

ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ

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ΑΡΧΗ ΔΙΑΣΦΑΛΙΣΗΣ & ΠΙΣΤΟΠΟΙΗΣΗΣ ΤΗΣ ΠΟΙΟΤΗΤΑΣ ΣΤΗΝ ΑΝΩΤΑΤΗ ΕΚΠΑΙΔΕΥΣΗ HELLENIC REPUBLIC

H.Q.A.

HELLENIC QUALITY ASSURANCE AND ACCREDITATION AGENCY

EXTERNAL EVALUATION REPORT

FACULTY OF PHILOLOGY

NATIONAL AND KAPODISTRIAN UNIVERSITY OF ATHENS







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External Evaluation Committee

The Committee responsible for the External Evaluation of the Faculty of Philology, the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens consisted of the following five (5) expert evaluators drawn from the Registry constituted by the HQA in accordance with Law 3374/2005:

- Professor Constantin Bobas Université Lille 3, France
- 2. Emeritus Professor Stella GEORGOUDI École Pratique des Hautes Études, France
- Professor Juan NADAL CAÑELLAS
 Pontificio Istituto Orientale, Roma, Italy
- 4. Professor Bernhard PALME Universität Wien, Austria
- Professor Anna Panayotou Triantaphyllopoulou (Coordinator)
 University of Cyprus, Republic of Cyprus

N.B. The structure of the "Template" proposed for the External Evaluation Report mirrors the requirements of Law 3374/2005 and corresponds overall to the structure of the Internal Evaluation Report submitted by the Department.

The length of text in each box is free. Questions included in each box are not exclusive nor should they always be answered separately; they are meant to provide a general outline of matters that should be addressed by the Committee when formulating its comments.

Introduction

I. The External Evaluation Procedure

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

The informative meeting of the External Evaluation Committee took place on Tuesday, December 17, 2013 in the offices of H.Q.A. at 44 Singrou Ave. Mr. Tsiantos made the briefing on behalf of the Controlling Agency. Due to the occupation of the building of the School of Philosophy at the Zografou Campus, the meetings of the Evaluation Committee took place in the 'Kostis Palamas' building of the University of Athens (Academia Street).

The first meeting of the Committee with the team for Internal Evaluation of the Department (OM.E.A) took place from 12:00 - 19:30. The following persons were present: The Chairperson of the Department, Professor Eleni Karamalengou, the Deputy Director and Chairperson of the Coordinating Committee for Postgraduate Studies, Professor Erasmia-Louisa Stavropoulou, the heads of the four Divisions of the Department: Professor Styliani Hadjikosta (Division of Classical Philology), Professor Euripidis Garantoudis (Division of Modern Greek Philology), Professor Ioannis Polemis (Division of Byzantine Philology and Folklore Studies) as well as Associate Professor Eleni Panaretou (Division of Linguistics), and the members of the team for Internal Evaluation of the Department (OM.E.A.). In the course of the meeting, detailed presentations of the Department, each Division and the Postgraduate Programmes were performed by the respective persons in charge. An extensive discussion between the External Evaluation Committee and the members of academic staff of the Department followed. The Chairperson of the Department handed over to the Committee an updated report with the required data until 2013 as well as information presented during that day. Subsequently, the members of the Committee and the members of the Team for Internal Evaluation of the Department met with the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and Chairman of the Unit for Quality Assurance (MO.ΔI.Π), Professor Asterios Doukoudakis, in the central University building. At the end of the meeting, a memorandum including statistics concerning, among others, the teaching and research personnel as well as the administrative staff and the students of the University was given to the members of the Evaluation Committee.

On Wednesday, December 18, the Committee first had a meeting (9:30 -19:30)

with the administrative and laboratory staff of the Department at the 'Kostis Palamas' building and afterwards met with the undergraduate and postgraduate students, the PhD candidates and the post-doctorates.

On Thursday, December 19, detailed presentations (9:30 - 18:30) of the research activities and the strategic planning as well as the laboratories and the specialized libraries of the Department were given to the members of the Evaluation Committee at the 'Kostis Palamas' building by the respective persons in charge. At the end of the day, under the prevailing circumstances a guided tour through the buildings of the Faculty of Philosophy (laboratories and specialized libraries) and the ongoing construction works for a new Central Library Building was given to the members of the Committee. Moreover, the Committee had a meeting with the Dean, Professor Amalia Moser in the Dean's Office.

II. The Internal Evaluation Procedure

Please comment on:

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

For reasons which are beyond the control of the Department, *the Internal Evaluation Report* refers to the period from 2004 to 2010. Additional data, covering the period up to and including 2013, were requested by the Evaluation Committee and provided by the Department. These raw data were placed at the disposal of the Committee during the presentation, but were not accompanied by a written analysis, and, as a result, there is no sufficient information for an adequate evaluation of the extant social reality. Despite lesser evidence from 2011 onwards, the continuation of previous realities remains, apparent.

The *Internal Evaluation Report 2004–2010* was carefully prepared and includes a large number of detailed lists and tabulations which facilitate the evaluation and provide valuable data. The Report demonstrates in timely methods the important scholarly and didactic achievements of the Department and allows the identification of potential problems as well as productive reasoning.

It is regrettable that the reports for the period 2010 to 2013 lack sensitive data (and their analysis) as these were the years of dramatic cuts in budget and personnel, which has affected the teaching as well as the research activities of the whole Department in a very massive way: no book, no access to the most basic electronic research tools, considerably diminishing of teaching personnel and non-academic staff, while 4500 students are being trained in very difficult working conditions. Over the past twenty years the Department has followed with determination a very successful way of constantly rising its standards and quality, but now it is highly in danger to loose many of its achievements as well as several of the most talented young scholars, if not at least a basic budget is granted in the following years.

A. Curriculum

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

APPROACH

- What are the goals and objectives of the Curriculum? What is the plan for achieving them?
- How were the objectives decided? Which factors were taken into account? Were they set against appropriate standards? Did the unit consult other stakeholders?
- Is the curriculum consistent with the objectives of the Curriculum and the requirements of the society?
- How was the curriculum decided? Were all constituents of the Department, including students and other stakeholders, consulted?
- Has the unit set a procedure for the revision of the curriculum?

The Evaluation Committee was informed about the recent change of the curriculum of the undergraduate studies as well as the regulations of a transitional period which guaranteed the smooth continuity of the studies for the students who had been admitted with the old system.

Regarding the programmes of studies, the Department is able to provide educational activities at a very high level.

It might be considered, if it is not too early to choose a branch of studies already in the third semester. On the other hand, a quite early orientation offers the possibility to go deeper into more specific subjects and to provide a wider range of topics within each field of specialization. Obligatory writing of essays during the whole period of the studies — and not only within the frame of seminars, as it happens now — as well as an obligatory diploma thesis would contribute efficiently to the competence of scientific writing in many different ways. To go into details:

I. Undergraduate degree programmes

1. Degree in Classical Philology

In the undergraduate studies the teaching goals are focused on one side on the scientific research and on the other side on the scientific and pedagogic training of the philology teachers for the secondary education level as well as for philologists who will be employed in areas of public administration. Based on the above, the existing programme covers these requirements in a sufficient way, and in particular the new programme of studies – which is enriched by new and up-to-date teaching methods – serves the envisaged goals in a very satisfactory way.

Based on the information provided (*Prospectus* 2013-2014, pp. 10-11), the Committee considers the twelve courses drawn from the Department of History and Archaeology and the Department of Philosophy, Pedagogy and Psychology (8 obligatory plus 4 electives), out of a total of 76 courses necessary for obtaining the degree, are absolutely sufficient for the general training of the philologists.

2. <u>Degree in Medieval-Modern Greek Literature</u>

The subjects of this curriculum at the undergraduate level present a very well balanced survey of the various scholarly fields. The programme of this degree fully meets the aims of the Department.

3. Degree in Linguistics

As with the other Divisions of the Department, this curriculum offers enough specialised courses and important subjects for the education of the philologists. Its programme also meets the goals of the Department.

II. Postgraduate degree programmes

- Generally speaking, the postgraduate curricula of a) <u>Ancient Greek</u> and b) <u>Latin Philology</u> respond to the requirements and goals in the same way as the undergraduate curriculum of the Classical Studies does. It should be mentioned, however, that the postgraduate curriculum could also include subjects from neighbouring modules dealing with the ancient Greek and Roman worlds.
- 2. The postgraduate curriculum of <u>Modern Greek Philology</u> presents a very wide range of courses.
- 3. The postgraduate curriculum of the <u>Byzantine Philology</u> offers courses from an extremely wide variety of literary texts from the Byzantine period.
- 4. <u>Folklore Studies</u> do not offer an undergraduate degree, but a postgraduate degree of specialization within the degree of Byzantine Literature and Folklore Studies. It could perhaps be considered to create a separate degree of Folklore Studies so as to have the possibility to indicate this specialization in the Department's teaching portfolio and in the title of the degree. Concerning the postgraduate programmes in Folklore Studies we observed a significant offer of seminars which could be further be enriched with modules from other scientific fields such as Social Anthropology.
- 5. The two postgraduate curricula of Linguistics, in a) <u>Theoretical Linguistics</u> and b) in <u>Applied Linguistics</u> cover courses in almost all contemporary scientific approaches.
- 6. An inter-university programme of postgraduate studies bearing the title <u>'Technoglossia</u>' (Mechanics and Linguistics) in collaboration with the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering of the Polytechnic University of Athens is assured by the Division of Linguistics.
- 7. The Department offers an interuniversity and interdisciplinary programme of postgraduate studies for teaching Modern Greek as a foreign language.

PhD studies

In the context of PhD studies it would be desirable to organise some seminar courses on specialised topics, although—as it was pointed out in the presentation of the programmes—PhD students necessarily hold a postgraduate title of one speciality already, which requires a significant number of seminars and examinations to obtain it. During their work on the dissertation, the Department and the three Divisions organise many scientific lectures and workshops on topics of particular interest for the PhD students.

IMPLEMENTATION

• How effectively is the Department's goal implemented by the curriculum?

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

The teaching and research personnel have a very high profile indeed. Nevertheless, it must be noted that their research and teaching activities face considerable difficulties due to the lack of funding and the obligation to carry out time-consuming bureaucratic procedures. The inherent difficulties, which are mentioned above, were also reported by the teaching and research personnel of the Department, the PhD students and by the postdoctoral researchers.

B. Teaching

APPROACH:

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

Please comment on:

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

We perceive that the Department has established a specific pedagogic policy regarding teaching, which is inspired and enriched by current methods of teaching. However, the extremely high numbers of students in the undergraduate courses (except the seminars) necessarily causes difficulties in the smooth implementation of pedagogical methods, as was also pointed out by the undergraduate students themselves. On the other side, the professors' accessibility and readiness to help was also mentioned by the undergraduate, postgraduate and PhD students. The lack of resources in terms of electronic journals, access to databases, or support by scholarships, since at least the beginning of 2013, was repeatedly mentioned also by the students. Due to the large number of the students the examination system is in most cases limited to final written examinations or, occasionally, to oral presentations and seminar papers. It should not go unmentioned that provision has been taken to meet the needs of the disabled people.

IMPLEMENTATION

Please comment on:

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

The improvement of the economic resources would allow a better management of teaching tools, especially in the laboratories of Informatics and Phonetics.

According to the evidence listed in the *Internal Evaluation Report* (pp. 115–116), the outcoming students of the Department of Philology are more numerous than the incoming students from other universities to the Department of Philology. It would be welcome to increase the number of incoming students. Likewise, it would be welcome to increase the number of the academic personnel who go to teach at other Universities in the framework of Erasmus or other teaching exchange programmes.

As stated in the *Internal Evaluation Report* (pp. 38–39 and p. 49, para. 4.3.3), until 2010 the teaching evaluation was made on a voluntary basis. At the presentation of the Department the fact was stressed that for the last three years an

obligatory and systematic questionnaire for teaching evaluation has been used, following international practice.

RESULTS

Please comment on:

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

The success percentage of the students differs from course to course. It varies depending on the year of studies and the course, but always remains at high levels (50–80%), except during the first year, which is lower. The average duration of the studies according to the system current until the end of 2013 is, of course, closely connected with the general problems that significantly extend the length of studies, as the Department sets forth on pp. 46–47 of the *Internal Evaluation Report*. Various oral reports during the presentation referred also to the fact that due to the general economic crisis many students are forced to work part-time and parallel to their studies.

IMPROVEMENT

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

The Department follows the legal framework and regulations governing higher educational institutions. The implementation of the new regulation about the duration of studies will also improve the educational process in connection with the pedagogical design of the Department.

C. Research

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

APPROACH

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

The Department systematically promotes common research activities that also involve students, especially from the first and second postgraduate cycles, as indicated in the common national and European research programmes (pp. 74–78 of the *Internal Evaluation Report*). Unfortunately, the lack of a legislative framework and a specific public policy for research cooperation between universities and research institutes does not encourage collaborations.

IMPLEMENTATION

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

The Department supports the research efforts by creating laboratories—not only those mentioned on p. 78, para. 5.3 of the *Internal Evaluation Report*, but also those mentioned in the presentations of December 17th and 19th—and by organizing conferences or other scientific events. Despite the existing economic hardship, the operation of the laboratories is very important, especially the Informatics Laboratory of the Philology Division, the Phonetics and Computational Linguistics Laboratory of the Linguistics Division, as well as the recently founded Laboratory for Cypriot Studies which secured grants and fellowships for graduate and PhD students.

The Department's scientific publications in prestigious international peer-reviewed journals and in books with evaluation systems are extremely important and certainly commensurate with the scientific output of other research institutes of comparable size and direction. The impact of the research output shows satisfactory high quotations, as is demonstrated in the table on p. 79, para. 5.5 of the *Internal Evaluation Report*. Members of the Department have successfully raised funds from particularly significant research programmes of European or Greek funding agencies (pp. 74–78, para. 5.2 of the *Internal Evaluation Report*). On a personal level there is much collaboration with research institutions and organisations in Greece and abroad. The years 2010–2013 showed extraordinary activities in this respect, as became obvious in a comprehensive print-out distributed to the Members of the Evaluation Committee, and as was displayed in the oral presentations of the scholarly work of the Department on the 17th and 18th of December 2013.

RESULTS

- How successfully were the Department's research objectives implemented?
- Scientific publications.
- Research projects.
- Research collaborations.

- Efficacy of research work. Applied results. Patents etc.
- Is the Department's research acknowledged and visible outside the Department?
- Rewards and awards.

The significant increase of the number of the abovementioned publications relates to the results of research projects of the members of the Department. Especially the publication of the results of the research programs *Pythagoras, Kapodistrias, Thales, Aristeia*, the *Programme for life-long learning* (from national and European Union funds $E\Sigma\Pi A$ [National Strategic Reference Framework]) as well as the Programmes of the Department financed by $E\Lambda KE$ [Special Account for Research Grants] of the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens over the last three years should be noted. Members of the Department have received awards and prices by organizations and institutions from Greece and abroad (pp. 81–83 of the *Internal Evaluation Report*).

IMPROVEMENT

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

The Department suggests cooperation with institutes abroad (e.g. the University of Barcelona, the Gregorianum University at Rome, the academic unit 'Sources Chrétiennes', the Fordham University at New York) in order to support and facilitate research activities and postgraduate studies. It is also planned to encourage externally funded research in the area of Humanities in order to improve and expand inter-university and inter-departmental cooperation and collaboration.

D. All Other Services

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

APPROACH

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

The services provided for the teaching and research personnel are satisfactory. However, the Department secretary's business hours and days for students and the public, which have been judged as inadequate (p. 93, para. 8.1.2 of the *Internal Evaluation Report*), should be substantially increased. As expected, the Department takes care of the development and improvement of its on-line services in spite of the difficulties that are observed in relation to the central services of the University. In order to further attract students and tie them to the University Campus, the Department organizes events for the students' community and the public.

IMPLEMENTATION

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

The number of the secretarial of the Department was satisfactory until recently. Secretariat staff has comprehensive competence in carrying out its duties and perform multiple tasks. As it is stated in the Internal Evaluation Report, the systematic training of the staff at regular intervals would be particularly useful, if not necessary. Regarding the study units (Spoudasteria/Departmental Libraries), the staff could be judged as sufficient until recently, but a better distribution of tasks and duties within the Department would probably be more effective. However, recent decisions about forced transpositions, removals and retirements in the administrative staff create great social and working problems with very serious consequences for the teaching and research efforts.

The Committee had the opportunity to visit the new building for the Central Library of the School of Philosophy (still under construction), where the existing units (Spoudasteria/Departmental Libraries) will be moved.

Computer and communication technologies are widely used in teaching (p. 64, para. 4.6.2 of the *Internal Evaluation Report*). Particularly intensive use is made of the platform *e-class*. Those technologies are used in the secretariat, in the communication between teaching personnel and students, in the laboratories and the tutorials.

We have noticed that there is a very important offer of specialized technical equipment for people with a handicap, and generally care has been taken of disabled people.

Due to the increased number of students, the running system of Academic Advisors cannot work satisfactorily. Although the teaching personnel accepts students on designated days and hours and also responds to their questions via e-

mail and other electronic media, it is necessary to increase these hours of communication and advice.

RESULTS

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

During the presentation members of the Department repeatedly expressed their deep concern about the situation of constant uncertainty in which the administrative staff work; the fact affects very negatively the teaching and research activities by retarding all processes.

IMPROVEMENTS

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

In this administrative deadlock the Department does not have any room to move, and there are no possibilities for strategies of reorganization within the existing legal framework.

Collaboration with social, cultural and production organizations

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

As has been mentioned on p. 85, para. 6.1.1 of the *Internal Evaluation Report*, members of the Institute have undertaken a series of educational initiatives which are addressed to the wider public. Moreover, the School for Modern Greek Language also supports training courses and teaching of Greek as a second language to refugees and economic immigrants. Additionally, the Department's members participate in administrative committees of various organizations and institutions.

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

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

Please, comment on the Department's:

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

Short-term goals of the Department are—in addition to the ones already mentioned—as follows:

- 1. The development and expansion of already existing bilateral relations with foreign universities.
- 2. The enrichment of the curriculum of the School for Modern Greek Language with courses on the classical languages.
- 3. Continuous and lifelong adult education aiming at a constant enrichment of their knowledge.

As regards the medium-term goals, the Department plans among others:

- 1. The reduction of the number of admitted students per year.
- 2. Sufficient space for the various activities and tasks of the Department.
- 3. The acquisition of external funding through international programmes.

F. Final Conclusions and recommendations of the EEC

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

Conclusions and recommendations of the EEC on:

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

The Committee found that the Department of Philology is of prime importance in Greece both for scientific research in the field of Humanities and for its social contribution, especially with regard to secondary education. More specifically, the Committee found that in the Department:

- The strategic aims are determined by the research and teaching activities as well as by fund-raising, as is the usual international practice.
- The teaching personnel and the administrative staff as well as the students have contributed to the development of a corporate identity and a feeling of belonging to a scientific community, which both parties appreciate and keep trying to improve.
- The researchers are distinguished for their continuous production and scientific publications in prestigious journals and books.
- Effectiveness of the pedagogical efforts is assured in each Division of the Department.
- The internal organization of the Department presents a clear structure due to the existence of Divisions. The undergraduate Programmes are organised in three degrees which, taken together, represent the wide range of scientific approaches covered by the Departments; the postgraduate Programmes offer in-depth specialisations based on the scientific subjects and approaches of the respective Division.
- Interdisciplinary research becomes obvious in the scientific publications of some of the Department's members; in a few branches, such as antiquarian studies, it might be intensified.
- There is obviously a lack of several statistic information, such as the monitoring of success rates in the AΣΕΠ professional examinations, or the scientific development and anchorage of all postgraduates —especially of the PhD-holders— in professional areas. Nevertheless, a large number of graduates holding a degree from the Department are accepted for postgraduate and post-doctoral studies in other Greek universities or abroad. According to the available data, PhD-holders of at least some Divisions have made and continue to make brilliant careers as researchers and professors at universities in other countries.
- For the near future it is necessary that detailed and refined statistics and a
 unified computer system will be made available by the University's Central
 Administration for all the administrative resources, the building facilities and
 the other infrastructure of the Department as well as a single database for the
 management of all human resources.
- A still wider dissemination of the research results would be welcome.

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The Members of the Committee

	Name and Surname	Signature
1.	Constantin Bobas	
2.	Stella Geordoudi	
3.	Juan Nadal Cañellas	
4.	Bernhard Palme	
5.	Anna Panayotou - Triantaphyllopoulou	