the existing legislative framework. The Institution's IQAS and its implementation processes are determined by the decisions of the competent bodies, as provided by the law, and are recently published in the Government Gazette, as well as, on the Institution's website, which provides a clear description on the structure, membership and operation of MODIP. The University has developed and maintains a management information system that facilitates the proper operation of the internal quality assurance system. For example, the results of the internal evaluation are available on the university's website.

The MODIP of the institution collaborates closely with HAHE, towards the development and maintenance of the management information system for storage and evaluation of data, which is periodically submitted to HAHE, according to the latter's instructions. Furthermore, MODIP has successfully fulfilled its responsibilities by:

- developing the policy, strategy and relevant processes towards the continuous improvement of the quality of the Institution's work and provisions;
- organizing, operating and continuously improving the Institution's internal quality assurance system;
- coordinating and supporting the evaluation process of the Institution's academic units and other services, and;
- supporting the external evaluation and accreditation process of the Institution's programmes and internal quality assurance system.

The University has published a quality manual that includes the appropriate actions to ensure effective planning, implementation and control of UNIWA processes. The quality manual provides a clear description of inputs and outputs for each process, as well as the associated procedures including the stages that should be followed. It also includes the way the procedures/processes are audited, measured and assessed, and how they interact.

The quality manual includes all the methods to achieve the quality objectives set out in the quality policy and describes how the requirements are met. It provides the necessary guides, pertinent legislation, and other supporting data. The organizational chart as presented to the panel and appears on the website, is structured in a manner that ensures that the IQAS organizational requirements are properly met. Overall, the quality manual is appropriate.

The institution has defined information documenting that the processes are being carried out as planned. UNIWA provides adequate human resources and infrastructure to the QAU.

Panel Judgement

Principle 4: Structure, Organization and Operation of the IQAS	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

- Develop procedures for collecting information from external stakeholders for continuous improvement of the programs of study.

Principle 5: Self-Assessment

THE INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM COMPRISES PROCEDURES PROVIDING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ANNUAL SELF-ASSESSMENT OF THE INSTITUTION'S ACADEMIC AND ADMINISTRATIVE UNITS, ADDRESSING AREAS OF OVERSIGHTS OR SHORTCOMINGS, AND DEFINING REMEDIAL ACTIONS TOWARDS THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE SET GOALS, AND EVENTUAL IMPROVEMENT.

The QAU conducts, on an annual basis, a self-assessment of the IQAS, following the written procedure provided for each area of activity, which is implemented by a certain academic or administrative unit, as appropriate. The procedure determines the timing, the participants, the data under consideration, and the expected outcomes. The self-assessment aims at a final estimation of the suitability of the IQAS in force, as well as at basing decisions concerning the necessary remedial or precautionary actions for improvement.

The data considered in the context of the self-assessment of a programme may, for example, include:

- *students performance;*
- *feedback from students / teaching staff;*
- *assessment of learning outcomes;*
- *graduation rates;*
- *feedback from the evaluation of the facilities / learning environment;*
- *report of any remedial or precautionary actions undertaken;*
- *suggestions for improvement.*

The outcomes of the self-assessment are recorded in internal reports drawn up by the QAU. The reports identify any areas of deviation or non-compliance with the Standards, and are communicated to the interested parties (if appropriate). The Institution's resolutions concerning any modification, compliance, or enhancement of the IQAS operation might include actions related to:

- *the upgrade of the IQAS and the pertinent processes;*
- *the upgrade of the services offered to the students;*
- *the reallocation of resources;*
- *the introduction of new quality goals, etc.*

The outcomes of the self-assessment are recorded and, along with the source data, are archived as quality files.

A special procedure is followed for the compliance check of newly launched programmes (of all three cycles), or programmes that are to be reviewed shortly, prior to the institutional approval of the programme.

Institution Compliance

The QAU/MODIP of UNIWA is charged with the task of managing and implementing the Quality Policy of the University to ensure compliance with the 8 basic Principles of the Internal System of Quality Assurance (ΕΣΔΠ) as dictated by HAHE.

The MODIP for UNIWA was formed recently on 27-02-2020 after the merging of three higher educational institutions, the Technical Educational Institution (TEI) of Athens, the Technical Educational Institution (TEI) of Piraeus, and the National School of Public Health, to form the

University of West Attica. The set of documents that MODIP has submitted for Accreditation, including the annual Internal Evaluation Report, are based only on data gathered for the periods 2017-2018 and 2018-2019 because of the recent merger.

The Principle of Self-Assessment requires an on-going effort, primarily from all academic and administrative units of the institution, culminating in an annual Internal Evaluation Report, that is, an annual review by a committee consisting of MODIP, the Rector and Deputy Rectors. It basically follows the process and requirements of the corresponding relevant section of the institutional Quality Manual, which describes a set of procedures and sub-procedures that must be conducted. It also requires the determination of the participants involved and the sources from which data must be gathered for analysis.

The main areas of interest for self-assessment mandated by the HAHE and which the ΕΣΔΠ system of any institution must comply with, are:

- Instructional Activity
- Research and Innovation Activity
- Economic Activity and Financial Management
- Human Resources
- Facilities and Other Infrastructures

HAHE further breaks down and expands these areas of activity in a total of 17 subcategories. The institutions must identify and conduct a self-assessment on the subcategories which are applicable to their educational environment. In addition, the institutions must conduct a self - assessment on Strategic Quality Goals that they have defined for Quality Assurance purposes. In the case of UNIWA these are listed in Principle 3.

The Proposal for Accreditation that MODIP submitted was supplemented by a presentation from the President of MODIP. Both sources were based for the most part on the results and conclusions of the latest Internal Evaluation Review of the institution relative to each of the 8 Principles of ΕΣΔΠ. In both sources of information, specifically regarding the evaluation for compliance with "Principle 5, Self-Assessment", there was ample evidence that the methodology prescribed in the Quality Manual of UNIWA was followed. It was conducted on all the activity areas and subareas that are specified by HAHE, as well as in the Strategic Goal areas of the institution, as they may be applicable.

In the Proposal for Accreditation two sets of tables were included, following the suggested format and layout by HAHE. One set displaying KPIs associated with goal attainment against values suggested by HAHE (154 in all) and another set displaying KPIs measuring Strategic Goal attainment against desired values set by the institution. The values of the applicable KPIs computed by UNIWA, are compared against the corresponding goal values suggested by HAHE for the ΕΣΔΠ of the institution. Additional KPIs, as defined by UNIWA relative to its Strategic Quality goals, are in consonance with the desired values set by the institution to measure level of attainment.

The EEAP recognizes that the results of the self-evaluation reflect only two academic years' worth of data gathering. It also recognizes that there have been only two years since the merger of the three institutions and that the MODIP was formed as recently as February of 2020. Based on these events, the EEAP feels that there has been substantial progress in implementing the Quality Policy of the institution. A good number of measurable goals set by HAHE and the ones associated with the institution's own strategic plan with completion dates in 2021, have been met or are following a trend toward attainment as more data are being gathered.

Panel Judgement

Principle 5: Self-Assessment	
Fully compliant	**X**
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

- MODIP should consider devising ways to obtain feedback for quality improvement from additional sources, such as undergraduate students (besides student evaluations), administrative personnel, and graduates (besides Undergraduate Study Program effectiveness).

Principle 6: Collection of Quality Data: Measuring, Analysis and Improvement

INSTITUTIONS ARE FULLY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE COLLECTION, ANALYSIS AND USE OF INFORMATION IN AN INTEGRATED, FUNCTIONAL AND READILY ACCESSIBLE MANNER, AIMING AT THE EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT OF THE QUALITY DATA RELATED TO TEACHING, RESEARCH AND OTHER ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES, AS WELL AS OF THOSE RELATED TO THE ADMINISTRATION.

> *The QAU should establish and operate an information system to manage the data required for the implementation of the Internal Quality Assurance System.*
>
> *The QAU measures and monitors the performance of the various activities of the Institution, through appropriate procedures established in the context of the IQAS structure, and assesses their level of effectiveness. The measuring and monitoring is conducted on a basis of indices and data provided by HAHE in the pertinent guidelines and forms, which are part of the National Information System for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (NISQA). These measurements may concern: the size of the student body, the size of the teaching and administrative staff, the infrastructure, the structural components of the curricula, students' performance, research activity performance, financial data, feedback on student and faculty satisfaction surveys, data related to the teaching and research activity, services, infrastructure, etc.*
>
> *The QAU makes use of the figures and presents the results for consideration using statistical analysis. Outcomes are displayed through histograms and charts. This sort of information is used by the Institution for decision making, at all levels, pursuing improvement, as well as for setting, monitoring, assessing and reviewing the Institution's strategic and operational goals.*

Institution Compliance

The institution has in place an information processing system for collecting, processing and analysing data pertaining to the teaching, research and administrative functions of the university. It has three functional units, students, faculty and administrative staff. Information from all these operations is available to MODIP for processing, analysis and evaluation and it is sufficient to be used in the evaluation of the performance.

The Internal Quality Management System under the control of MODIP allows for direct entry of data into the appropriate data bases of the component functional units. Course evaluations are on-line. Direct student access to the courses in which they are enrolled facilitates maximal student participation and increases confidence in the information conveyed by the data. The system has demonstrated capability to process and analyse the input information as well as present the results of the analysis in a usable format. The results of the course evaluations are available in table format in the MODIP website. In addition to the course evaluations, the information processing system has the capability of generating numerical indicators for the quality of students entering the university as well as indicators that can be used to assess relative ranking with respect to other institutions of higher learning in Greece and other functions.

In addition, the system is capable of collecting and processing information on a periodic basis, typically annually, pertaining to students, teaching, administrative staff, research activities, infrastructure and finances. The Panel was presented with sample results from these analyses and was told that they are used in effecting improvement of each of the three functional units. There are no documented procedures specifying how the results of the analysis are used toward the improvement of each evaluated activity. However, in its presentations, the Institution described anecdotally how these results are used in practice, with the exception of the

educational component where the processes are clearly defined and formalized. However, for the remaining components there was not sufficient documented evidence how the results are used.

Panel Judgement

Principle 6: Collection of Data: Measuring, Analysis & Improvement	
6.1 Study Programmes / education activities	
Fully compliant	**X**
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	
6.2 Research & Innovation	
Fully compliant	**X**
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	
6.3 Activities related to the administration (funding, human resources, infrastructure management)	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	**X**
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	
6.4 Human Resources	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	**X**
Non-compliant	

Principle 6: Collection of Data: Measuring, Analysis & Improvement (overall)	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	**X**
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

- ▪ Formulate and document procedures for improving the Key Performance Indicators, particularly in the areas of Human Resources and Administration, based on the results of the analysis performed by the Internal Quality Management System.

Principle 7: Public Information

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD PUBLISH INFORMATION ABOUT THEIR TEACHING AND ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES IN A DIRECT AND ACCESSIBLE MANNER. ALL PERTINENT INFORMATION SHOULD BE UP-TO-DATE, CLEAR AND OBJECTIVE.

> *The QAU publishes data related to IQAS structure, organisation and operation. Furthermore, the QAU publishes data pertinent to the institutional quality policy and objectives, as well as information and data relevant to the Institution's internal and external evaluation. In the context of the self-assessment process, the QAU verifies that adequate information regarding the teaching activities and, particularly, the programmes' profile and the overall institutional activity is publicly available. QAU makes recommendations for improvement, where appropriate.*

Institution Compliance

The flagship of UNIWA for Public Information dissemination is an extensive, comprehensive, well designed and user-friendly Website in both Greek and English. It contains a broad spectrum of information related to the institution's basic functions and services as well as its strategic goals and Quality Assurance Policy. It is well staffed and is implemented based on up-to-date technology. The website visitor can find information related to:

- History, profile, administrative structure, mission, and vision of UNIWA
- Academic information pertaining to organizational structure such as schools and departments
- Degree program information including courses, instructor profiles, academic schedules, and procedures
- Research information such as laboratories, research programs and grants, and all services related to the Special Account of Research Funding (ELKE) office
- All student services, support functions, social, scholarly, cultural, and physical activities
- Announcements of all kinds such as seminars, presentations, competitions and awards, conferences, student, and faculty accomplishments
- Websites of all departments with profiles of broad spectrum of detailed information with similar links and information categories as the institutional website
- The Quality Policy for the institution
- The website link for MODIP which has extensive content and information about the MODIP organizational structure, its personnel and all activities that relate to the implementation of the institutional Quality Assurance Program.

UNIWA attempts to enhance its outreach efforts with memberships in international academic organizations such as International Association of Universities and European University Association. It has live exposure through a television media broadcast, the "First on the West", on a local municipal channel. The institutional website also has a link dedicated to providing information promoting the institution's environmental conservation activities, since one of its strategic goals is sustainable development. Areas of involvement in this strategic goal are related to energy efficiency, recycling, water conservation and green environment. Because of its active involvement in these areas UNIWA has been named as "the First Green University of the Country". Finally, the institutional website is connected to social media such as Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn. Considering its short time in existence, UNIWA disseminates public information effectively. The External Stakeholders of the institution attested to that during their

teleconference with the EEAP and it was evident that they are very actively promoting the UNIWA image and capabilities.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

None

Principle 8: External Evaluation and Accreditation of the IQAS

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD BE PERIODICALLY EVALUATED BY COMMITTEES OF EXTERNAL EXPERTS SET BY HAHE, FOR THE PURPOSE OF ACCREDITATION OF THEIR INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEMS (IQAS). THE PERIODICITY OF THE EXTERNAL EVALUATION IS DETERMINED BY HAHE.

External quality assurance, in the case in point external evaluation aiming at accreditation, may act as a means of verification of the effectiveness of the Institution's internal quality assurance, and as a catalyst for improvement, while opening new perspectives. Additionally, it can provide information with a view to public acknowledgement of the positive course of the Institution's activities.

The Higher Education Institutions engage in periodic external quality assurance which is conducted taking into consideration any special requirements set by the legislation governing the operation of the Institutions and their academic units.

Quality assurance, in this case accreditation, is an on-going process that does not end with the external feedback, or report or its follow-up process within the Institution. Therefore, Institutions ensure that the progress made since the last external quality assurance activity is taken into consideration when preparing for the next one.

Institution Compliance

The EEAP has identified a consistent, active and constant engagement of all the internal stakeholders of the academic community in the quality assurance process, as it is specified by the QAU/MODIP. The meetings with the University administration, the QAU/MODIP, the OMEAs and the heads of the Schools have revealed that this procedure has become part of the University life at all levels of the University functions. Given the fact that the University in its current form has about two (2) years of life, the EEAP was not able to observe the evolution of the improvement of the process.

Internal self-evaluation procedures focus mainly in the area of course and teaching evaluation but it has been recognized that the QAU has made consistent and constant efforts to introduce a QA system that will cover the multiple aspects of the University functions. The information available is only two years old. Consequently, it is not sufficient to understand how the results will be used to improve the processes and how they will be employed by the different University stakeholders. Long term trends will be available in the future and with the anticipation that will be incorporated into longer-term decision making.

The University has extensive contact with external stakeholders (alumni, governmental agencies, local authorities, industry, business and other research entities) either through personal contacts of the academic staff or high-level institutional agreements that are signed to foster collaboration. Nevertheless, there is no formal and consistent way of engaging the external stakeholders and the community at large. Most of the external stakeholders, while highly supportive of the university and genuinely engaged to work with it, seemed unaware of the formal QA procedures and did not describe any particular engagement. This needs to be addressed, given the fact that the external stakeholders expressed the eagerness and commitment to engage.

Finally, due to its young age, the University has not undergone a previous external evaluation and/or accreditation process. In that respect, it is rather difficult to compare and draw conclusions. HAHE made available to the EEAP the external evaluations of the two merged institutions (TEI of Athens and TEI of Piraeus). Those evaluations were largely positive and,

moreover, the current University Administration endeavoured to take into account their recommendations. In addition, as a result of the merger some weaknesses were remedied due to the economies of scale, but others still remain. For example, improved support by the University of the faculty members applying for research funding, while others like the permanent/temporary faculty ratio or the number of incoming students fall mostly under governmental responsibilities.

Panel Judgement

Principle 8: External Evaluation & Accreditation of the IQAS	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	**X**
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

- Formalize communications between the Institution and its stakeholders, especially external stakeholders like industry, business and public sector entities, beyond the ad-hoc or personal relations that already exist with members of the teaching staff.
- Institutionalize a system, in addition to the web site, that provides feedback to all stakeholders, internal and external. Continue and enhance the publication of all information on the QAU website.
- Organize events to update external stakeholders on the quality assurance procedures and their results.
- Improve the administrative support to the faculty members who apply for research grants; introduce a formal process to request help and evaluate the results of the grant bidding process.

I.   Features of Good Practice

- Excellent relationship with Stakeholders and Social Partners
- Well designed and comprehensive webpage
- Good working relationship and communication between Faculty and students
- Adequate, modern, clean facilities and campus environment based on the virtual tour
- The quality of the information processing system.

II.   Areas of Weakness

- Lack of formal documented procedures for utilizing the KPIs to improve the processes.

III.   Recommendations for Follow-up Actions

- The EEAP recommends that the institution involve the External Stakeholders in a more formal and structured manner to obtain feedback on a variety of issues. For instance, a formal platform of communication such as an Advisory Board, including alumni and representatives of sectors of the broader society, could be established. Periodic meetings on an annual basis could be used to provide input to the University on topics of concern of the external stakeholders. A section in the portal within the Career Office information system could serve as a means of communication of this body.
- The EEAP recommends enhancing the international engagement of the university members by:
  - ➢ offering some undergraduate courses in English as electives in the undergraduate programs to facilitate participation to the ERASMUS program and enhance the international statute of the institution
  - ➢ providing incentives to faculty members to spend their sabbatical abroad
  - ➢ providing incentives to foreign faculty members to spend their sabbatical at the University
- Improve the administrative support to the faculty members who apply for research grants; introduce a formal process to request help and evaluate the results of the grant bidding process.
- The EEAP recommends that QAU/MODIP devises ways to encourage a proactive involvement, in the institutional Quality Policy (in addition to student evaluations) of the student body, including returning ERASMUS students, since they are the main beneficiaries. One way might be to include content related to Quality Assurance in suitable undergraduate courses, perhaps in the form of case studies to serve as a basis to educate students and motivate involvement. Another way is to include a student representative in the committee of Internal Evaluation Review.
- QAU/MODIP should encourage individual departments to embark on a compilation and on-going documentation, in an easy-to-follow graphical format (such as a flow chart), of selected key, repeatable, ongoing operating procedures and processes that are deemed

to be of importance. Such a collection of documents would standardize these procedures and serve as a "standards manual" that can be followed to ensure consistency of implementation.

- The EEAP recommends the implementation of a policy for detecting plagiarism.
- The QA policy statement needs to clearly state the remedial procedures and corrective actions in case of non-compliance with the quality requirements.

IV.   Summary & Overall Assessment

The Principles where full compliance has been achieved are:

1. Institution Policy for Quality Assurance
3. Establishing Goals for Quality Assurance
4. Structure, Organization and Operation of the IQAS
5. Self-Assessment
7. Public information

The Principles where substantial compliance has been achieved are:

2. Provision and Management of the Necessary Resources
6. Collection of Quality Data: Measuring, Analysis and Improvement
8. External Evaluation and Accreditation of the IQAS

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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