



**ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ**  
HELLENIC REPUBLIC



**Εθνική Αρχή  
Ανώτατης Εκπαίδευσης**  
Hellenic Authority  
for Higher Education

Αριστείδου 1 & Ευριπίδου 2 • 10559 Αθήνα | 1 Aristidou str. & 2 Evripidou str. • 10559 Athens, Greece  
**T.** +30 210 9220 944 • **F.** +30 210 9220 143 • **E.** secretariat@ethaae.gr • [www.ethaae.gr](http://www.ethaae.gr)

# Accreditation Report

## for the New Undergraduate Study Programme in Operation of:

**Social Work**

**Institution: University of West Attica**

**Date: 17 June 2023**



Επιχειρησιακό Πρόγραμμα  
Ανάπτυξη Ανθρώπινου Δυναμικού,  
Εκπαίδευση και Διά Βίου Μάθηση  
Με τη συγχρηματοδότηση της Ελλάδας και της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης



Report of the Panel appointed by the HAHE to undertake the review of the New Undergraduate Study Programme in operation of **Social Work** of the **University of West Attica** for the purposes of granting accreditation.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Part A: Background and Context of the Review</b> .....	<b>4</b>
I.    The External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel.....	4
II.   Review Procedure and Documentation .....	5
III.  New Undergraduate Study Programme in operation Profile.....	7
<b>Part B: Compliance with the Principles</b> .....	<b>9</b>
Principle 1: Strategic Planning, Feasibility and Sustainability of the Academic Unit.....	9
Principle 2: Quality Assurance Policy of the Institution and the Academic Unit.....	18
Principle 3: Design, Approval and Monitoring of the Quality of the New Undergraduate Programmes .....	21
Principle 4: Student-centred Approach in Learning, Teaching and Assessment of Students.....	25
Principle 5: Student Admission, Progression, Recognition of Academic Qualifications and Award of Degrees and Certificates of Competence of the New Study Programmes.....	28
Principle 6: Ensuring the Competence and High Quality of the Teaching Staff of the New Undergraduate Study Programmes.....	30
Principle 7: Learning Resources and Student Support of the New Undergraduate Programmes...	33
Principle 8: Collection, Analysis and Use of Information for the Organisation and Operation of New Undergraduate Programmes .....	36
Principle 9: Public Information Concerning the New Undergraduate Programmes .....	38
Principle 10: Periodic Internal Review of the New Study Programmes.....	40
Principle 11: Regular External Evaluation and Accreditation of the New Undergraduate Programmes.....	42
Principle 12: Monitoring the Transition from Previous Undergraduate Study Programmes to the New Ones.....	44
<b>Part C: Conclusions</b> .....	<b>47</b>
I.    Features of Good Practice .....	47
II.   Areas of Weakness .....	47
III.  Recommendations for Follow-up Actions .....	47
IV.  Summary & Overall Assessment .....	49

## **PART A: BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT OF THE REVIEW**

### **I. The External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel**

The Panel responsible for the Accreditation Review of the new undergraduate study programme in operation of **Social Work** of the **University of West Attica** comprised the following five (5) members, drawn from the HAHE Register, in accordance with Laws 4009/2011 & 4653/2020:

- 1. Associate Professor Panagiotis Christias (Chair)**  
University of Cyprus
  
- 2. Professor Dimitris Michailakis**  
Department of Culture and Society, unit of Social Work, Linköping University
  
- 3. Associate Professor Stelios Stylianou**  
Department of Communication and Internet Studies, Cyprus University of Technology
  
- 4. Professor Apostolis Papakostas**  
Södertörn University, Stockholm, Social sciences
  
- 5. Electra Tsoulfidi**  
Hellenic Mediterranean University

## II. Review Procedure and Documentation

Prior to their visit to the University of West Attica, the members of the External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel (EEAP) had the opportunity to study all accreditation support materials supplied to them by HAHE in advance, including:

- HAHE Materials such as P12B\_Guidelines for EEAPanel, P13B\_MAPPING GRID & ASSESSMENT GUIDE, European Qualifications Framework, P1B Standards New UGP in operation EN
- Social Policy Department, University of West Attica, Material, and the Department's Proposal for Accreditation along with several annexes

In the morning of June 12, the EEAP met to discuss the process and to divide tasks among its members. The visit to the Department took place between 12 and 13 March 2023.

At 12.30, on June 12, the EEAP members were welcomed by Prof. Efstathia Papageorgiou, Vice-Rector for Academic and Student Affairs / President of MODIP and Prof. Charis Simopoulos, Head of the Department, who presented the history, profile, and current status of the Undergraduate Study Programme.

Following a short break, EEAP discussed the degree of compliance of the Undergraduate Programme to the Standards for Quality Accreditation with Prof. Efstathia Papageorgiou (Vice-Rector/President of MODIP), Dr. Marisa Sigala (MODIP staff), Prof. Aikaterini Maniadaki (President of OMEA), Prof. Charis Asimopoulos (Head of the Department /Member of OMEA), and Prof. Vasilios Ioakimidis (Member of OMEA).

OMEA representatives explained in detail the program's internal evaluation processes, answered a series of questions addressed to them by the EEAP members and provided supplementary information when requested. The meeting was informative, lively and fruitful.

After lunch, offered by the Department at the facilities of the University, the EEAP met with Teaching staff members Prof. Charalambos Pouloupoulos, Associate Prof. Dora Dimitra Teloni, Assistant Prof. Helene Papouli, Assistant Prof. Konstantina Sklavou, Assistant Prof. Sofia Dedotsi, Assistant Prof. Sofia Martinaki, Assistant Prof. Stella Papamichail, Assistant Prof. Konstantina Vasiliou, Lecturer Despina Kompoti, and Lab Teaching Staff Venetia Lambropoulou. They discussed professional development opportunities, faculty mobility, student evaluations, the link between teaching and research, and the student-centred teaching.

The first day of the visit closed with a short informal debriefing meeting of the EEAP members.

On the next day, the site visit of EEAP members included subsequent meetings with:

### **Undergraduate Students** of the Department

The EEAP discussed with ten (10) students from 2nd to 8th semester their experience of studying at the Department and their career paths. The students expressed very positive opinions about their personal relationship with the members of the teaching staff. The EEAP was particularly interested in the employment possibilities they had, their introduction into the theoretical framework of social work as well as the professional environment in the field. All students stipulated that the two internships should be remunerated. During the exchanges, the EEAP highly appreciated the capacity of the students to engage in dialogues concerning the theoretical and the practical aspects of social work.

**During a guided tour**, in the company of Academic Members of the Staff, the EEAP was able to evaluate the departmental facilities and learning resources, including offices of the teaching staff and classrooms. The EEAP members visited the campus, the external facilities and the congress Hall.

### **Employers and social partners**

The discussion focused on the work experience that Department students carry out in their institutions. The EEAP had an interesting exchange of ideas about the needs for social workers in a Greek society recovering from multiple blows, such as the economic and pandemic crises, and about the professional rights defended by the Association of Social Workers. The judgment of the employers on the collaboration with the Department was very positive, and they all saw great opportunities of employment in State and municipal social care services. The idea of a research graduate degree in English that would combine the academic competence of the Department and the action research of the social partners was encouraged by the EEAP.

Following this meeting, the EEAP held a lunch meeting to discuss first findings and inconclusive points and to prepare for the last meeting.

The site visit concluded with a closing meeting with the representatives of MODIP and OMEA, as well as with Prof. Efstathia Papageorgiou, Vice-Rector for Academic and Student Affairs / President of MODIP, and Prof. Charis Asimopoulos, Head of the Department. During this meeting, the EEAP discussed their first impressions and received the Department's feedback. It also requested and received supplemental materials from MODIP.

### **III. New Undergraduate Study Programme in operation Profile**

The University of West Attica was established in March 2018 by Law 4521. The establishment of the new University came about through the merger process of TEI. The University of West Attica was established by the merger of the Technological Sector of the University of Athens and the Technological Sector of the Piraeus University of Piraeus. In 2019, the National School of Public Health joined the newly established University.

The Department of Social Work of the University of West Attica (former TEI of Athens) was created by Law 1404/1983, Government Gazette 173. The development of the academic profile of the Department in the last three decades is mainly related to significant institutional changes, such as the four-year course of study, the increase of academic qualifications for the recruitment of teaching staff, the updating of the curriculum, the flourishing of exchange programmes with many universities of other European countries and, in general, the increase of academic qualifications of the permanent teaching staff. In addition, the academic profile of the department has recently been upgraded with the establishment of a master's degree Programme. The aim is to provide contemporary knowledge and skills for professional and scientific activity in the context of the changing social needs and the rapid development of science and technology. At the same time, the mission of the Department is to promote and conduct research contributing to the advancement of social work as an applied social science and to the development of the country.

The Programme of Studies of the Department of Social Work of the University of West Attica aims to train social workers capable of meeting the contemporary challenges of Social Work both nationally and internationally. It has been developed and is fully aligned with the International Standards for Social Work Education and the standards set by the International Federation of Social Workers and the International Federation of Schools of Social Work. The orientation of the Department of Social Work is primarily educational and research, but at the same time it is also professional. Students acquire general and specialized knowledge, as well as the methodological - research tools for deepening their knowledge in the science of Social Work.

At the same time, the Department places particular emphasis on strengthening applied research, through the operation of its Research Laboratories and the research activity of its staff and students, as well as on the development of science and innovation.

Graduates of the Department acquire all the necessary skills (knowledge, multifaceted study of psychosocial phenomena, methodology, development of synthetic and critical thinking, skills) for their professional integrity. They have established professional rights as social workers (Decree 50, Government Gazette 23, Vol. A, 26.1. 1989) with the possibility of working in a wide range of social services in the public and private sector (local government, child

protection, health, mental health, education, special education, disability, rehabilitation, juvenile guardians, prisons, immigrants, refugees, etc.) and as freelance professionals.

The Study Programme follows all the international standards for social work education and training, leading to professional social workers with specific and protected professional rights in Greece, EU, and all other partner countries. Upon completion of their studies in the Department of Social Work with the proposed Programme of Studies, graduates will have a wide range of scientific knowledge and approaches for the understanding of human behaviour and social problems in the contemporary Greek and European environment; will have embraced the principles and values of Social Work; will have cultivated the critical competence required for the contemporary European social policy framework and the role of social work; will be equipped with knowledge and skills for conducting research, evaluating professional practice and using the results of research.



## **PART B: COMPLIANCE WITH THE PRINCIPLES**

### **Principle 1: Strategic Planning, Feasibility and Sustainability of the Academic Unit**

**Institutions must have developed an appropriate strategy for the establishment and operation of new academic units and the provision of new undergraduate study programmes. This strategy should be documented by specific feasibility and sustainability studies.**

*By decision of the institutional Senate, the Institutions should address in their strategy issues related to their academic structure in academic units and study programmes, which support the profile, the vision, the mission, and the strategic goal setting of the Institution, within a specific time frame. The strategy of the Institution should articulate the potential benefits, weaknesses, opportunities or risks from the operation of new academic units and study programmes, and plan all the necessary actions towards the achievement of their goals.*

*The strategy of their academic structure should be documented by specific feasibility and sustainability studies, especially for new academic units and new study programmes.*

*More specifically, the feasibility study of the new undergraduate study programmes should be accompanied by a four-year business plan to meet specific needs in infrastructure, services, human resources, procedures, financial resources, and management systems.*

*During the evaluation of the Institutions and their individual academic units in terms of meeting the criteria for the organisation of undergraduate study programmes, particular attention must be placed upon:*

#### ***a. The academic profile and the mission of the academic unit***

*The profile and mission of the department should be specified. The scientific field of the department should be included in the internationally established scientific fields of Higher Education, as they are designated by the international categorisation of scientific fields in education, by UNESCO (ISCED 2013).*

#### ***b. The strategy of the Institution for its academic development***

*The academic development strategy for the operation of the department and the new study programme should be set out. This strategy should result from the investigation of the factors that influence the studies and the research in the scientific field, the investigation of the institutional, economic, developmental, and social parameters that apply in the external environment of the Institution, as well as the possibilities and capabilities that exist within the internal environment (as reflected in a SWOT Analysis: strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats). This specific analysis should demonstrate the reason for selecting the scientific field of the new department.*

#### ***c. The documentation of the feasibility of the operation of the department and the study programme***

*The feasibility of the operation of the new department should be justified based on:*

- *the needs of the national and regional economy (economic sectors, employment, supply-demand, expected academic and professional qualifications)*
- *comparison with other national and international study programmes of the same scientific field*
- *the state-of-the-art developments*

- *the existing academic map; the differentiation of the proposed department from the already existing ones needs to be analysed, in addition to the implications of the current image of the academic map in the specific scientific field.*

**d. The documentation of the sustainability of the new department**

*Mention must be made to the infrastructure, human resources, funding perspective, services, and all other available resources in terms of:*

- *educational and research facilities (buildings, rooms, laboratories, equipment, etc.)*
- *staff (existing and new, by category, specialty, rank and laboratory). A distinct five-year plan is required, documenting the commitment of the School and of the Institution for filling in the necessary faculty positions to cover at least the entire pre-defined core curriculum*
- *funding (funding possibility from public or non-public sources)*
- *services (central, departmental / student support, digital, administrative, etc.)*

**e. The structure of studies**

*The structure of the studies should be briefly presented, namely:*

- **The organisation of studies:** *The courses and the categories to which they belong; the distribution of the courses into semesters; the alignment of the courses with the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS).*
- **Learning process:** *Documentation must be provided as to how the student-centered approach is ensured (modes of teaching and evaluation of students beyond the traditional methods).*
- **Learning outcomes:** *Knowledge, skills and competences acquired by graduates, as well as the professional rights awarded must be mentioned.*

**f. The number of admitted students**

- *The proposed number of admitted students over a five-year period should be specified.*
- *Any similar departments in other HEIs with the possibility of student transfers from / to the proposed department should be mentioned.*

**g. Postgraduate studies and research**

- *It is necessary to indicate research priorities in the scientific field, the opportunities for interdisciplinary research, the challenges towards new knowledge, possible research collaborations, etc.*
- *In addition, the postgraduate and doctoral programmes offered by the academic unit, the research projects performed, and the research performance of the faculty members should be mentioned.*

**Relevant documentation**

- *Introductory Report by the Quality Assurance Unit (QAU) addressing the above points with the necessary documentation*
- *Updated Strategic Plan of the Institution that will include its proposed academic reconstruction, in view of the planned operation of new department(s) (incl. updated SWOT analysis at institutional level)*
- *Feasibility and sustainability studies for the establishment and operation of the new academic unit and the new study programme*
- *Four-year business plan*

## **Study Programme Compliance**

### ***a. The academic profile and the mission of the academic unit***

#### *Findings*

*The profile and mission of the department should be specified. The scientific field of the department should be included in the internationally established scientific fields of Higher Education, as they are designated by the international categorisation of scientific fields in education, by UNESCO (ISCED 2013).*

#### *Analysis*

The profile and mission of the Department are specified in the relevant report by MODIP. The Department has evolved to an independent university department in the Faculty of Administration, Economics and Social Sciences of the University of West Attica. Since the academic year 2018-2019, the Department operates in accordance with the Global Standards for Social Work Education and the standards set by the International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW) and the International Association of Schools of Social Work (IFSSW). The Department offers a Bachelor of Arts in Social Work. Social Work is, as a scientific field, belongs in the internationally established scientific fields of Higher Education, as defined by UNESCO. This Program falls under the code 0923. It aims to study the welfare needs of communities, special groups and individuals and the ways that these needs can be addressed.

#### *Conclusions*

Complies with principles.

### ***b. The strategy of the Institution for its academic development***

#### *Findings*

*The academic development strategy for the operation of the department and the new study programme should be set out. This strategy should result from the investigation of the factors that influence the studies and the research in the scientific field, the investigation of the institutional, economic, developmental, and social parameters that apply in the external environment of the Institution, as well as the possibilities and capabilities that exist within the internal environment (as reflected in a SWOT Analysis: strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats). This specific analysis should demonstrate the reason for selecting the scientific field of the new department.*

#### *Analysis*

The academic development strategy for the operation of the Department and the Program was specified after taking into consideration factors that influence studies and research and various social and academic parameters. A SWOT Analysis was performed specifically for each of the six strategic directions set by HAHE (continuous improvement of education, excellence in research, connection with society and the labour market, international scope, quality of the

academic environment and quality assurance). The analysis is accompanied by a list of strategic objectives and actions which correspond to specific strategic directions. Overall, the academic development strategy is well documented.

#### *Conclusions*

Complies with principles.

#### ***c. The documentation of the feasibility of the operation of the department and the study programme***

*The feasibility of the operation of the new department should be justified based on:*

- *the needs of the national and regional economy (economic sectors, employment, supply-demand, expected academic and professional qualifications)*
- *comparison with other national and international study programmes of the same scientific field*
- *the state-of-the-art developments*
- *the existing academic map; the differentiation of the proposed department from the already existing ones needs to be analysed, in addition to the implications of the current image of the academic map in the specific scientific field.*

#### *Findings*

The feasibility of the operation of the Department is well justified based on regional and national needs. This is demonstrated in the Feasibility and Sustainability Study, where figures about economic inequality, concentration of poverty, urban decay, prejudice, and social exclusion are presented. The operation of the Department will support social improvement in the local and national society by promoting social change, social justice, social cohesion, and social welfare.

#### *Analysis*

This contribution gains more value if we take into consideration that there are only three other university departments offering social work degrees in Greece (Hellenic Mediterranean University, Democritus University of Thrace, and the University of Patras). The potential contribution of the Department in the development of the field of social work in the context of the current academic landscape is also demonstrated in the Feasibility and Sustainability Study. Particular importance is placed on the two research labs hosted in the Department, namely the Research Laboratory in Counselling, Psychological Support and Community Interventions and the Research Centre for Social and Humanitarian Crises.

#### *Conclusions*

Complies with principles.

#### **d. The documentation of the sustainability of the new department**

*Mention must be made to the infrastructure, human resources, funding perspective, services, and all other available resources in terms of:*

- *educational and research facilities (buildings, rooms, laboratories, equipment, etc.)*
- *staff (existing and new, by category, specialty, rank and laboratory). A distinct five-year plan is required, documenting the commitment of the School and of the Institution for filling in the necessary faculty positions to cover at least the entire pre-defined core curriculum*
- *funding (funding possibility from public or non-public sources)*
- *services (central, departmental / student support, digital, administrative, etc.)*

#### *Findings*

The operation of the Department is primarily financed by the Ministry of Education. The Program is sustainable, given this funding, but also given the University's infrastructure, including teaching and research facilities and human and material resources for teaching, research, and student services. Research funding opportunities (European or national programs) provide a good prospect in supplementing the basic state funding for research. The Department of Social Work recognizes the need to further utilize these financial resources to support research. Collaborations with other universities and organizations for funding applications are also sought.

#### *Analysis*

Currently, the Department does not offer master's level postgraduate study programs but is planning to do so in the next two years. Beyond its academic value, such development will also bring more income to the Department. A PhD program operates in the Department. A strategic plan has been drafted which includes elaborate presentation of the Department's developmental objectives with respect to excellence in education, the promotion of research, international recognition and collaboration and the improvement of the academic environment and human resource development.

#### *Conclusions*

Complies with principles.

#### **e. The structure of studies**

*The structure of the studies should be briefly presented, namely:*

- ***The organisation of studies:*** *The courses and the categories to which they belong; the distribution of the courses into semesters; the alignment of the courses with the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS).*
- ***Learning process:*** *Documentation must be provided as to how the student-centered approach is ensured (modes of teaching and evaluation of students beyond the traditional methods).*

- **Learning outcomes:** Knowledge, skills and competences acquired by graduates, as well as the professional rights awarded must be mentioned.

#### *Findings*

The Program is a typical 4-year undergraduate program, requiring 240 ECTS for the award a bachelor's degree in Social Work. This equals either 42 courses without a bachelor's thesis or 40 courses with a bachelor thesis. Typically, students enrol in 5-6 courses per academic semester to earn 30 ECTS (60 ECTS per year of study). The Program includes 34 mandatory courses (8 "general background" and 26 "special background" courses), and 17 elective courses of which students must take eight (or six plus bachelor's thesis).

#### *Analysis*

Field practice placements are an integral part of the curriculum and they spread over the fourth year of study. Students are placed in social services structures for four days per week and attend supervision sessions once a week at the Department. The learning outcomes of the Program are clearly stated in the Student Guide and are pursued through teaching and learning activities, which are increasingly becoming more student centered. The Department has committed itself to partially replace old-fashioned final-exam-only evaluation of student performance with concurrent and more interactive methods of assessment such as individual or group projects.

#### *Conclusions*

Complies with principles.

#### ***f. The number of admitted students***

- *The proposed number of admitted students over a five-year period should be specified.*
- *Any similar departments in other HEIs with the possibility of student transfers from / to the proposed department should be mentioned.*

#### *Findings*

The Department admitted the first students in the Program in the academic year 2018-19 and since then it admits approximately the same number of students each year (about 120 through the national university entry exams and about 60 through special exams for candidates with a university degree and candidates in special categories based on social criteria). The Department will continue to admit about this number of students in the next five years, unless its request for a reduction of the number of students admitted through the national university entry exams to 80 is accepted.

#### *Analysis*

About 900 students are currently enrolled. The Program is academically equivalent to the other three social work programs of the country (Hellenic Mediterranean University,

Democritus University of Thrace, and the University of Patras) and therefore transfer from these departments is possible.

#### *Conclusions*

Complies with principles.

#### ***g. Postgraduate studies and research***

- *It is necessary to indicate research priorities in the scientific field, the opportunities for interdisciplinary research, the challenges towards new knowledge, possible research collaborations, etc.*
- *In addition, the postgraduate and doctoral programmes offered by the academic unit, the research projects performed, and the research performance of the faculty members should be mentioned.*

#### *Findings*

The Department has started its operation focusing on the smooth transition from the previous (TEI) to the current (University) status and structures, placing primary emphasis on the quality of the undergraduate program. At the same time, the Department places high priority on its research component. All staff members are involved in research and the results of their work are disseminated in professional conferences, articles in peer-reviewed journals and books.

#### *Analysis*

The Department is planning to offer a master's level postgraduate study programs in the next two years, while a doctoral program of study is already in operation. These programs, together with the continuous involvement of the faculty in research, are important elements of the Department's identity in the next few years.

#### *Conclusions*

Complies with principles.

#### *Overall Conclusions*

Overall, based on the above, the Committee feels that the strategic planning for the Program is complete and appropriate. This conclusion is substantiated in the relevant documentation. The SWOT analysis and the Feasibility and Sustainability Study are of particular importance.

## Panel Judgement

<b>Principle 1: Strategic planning, feasibility and sustainability of the academic unit</b>	
<b>a. The academic profile and the mission of the academic unit</b>	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	
<b>b. The strategy of the Institution for its academic development</b>	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	
<b>c. The documentation of the feasibility of the operation of the department and the study programme</b>	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	
<b>d. The documentation of the sustainability of the new department</b>	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	
<b>e. The structure of studies</b>	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	
<b>f. The number of admitted students</b>	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	
<b>g. Postgraduate studies</b>	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	



<b>Principle 1: Strategic planning, feasibility and sustainability of the academic unit (overall)</b>	
Fully compliant	<b>X</b>
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

### **Panel Recommendations**

As the Committee believes that the Department of Social Work is fully compliant with the dimensions of Principle 1, our general recommendation is that the University and the Department continue to allocate all necessary resources to sustain this compliance.

## Principle 2: Quality Assurance Policy of the Institution and the Academic Unit

The Institution should have in place an accredited Internal Quality Assurance System, and should formulate and apply a Quality Assurance Policy, which is part of its strategy, specialises in the operation of the new academic units and the new study programmes, and is accompanied by annual quality assurance goals for the continuous development and improvement of the academic units and the study programmes.

*The quality assurance policy of the Institution must be formulated in the form of a published statement, which is implemented by all stakeholders. It focuses on the achievement of special annual quality goals related to the quality assurance of the new study programme offered by the academic unit. In order to implement this policy, the Institution, among others, commits itself to put into practice quality procedures that will demonstrate: the adequacy and quality of the academic unit's resources; the suitability of the structure and organisation of the curriculum; the appropriateness of the qualifications of the teaching staff; the quality of support services of the academic unit and its staffing with appropriate administrative personnel. The Institution also commits itself to conduct an annual internal evaluation of the new undergraduate programme (UGP), realised by the Internal Evaluation Group (IEG) in collaboration with the Quality Assurance Unit (QAU) of the Institution.*

*The quality assurance policy of the academic unit includes its commitment to implement quality procedures that will demonstrate: a) the adequacy of the structure and organisation of the curriculum, b) the pursuit of learning outcomes and qualifications in accordance with the European and National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education, c) the promotion of the quality and effectiveness of the teaching work, d) the adequacy of the qualifications of the teaching staff, e) the promotion of the quality and quantity of the research work of the members of the academic unit, f) the ways of linking teaching with research, g) the level of demand for graduates' qualifications in the labour market, h) the quality of support services, such as administration, libraries and student care, i) the implementation of an annual review and audit of the quality assurance system of the UGP through the cooperation of the Internal Evaluation Group (IEG) with the Quality Assurance Unit (QAU) of the Institution.*

### **Relevant documentation**

- Revised Quality Assurance Policy of the Institution
- Quality Assurance Policy of the academic unit
- Quality target setting of the Institution and the academic unit (utilising the S.M.A.R.T. methodology)

### **Study Programme Compliance**

#### *Findings*

An Internal Quality Assurance System is in operation at the University of West Attica, aiming at the implementation of the institution's Quality Assurance Policy. The Policy is re-examined, revised, and refined on an annual basis. A Quality Assurance Unit ("MODIP") monitors the implementation of the Policy at the university level. In accordance with the university-level policy, a Departmental Quality Assurance Policy is being implemented at the Department of Social Work. The implementation is monitored by an Internal Evaluation Group ("OMEA"), which closely cooperates with MODIP. The quality assurance policies at both levels are realized by clearly specified and measurable quality assurance goals. An examination of the goals set

for the current period shows that both MODIP and OMEA function well with respect to goal setting and progress monitoring.

### *Analysis*

At the level of the Department of Social Work, the goals correspond to four strategic directions: excellence in education (increasing the percentage of students graduating in eight semesters of study and enhancing student-centered learning through promotion of more active participation of the students in the learning process), promotion of research activity (promoting research production and dissemination in visible outlets, increasing the number of funded research programs, further promotion of doctoral and post-doctoral studies, increasing the number of research centers and labs and the establishment of a post-graduate study program in collaboration with the Department of Social Policy at Panteion University), promoting the program externally and internationally (supporting faculty and student mobility through the Erasmus+ programs and promotion of the work of the Department through events and social networks) and improvement of the academic environment and human resource development (increasing the number of research and teaching faculty, special teaching faculty and administrative staff, reduction of the number of undergraduate admissions, reduction of the student-teacher ratio and further training of the administrative staff).

### *Conclusions*

In conclusion, the Committee believes that the policy fulfils the quality assurance requirements for the Program. The goals set for improvement of the Program are relevant, specific, realistic, and measurable within a clearly stated time frame. The policy includes sufficient and appropriate structures and procedures for maintaining quality standards and for paving further improvement.

### **Panel Judgement**

<b>Principle 2: Quality assurance policy of the Institution and the academic unit</b>	
Fully compliant	<b>X</b>
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

### **Panel Recommendations**

As the Department of Social Work is new, the outcome of the implementation of most quality assurance policies is yet to be observed. The Committee's recommendation is that these policies continue and that both the University and the Department continue to allocate sufficient and appropriate resources for their implementation.

### **Principle 3: Design, Approval and Monitoring of the Quality of the New Undergraduate Programmes**

Institutions should design the new undergraduate programmes following a defined written process, which will involve the participants, information sources and the approval committees for the programme. The objectives, the expected learning outcomes, the intended professional qualifications and the ways to achieve them are set out in the programme design. The above details, as well as information on the programme's structure, are published in the Student Guide.

*The Institutions develop their new undergraduate study programmes, following a well-defined procedure. The academic profile, the identity and orientation of the programme, the objectives, the subject areas, the structure and organisation, the expected learning outcomes and the intended professional qualifications according to the European and National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education are described at this stage. An important new element in the structure of the programmes is the introduction of courses for the acquisition of digital skills. The above components should be taken into consideration and constitute the subject of the programme design, which, among other things, should include: elements of the Institution's strategy, labour market data and employment prospects of graduates, smooth progression of students throughout the stages of the programme, the anticipated student workload according to the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS), the option of providing work experience to the students, the linking of teaching and research, the international experience in study programmes of similar disciplines, the relevant regulatory framework, and the official procedure for the approval of the programme by the Institution.*

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

#### **Relevant documentation**

- *Senate decision for the establishment of the UGP*
- *Curriculum structure: courses, course categories (including courses for the acquisition of digital skills), ECTS awarded, expected learning outcomes according to the EQF, internship, mobility opportunities.*
- *Labour market data regarding the employment of graduates, international experience in a related scientific field.*
- *Student Guide*
- *Course outlines*
- *Teaching staff (list of areas of specialisation, its relation to the courses taught, employment relationship)*
- *QAU minutes for the internal evaluation of the new study programme and its compliance with the Standards*

## **Study Programme Compliance**

### *Findings*

This is a new programme; it was launched in 2018/19. According to the Department the programme has been designed to address current needs in society and meet the standards of the international community of education in social work. The programme was even designed to meet the requirements of the Greek legal system and the requirements of issuing a professional license in the profession of Social Work. An extensive scanning of similar programmes in other countries was conducted as a part of the development of the programme. It is not clear from the material at our disposal if a systematic hearing of or a consulting with the surrounding society or the students was conducted as a part of the development or the programme.

This is a four-year program that in real duration of studies is equivalent with the more concentrated three and a half year programs in Northern Europe. For the diploma, a compulsory part of 34 courses (plus internship and practical training), and 8 elective courses are required. Writing a thesis is not compulsory. The core courses in Social Work are at level I and II. The elective part contains nearly 20 courses in various subthemes of Social Work and nearby areas of which students can freely choose 8. In total, 240 ECTS are required for graduation.

### *Analysis*

There are some prerequisites in the program, but students can take courses at the third year without passing the majority of the courses in previous years.

The department reports a smooth progression of the students throughout the program, no statistics are available yet about the proportion of students that fulfil their studies in four years.

Courses securing the acquisition of digital skills have been introduced and are sufficient.

The link between research and teaching is accomplished by:

- Linking literature with research
- Linking teaching with research
- Partially by linking up the research conducted by members of the Department with the content of the courses offered.
- Some of the students linking research with education by writing a thesis.
- Practicing Social Work during the education.

### *Conclusions*

While the program offers many courses in subthemes at the intersection of Social Work and nearby disciplines, there are some ambiguities concerning the degree of progression and deepening of the professional knowledge.

The elective courses are not sequenced, and students can make free choices. The impression of the committee is that this part of the programme is more like an unstructured “smorgasbord” of loosely related courses.

The stakeholders of the program that were introduced to the committee were mainly involved in the courses of Practical Training and special authorities from the central government. The committee found that the link to local society outside the University is rather partial.

### Panel Judgement

<b>Principle 3: Design, approval and monitoring of the quality of the new undergraduate programmes</b>	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	<b>X</b>
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

### Panel Recommendations

The quality of the Department and the programme stand well in comparison to similar departments in Scandinavian countries and the overarching impression of the evaluation committee of the Department and the programme is very positive. Still the committee believes that there is room for improvement.

- We strongly recommend that the core of the program is strengthened by introducing courses labelled Social Work and Social Work Practices at level III (for instance the compulsory blocks below).
- The progressivity and deepening knowledge between the years of study must be elaborated and demonstrated.
- Prerequisites should be introduced at different levels in a more systematic way.
- We strongly recommend the organisation of the elective courses in blocks or thematic areas. In order to link the research at department with education, two of them should be connected to the two major research themes of the Department: social-psychological consulting and community development in crises. Our recommendation is that the two block be compulsory for all students while students be allowed to

choose two to three other elective blocks according to their preferences and orientation. The choice of a thematic area should practically mean that students are expected to read the entire block of courses.

- We recommend moving the two advanced methods courses (qualitative methods and quantitative methods) to the second year of study.
- The program could include free electives and students can be advised to enrol in courses offered by other departments (e.g., courses in business administration).
- The Department should enhance the number of students that write a dissertation thesis. Specific and uniform supervision should be provided to all students on their dissertation (i.e., standard number of hours on specific aspects such as study design, fit of research methods, analysis, ethics and writing up).
- Relations to stake holders, such as employers from the public and private sectors and civil society organisation, need to be developed and institutionalized. Further development of the programme should involve active consultation with the social partners.
- We strongly recommend that the Department takes more advantage of the location of the university in the west suburbs of the area of Athens where several groups in precarious situation live. The social environment of the university is a vivid laboratory of social processes or of multiple natural social experiments that can make every student of social life, or social scientist, think. This unique situation is of paramount importance for both the surrounding community and the international academic community.



## Principle 4: Student-centred Approach in Learning, Teaching and Assessment of Students

The academic unit should ensure that the new undergraduate programmes are delivered in a way that encourages students to take an active role in creating the learning process. The assessment methods should reflect this approach.

*In the implementation of student-centered learning and teaching, the academic unit:*

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

### **Relevant documentation**

- *Questionnaires for assessment by the students*
- *Regulation for dealing with students' complaints and appeals*
- *Regulation for the function of the academic advisor*
- *Reference to the planned teaching modes and assessment methods*

### **Study Programme Compliance**

#### *Findings*

The EEAP has read the material supplied and discussed extensively with the faculty about the methods of teaching and assessment of the modules delivered at the course. The findings were that the teaching and learning are underpinned to some extent by student-centered learning (SCL) appropriate methods to introduce the curriculum.

Almost all participating academic teachers embraced SCL and reported benefits. They acknowledged building better relationships with students, felt more attuned to classroom dynamics, and tailored learning to individual needs. Through a student-centered approach faculty members teach academic content alongside crucial life skills, like critical thinking, synthesis of multiple kinds of resources, empathy, and creativity. The students, in some courses, come up with creative projects to synthesize their knowledge and relate to the community.

### *Analysis*

The academic staff of the Department uses independent study, projects, assignments, laboratory and practical learning, e-learning, face to face lectures, critical analysis of research data, and learning through research. The methods of teaching and learning are innovative and diverse to some extent and collectively facilitate a student-friendly learning environment. The faculty is fully committed to their academic roles, and they show appropriate professionalism and integrity. Moreover, the Department respects the diversity of the students and applies a fair approach to all. Teaching has a clear procedure to ensure quality. MODIP utilizes anonymous questionnaires so each student can evaluate the quality of teaching. These questionnaires are analysed and are taken into serious consideration for formative actions for the faculty and the course. This finding was also verified by the students. There is also a formal way of dealing with student complaints, swiftly and efficiently. The study program promotes the student's sense of autonomy, while ensuring adequate guidance and support from the teaching staff and promotes mutual respect in the student-teacher relationship. The faculty knows the students personally, the students communicate with the faculty members openly and they are treated with respect. The EEAP members also reviewed documentation of Questionnaires for assessment by the students, Regulation for dealing with students' complaints and appeals, Regulation for the function of the academic advisor and Reference to the planned teaching modes and assessment methods in the supporting material that the Department presented.

In addition, the teaching methods, tools, and material used in teaching, are up-to-date and support the use of modern educational technologies. The students are facilitated to develop their digital skill competencies via tutorials and workshops offered by the Librarian and by offering IT support. The faculty uses digital platforms to assist in effective teaching and communication with their students (E-Class, Moodle and MS Teams). The extensive use of the electronic platform supports further learning as the members of staff upload supporting material and teaching slides. The assessment methods vary, including assignments, essays, and exams. The exams are the main way that students are assessed for the theoretical elements of each subject. The practical and clinical elements are assessed as competencies in each subject; the stakeholder director and the faculty monitor the outcomes and students can pass their practice.

### *Conclusions*

Complies with principles.

## Panel Judgement

<b>Principle 4: Student-centred approach in learning, teaching and assessment of students</b>	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

## Panel Recommendations

The course “Thesis Writing” is compulsory for students in the 8th semester, but the actual writing of a dissertation is optional for those who choose to do a research project and write a scientific article for publication. This was pointed by the EEAP members as something to be considered in the next review of the study curriculum and all faculty members agreed to this suggestion.

## **Principle 5: Student Admission, Progression, Recognition of Academic Qualifications and Award of Degrees and Certificates of Competence of the New Study Programmes**

**Academic units should develop and apply published regulations addressing all aspects and phases of studies of the programme (admission, progression, recognition and degree award).**

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

- ✓ *the registration procedure of the admitted students and the necessary documents - according to the law - and the support of the newly admitted students*
- ✓ *student rights and obligations, and monitoring of student progression*
- ✓ *internship issues, granting of scholarships*
- ✓ *the procedures and terms for writing the thesis (diploma or degree)*
- ✓ *the procedure of award and recognition of degrees, the duration of studies, the conditions for progression and assurance of the progress of students in their studies*

*as well as*

- ✓ *the terms and conditions for enhancing student mobility*

*Appropriate recognition procedures rely on relevant academic practice for recognition of credits among various European academic departments and Institutions in line with the principles of the Lisbon Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region. Graduation represents the culmination of the students' study period. Students need to receive documentation explaining the qualification gained, including achieved learning outcomes, and the context, level, content and status of the studies that were pursued and successfully completed (Diploma Supplement).*

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

### **Relevant documentation**

- *Internal regulation for the operation of the new study programme*
- *Regulation of studies, internship, mobility and student assignments*
- *Printed Diploma Supplement*

*Certificate from the President of the academic unit that the diploma supplement is awarded to all graduates without exception together with the degree or the certificate of completion of studies*

### **Study Programme Compliance**

#### *Findings*

Students enter the Program through a national system of access based on equal competition, organized by the Ministry of Education of Greece. The student admission number is about 120 students. The department has limited influence on admission processes. The Program's entrance lowest grade is considerably high in the Greek university admission reality. About 60

more students are enrolled by transfers from other universities or a specific admission process for students that already have a university diploma.

The completion of the studies in the Department entails 34 mandatory subjects, 8 subjects of choice and an internship of 23 ECTS. A thesis project is optional. Furthermore, the students throughout the program attain knowledge and skills on digital tools and processes.

### *Analysis*

Students can track their progress through an Information System. Each student, in case an issue emerges related to their studies or other matters, can reach out to the student advisor or the secretary of the Department.

Students have the opportunity to test their skills and improve their knowledge outside the Program by conducting an internship in external institutions. The procedures around the internship are clearly explained on the website of the Department and students can get updates through the university system called E-class.

First-year students are smoothly welcomed at the Department. During their studies, students can participate in Erasmus+ or CIVIS programs with sufficient help and information from the Erasmus Office.

Graduates receive a "Diploma Supplement" from the Secretariat of the Department, in which their academic progression is described in both Greek and English.

### *Conclusions*

Overall, based on our inspection of teaching and learning materials provided and the evaluation process, we conclude that the program, its different parts, the expected outcomes at different levels, the duration of the studies and the content of different courses are well documented and detailed in the handbook of studies and other relevant documents. All teaching and learning documents are easily accessible.

## **Panel Judgement**

<b>Principle 5: Student admission, progression, recognition of academic qualifications, and award of degrees and certificates of competence of the new study programmes</b>	
Fully compliant	<b>X</b>
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

## **Panel Recommendations**

No recommendations.

## **Principle 6: Ensuring the Competence and High Quality of the Teaching Staff of the New Undergraduate Study Programmes**

**Institutions should assure themselves of the competence, the level of knowledge and skills of the teaching staff of the academic units, and apply fair and transparent processes for their recruitment, training and further development.**

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

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

### **Relevant documentation**

- *Procedures and criteria for teaching staff recruitment*
- *Regulations or employment contracts, and obligations of the teaching staff*
- *Policy for staff recruitment, support and development*
- *Performance of the teaching staff in scientific-research and teaching work, also based on internationally recognised systems of scientific evaluation (e.g., Google Scholar, Scopus, etc.)*

### **Study Programme Compliance**

#### *Findings*

According to the department's self-description all procedures for announcements, applications and faculty member evaluations are carried out in a transparent manner through the electronic system APELLA. In the election of faculty members, the procedures and criteria laid down by the law in force are strictly observed. However, the Panel lacks the necessary factual data in order to pronounce itself on whether recruitment of faculty members is transparent and impartial. Another set of input and inquiry would have been necessary as to examine this specific feature.

As regulated by legislation, each semester includes at least 13 full weeks of teaching and 2 weeks of examinations. The teaching load is two (2) three-hour courses per semester. This results in a total, average weekly teaching load, of roughly six hours. The reception of students and supervision of theses and doctoral dissertations should be added to the weekly teaching workload of the academic staff members. According to the information we received, the teacher to student ratio is ca 1:34. In comparison to international standards, the teaching workload is very good. All in all, the career prospects are good.

### *Analysis*

The department manages to ensure good conditions for the professional development of the faculty members, despite the financial difficulties of the two last decades. This is done through several formal and informal measures, foremost of which is the possibility of obtaining a sabbatical (one semester every three years). The department approves the granting of research permits, as well as permits for participation in scientific conferences. The university grants every faculty member 1000 € per year in order to participate in national or international conferences, provided that the person concerned presents a paper. A smaller amount of money is also granted for every faculty member for each publication in refereed journals. The Department also encourages the participation of faculty members in European or International Academic Networks. There is evidence of cooperation with foreign institutions in research projects. We observed a collegiality among faculty members. This results among other things in the co-authoring of articles and in common applications to research funds.

There is an annual review for each faculty member in which his/her performance is evaluated. This implies that research is a key objective of all faculty members. It is reflected in a considerable rate of publications in renowned Greek and foreign refereed journals, their participation in research projects, as well as the number of citations as it is indicated in databases such as Google Scholar, Research Gate, Academia, Scopus, or Web of Science. Looking at the CVs of the faculty members there is evidence of considerable scholarly work. The department has also defined research strategies concerning new challenges for social work such as refugee/immigration problem, mental health, etc. Thus, the department undoubtedly exhibits an international presence.

### *Conclusions*

The linking between teaching and research and the subsequent renewal of the curriculum is based on the active participation of faculty members in research projects, conferences, workshops, seminars, and the publications by faculty members. This, in turn, supplements the teaching activities, which ultimately results in the updating of course material. There is a dialogue between the department and the stakeholders concerning the revision of the program. Thus, we found evidence of linking teaching with research.

The competence of faculty members falls within the field of social work. Many of the faculty have a bachelor's and/or a Ph.D. in social work.

## Panel Judgement

<b>Principle 6: Ensuring the competence and high quality of the teaching staff of the new undergraduate study programmes</b>	
Fully compliant	<b>X</b>
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

## Panel Recommendations

- The Panel underlines the importance of substantial financial support by the Ministry of Education in order to ensure the continuity and increase of high-quality research outputs.
- There is room for further co-operation with other internationally recognized departments of social work in research, in programs of student exchanges, etc.
- Finally, we recommend the introduction of more courses offered in English to attract international students.



## **Principle 7: Learning Resources and Student Support of the New Undergraduate Programmes**

**Institutions should have adequate funding to meet the needs for the operation of the academic unit and the new study programme as well as the means to cover all their teaching and learning needs. They should -on the one hand- provide satisfactory infrastructure and services for learning and student support and -on the other hand- facilitate direct access to them by establishing internal rules to this end (e.g., lecture rooms, laboratories, libraries, networks, boarding, career and social policy services, etc.).**

*Institutions and their academic units must have sufficient resources, on a planned and long-term basis, to support learning and academic activity in general, in order to offer students the best possible level of studies. The above means include facilities such as, the necessary general and specific libraries and possibilities for access to electronic databases, study rooms, educational and scientific equipment, information and communication services, support and counselling services. When allocating the available resources, the needs of all students must be taken into consideration (e.g. whether they are full-time or part-time students, employed students, students with disabilities), in addition to the shift towards student-centred learning and the adoption of flexible modes of learning and teaching. Support activities and facilities may be organised in various ways, depending on the institutional context. Students should be informed about all available services. In delivering support services, the role of support and administration staff is crucial and therefore this segment of staff needs to be qualified and have opportunities to develop its competences.*

### **Relevant documentation**

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

### **Study Programme Compliance**

#### *Findings*

The Department of Social Work of the University of West Attica presents contemporary infrastructures for learning resources, as well as facilities for enabling students to access learning. Information for the available facilities and student support services are presented in files B1, B11, B17, B18.1, B18.2, B20\_6 and these were also presented to the EEAP during the meetings with student representatives, academic staff, and stakeholders.

#### *Material Facilities*

The Department of Social Work has two auditoriums with a capacity of 124 students, three classrooms with a capacity of 197, 174 and 124 students and six smaller classrooms with a

capacity of 54 students. However, the number of the classrooms is not equivalent to the number of students. Furthermore, the Department has two classrooms fully equipped with computers with capacity of 50 and 34 students and two fully stocked and modern labs for research courses. The Department also houses the offices of the academic staff.

All buildings are accessible to limited mobility students, staff, and visitors. Also, in every building, there is a fast LAN and Wi-Fi network installed.

Both the central libraries of the Alsous Egaleo Campus and the Ancient Eleonas Campus as well as the Athens Campus libraries are available to students.

The libraries have the necessary specialized staff as well as the appropriate infrastructure to serve the students. All the services offered are listed in detail on the library' website where one can also access the computerized catalogues, electronic sources, electronic journals, etc.

### Student support services

The students of the Department are entitled to choose and receive free textbooks through the EVDXOS program of the Hellenic Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs.

Each teaching staff has been assigned to be a Student Advocate [SK] (“Simvoulos Kathigitis”). The SA is a member who can give advice and help the student resolve any problems related to the student’s studies. The Assembly of the Department has approved a formal complaint management protocol and has also formed a Social Care Committee.

On the Department’s current website (<https://sw.uniwa.gr/>), there are links to various sources relevant to both the students and staff in the department. Moreover, there is an adequate range of support services available to the students such as boarding, dormitories, career counselling, student welfare office and sport/cultural facilities. Students mentioned to the Panel that they are fully informed about the available services from the first day of their registration and all the services are functional and easily accessed by all students. In addition, the Department of Social Work has made provision so that all its facilities are accessible to persons with disabilities. The department's website has been modified so that it can be easier to use by such individuals.

### Analysis of Judgement

The available facilities are highly equipped, modern, and easily accessible by everyone. The EEAP is pleased with the continuous improvement of the infrastructure and digital services to students. Students are widely informed about the services available to them and are strongly supported by academic and administrative staff.

### Conclusion

The EEAP appreciates the efforts of the Department to put policies in place for the well-being of the students.

### Panel Judgement

<b>Principle 7: Learning resources and student support of the new undergraduate programmes</b>	
Fully compliant	<b>X</b>
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

### Panel Recommendations

It is necessary for the university to place signs in the courtyards for easy orientation of students, especially first year students.

## **Principle 8: Collection, Analysis and Use of Information for the Organisation and Operation of New Undergraduate Programmes**

**The Institutions and their academic units bear full responsibility for collecting, analysing and using information, aimed at the efficient management of undergraduate programmes of study and related activities, in an integrated, effective and easily accessible way.**

*Effective procedures for collecting and analysing information on the operation of Institutions, academic units and study programmes feed data into the internal quality assurance system. The following data is of interest: key performance indicators for the student body profile, student progression, success and drop-out rates, student satisfaction with the programme, availability of learning resources and student support. The completion of the fields of National Information System for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (NISQA) should be correct and complete with the exception of the fields that concern graduates in which a null value is registered.*

### **Relevant documentation**

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

### **Study Programme Compliance**

#### *Findings*

The Secretariat of the Department of Social Work at the University of West Attica electronically records, manages, and monitors the data of students, teaching staff, the structure and organisation of courses, teaching and the provision of services to students and the academic community. All types of information collected are used to produce reports and indicators concerning staff and students, as well as the educational, research and operational processes of the Institution, allowing their monitoring and evaluation over time.

The Undergraduate programme is monitored periodically involving members of the teaching/research and other academic staff and students, mainly by answering questionnaires. The overwhelming majority of students evaluate the lecturers of the Department very positively on issues related to their communicability, their cooperation with students, their availability and consistency, the organisation of their lessons and their ability to motivate students' interest in the course.

#### *Analysis*

The OMEA ensures the organization of the electronic evaluation process of each course through the official website of the department. The OMEA analyses the results of the evaluation and recommends in writing to the General Assembly improvement actions that arise as a need from the evaluation of the teaching work of the teaching staff. The information is presented with graphs and tables that allow direct interpretation and comparisons over time. In addition, faculty members are required to schedule three hours of student advising on a weekly basis. This is an additional source of information on an individual basis.

### Conclusions

Thus, the University of West Attica has developed and operates an information system through which the data required for the implementation of the Internal Quality Assurance System of the University is managed.

### Panel Judgement

<b>Principle 8: Collection, analysis and use of information for the organisation and operation of new undergraduate programmes</b>	
Fully compliant	<b>X</b>
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

### Panel Recommendations

The questionnaire for the course evaluation can be amended by adding an item where the student adds the rate of attendance in non-mandatory courses (lectures/seminars/workshops).

## **Principle 9: Public Information Concerning the New Undergraduate Programmes**

**Institutions and academic units should publish information about their teaching and academic activities in a direct and readily accessible way. The relevant information should be up-to-date, clear and objective.**

*Information on the Institutions' activities is useful for prospective and current students, graduates, other stakeholders and the public. Therefore, Institutions and their academic units must provide information about their activities, including the new undergraduate programmes they offer, the intended learning outcomes, the degrees awarded, the teaching, learning and assessment procedures used, the pass rates and the learning opportunities available to their students. Information is also provided, to the extent possible, on graduate employment perspectives.*

### **Relevant documentation**

- *Dedicated segment on the website of the department for the promotion of the new study programme*
- *Bilingual version of the website of the academic unit with complete, clear and objective information*
- *Provision for website maintenance and updating*

### **Study Programme Compliance**

#### *Findings*

The University of West Attica provides adequate and useful information for future and current students at all levels and disseminates relevant information widely through its homepage.

The Department of Social Work uses electronic information to a great extent. This information is provided both in Greek and English, with the former, of course, taking precedence over the latter. The Department's website is well-structured, updated, and student/user-friendly.

#### *Analysis*

It is pointed out that there is a very good participation of students in the evaluation of courses and lectures, perhaps due to the option to evaluate them electronically, through a specific application on their mobile phones.

The policy followed by the Quality Assurance Unit (MODIP) is also available online and easily accessible both in Greek and English.

Information for students and visitors in general is easily accessible and sufficient.

The publications as well as the CVs of the academic staff are presented on the website of the Department.

### *Conclusions*

It was established that there is a lot of important information uploaded, with a very good structure and up to date information, particularly useful for the existing and potential students as well as for stakeholders on matters of their interest.

The postgraduate programs are also presented well on the website and the chain of courses is easily followed.

### **Panel Judgement**

<b>Principle 9: Public information concerning the new undergraduate programmes</b>	
Fully compliant	<b>X</b>
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

### **Panel Recommendations**

No recommendations.

## **Principle 10: Periodic Internal Review of the New Study Programmes**

**Institutions and academic units should have in place an internal quality assurance system, for the audit and annual internal review of their new programmes, so as to achieve the objectives set for them, through monitoring and amendments, with a view to continuous improvement. Any actions taken in the above context, should be communicated to all parties concerned.**

*Regular monitoring, review and revision of the new study programmes aim at maintaining the level of educational provision and creating a supportive and effective learning environment for students. The above comprise the evaluation of: the content of the programme in the light of the latest research in the given discipline, thus ensuring that the programme is up to date; the changing needs of society; the students' workload, progression and completion; the effectiveness of the procedures for the assessment of students; the students' expectations, needs and satisfaction in relation to the programme; the learning environment, support services, and their fitness for purpose for the programme. Programmes are reviewed and revised regularly involving students and other stakeholders. The information collected is analysed and the programme is adapted to ensure that it is up-to-date.*

### **Relevant documentation**

- *Procedure for the re-evaluation, redefinition and updating of the curriculum*
- *Procedure for mitigating weaknesses and upgrading the structure of the UGP and the learning process*
- *Feedback processes on strategy implementation and quality targeting of the new UGP and relevant decision-making processes (students, external stakeholders)*
- *Results of the annual internal evaluation of the study programme by the QAU and the relevant minutes*

### **Study Programme Compliance**

#### *Findings*

In the context of internal evaluation, the Department makes full use of the internal quality assurance system of the University of West Attica, through which the control and the annual internal evaluation of the curriculum is carried out. A central role in this process is played by the OMEA of the Department, which cooperates closely with the faculty members for the completion of the individual and course evaluation forms, as well as for the distribution of the course evaluation questionnaires to the students. In these individual stages of evaluation, the OMEA is in direct collaboration with the central services of the MODIP for the support of the necessary logistical infrastructure, the provision of support for an effective evaluation process and the technical reports on indicators for the evaluation of courses and lecturers, necessary in the processes of reforming and updating the Guide and the Regulation Curriculum and during faculty developments.

#### *Analysis*

At the beginning of each academic year, the coordinator of the OMEA presents a summary of the report's content, to be followed by a discussion of the Assembly members on the course



of the Department and the undertaking of possible actions to upgrade the educational and research work. Subsequently, the President submits the Annual Evaluation Report, as well as any annexes as supporting material, to the Secretariat of the MODIP. Under the responsibility of the MODIP Secretariat, the reports are posted on the MODIP website. In addition, the OMEA coordinates the assessments of the courses by the students through the special digital platform of the MODIP. The annual and continuous assessments of the Programme lead to the regular and dynamic updating of the taught courses and the Study Programme in general. A departmental Curriculum Committee, responsible for this updating, collaborates with the Department Chairperson and recommends modifications to ensure the rational distribution of courses per semester, the replacement of lecturers in cases of leave of absence, the assignment of courses to contract teachers and the existence of an adequate number of elective courses.

Student representatives are invited to actively participate in the Departmental Assembly. In addition to the Assembly, the Departmental Administration is in regular contact with student representatives to be able to respond in a timely and adequate manner to the comments and requests of the student community. The Department has historically maintained an excellent relationship with the body that represents and supervises licensed social workers. Although the University Regulations do not provide for the participation of social service users in the Department Assembly, both the administration and faculty members through their actions ensure that there is regular, transparent and meaningful participation of social service users in the educational process and evaluation of aspects of the programme.

### *Conclusions*

The EEAP believes that the procedure of the internal evaluation is well structured and followed and the results of its work are visible to the members of the Academic Staff, facilitating possible reviews of the Study Programme.

### **Panel Judgement**

<b>Principle 10: Periodic internal review of the new study programmes</b>	
Fully compliant	<b>X</b>
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

### **Panel Recommendations**

No recommendations.

## **Principle 11: Regular External Evaluation and Accreditation of the New Undergraduate Programmes**

The new undergraduate study programmes should regularly undergo evaluation by panels of external experts set by HAHE, aiming at accreditation. The results of the external evaluation and accreditation are used for the continuous improvement of the Institutions, academic units and study programmes. The term of validity of the accreditation is determined by HAHE.

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

### **Relevant documentation**

- *Progress report on the results from the utilisation of the recommendations of the external evaluation of the Institution and of the IQAS Accreditation Report.*

### **Study Programme Compliance**

#### *Findings*

The most recent external evaluation of the Department was carried out, in accordance with the relevant legislation, in September 2013. The observations - recommendations of the External Evaluation Committee were formulated in a relevant report that was communicated to the Department in the same month. The Report captured a number of observations related to areas for improvement in the areas of strengthening staff, improving facilities and further development of research synergies.

#### *Analysis*

The Department, taking the Commission's observations seriously, developed a corrective action plan and succeeded in overcoming all the recommendations of the Evaluation Committee.

#### *Conclusions*

This is the first external evaluation of the Study Programme in its current form, after the transition/upgrading from Technological Educational Institution to University. All necessary steps for preparing and accommodating the current evaluation were fulfilled at the highest degree.

## Panel Judgement

<b>Principle 11: Regular external evaluation and accreditation of the new undergraduate programmes</b>	
Fully compliant	<b>X</b>
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

## Panel Recommendations

No recommendations.

## Principle 12: Monitoring the Transition from Previous Undergraduate Study Programmes to the New Ones

Institutions and academic units apply procedures for the transition from previously existing undergraduate study programmes to new ones, in order to ensure compliance with the requirements of the Standards.

*Applies in cases where the department implements, in addition to the new UGPs, any pre-existing UGPs from departments of former Technological Educational Institutions (TEI) or from departments that were merged / renamed / abolished.*

*Institutions should implement procedures for the transition from former UGPs to new ones, in order to ensure their compliance with the requirements of the Standards. More specifically, the institution and the academic unit must have a) the necessary learning resources, b) appropriate teaching staff, c) structured curriculum (courses, ECTS, learning outcomes), d) study regulations, award of diploma and diploma supplement, and e) system of data collection and use, with particular reference to the data of the graduates of the pre-existing UGP. In this context, the Institutions and the academic units prepare a plan for the foreseen transition period of the existing UGP until its completion, the costs caused to the Institution by its operation as well as possible measures and proposals for its smooth delivery and termination. This planning includes data on the transition and subsequent progression of students in the respective new UGP of the academic unit, as well as the specific graduation forecast for students enrolled under the previous status.*

### Relevant documentation

- *The planning of the Institution for the foreseen transition period, the operating costs and the specific measures or proposals for the smooth implementation and completion of the programme*
- *The study regulations, template for the degree and the diploma supplement*
- *Name list of teaching staff, status, subject and the course they teach / examine*
- *Report of Quality Assurance Unit (QAU) on the progress of the transition and the degree of completion of the programme. In the case of UGP of a former Technological Educational Institution (TEI), the report must include a specific reference to how the internship was implemented*

### Study Programme Compliance

#### Findings

The Department applied the relevant legislation for the transition from a Technological to a Highest Education Department.

A) as provided by the Law on the establishment of the University of West Attica, No. 4521, Government Gazette A' 38/02.03.2018, and in particular Article 5, regarding the procedure of transition from the Programmes of Studies of the Departments of TEI of Athens to the Programmes of Studies of the Departments of the University of West Attica.

B) the opinion of the Third Section of the Legal Council of the State 121/2021, which was accepted by the Rector of the University of Athens and therefore constitutes a binding act according to Article 9, paragraph 1, of the Law of the State of Athens. 6 of Law 4831/2021, which states that the PADA is not obliged to maintain and organise a separate Programme of

Studies for students who will complete a course of study at the TEI. In order to obtain a TEI degree, students must successfully complete their studies in those courses that the President of the Department shall determine by an act of the Department President and that are included in the University's Programme of Studies, in accordance with the decisions of the Assemblies of the Departments of PADA, which will determine the correspondence between the courses in the curriculum of the departments of the merged TEI and the courses in the curriculum of the PADA departments.

In particular, according to the Law, students who at the beginning of the academic year 2018-2019 had exceeded the duration of the semesters required for the degree, according to the Programme of Studies, plus four (4) semesters, were only entitled to complete the first cycle of studies of the Department of Social Work of TEI of Athens. Furthermore, those students who wished to complete the first cycle of the Department of Social Work of TEI of Athens submitted a declaration to the Department's Secretariat by 30 September 2018, which could not be withdrawn afterwards.

### *Analysis*

The total number of students who will complete the pre-existing Programme of Studies of the first cycle of the Department of Social Work T.E.I. is 118. The period of time they are invited to complete their studies is the academic year 2024 - 2025. The responsibility for the completion of their Programme of Studies, the awarding of the degree, the issuing of certificates and all kinds of attestations is the responsibility of the Department of Social Work of the University, in which they have been enrolled. In this case, students receive the degree of the Department of Social Work of the TEI of Athens to which they were admitted. The Department makes available to those students who complete the pre-existing Study Programme of the first cycle of studies of the Department of Social Work of the TEI of Athens: a) the necessary learning resources, b) teaching staff, c) curriculum (courses, ECTS, learning outcomes), d) award of the degree and diploma supplement and e) system for the collection and use of their data. By an act of the President of the Department, following a relevant decision of the Department Assembly, as stipulated by the aforementioned Law, courses of the pre-existing Curriculum of the Department of Social Work of TEI were matched with courses of the Curriculum of the Department of Social Work of UWA, with the provision of credit units (ECTS), the attendance of which leads to the first cycle degree of the Department of Social Work of TEI. Students who receive a TEI degree attend the courses of the new university curriculum, in accordance with the above-mentioned assignments, and in addition, they are required to complete a semester-long Practical Training. The correspondence of the courses of the pre-existing Curriculum of the Department of Social Work of the TEI with courses of the new Curriculum is posted on the Department's website. Through the Department's student register, the declaration of courses, the collection and use of necessary data and the issuing of all kinds of certificates for students attending the pre-existing Programme of Studies are carried out. In addition, students following the pre-existing Programme of Studies have the opportunity to use all the educational support services of the Department and student services of the University that are available to students following the new Programme of Studies.

### *Conclusions*

The EEAP finds that the transition was conducted appropriately, respecting the wishes of the students, and the relevant legislation.

### **Panel Judgement**

<b>Principle 12: Monitoring the transition from previous undergraduate study programmes to the new ones</b>	
Fully compliant	<b>X</b>
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

### **Panel Recommendations**

No recommendations.

## **PART C: CONCLUSIONS**

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

The quality of the Department and the programme stand well in comparison to similar departments in other big Universities with tradition to social work and the overarching impression of the evaluation committee of the Department and the programme is very positive.

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

- There are not enough courses in English to enhance the capacity of the Department to welcome Erasmus students. This could also be useful to the students of the Department, to have some courses in English.
- Ties with local communities are already strong. But as the locality of the university site (Eleonas) is unique in combination with the nature of the studies of social work, they need to be further strengthened. The identification of the Department of Social Work of the University of West Attica with the communities and localities in its surroundings is huge comparative advantage for the Department.

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

- Creation of groups of the elective-obligatory courses in accordance with the scientific-research activities of the two research laboratories of the Department. Students should choose a package of courses and not pick individual ones. (See all recommendations in principle 3).
- Introduction of a first-year course, introducing students to the field and bringing them in contact with professional social workers and their fields of work.
- Remuneration for the two internships.
- The Undergraduate Thesis should be enhanced in the principle of completing the cycle from theoretical courses (Study Programme) to practical application (Internships) and then back to theorising through action research (Undergraduate Thesis). The Thesis could be a more elaborate internship report, to which a theoretical framework and a consequent bibliography should be added.
- The Department should better exploit its “indigenous knowledge” as its location, including sensitive and working-class populations, provides a vast field of applications to all social work domains. Acting upon this knowledge could help the Department find a good place in the international mapping of academic teaching and research in social work.
- The Department should further promote student-centered teaching methodology, including supporting students in large audiences with additional small group seminars run

by teaching assistants and gradual replacement of final-exam-only assessment with interactive and concurrent methods of assessment, such as individual or group assignments and projects. This can be done provided that teaching assistants will be available.

- Gradually reduce the student/teacher ratio.
- Place signs in the courtyards for easy orientation of students, especially freshmen.
- In collaboration with stakeholders, arrange visits of the campus and the Department from nearby schools. This would give access to the university world to local communities and would put the Department in the heart of the neighbour quarters.



#### IV. Summary & Overall Assessment

The Principles where full compliance has been achieved are: **1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12.**

The Principles where substantial compliance has been achieved are: **3.**

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

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

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

## The members of the External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel

Name and Surname

Signature

- 1. Associate Professor Panagiotis Christias (Chair)**  
University of Cyprus
- 2. Professor Dimitris Michailakis**  
Department of Culture and Society, unit of Social Work, Linköping University
- 3. Associate Professor Stelios Stylianou**  
Department of Communication and Internet Studies, Cyprus University of Technology
- 4. Professor Apostolis Papakostas**  
Södertörn University, Stockholm, Social sciences
- 5. Electra Tsoulfidi**  
Hellenic Mediterranean University