Accreditation Report

for the New Postgraduate Study Programme of:

Applied Innovations and Digital Technologies in Healthcare

Departments: Public and Community Health &
Informatics and Computer Engineering
Institution: University of West Attica
Date: 8 June 2024

Report of the Panel appointed by the HAHE to undertake the review of the New Postgraduate Study Programme of **Applied Innovations and Digital Technologies in Healthcare** of the **University of West Attica** for the purposes of granting accreditation.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PART A: BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT OF THE REVIEW

I.   The External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel

The Panel responsible for the Accreditation Review of the new postgraduate study programme of **Applied Innovations and Digital Technologies in Healthcare** 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.   **Professor Thimios Mitsiadis (Chair)**
       University of Zurich, Switzerland

2.   **Professor Panos Soultanas**
       University of Nottingham, UK

3.   **Professor George K. Christophides**
       Imperial College London, London, United Kingdom

4.   **Adj. Professor Anastassios C. Papageorgiou**
       University of Turku and Åbo Akademi University, Turku, Finland

5.   **Mr. Nikolaos Savvopoulos**
       PhD candidate, University of Patras, Patras, Greece

II.   Review Procedure and Documentation

An introductory meeting took place on the 3rd of June 2024 between the members of the Panel to discuss the material provided by the University of West Attica (UNIWA) and the Program Committee.

The Panel reviewed the submitted documentation (A.0 to A.20), which is listed below:

A.0 – [new] Table of contents
A.1 – [new] Proposal of academic accreditation
A.2 – [new] Decision of the Senate for the establishment of the Programme
A.3 – [new] MODIP Internal Evaluation
A.4 – [new] University's Policy Goal Setting
A.5 – [new] Feasibility Report
A.6 – [new] Quality Assurance Policy
A.7 – [new] Policy Goal Setting
A.8 – [new] Study Guide
A.9 – [new] Courses Outline
A.10 – Teaching Staff list
A.11 – Rules for internal operations
A.12 – Regulations for Studies - Mobility - Thesis Preparation
A.13 – [new] Dealing with complaints Guide
A.14 – [new] Academic Counsellor rules
A.15 – Deontological ethics code
A.16 – Research staff - Performance Report
A.18 – [new] Regulations for Educational Process with Distance Learning Methods
A.19 – [new] Tuition Fees Utilization Plan
A.20 – Supplementary Material

In response to the panel's request, additional material was provided regarding a list of projects/publications between the two departments, a list of guest lecturers in the Master's program, and syllabus for the final semester course (which was renamed in "Applied Research Project").

The meetings with the rector, vice-rector, course director, head of the department, MODIP, teaching staff, and external partners took place on the 4th of June 2024 via MS Teams. The schedule was followed in order. Prospective students and alumni were not present on the agenda, as this is a new postgraduate program with no admissions yet.

The course director and the departmental MODIP, and the teaching staff were all present, according to the approved timetable. In addition, the panel met with social partners from various institutions. The Panel discussed the program with representatives from the following organizations (in no particular order): Hellenic Union of Rehabilitation Centres, Mediterraneo Hospital, Hellenic Association of Clinics, Athens Medical Group, EULAR PARE Committee

(European Alliance of Associations for Rheumatology), Alpha Public Relations S.A. - Health Communications - Medical Marketing Agency, Department of Nursing, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens.

Overall, the review process (including preparation, meetings, and report writing) was completed smoothly without any significant issues or concerns. The panel expresses its gratitude to HAHE for effectively supporting the review of this PSP. The material requested was immediately provided and all PSP and UNIWA showed great enthusiasm and dedication to successfully accomplish the accreditation procedure. The preparation of this meeting was excellent.

III. Postgraduate Study Programme Profile

The MSc in Applied Innovations and Digital Technologies in Healthcare is a newly established program at the University of West Attica (UNIWA) and has been designed and organized by the Department of Public and Community Health of the School of Public Health, together with the Department of Computer Engineering and Informatics of the School of Engineering at the UNIWA.

The PSP, along with its instructional components, constitutes a blend of knowledge aimed at addressing the diverse challenges encountered by contemporary healthcare professionals. These challenges include, but are not limited to, heightened patient/citizen expectations, influx of online information, integration of new technologies for efficient communication, meeting modern pandemic-related demands, and implementing effective and innovative methods and technologies for patient care, communication, and time management.

The academic curriculum comprises three semesters, each spanning six months. The initial two semesters entail four mandatory courses, ranging from 6 to 9 ECTS credits each, summing up to 30 ECTS credits per semester. In the third semester, students have the option to either write a thesis or pursue hands-on laboratory training. The teaching staff includes 8 staff contributors and 2 external teaching associates. Students must effectively fulfil their academic requirement that entails acquiring a cumulative sum of 90 ECTS credits (30 credits per semester of study, along with an additional 30 credits from last semester course) to obtain Master's degree qualification in Applied Innovations and Digital Technologies in Healthcare. The program is offered in Greek and primarily aims at healthcare professionals, although it also welcomes applicants from other disciplines. Selection criteria encompass overall academic performance, research or professional background, and a record of published scientific work.

The instructional approach for this program employs distance learning via a blended learning model. The ratio of asynchronous to synchronous instruction (utilizing platforms like Open e-class and MS Teams) will not surpass 25% and 50% of the total program credits, respectively.

The primary source of funding for the PSP will come from tuition fees, set at €3000 per student, supplemented by additional support from potential alternative sources.

<u>The main goals of the program are as follows</u>:

Train and develop specialized scientists and researchers capable of addressing health challenges.

Foster analytical, strategic, and creative thinking for innovative healthcare solutions.

Acquire proficiency in managing and utilizing innovative technologies.

Provide academic knowledge to healthcare professionals for high-quality service delivery.

Develop advanced skills for emerging roles in digital healthcare.

<u>At the end of the program, the graduates are expected to</u>:

Acquire a range of knowledge (e.g., understanding of digital transformation in healthcare)

Specialize in cutting-edge topics (e.g., telemedicine and digital therapy).

Specialize knowledge in specific fields (e.g., Healthcare unit management in a digital environment.

Acquire analytical and critical thinking skills (ability to evaluate digital solutions and technologies based on scientific data).

PART B: COMPLIANCE WITH THE PRINCIPLES

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

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

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

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

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

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

The quality assurance policy of the academic unit for postgraduate study programmes should be in line with the Institution's strategy and must be formulated in the form of a public statement, which is implemented by all stakeholders. It focuses on the achievement of special goals related to the quality assurance of the postgraduate study programmes offered by the academic unit. Indicatively, the quality policy statement of the academic unit includes its commitment to implement a quality policy that will promote the academic profile and orientation of the postgraduate study programme (PSP), its purpose and field of study; it will realise the programme's goals and it will determine the means and ways for attaining them; it will implement appropriate quality procedures, aiming at the programme's continuous improvement.

In particular, in order to implement this policy, the academic unit commits itself to put into practice quality procedures that will demonstrate:

  a. *the suitability of the structure and organisation of postgraduate study programmes*

  b. *the pursuit of learning outcomes and qualifications in accordance with the European and National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education - level 7*

  c. *the promotion of the quality and effectiveness of teaching at the PSP*

> d. *the appropriateness of the qualifications and the availability of the teaching staff for the PSP*
>
> e. *the drafting, implementation, and review of specific annual quality goals for the improvement of the PSP*
>
> f. *the level of demand for the graduates' qualifications in the labour market*
>
> g. *the quality of support services, such as administrative services, the libraries, and the student welfare office for the PSP*
>
> h. *the efficient utilisation of the financial resources of the PSP that may be drawn from tuition fees*
>
> i. *the conduct of an annual internal review and audit of the quality assurance system for the PSP through the cooperation of the Internal Evaluation Group (IEG) with the Institution's Quality Assurance Unit (QAU)*

Documentation

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

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The University of West Attica (UNIWA) has included in its strategy the development of postgraduate programs that support its character, vision, mission and strategic, focus (Senate decision 18/20-12-2023, ΑΔΑ: ΨΒΙΔ46Μ9ΞΗ-921). The program is organized by two UNIWA departments, requires 90 ECTS for successful graduation, and aims to attract up to 60 students in each semester during its first year of running.

The funding of the PSP will be covered mainly by tuition fees (€3000 per student) with extra alternative sources provided from other sources, such as: 1) budget of the ministry of education, research, and religious affairs; 2) donations, benefits, bequests, and all kinds of sponsorship from public or private sector institutions; 3) resources from research programs; 4) resources from programs of the European Union or other international organizations; 5) part of the income of the special research funding accounts (ΕΛΚΕ) of the UNIWA; 6) any other legal source.

The annual internal evaluation of the PGP will be carried out in collaboration with the MODIP of the UNIWA following the internal evaluation of the department/faculty to which it belongs and in accordance with the corresponding process of the internal quality assurance system of the institution. The external evaluation of the PGP will be carried out in cooperation with the MODIP in the framework of their accreditation, according to the procedure provided by HAHE. The department of public and community health, which provides administrative support, is evaluated as part of the periodic evaluation and certification of the academic unit by HAHE.

The quality assurance policy of the graduate school is made public, disseminated, and applied

to the involved members, faculty, external partners, and graduate students so that they all take responsibility for quality assurance. Students will be informed about the quality policy of the graduate school, the departments involved, and the University in general, from the beginning of their studies, in the context of a special welcome event for new students. The PSP will communicate its quality policy at national and international events, which it organizes or participates in, as well as at meetings with professional, research, social, environmental, and cultural bodies.

The postgraduate students will carry out the evaluation of each course and lecturer at the end of each semester. The evaluation will be conducted using a special evaluation form/questionnaire completed by postgraduate students.

The lectures will be conducted in the lecture halls and classrooms of the UNIWA. Auditoriums and classrooms are equipped with projectors, microphones, and wired and wireless broadband networks, and are suitable for both face-to-face and online classes. Courses will be created in the e-class and/or Moodle/Teams of the UNIWA. The teaching staff will conduct the design, organization, and posting of lectures. The management of the student register will be done through the University's integrated information system of the registry (student system), where students, upon receipt of their unique code from the PGP secretariat, will have access to their grades electronically and will also have the possibility of registering courses for each semester. The third semester is dedicated to diploma work or hands-on training.

II. Analysis

PSP is supported by the host university and aligns with the overall strategy of the Institution. The available facilities are sufficient and provide all the tools for online and in-person teaching. The program considers cooperation and communication between students an important factor in the learning process. Thus, it encourages teamwork, exchange of ideas, and mutual support. The program aims for 75% of the courses to be given online to facilitate attendance by students leaving remote areas of Greece. However, this arrangement reduces the interactions between students and may not yield the expected learning results. It is anticipated that students will be actively involved in the learning process, including conducting research, study visits, presenting projects, participating in discussions, and applying their knowledge to practical problems. A market survey or experience from other similar PSPs could have helped shape the program in the best possible way for efficient learning outcomes. The level of exposure to research is unclear. The expected income, mainly from tuition fees, could have been better planned to promote excellence in studies and research.

The PSP aims to provide education in the areas of management, marketing, and technology. However, the curriculum lacks courses that can provide knowledge of cutting-edge technologies used in the modern world. Areas such as artificial intelligence and cloud computing appear to be missing from the courses offered. Although seminars by invited speakers can be arranged to cover these areas, solid knowledge and not just a 'scratch on the surface' is necessary. It is therefore possible that graduates will lack key knowledge, and their employability will be severely affected.

The board of the PSP expected a high percentage of students to complete the questionnaires. Unfortunately, this is not always the case. The program should be prepared for a low percentage of participation and have a 'plan B' to overcome this issue. Notably, questionnaires

will be printed on paper and not in an electronic form. This will affect the processing and credibility of the data.

III.   Conclusions

The program should assess its risks more carefully and improve several areas to increase its sustainability and the offered knowledge. The panel considers that the program is substantially compliant with Principle 1.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

- Income should be distributed in a way that enhances research and provides fellowships/prizes for students or awards to teaching staff/secretariat support
- Take measures to ensure high participation in questionnaire completion
- Make questionnaires in electronic form and distribute them in e-class/Moodle/Teams etc with frequent reminders
- Make the connection between the PSP and research conducted in the participating Departments clearer. Create research topics.
- Adjust the ratio of courses given on-line/in-person to improve the active participation of the students and the interactions between students and student-teaching staff.
- Results of the evaluations should be uploaded on the PSP's website and be publicly available
- Aim for a higher number of publications per teacher to improve the research output of the teaching staff and make the research opportunities more visible for students.
- Improve the curriculum by adding new courses that better reflect current and future trends.

Principle 2: Design and Approval of New Postgraduate Study Programmes

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

The academic units develop their postgraduate study programmes following a well-defined procedure. The academic profile and orientation of the programme, the research character, the scientific objectives, the specific subject areas, the specialisations, the expected learning outcomes, the structure, the courses, the teaching and assessment modes, the teaching staff and the necessary resources are described at this stage.

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

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

In addition, the design of PSP must consider:

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

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

Documentation

- *Senate decision for the establishment of the PSP*
- *PSP curriculum structure: courses, course categories, ECTS awarded, expected learning outcomes according to the NQF, internship, mobility opportunities*

- *Labour market data regarding the employment of graduates, international experience in a relevant scientific field*
- *PSP Student Guide*
- *Course and thesis outlines*
- *Teaching staff: teaching assignments per subject area and per course*

Study Programme Compliance

I.   Findings

The proposed PSP in "Applied Innovations and Digital Technologies in Health Care" has been approved by the Senate of the University of West Attica (UNIWA) and is being developed through the collaboration of two academic units, "Public and Community Health" and "Information Technology and Computer Engineering", in accordance with the UWA strategic plan for 2024-2027 to expand its educational and research activities, aiming to improve the wider University environment through a well-defined quality assurance policy and internationalization. It has been designed according to current societal needs in the broad area of public health, with the help of an advisory board from social partners directly involved in different aspects of public health.

The orientation of the PSP serves the ever-increasing needs of society in healthcare, driven by exponential population increases, longer lifespans, technological expansion and innovation in health, and increasing financial demands. There is a pressing need to train health professionals and scientists to be equipped with the necessary technological knowledge and skills to meet the needs of demanding patients and meet this significant societal challenge.

The study program encompasses three 6-monthly terms, each contributing 30 ECTS. The first two terms include four compulsory courses varying between 6 and 9 ECTS, culminating in a total of 30 ECTS for the term. The final (third) term offers a choice of either the writing of a diploma thesis or a more practical approach. The teaching methods specify in-person or remote teaching. The electronic platform e-class, Microsoft Teams, and Skype Business support the teaching methods. The assessment of courses appears to be uniform and for all courses in the first two semesters, it includes a final written exam (60%) and either a team or individual task assessment (40%). The teaching staff includes 8 staff contributors and 2 external teaching associates. The external associates have been allocated teaching in two courses, one in semester one (administration and management of health units) and one in semester two (digital marketing in health). The PSP is committed to student assessment of teaching, but it is not clear how student assessment of teaching staff would take place.

The specified courses are clearly designed and oriented towards deepening knowledge in several topical subjects in the broad area of public health and acquiring essential digital and technological skills that will be applied in the public health sector to promote innovation and serve better patients. The objectives of this PSP are distinctly geared towards training health professionals rather than academic researchers.

The specified learning outcomes are in line with the European and National Qualifications Framework, and the entire PSP awards the necessary ECTS for a Dublin descriptor level 7 PSP. This new PSP appears to be committed to continuous revision and updating via comparisons with equivalent international PSPs in Europe and the USA, as well as literature reviews to identify the latest trends and technological developments in the broad area of health science

that can then be implemented in the program study of the PSP. There is particular emphasis on developing and leveraging digital services to improve healthcare delivery, developing and applying new technologies for treatment of chronic diseases, using technology to diagnose, monitor, and treat health problems, applying new ideas and technologies to improve prevention and treatment, using data and technology to analyse and improve health, using digital innovations for health promotion, patient-physician communication, and targeted promotion of medical services.

II.   Analysis

The proposed PSP in "Applied Innovations and Digital Technologies in Health Care" is a well-designed PSP serving the needs of an important, complicated, and increasingly demanding societal challenge. From its conception to its final development, the PSP organizing committee and its director followed a defined process involving social partners, external advisers, and academics from both participating academic units to present a mature and interesting study program. There is scope to incorporate more content on topics with potential future growth and importance in public health, such as stratified medicine, personalized medicine, diagnostics and prevention, and population health through community medicine, and how these relate to large data collection and use. Detailed course descriptions have been provided clearly stating detailed content, learning outcomes and skills expected to be acquired by students, the organization of the lectures and methods of delivery, the supporting structure of the learning processes, and the assessment methods. Although there was a detailed description of what the final diploma thesis entails (learning outcomes, content, teaching resources, methods, and assessment), there was no information provided in the original documentation on the second, more practical approach choice that is going to be offered in the final semester. This was rectified subsequently when the course description for MYE3.1.1.1 was provided. In that document, the title of the course was modified to "Applied Research Project" to better reflect the content and learning outcomes.

The information provided on the teaching methods and support for each course appears to be generic, vague, and *ad hoc*. More detailed information is needed to specify the number of lectures that will be conducted in person and remotely.

There is room for improvement in the assessment methods for courses by including team- and individual-assessed tasks rather than one or the other. In this manner, both teamwork and individual work will be appropriately encouraged and rewarded. Perhaps the PSP should consider allocating 20% for a teamwork assessment, and 20% for an individual work assessment.

There does not seem to be a structured, detailed program offering work experience to the PSP students. In fact, the provided documentation states that this PSP "does not provide for practical training of its students". This is a distinct weakness, as the nature and orientation of graduates from this PSP demand considerable applied knowledge and skills that can only be

demonstrated through real work experience. The panel understands that this PSP aims to attract a large pool of public health professionals already in the labour market, but for those students who are not public health professionals, there should be an opportunity to experience practical training in the form of real work experience. Instead of real work experience, the PSP offers "contact of students with important executives of the labour market who are invited for lectures" and "contact of students with the alumni association where they can register for various activities". However, given that this PSP is new, there are no alumni available and for that to be created, it will take a long time.

There is no clear framework for student assessment of teaching staff beyond vague descriptions of teaching assessment. It would have been informative for the external assessment committee to see a draft of the proposed teaching evaluation surveys that would be distributed to students and/or some evidence of peer review of teaching.

Adopting the English language in some lectures and seminars can further enhance the PSP.

The PSP dedicated webpages in Greek and English, where all information specifically related to this PSP is made public, are available, but they are not linked yet to the main webpage of the academic unit. We presume that this will be rectified when the PSP becomes active.

III.   Conclusions

In the opinion of the panel, the design and approval of this PSP in "Applied Innovations and Digital Technologies in Health Care" are substantially compliant. The recommendations of the panel are advisory in line with facilitating the continuous pursuit of improvement and excellence.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

- Specify the number of in-person and remote lectures for each course.
- Consider changing the assessment methods for courses by including both team and individual assessed tasks.
- Consider the provision of an assessed element of work experience. This may be part of the final "Applied Research Project" or the "Diploma Thesis" in the third semester. For this to happen, perhaps one month in the final semester could be dedicated to real work experience for those students who are not current public health professionals.
- Clarify in more detail the student evaluation of the teaching staff.
- Implement an internal peer-review scheme of teaching.
- Link the PSP-specific webpage (in Greek and English) to the webpage of both participating academic units.
- Consider the introduction of more content on large data acquisition and use, relating to stratified medicine, personalized medicine, diagnostics, prevention, and community medicine, the latter focusing more on the health of populations than individuals.

Principle 3: Regulations for Student Admission, Progression, Recognition of Postgraduate Studies, and certification

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

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

Indicatively:

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

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

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

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

Documentation

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

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

Study Programme Compliance

I.   Findings

The UNIWA and the PSP program have established a well-described procedure for admission to the program. The PSP's secretariat announces the admission process for postgraduate students on dates set by the program study committee. The UNIWA handles the publication, bearing the costs, and the call is posted on relevant department and university websites. The program mainly targets health professionals but candidates from other departments (indicatively: sciences, biological sciences, business administration) are also accepted into the postgraduate program. Final-year students from departments in Greece and abroad can also apply, although the program is offered currently in Greek.

Applications and the required supporting documents are submitted to the secretariat of the PSP, in accordance with the call for expressions of interest. The selection criteria for candidates, indicative, include a) the overall grade of the degree/diploma, b) the candidate's research or professional experience in a corresponding field or a related subject, and c) the published scientific papers.

The study program has been structured to accommodate a three-semester duration of study. The maximum number of students admitted to the PSP is capped at 60 per study cycle, with two cycles per academic year, making a total of 120 students annually. In general, the course is structured to include weekly three-hour lectures, group meetings, and additional student support outside these meetings to help them in preparation of assignments. Additionally, it involves supporting students throughout their 13-week study schedule and providing individualized feedback on assignments.

In the first two semesters, students attend courses related to different aspects of digital healthcare that are well described in the material shared with the panel. On the final semester, students can choose between a «hands-on laboratory» or a research dissertation. In the «hands-on laboratory» students are expected to analyse case studies and different tools in the field of digital technologies in healthcare. Students are informed of thesis topics related to their research interests at the end of the second semester. They subsequently choose their thesis topic in coordination with their advisor and potential supervisor. A detailed guide for the preparation and writing of the thesis is provided to support students in completing the required steps of the thesis preparation process. After completing the postgraduate dissertation and upon approval of its content by the supervising professor, who also assesses whether the prescribed technical specifications for structure, composition, and formatting are met, it is submitted in its final form to the Secretariat of the MSc program. All submitted work is checked for plagiarism using the Turnitin program. Guidelines for the plagiarism detection program can be found online. Internship opportunities are not available in this program. However, they can participate in the Erasmus exchange programs that are available for students and faculty.

It is noted that the teaching method of this program is through distance education using a blended learning system. The proportion of asynchronous and synchronous education (through open e-class, MS Teams) will not exceed 25% and 50% of the program's credits, respectively. There is a well-described regulation concerning issues related with data protection, intellectual

property and protection against fraud. The e-class education platform (eclass.uniwa.gr) used at the University of West Attica immediately records the progress of each student, allowing professors to monitor it.

The PSP according to the regulations of its operation may grant both reciprocal and non-reciprocal scholarships, according to academic, economic and social criteria that are described in the material shared.

To be conferred the Master degree, students must successfully complete their studies, which involves accumulating a total of 90 ECTS credits. Additionally, an Annex to the master's degree, serving as an explanatory document, is included, which does not substitute the official degree title or the comprehensive course grades. This annex, appended to the MSc in Greek and English form, provides information about the nature, level, general framework of education, content, and status of the studies.

II.   Analysis

The UNIWA and the PSP have outlined a clear admission process for the program. The program primarily targets health professionals, but also admits candidates from other departments, with selection criteria including overall grades, research or professional experience, and published scientific papers. Given that the program targets healthcare professionals from a wide range of backgrounds, there should be provisions to ensure that the structure of the courses caters to students from different backgrounds.

Spanning three semesters, the program admits a maximum of 60 students per cycle. This is a large number of students for a postgraduate program. This may complicate the educational process, as the relatively limited number of teaching staff may not fully cater to the entire student body. However, since most courses are conducted online, there may not be a significant burden on the teaching staff compared to conducting classes in person. The teaching method involves blended learning, with regulations ensuring data protection and intellectual property rights. The e-class platform tracks student progress for faculty monitoring.

Students are expected to engage in lectures and group meetings and receive personalized support, indicating a well-established support system. The PSP may offer scholarships based on academic, economic, and social criteria. However, the program should foresee attracting funding to ensure more support for students, as most of the current income comes from tuition fees.

Regarding the provision of the program for research implementation, a "hands-on laboratory" or research dissertation can be conducted in the last semester. Regulations regarding ethics for drafting assignments and theses are well described, and support is offered to the students throughout this period. However, there is a tendency towards reducing the percentage of pure research applications, and the courses should be designed in such a way that students become familiar with the research process and professional pathways are promoted towards the academic environment (e.g., doctoral studies). Although internships are unavailable, students can participate in Erasmus+ exchange programs. It is worth noting that internships provide multiple benefits, not only to students but also to stakeholders, as there is a direct connection with real work needs.

III.   Conclusions

Overall, the program has a clear process regarding student admission, progress, and support throughout their studies. This is evidenced through the procedures described in the regulations and the materials shared with the panel. Emphasis should be placed on ensuring that the program can support all the students it targets, both quantitatively and qualitatively, becoming more outward-looking and research-oriented, and establishing more contact with interested employers (e.g., through internships) so that they can be absorbed into the job market.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations
- Introduce practical training either as a separate module in a two-year postgraduate program or as part of a module (e.g., "hands-on laboratory"). This will help students to connect with the job market.
- Attract funding through programs and grants. This will help cover operational expenses and possibly reduce the need to attract many students, thus focusing on the specialization of the student in a specific field, which is the purpose of a postgraduate program.
- Introduce modules in courses that shape research thinking (e.g., research methodology & statistics, guest lecturers with research experience from abroad) and interconnection and collaborations at the research level between professors and research teams in the field of digital technology in health at both national and international level.
- Include additional members on the advisory board focusing on computing sciences and informatics. Individuals with a strong track record in research activities that cover the fields of the present PSP should also be incorporated into the advisory board.

Principle 4: Teaching Staff of New Postgraduate Study Programmes

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD ASSURE THEMSELVES OF THE LEVEL OF KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS OF THEIR TEACHING STAFF, AND APPLY FAIR AND TRANSPARENT PROCESSES FOR THEIR RECRUITMENT, TRAINING, AND FURTHER DEVELOPMENT.

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

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

Documentation

- *Procedures and criteria for teaching staff recruitment, policy for attracting highly qualified staff, and PSP Obligation Regulation*
- *List of the intended for recruitment teaching staff including subject areas, employment relationship, Institution of origin, Department of origin and relevant individual achievements*

Study Programme Compliance

I.   Findings

The PSP staff is composed of dedicated academics with teaching and research capabilities and consists of 9 members. A list of the PSP staff and their department of origin is provided. However, information concerning teaching staff accomplishments and performances (publications, extramural funding, h-index, etc.) is not available on the PSP's web page. Employment regulations and obligations of the PSP staff are also provided and described in the corresponding official documents. A policy for the faculty's support and development is also in place.

The department (similarly to UNIWA) adheres to transparent procedures for the selection and recruitment of the PSP faculty (APELLA national platform). This recruitment is based on covering PSP teaching needs and specific research directions. A curriculum committee ensures transparency and meritocracy regarding the selection of the teaching staff. Most of the staff members are recognized for their research qualities, and they are experienced in delivering academic courses. Research activities and the attraction of external funding by the PSP staff are not monitored yet for all faculty via universally accessible tools (e.g., Google Scholar, Scopus, etc.). Staff's teaching excellence will be assessed by means of student evaluations (anonymous PSP student surveys). This is a very important function that can help improve the PSP in the future. The evaluation questionnaires should be administered during

final examinations to ensure 100% participation of all students. The PSP curriculum committee should potentially attend certain lectures to provide additional feedback to individual teaching faculty. Overall, the staff's research productivity and teaching experience can be estimated as satisfactory. The teaching load is acceptable, according to the faculty. The PSP staff can be mobile by means of the Erasmus+ program. The department has the possibility of providing continuous education and training to the PSP faculty in order to improve their teaching capabilities and performance.

II.   Analysis

This new PSP is designed to successfully accomplish the stated goals of the program. The faculty involved in the program are experienced and recognized in the field. Most PSP faculty originates from UNIWA, while additional staff or visiting faculty is from other Greek institutions. Increasing the faculty number from foreign Institutions could further enrich the PSP. The PSP staff covers various aspects of the digital healthcare technology field. There is a core group that administers the PSP, as well as an advisory/consultative board (6 members). It is planned that the teaching faculty meet once a year to discuss the entire program and receive expert consultation for new teaching methodologies that involve the active participation of students and stakeholders. The department should have a formal policy for the faculty's continuous support and development of their teaching activities. Teaching prizes and awards to the best teachers can provide additional recognition to the faculty. This is not yet in place, but it will motivate teachers and help them to excel in the future.

III.   Conclusions

This is an important PSP that provides both education and training. This PSP offers job opportunities but does not direct PSP students towards further academic studies (PhDs). Academic performances, extramural funding, etc., by the faculty members should be presented on the webpage (in both Greek and English versions).

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

- The PSP committee shall meet at least once per year to discuss progress, problems, and reorganization of the PSP. It is recommended to involve students and stakeholders during the PSP content review to get their opinion on additional courses that need to supplement the curriculum based on their experience.

- The panel recommends enhanced mobility of PSP faculty throughout Erasmus+ and other similar exchange platforms.

- Identify mechanisms to encourage students to fill out surveys and questionnaires related to the program and evaluation of each module, lecturer, instructor, or supervisor.

- The PSP should continuously promote the policy for the faculty's support and development concerning their teaching duties. Establish formal mechanisms for validating and enhancing teaching credentials through participation in teaching methodology seminars. Establish the "teacher of the year" award.

- Information about the teaching, research, and all other achievements of the faculty members should be easily accessible on the PSP's webpage (Greek and English versions).

- PSP faculty members are encouraged to adopt the English language in some lectures and seminars to promote PSP's visibility and create opportunities for international exchanges in the future.

Principle 5: Learning Resources and Student Support

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

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

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

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

Documentation

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

Study Programme Compliance

I.   Findings

The PSP will primarily use remote delivery via teleconference technology (both synchronous and asynchronous), with a fraction of in-person or hybrid teaching. For synchronous distance learning, students can interact with lecturers/instructors and follow presentations. While no specific software was identified, it is mentioned that courses will also utilize UNIWA's e-class and/or Moodle platforms. In-person sessions will utilize UNIWA's facilities, including buildings, laboratories, auditoriums, libraries, and high-speed networks. Lectures will be held in well-equipped lecture theatres and classrooms. The computer lab of the school of public health will be used for practical exercise, though the committee did not have the chance to see these facilities.

Laboratory components will use the computer rooms of the department of public and

community health and department of computer engineering and informatics. A helpdesk at the network management centre supports users.

Student registry management will be handled through the University's integrated information system, providing electronic access to grades and course registration instruments. Students also have access to digital and physical academic databases, such as Elsevier, Science Direct, Scopus, ISI Web of Knowledge, and Heal Link - PubMed, via VPN using academic credentials.

It is stated that the secretariat of the program will manage student affairs, including registrations, class assignments, grades, diplomas, and correspondence; however, it is unclear whether this will be a dedicated role or shared among existing staff. Indications from the budget allocation suggest the latter.

The career services, mediation, and innovation department will assist students and graduates with job market integration, networking, career guidance, and support for students. Additional psychosocial support services are also available.

An independent "student ombudsman" office mediates between students and university staff, ensuring legality, addressing misadministration, and safeguarding institutional operations.

The PSP plans to admit up to 60 students (€3000 each), generating up to €126000 income after a 30% law-enforced discount on €180000 from tuition fees. The budget allocation is: 61.2% for lecturers' (both permanent and temporal staff) payment, 13.6% for support staff, 5.4% for travel expenses (lecturers and students), and 19.7% for consumables, equipment, and other program-related expenses. There is no allocation for studentships or organization of congresses.
It is mentioned and was discussed that should tuition income be insufficient to support the operation of the program, alternative sources of funding may include the ministry of education's budget, donations, sponsorships, research program resources, EU programs, and other legal sources. However, no specific or rump-up plans were provided.

II.   Analysis

The infrastructural resources and services available to the PSP are described in sufficient detail. Although the descriptions are somewhat generic (likely due to the PSP not having started yet), they appear adequate for the needs of the program. UNIWA's extensive experience in delivering undergraduate and postgraduate programs supports this adequacy. Staffing for these services also seems appropriate, and there is no indication that students will receive anything less than high-quality support. However, there are no mechanisms described to promote research within the PSP. The panel remains concerned that has not been given importance to the integration of primary research activities with the quality of program delivery.

The secretariat for the PSP appears to be shared with other departmental activities, with no dedicated staff planned. Given the target of recruiting up to 60 students in the first year

without a phased ramp-up, this may be inadequate to meet the PSP's needs.

The tuition fee utilization plan is detailed; however, without a ramp-up profile, its viability remains unclear. The budget relies solely on tuition fees, with approximately 75% allocated to lecturers' compensation and support staff salaries. This suggests a minimum of 45 students is needed to sustain the program initially, a target that seems ambitious. Discussions indicated that the program would be sustainable with just 15 students, but this calculation appears flawed, given the outlined expenses. No mitigation plans were presented for scenarios with fewer students' enrolment, such as reducing lecturer compensation etc. Additionally, there is no plan to provide studentships or awards for outstanding students. While the panel suggested this, it remains uncertain whether it is feasible within the current financial plan.

III.   Conclusions

The PSP shows great promise in leveraging the University's extensive infrastructure and established digital platforms for remote and in-person learning. The available resources, including well-equipped facilities, a comprehensive student registry system, and access to academic databases, are adequate to support the delivery of the program. Administrative and support services, including career guidance and psychosocial support, further enhance the student experience and services.

However, some concerns need addressing for the PSP to achieve its full potential. The lack of mechanisms to promote and integrate primary research within the program is a noticeable gap that could affect the quality of education and research output. The understood absence of dedicated staff for the PSP may also strain resources, particularly with the ambitious goal of enrolling up to 60 students in the first year without a phased ramp-up.

The tuition fee utilization plan, while detailed, relies heavily on achieving high student enrolment, with 75% of the budget allocated to personnel costs. The committee remains sceptical of the sustainability of the program with the current financial projections, especially given the absence of contingency plans for lower enrolment numbers or additional funding sources. Furthermore, the lack of provision for studentships and awards raises concerns about attracting and retaining high-calibre students.

Overall, all the foundational elements for a successful PSP are in place; however, attention to research integration, dedicated administrative support, realistic financial planning, and provisions for student scholarships are crucial for the program's long-term viability and success.

Panel judgement

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

Panel recommendations

- Develop and implement strategies to promote primary research within the PSP, ensuring that research activities are well integrated with program delivery to enhance academic quality.
- Assign dedicated administrative staff to the PSP (if not already in place) to handle student affairs and ensure efficient management and support, especially given the target of high student enrolment.
- Implement a phased ramp-up plan for student enrolment to ensure that the infrastructure, resources, and administrative support can adapt and scale effectively with increasing student numbers.
- Create detailed contingency plans for scenarios where enrolment targets are not met, including potential adjustments to lecturer compensation and exploration of alternative funding sources such as grants, donations, and sponsorships, as presented in the application.
- Establish a plan to provide studentships and awards for outstanding students to attract high-calibre candidates and support academic excellence within the PSP.

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

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

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

The above comprise the assessment of:

- *the objectives, content, and structure of the curriculum, the knowledge offered and the level of science and technology in the given discipline, thus ensuring that the PSP is up to date, according to the relevant documentation listed in the decisions of the pertinent bodies*

- *the entailed students' workload for the progression and completion of postgraduate studies*

- *the satisfaction of the students' expectations and needs in relation to the programme*

- *the learning environment, support services, and their fitness for purpose for the PSP in question*

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

Documentation

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

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

This PSP is addressed to graduates in informatics, biology, and health sciences, such as doctors, dentists, pharmacists, scientists, etc. It aims to deepen PSP students' understanding of the role of innovative computing and digital technological tools and their use in healthcare. The objectives, content, and structure of the curriculum are clearly described in the received documents. The content of this PSP is up to date; however, some important topics (e.g., personalized medicine, diagnostics, and therapeutic approaches) have been neglected. Similarly, the practical exercise (research oriented) is absent from this new PSP. Periodic internal evaluation and monitoring will be carried out on an annual basis by the MODIP. Quality data, such as the structure and organization of courses, teaching methods, degree of student satisfaction, etc., will be collected and evaluated. All the above information will be made public to be easily accessible to all interested participants. The learning environment is very good, and the support services on place for the successful realization of this PSP. The PSP has duration of

one and a half years (3 semesters).

II.   Analysis

The organization of internal evaluation by MODIP is satisfactory and aims to provide high-quality studies, improving the benefits and services, as well as the efficiency of the faculty. In particular, the monitoring of the structure and organization of the curriculum, student satisfaction, and the mobility of teachers and PSP students (using the Erasmus + platform), will contribute to the continuous improvement of quality. Students contribute feedback on course content, teaching methods, and instructor effectiveness, which, along with qualitative analysis, shapes the annual internal report pinpointing areas for improvement. The steering committee collaborates with academics and the PSP director to address issues and implement corrective measures guided by the qualitative research findings. Evaluation criteria encompass goal achievement, sustainability, graduates' progress, and research contribution. Continuous improvement efforts involve exploring similar programs, holding regular meetings, enhancing syllabi, and updating program guidelines. This inclusive internal evaluation ensures a supportive learning environment and alignment with evolving academic and market demands, overseen by the University's quality assurance unit following national guidelines.

The feedback mechanism involves an internal evaluation report of the PSP that captures the strategic objectives and the annual achievement levels. Based on the results of all data indicators (student evaluations, research work, etc.), necessary measures are taken, and appropriate corrective interventions are implemented.

The external evaluation process of the PSP is clearly outlined. This underscores the need for practical implementation to gauge its effectiveness. Essentially, the process entails periodic evaluations by panels appointed by HAHE for certification purposes. The outcomes of these evaluations are utilized to continuously improve institutions, academic units, and the PSP.

In leveraging external evaluation recommendations for the PSP, the process is part of the broader evaluation of the institution's quality assurance system. Recommendations for improvement are made by a committee of external experts (advisory board), which MODIP then deliberates on to formulate an action plan for optimal utilization. The addition of experts in informatics and having a strong research background it is pivotal for the correct development and orientation of this new PSP. This action plan is communicated to the relevant department, which initiates corrective actions. For instance, in response to the recommendation to develop procedures for gathering stakeholder input to enhance all University programs and knowledge transfer, the department establishes a group of external experts. Comprising respected academics, researchers, and professionals with relevant expertise, along with representatives from local and national social institutions, this group aims to elevate program quality and relevance.

MODIP's concluded strength on the PSP's uniqueness based on in its proposed approach is rather ambiguously phrased, but it must be noted that the panel identified that similar programs appear to exist elsewhere in country, although the approach may be different. This is not something that the panel can attest.

A minor concern is what appears to be an overreliance of the internal evaluation process on student questionnaires for gathering feedback on various aspects of the program. While soliciting student input is essential for evaluating teaching effectiveness and satisfaction from the course content, reactive measures based solely on questionnaire responses may not always be effective. Issues such as low response rates, inadequate capturing of relevant feedback, or a small and unrepresentative sample size, especially at the program's inception, can hinder the

usefulness of student questionnaires. It is suggested that the PSP's director, steering committee, department and OMEA/MODIP must develop alternative mechanisms for collecting feedback from lecturers, students, and stakeholders to ensure continuous program improvement.

All courses in this PSP address current developments in computing and digital technologies that are linked to the healthcare system. PSP students can potentially obtain the necessary knowledge and training in this important and continuously evolving field linked to healthcare. It is not certain if the 3-semester period will allow for a strong and competitive PSP. The addition of a fourth semester will significantly strengthen this PSP. Collaboration with other major institutions will ensure that students will be provided with a good level of practical experience. This will allow PSP students to develop the appropriate skills to continue their careers. The services provided, both electronic (online secretariat) and academic, are of good quality. The better use of the financial resources (research-oriented budget, trophies and prizes for the best PSP students, organization of national or international meetings, etc.) and the qualifications of invited teachers for this PSP will also contribute to its improvement.

III. Conclusions

The documents provided an outline of a robust framework for evaluating and monitoring the PMS, although its effectiveness ultimately hinges on practical application and adaptation to real-world contexts. The organization of this PSP is quite satisfactory. The curriculum includes courses on current topics in the new technologies linked to healthcare, to ensure high quality education but not sufficient practical experience. The PSP will benefit upon addition of other important courses (elective form). The structure and organization of the internal evaluation are also satisfactory and aim at a multi-faceted evaluation of the PSP. It is not certain that the 3-semester period of this PSP is adequate to have a solid and competitive PSP soon.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

The panel recommends the addition of a fourth semester, as well as the addition of practical exercises to further strengthen this new PSP. Similarly, the addition of experts in informatics and having a strong research background in the advisory board will be helpful.

PART C: CONCLUSIONS

I. Features of Good Practice

- Experienced and good PSP faculty.
- Excellent program covering important societal needs in the domain of healthcare.
- Established QAS to ensure evaluation and efficient revisions of the program.
- Advisory board in place.
- Utilization of UNIWA's comprehensive facilities and established digital platforms supports both remote and in-person learning effectively. Provision of access to extensive digital and physical academic resources, including leading databases such as Elsevier, Science Direct, and Scopus.
- Availability of career guidance, psychosocial support, and the "student ombudsman" office to assist students in various aspects.
- Good internal evaluation mechanisms. Active and helpful MODIP.
- Webpages (in Greek and English) ready to function.

II. Areas of Weakness

- Lack of certain courses in cutting-edge technologies.
- Limited research output. No specific mechanisms are in place to promote and integrate primary research within the PSP.
- The secretariat appears to be shared with other departmental activities, with no dedicated staff for the PSP, which may not meet the PSP's administrative needs.
- The target of recruiting up to 60 students per cohort without a phased ramp-up plan may be unrealistic and strain resources. The tuition fees utilization plan relies heavily on high student enrolment, with no contingency plans for lower enrolment or alternative funding sources.
- No provisions for studentships or awards, which may affect the program's ability to attract and retain high-calibre students.
- Large number of remote courses.
- Poorly designed budget for the distribution of income money (PSP tuition fees).

III. Recommendations for Follow-up Actions

- Better distribution of income money to support research and excellence. Increase research output by aiming for more publications and in high-impact journals.
- Improve the ratio of on-line / in-person courses to maximize learning outcomes. Specify for each course the number of in-person versus remote lectures.
- Clarify in more detail the student evaluation of the teaching staff. Consider changing the assessment methods for courses by including both team and individual assessed tasks.
- Implement an internal peer-review scheme of teaching.
- Consider the provision of an assessed element of work experience. This may be part of the final "Applied Research Project" or the "Diploma Thesis" in the third semester. For this to happen, perhaps one month in the final semester could be dedicated to real work experience for those students who are not current public health professionals.
- Include courses on cutting-edge technologies. Consider the introduction of more content on large data acquisition and use, relating to artificial intelligence, stratified medicine, personalized medicine, diagnostics, prevention, and community medicine, the latter focusing more on the health of populations than individuals.

- Establish and implement clear mechanisms to promote and integrate primary research within the PSP to enhance the quality of education and research output. Include modules in courses that shape research thinking (e.g., research methodology & statistics, guest lecturers with research experience), interconnections and research driven collaborations in the field of digital technology in health.
- Attract funds through competitive international and national programs and grants. This will help cover operational expenses and possibly reduce the need to enrol many students.
- Allocate specific administrative support exclusively for the PSP to efficiently manage student affairs and support the program's needs.
- Establish a realistic number of PSP students to ensure financial sustainability of the program. The proposed number of 60 students per cohort appears to be overoptimistic. Develop detailed contingency plans for lower enrolment scenarios, including potential adjustments in lecturer compensation and exploring alternative funding sources.
- Establish provisions for studentships and awards to attract and support outstanding students, thereby enhancing the program's appeal and competitiveness.
- Link the PSP-specific webpage (in Greek and English) to the webpage of both participating academic units. Information about the teaching, research, and all other achievements of the faculty members should be easily accessible on the PSP's webpage (Greek and English versions).

- The panel recommends enhanced mobility of PSP faculty throughout Erasmus+ and other similar exchange platforms.
- Promote a policy for the faculty's support and development concerning their teaching duties. Establish the "teacher of the year" concept.

- PSP faculty members are encouraged to adopt the English language in some lectures and seminars to promote PSP's visibility and create opportunities for international exchanges in the future.

- The panel recommends the addition of a fourth semester, with exclusive practical training and research activities.

- Include additional members on the advisory board with big expertise in computing sciences and informatics. Individuals with a strong track record in research should also be incorporated.

- Support the creation of a PSP alumni that will help further development and improve the quality of the PSP.

IV. Summary & Overall Assessment

The Principles where full compliance has been achieved are: **3, 4, and 6.**

The Principles where substantial compliance has been achieved are: **1, 2, and 5.**

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

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

Overall Judgement	
Fully compliant	**X**
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

The members of the External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel

Name and Surname   **Signature**

1.   **Professor Thimios Mitsiadis (Chair)**
       University of Zurich, Switzerland

2.   **Professor Panos Soultanas**
       University of Nottingham, UK

3.   **Professor George K. Christophides**
       Imperial College London, London, United Kingdom

4.   **Adj. Professor Anastassios C. Papageorgiou**
       University of Turku and Åbo Akademi University, Turku, Finland

5.   **Mr. Nikolaos Savvopoulos**
       PhD candidate, University of Patras, Patras, Greece