



ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ  
HELLENIC REPUBLIC



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# Accreditation Report for the Internal Quality Assurance System (IQAS)

Institution: National and Kapodistrian University of Athens

Date: 31 May 2024



Με τη συγχρηματοδότηση  
της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης



Πρόγραμμα  
Ανθρώπινο Δυναμικό και  
Κοινωνική Συνοχή



Report of the Panel appointed by the HAHE to undertake the review of the **Internal Quality Assurance System (IQAS)** of the **National and Kapodistrian University of Athens** for the purposes of granting accreditation.

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

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

The Panel responsible for the Accreditation Review of the **Internal Quality Assurance System (IQAS)** of the **National and Kapodistrian University of Athens** comprised the following five (5) members, drawn from the HAHE Register, in accordance with Laws 4009/2011 & 4653/2020:

- 1. CHRYSOCHOU POLYMEROS (Chair)**  
Aarhus University
- 2. EFSTATHIADES ANDREAS**  
European University Cyprus
- 3. VALAVANIS KIMON**  
Department of Electrical & Computer Engineering, Daniel Felix Ritchie School of Engineering & Computer Science, University of Denver
- 4. FOURKIOTIS KONSTANTINOS PANAGIOTIS**  
Aristotle University of Thessaloniki
- 5. MICHOTIS IOANNIS**  
Economic Chamber of Greece

## **II. Review Procedure and Documentation**

The present accreditation report for the Internal Quality Assurance System (IQAS) took place between 26 May 2024 and 1 June 2024. On Monday, 27 May 2024, the External Evaluation and Accreditation Panel (EEAP) held meetings with a) the Rector and the Vice-Rectors; b) members of the Quality Assurance Unit (QAU/MODIP); c) members of the Internal Evaluation Groups (OMEA); and d) faculty members. On Tuesday, 28 May 2024, the EEAP members held meetings with a) undergraduate students; b) postgraduate students (MSc, PhD) and post-doctoral researchers; c) the heads of administrative units; d) alumni of all three study cycles; and e) external stakeholders. The meetings concluded with a session with members of MODIP to clarify questions from the EEAP. Finally, there was a closing meeting with the Rector and the Vice-Rector for Academic Affairs, International Relations, and Extroversion.

The EEAP panel was provided with all necessary materials from the Hellenic Authority for Higher Education (HAHE). The materials included, among other things, the guidelines for accreditation, the European qualifications framework, the expert manual, the standards for quality accreditation, the IQAS guidelines, and the mapping grid.

The University provided the EEAP with the required documentation as requested by HAHE, which was uploaded to their platform. A total of 22 files were provided, containing, among other things, the internal evaluation by MODIP, the management and monitoring information systems for the financial and human resources of the University, descriptions of the functions of the information system by MODIP, the quality objectives of the University (SMART), the quality assurance policy of the University in connection with the strategy, and the updated quality manual of the quality management system. Additionally, the University shared presentation slides used during the meetings and extra documentation requested by the EEAP panel.

These documents, along with the valuable input obtained from the discussions during the meetings, were used by the EEAP panel to complete the present evaluation.

### **III. Institution Profile**

The National and Kapodistrian University of Athens (NKUA) is the oldest university in Greece, founded on April 14, 1837. It is the first university of the Greek state and the broader region of Southeastern Europe. NKUA comprises 9 schools and offers 41 undergraduate programs, two of which are taught in English exclusively for international students. Additionally, it offers 239 master's degree programs, 33 of which are conducted in English.

The most recent census shows that the total number of undergraduate and postgraduate students exceeds 60,000 (41,454 undergraduates, 16,385 master's level graduates, and 9,032 PhD candidates). Its permanent teaching staff, including all categories, numbers approximately 2,000 members (1,600 professors of all ranks, 509 research associates and other teaching/technical staff, and 1,021 administrative staff).

NKUA's facilities are spread across five campuses: Zografou, Centre of Athens, Goudi, Dafni, and Psaxna in Evia.

NKUA ranks among the top universities in Greece according to international rankings. For example, in the Top Universities by Top Google Scholar Citations report in 2024, NKUA ranks 89th in the world and 16th in Europe. Similarly, the Ranking Web of Universities report in 2024 places NKUA 247th in the world out of 12,000 universities, 55th in Europe, and 1st in Greece. It is noteworthy that NKUA's ranking has been improving over the years. Some of its departments, such as the School of Dentistry, School of Medicine, and the Department of Informatics and Telecommunications, have gained high recognition and rank globally.

NKUA is committed to innovation and academic excellence, aiming to instil in its members a passion for research and knowledge. Its vision is grounded in four main principles: a) research; b) education and training characterized by a pursuit of high quality and distinction; c) continuous engagement with innovation and creativity; and d) active participation in scientific, social, and cultural events.

Finally, NKUA seeks to enhance its international profile by increasing collaborations with universities in Europe and globally. Its internationalization strategy includes delivering educational programs outside Greece, such as in Cyprus.

## PART B: COMPLIANCE WITH THE PRINCIPLES

### Principle 1: STRATEGY, QUALITY POLICY AND TARGET SETTING OF THE INSTITUTION

**INSTITUTIONS SHOULD DEVELOP A FOUR-YEAR STRATEGY, WITHIN WHICH THE QUALITY ASSURANCE STRATEGY IS INCLUDED. THE QUALITY ASSURANCE STRATEGY IS SPECIFIED THROUGH THE QUALITY ASSURANCE POLICY, WHICH SETS OUT THE PRINCIPLES OF THE OPERATION OF THE IQAS AND AIMS AT THE CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT OF THE SYSTEM. THE QUALITY ASSURANCE POLICY IS SPECIFIED THROUGH THE ANNUAL QUALITY TARGET SETTING WHICH EXTENDS TO ALL ASPECTS AND DIMENSIONS OF THE INSTITUTION'S OPERATION AND ACTIVITIES.**

*The Institution's strategy provides the general guidelines for the actions to be implemented within the specific forthcoming period. The strategic goals for quality assurance constitute one of the main pillars of the Institution's strategy. These goals are set out and specified following to analysis of relevant parameters and quality indicators. The quality assurance strategy includes the quality assurance policy as a specific document.*

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

*The quality assurance policy is implemented through:*

- *the commitment for compliance with the laws and regulations that govern the Institution;*
- *the establishment, review, redesign, and redefinition of quality assurance objectives, which are fully in line with the institutional strategy*

*This policy mainly supports:*

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

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

*For the implementation of the quality assurance policy, an annual quality target-setting (using the SMART methodology) and a specific action plan for the achievement of the targets are drafted. The quality targeting includes all annual goals required for addressing weaknesses and improving the parameters of the Institution's teaching, research, and administrative work, according to the*

*strategic guidelines set as part of the Institution's strategy.*

### **Documentation/Annexes**

E1.1 Strategic planning of the Institution (including the quality assurance strategy)

E1.2 Quality assurance policy of the Institution in liaison with the strategy

E1.3 Quality Targeting of the Institution (SMART), as implementation of the strategy and policy

## **Institution compliance**

### **I. Findings**

The EEAP panel conducted a comprehensive evaluation of the documentation submitted by NKUA, considering issues that emerged during the two-day scheduled meetings, along with additional documentation requested by the panel and provided by NKUA.

NKUA has a strategy in place for the period 2023-2027, accompanied by a detailed SWOT analysis that outlines areas of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats resulting from the external environment. The elements in the SWOT analysis are supported by data and relevant indicators.

NKUA has defined eight strategic priorities:

1. Educational Policy
2. Research Policy
3. Lifelong Learning and Education
4. Outreach and Internationalization
5. Connection with Society and the Economy and Enhancement of Innovation
6. Upgrading the Quality of the Academic Environment
7. Sustainability and Sustainable Development
8. Quality Assurance Strategy

For each strategic priority, strategic goals are formulated and a list of KPIs is developed. Additionally, the frequency of monitoring each KPI is explained, and the type of measurement is listed.

The quality assurance strategy set by NKUA aims to enhance the quality of each priority, and there is evidence that these priorities align with the SWOT analysis. Furthermore, a Quality Assurance Policy System (IQAS) is in place, with SMART-compliant goals.

Overall, NKUA has a well-defined quality assurance strategy and has set targets for the upcoming period.



## **II. Analysis**

The strategic plan is detailed, setting clear priorities and targets, along with methods to achieve these targets. The quality goals are articulated, with key performance indicators (KPIs) established by MODIP.

The Internal Quality Assurance System (IQAS) is appropriate and effectively communicated to all interested stakeholders through the website.

NKUA has existing information systems that collect data and monitor KPIs. A new information system has been implemented in PowerBI, currently monitoring student information, and by 2024, a transition to this new system is expected for the remaining monitoring services. This new system will improve the IQAS and support the quality assurance policy by enabling MODIP to better monitor targets and offer a more holistic and integrative assessment. The EEAP panel considers this development positive and supports the transition.

The quality goals set are relevant and realistic, paired with suitable KPIs. These goals are monitored, updated annually (for the majority), and communicated.

A detailed list of KPIs is provided, and a target setting for the next year is established. From the meetings the EEAP panel held, it was explained that goals are defined bottom-up, allowing for realistic goal setting. However, their 5-year evolution is not presented. There are several reasons for this: some KPIs regularly change, new KPIs are added, new information systems are implemented, and frequent regulatory changes require updates. These issues prevent the institution from long-term monitoring of KPIs.

From the discussions held, it was noted that the number of KPIs continuously increases, adding extra burden to MODIP and other administrative units responsible for data collection. The EEAP panel recognized that this issue requires streamlining KPIs and setting baseline targets, which could also be done with support from HAHE. Additionally, there is a need for these KPIs to consider the complexity of NKUA, which consists of faculties with different research cultures and traditions. Finally, these KPIs should also allow comparability across other institutions, while still taking into account the peculiarities of each academic institution.

## **III. Conclusions**

Given the above findings and analysis, the EEAP panel considers Principle 1 as compliant.

**Panel Judgement**

<b>Principle 1: STRATEGY, QUALITY POLICY AND TARGET SETTING OF THE INSTITUTION</b>	
Compliance	X
Partial compliance	
Non-compliance	

**Panel Recommendations**

- R1.1: KPIs should be streamlined to ensure relevancy and reduce the administrative burden.
- R1.2: KPIs could also be presented for each school/faculty for better monitoring.

## **Principle 2: PROGRAMMING AND ALLOCATION OF RESOURCES**

**INSTITUTIONS SHOULD ENSURE ADEQUATE FUNDING, HUMAN RESOURCES, INFRASTRUCTURE, SERVICES AND SYSTEMS FOR TEACHING, RESEARCH, AND INNOVATION, AS WELL AS FOR THE WHOLE RANGE OF THEIR ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES, FOR THE PURPOSE OF FULFILLING THEIR MISSION AND STRATEGIC GOALS. THE ABOVE RESOURCES ARE PLANNED OVER A FOUR-YEAR HORIZON, ARE LINKED WITH THE STRATEGY AND ARE ALLOCATED IN A RATIONAL MANNER, IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PERTINENT PROCEDURES. THEIR MANAGEMENT AND MONITORING IS IMPLEMENTED BY MEANS OF INFORMATION SYSTEMS.**

### Funding

The institution ensures adequate funding to cover not only the overhead and operational costs (regular budget and public investment budget) but also costs related to research, innovation, and development by exploiting external sources of financing. The financial planning and the operation of an effective financial management system constitute necessary tools for the full exploitation of the resources.

The annual public funding of the Institution follow the procedures set out in article 16 of Law 4653/2020 and the relevant ministerial decisions.

The annual budgets for the past five years, the absorption and the main categories of expenditure as well as the amount and sources of the external funding are key elements for the assessment of the principle.

### Infrastructure

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

### Working environment

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

### Human resources

The Institution and the academic units bear the responsibility for the allocation and development of the human resources. The rational allocation of human resources is based on a system of criteria, in line with the mission and the strategic options of the Institution.

The subject areas, as well as the competences and tasks of the staff members are defined by the corresponding job descriptions that are established within the operation scope of each academic or administrative unit. These posts are filled following the requirements set by the law, on the basis of fair and published processes. The continuous training and evaluation of the staff is considered necessary for the enhancement of the performance, which is recorded and monitored as provided in the context of the IQAS.

The Institution should acknowledge and provide the necessary resources for the implementation of the IQAS, its enhancement and the provision of services that assist the satisfaction of the quality assurance requirements. Moreover, the Institution provides the necessary resources for the organization and staffing of the QAU, with a clear allocation of competences and tasks to its staff members.

### **Documentation/Annexes**

E2.1 Annual planning and allocation of funding from all available sources for the next 4 years, or Programme Agreement of the Institution, if applicable

E2.2 Internal rules for the allocation and distribution of the financial and human resources to the academic units and the central services of the Institution

E2.3 Internal evaluation by the QAU of the resources, according to the relevant NISQA indicators and the performance indicators of the Institution

E2.4 Overview of the information systems for the management and monitoring of the financial and human resources of the Institution

### **Institution compliance**

#### **I. Findings**

NKUA was established in 1837 and it operates as a Public Law Legal Entity (in Greek: Νομικό Πρόσωπο Δημοσίου Δικαίου). The overall campus spans across five locations (Zografou, Centre of Athens, Goudi, Dafni, and Psaxna in Evia), four of which are in the Prefecture of Attica, and one in the Island of Evia. NKUA has substantial real estate and legacy assets; proceeds from those assets are mainly used for student scholarships, awards, and improving public health.

The most recent Programme of Studies is composed of:

- 41 Undergraduate Programs of Study each housed in a separate Department. Two of these programs are offered in English to international students, namely, Bachelor of Arts, BA, in Archaeology, History and Literature of Ancient Greece (offered by the School of Philosophy) and Medical Degree in English (offered by the Medical School).
- 239 Graduate Programs, 33 of which are offered in a foreign language.

The educational programs are supported and complemented by 287 Laboratories, 9 Library Building complexes, 2 Libraries and Reading Rooms of the Student Directorate, 17 thematic Museums that belong to specific Schools and/or

Departments, the History Museum, and the University Historical Archives. NKUA is also home to 15 Centres of Excellence and 23 Research Institutes. It has 3 University Hospitals, 72 University Clinics (62 of which are in the Medical School, 5 in the Department of Nursing, and 5 in the Department of Dentistry).

The most recent census shows that NKUA has 1.600 Faculty members, 508 Research, Teaching and Technical staff members, 1.021 Administrative staff members, 41,473 undergraduate students, 16,385 Graduate Students, and 9,032 PhD candidates.

## **II. Analysis**

NKUA's facilities have partially improved over the years, despite the continuous lack of adequate funding from the Government and the reduction in personnel (faculty, administrative staff, and support personnel). Lack of sufficient Government funding impacts modernization. Difficulties in securing proceeds from the NKUA 'real estate property' add to the funding challenge.

The EEAP panel recognizes the efforts made by the University to allocate research-oriented funding (from ELKE) towards infrastructure improvement, faculty wages, and student support through scholarships. However, although ELKE is a healthy entity handling on an annual basis more than 100-120 million euros of research funds, it is not independent. The EEAP panel learned that EKLE now operates as a Public Law Legal Entity – this change was imposed by the Government with one objective to 'tap' on ELKE resources as / if needed – which limits its flexibility and ability for long-term planning, adversely impacting resource utilization.

Non-educational facilities are limited and mostly understaffed. The administrative staff is very professional, overworked, and underpaid.

Discussions and interviews held with MODIP, OMEA, the Rector, and the Vice-Rector have revealed their commitment to improving resources despite the challenges and 'systemic issues', which NKUA tries to solve on their own without support from the State.

Although, the most important issue that all participants pointed out is the under-funding from the Government, all parties in NKUA have managed to create top programs in all disciplines.

The working environment is friendly and collegial, encouraging interactions and

collaboration.

### **III. Conclusions**

It is registered that all stakeholders have pointed to the need for: a) additional permanent staff (faculty, administrators) to maintain the provided high-level education; and b) substantial funding increase to improve resources.

The EEAP panel observes that unless there is substantial investment from the State, the University risks not being fully compliant in future accreditations.

It was communicated to the EEAP panel that funding required to run operations (e.g., for improving infrastructure, additional hiring) from the State is insufficient.

Overall, given the above findings and analysis, the EEAP panel considers Principle 2 as compliant.

## Panel judgement

<b>Principle 2: PROGRAMMING AND ALLOCATION OF RESOURCES</b>	
<b>2.1 Funding</b>	
Compliance	X
Partial compliance	
Non-compliance	
<b>2.2 Infrastructure</b>	
Compliance	X
Partial compliance	
Non-compliance	
<b>2.3 Working Environment</b>	
Compliance	X
Partial compliance	
Non-compliance	
<b>2.4 Human Resources</b>	
Compliance	
Partial compliance	X
Non-compliance	

<b>Principle 2: PROGRAMMING AND ALLOCATION OF RESOURCES (overall)</b>	
Compliance	X
Partial compliance	
Non-compliance	

## Panel Recommendations

Not any.

### **Principle 3: STRUCTURE, ORGANISATION AND OPERATION OF THE IQAS**

**THE IQAS INCLUDES ALL NECESSARY PROCESSES AND PROCEDURES FOR THE COMPLIANCE OF ALL THE INSTITUTION'S ACADEMIC STRUCTURES, ACTIVITIES AND ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES WITH THE QUALITY STANDARDS. THE QAU IS THE COMPETENT UNIT FOR THE ORGANISATION AND OPERATION OF THE IQAS AND HAS THE REQUIRED FUNCTIONAL INDEPENDENCE AND OPERATIONAL CAPACITY FOR THE EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE IQAS, AS WELL AS FOR ITS COMPLIANCE WITH THE PRESENT STANDARDS.**

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

#### Structure and organization

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

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

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

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

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

The QAU is staffed by a sufficient number of permanent personnel, so as that the operational needs of the IQAS are completely met. The administrative officer of the QAU has comprehensive updating and knowledge about the implementation of its operations and activities.



### Operation

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

The above actions include:

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

### Documents

The IQAS documentation includes, among other things, a series of key documents demonstrating its structure and organisation, and the Quality Manual, which describes how the requirements of the Standards are met.

The Annexes of the Quality Manual include:

- the Quality Policy and the Quality Assurance Objectives;
- the necessary written Procedures, along with the entailed forms;
- the necessary Guides, External Documents (e.g. pertinent legislation), as well as any other supporting data;
- the standing organisational structure of the QAU, with a detailed description of the competences, the required qualifications and the goals for each post. The organisational chart is structured in a manner that ensures that the IQAS organisational requirements are fully and properly met.

### Documentation

E3.1 Government Gazette for the approval, structure, and operation of the IQAS and the QAU

E3.2 Updated IQAS Quality Manual (including the QAU organisational structure- job descriptions, tasks, skills)

E3.3 QAU Internal Regulation

## **Institution compliance**

### **I. Findings**

The institution's QAU has been established according to the existing legislative framework (4957/2022, art. 215) and the provisions of HAHE. The institution's IQAS and its implementation processes were determined by decisions of the appropriate decision-making bodies of the university (the senate), as provided by the law.

QAU is headed by the Vice-Rector of Academic Affairs and International Relations and Extroversion. It comprises five (5) experienced academic staff members (who served in the departmental Internal Evaluation Groups - OMEAs - for many years), as well as representatives from special scientific personnel, laboratory teaching staff, special technical laboratory staff, administrative staff, and students. The QAU is supported by nine (9) administrative members of staff.

QAU is an independent unit, coordinating the quality assurance actions of all the academic units of the university.

The details of the structure, organization, and operation of the IQAS are provided in the submitted documents.

A number of departments and all the laboratories have certified their quality systems using ISO9001 which is considered a good practice.

## **II. Analysis**

During the visit, the EEAP panel was presented with the required evidence on the effectiveness of the structure put in place for managing quality at the institutional level. The EEAP panel confirms that the Quality Manual includes all the necessary processes and procedures for the institution's compliance with the Standards.

The EEAP was also provided with samples of standardized forms, highlighting that the procedures were implemented as expected.

The QAU is adequately staffed by an administrative support unit (Υπηρεσία Διασφάλισης Ποιότητας). During the discussions with this administrative support unit, it was evident that the workload is high, and that additional members of staff should be appointed to cover these needs. Discussions highlighted that all members of staff have adequate skills and competencies, with a clear job description and task allocation.

## **III. Conclusions**

Given the above findings and analysis, the EEAP panel considers Principle 3 as compliant.

**Panel judgement**

<b>Principle 3: STRUCTURE, ORGANISATION AND OPERATION OF THE IQAS</b>	
Compliance	<b>X</b>
Partial compliance	
Non-compliance	

**Panel Recommendations**

R3.1 QAU Administrative Support Unit would benefit from additional members of staff.

## Principle 4: SELF-ASSESSMENT

THE INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM CONDUCTS INTERNAL EVALUATION OF THE WHOLE RANGE OF ACADEMIC AND ADMINISTRATIVE ACTIVITIES OF THE INSTITUTION, AS WELL AS ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE SYSTEM, TO IDENTIFY ANY OVERSIGHTS, DEFICIENCIES OR DISCREPANCIES. CORRECTIVE ACTIONS AND IMPROVEMENTS ARE PROPOSED TOWARDS THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE QUALITY AND STRATEGIC GOALS. DURING THE SELF-ASSESSMENT, THE EFFECTIVE INTERNAL COMMUNICATION WITH THE INTERNAL AS WELL AS THE EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS IS ENSURED.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

### **Documentation**

E4.1 Minutes and other documents and relevant correspondence regarding the annual internal evaluation of the IQAS by the QAU

E4.2 Results of the last annual internal evaluation of the IQAS by the QAU, and the relevant minutes and documentation

E4.3 Correspondence and other actions (workshops, meetings) for collecting feedback from the external stakeholders

## **Institution compliance**

### **I. Findings**

NKUA provided the following relevant documentation that was used by the EEAP panel:

a) Document E4.1: This report specifies the need for a clear and thorough self-assessment process, involving all stakeholders, including students. It is evident that MODIP collaborates closely with OMEA in all departments, ensuring consistent quality assurance across the university. Regular departmental meetings between MODIP and OMEA take place.

b) Document E4.2: This report highlights the importance of systematically collecting and analysing data. NKUA collaborates with HAHE and monitors feedback from students and graduates. A comprehensive information system for monitoring performance indicators and a Business Intelligence (BI) tool is set in place.

c) Document E4.3: This report outlines the importance of regular monitoring, stakeholder feedback, and adaptive strategies to address challenges. There is evidence that MODIP continuously monitors quality assurance processes.

Overall, MODIP has enhanced NKUA's quality assurance processes.

### **II. Analysis**

The IQAS at NKUA has grown significantly since its inception in 2008. MODIP has been crucial in this growth, expanding its team from 2 members in 2008 to 9 members in 2024 and completing over 220 certification files for accreditation since 2022. MODIP collaborates closely with OMEA groups in all departments to ensure consistent quality assurance across the university.

The University's international rankings have improved, particularly due to enhanced researcher profiles (e.g., in Google Scholar) and the standardization of profile names for NKUA. This collaboration between MODIP and OMEA has led to the standardization of quality assurance reports, significantly increasing the number of indexed academic profiles from 200 to 2000. MODIP also holds regular meetings with departmental OMEAs, ensuring continuous dialogue and improvement.

NKUA has implemented mentoring systems for students across all study programs (undergraduate, postgraduate, and doctoral) and has made significant

strides in supporting foreign students, especially through English-language programs like medicine and the evaluation of international students. Student participation in course evaluations is currently at 8.45%.

The EEAP panel was given evidence that MODIP facilitates workshops and career days, enhancing graduate employability and job market engagement. Since 2020, the career office has organized webinars and seminars to prepare students for career days, resulting in 850 applications, 500 interviews, and 7% of participants finding employment. NKUA's focus on gender equality ranks the institution in 9th place in the Impact Ranking for SDG 5 (Gender Equality).

MODIP uses various tools to support quality assurance, including electronic questionnaires, a comprehensive information system for monitoring performance indicators, and a Business Intelligence (PowerBI) tool to enhance data analysis.

### III. Conclusions

Given the above findings and analysis, the EEAP panel considers Principle 4 as compliant.

#### Panel judgement

Principle 4: SELF-ASSESSMENT	
Compliance	X
Partial compliance	
Non-compliance	

#### Panel Recommendations

R4.1: Increase student participation by highlighting the importance of student involvement in quality assurance processes.

R4.2: Educate faculty and staff on quality assurance (e.g., by providing continuous training programs; frequent communication).



## **Principle 5: COLLECTION OF QUALITY DATA: MEASURING, ANALYSIS, AND IMPROVEMENT**

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

*The QAU should establish and operate an information system to manage the data required for the implementation of the Internal Quality Assurance System.*

*The QAU measures and monitors the performance of the various activities of the Institution, through appropriate procedures established in the context of the IQAS structure and assesses their level of effectiveness. The measuring and monitoring is conducted on a basis of indicators and data provided by the HAHE in the pertinent guidelines and forms, which are part of the National Information System for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (NISQA). These measurements may concern: the size of the student body, the size of the teaching and administrative staff, the infrastructure, the structural components of the curricula, students' performance, research activity performance, financial data, feedback on student and faculty satisfaction surveys, data related to the teaching and research activity services, infrastructure, etc.*

*The QAU makes use of the figures and presents the results for consideration using statistical analysis. Outcomes are displayed through histograms and charts. This sort of information is used by the Institution for decision making, at all levels, pursuing improvement, as well as for setting, monitoring, assessing and reviewing the Institution's strategic and operational goals.*

*Institutions are under an obligation to provide or transfer data (through the QAU) to the HAHE, for the purposes of quality assurance, and monitoring of their strategy and funding.*

### **Documentation**

E5.1 Reports from the National Information System for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (NISQA) and accompanying assessment report by the QAU

E5.2 Description of the functions of the QAU information system

E5.3 Sample of fully completed questionnaire of satisfaction surveys addressed to the teaching and the administrative staff

E5.4 QAU report on the utilisation of the data collected from the QAU information system (internal evaluation, quality targeting, etc.)

### **Institution compliance**

#### **I. Findings**

NKUA has developed and operates a mix of methods, for the collection and management of the required data during the implementation of the IQAS. Those methods include (i) the students learning and feedback evaluation system, (ii) the business intelligence (BI) system for the collection and processing of the institution's primary data, and (iii) the system for communicating and sending the data to HAHE.



During the discussions with the Head of the Network Operations department, it was mentioned that the PowerBI system is not fully integrated. For the time being it is utilized in collecting information from the Student Information system only.

At its full integration is expected to collect primary data from other Information systems of the institution such as the Personnel Management System, the Financial Management System, and the Research Programs Management System. Its purpose is to support the internal operation of the institution and MODIP, by exporting and processing data for the whole institution. This system as a business intelligence platform, shall enable its users to perform statistical analysis and generate and monitor business performance indicators safeguarding the accuracy and reliability of data.

All the above 3 tools are managed centrally by QAU but also access is given to OMEA groups.

Data related to courses are collected at the end of each semester, while performance-related metrics are collected annually. The information obtained from the student feedback questionnaires is systematically analysed and appropriately channelled through the decision-making bodies of the University.

The data are properly presented in graphs, demonstrating trends and allowing direct interpretation and comparisons

## **II. Analysis**

In the process of internal evaluation, all stakeholders are involved (i.e., students, faculty members, administrative and technical support staff, and the OMEA groups of the Departments). On the other hand, the graduates, representatives of social partners, and collaborating bodies are involved in the process in an ad hoc and informal way.

The participation of the students in the feedback surveys is rather limited, and the participation ratio was reduced once the university moved to paperless/online surveys. This is typical for student surveys globally, although, in the case of NKUA (and other Greek universities), the oversubscription to courses with students who do not attend the lectures can result in distorted percentages.

During the discussions the EEAP panel had with students, it was mentioned that limited feedback is given on the corrective actions taken by the University following the evaluations. Further on, the students mentioned that in a limited

number of courses, instructors did not provide them access to the evaluation questionnaires.

### III. Conclusions

The EEAP panel concludes that the University is compliant with regard to Principle 5, with the main weakness focused on the students' feedback evaluation process with diversity across Schools.

#### Panel judgement

Principle 5: COLLECTION OF QUALITY DATA: MEASURING,	
Compliance	X
Partial compliance	
Non-compliance	

#### Panel Recommendations

R5.1 Formalize the collection of information from external stakeholders by establishing an Advisory Board.

R5.2 Examine ways for further engagement of the students in the feedback surveys.

R5.3 Examine ways to provide feedback on the corrective actions taken by the university following the student's evaluations.

## Principle 6: PUBLIC INFORMATION

**INSTITUTIONS SHOULD PUBLISH INFORMATION ABOUT THEIR TEACHING AND ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES IN A DIRECT AND ACCESSIBLE MANNER. ALL PERTINENT INFORMATION THAT APPEARS IN THE INSTITUTION'S WEBSITE SHOULD BE UP-TO-DATE, CLEAR AND OBJECTIVE.**

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

*The public information available via the internet should appear in Greek and in English, the webpages should have uniform architecture, structure and content across all academic units of the Institution, so that the users can easily identify the information of their interest.*

### Documentation

E6.1 Results of the assessment of the functionality and the content, as well as of the maintenance and update of the Institution's webpage

E6.2 List of the links included in the Institution's and QAU webpage, and of the special personalized internet applications

### **Institution compliance**

#### **I. Findings**

NKUA has an efficient, modern, and comprehensive website. It has both Greek and English versions that include detailed information about its mission, vision, and programs. The Menu structure is user-friendly and well organized with cross- links that are easy to follow.

#### **II. Analysis**

Key information regarding the Departments and Programs of Study, and all course outlines are available online and easily accessible. All published information is current, up-to-date, and clear.

The NKUA web presence is comprehensive and functional.

#### **III. Conclusions**

Given the above findings and analysis, the EEAP panel considers Principle 6 as compliant.

## Panel judgement

<b>Principle 6: PUBLIC INFORMATION</b>	
Compliance	<b>X</b>
Partial compliance	
Non-compliance	

## Panel Recommendations

R6.1: Giving the University's landing page a more modern feel, with a few impactful visuals, showcasing recent success stories, labs, student and faculty distinctions and awards would add to an already substantial online presence.

## **Principle 7: EXTERNAL EVALUATION AND ACCREDITATION OF THE IQAS**

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

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

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

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

### **Documentation**

E7.1 Five-year Progress Report, on the response to the recommendations included in the most recent IQAS Accreditation Report

### **Institution compliance**

#### **I. Findings**

NKUA had a previous external evaluation and accreditation process (13-19/10/2018). The EEAP panel has identified a consistent, active, and constant engagement of all the internal stakeholders of the academic community in the quality assurance process, as it is specified by MODIP.

The meetings with the University Administration, the QAU/MODIP, and the OMEA groups have revealed that this procedure has become part of the University life at all levels of its functions.

NKUA, as a historic University of Greece, has extensive contact with external stakeholders (alumni, governmental agencies, local authorities, industry, business, and other research entities) either through personal contacts of the academic staff or high-level institutional agreements that are signed to foster collaboration.

## **II. Analysis**

Internal self-evaluation procedures focus mainly on the area of course and teaching evaluation but it has been recognized that the QAU has made consistent and constant efforts to introduce a QA system that will cover the multiple aspects of the University functions.

The information available is only two years old. Consequently, the results will be used to improve the processes and they will be employed by the different University stakeholders. Long-term trends are available and incorporated into longer-term decision-making.

Nevertheless, there is no formal and consistent way of engaging the external stakeholders and the community at large (Advisory Board). Most of the external stakeholders, while highly supportive of the university and genuinely engaged in working with it, seemed unaware of the formal QA procedures and did not describe any particular engagement.

This needs to be addressed, given the fact that the external stakeholders expressed an eagerness and commitment to engage.

## **III. Conclusions**

This evaluation was largely positive and, moreover, the current University Administration endeavoured to take into account the recommendations. In addition, as a result of the merger, some weaknesses were completed due to the economies of scale, but others (a few) are still in progress. For example, Student Support, Student Infrastructure, and Student Services (and Establishment of a Structure for the support of teaching & learning (TEACHING AND LEARNING SUPPORT CENTRE/K.Y.D.I.M.A.).

Overall, given the above findings and analysis, the EEAP panel considers Principle 7 as compliant.

### Panel judgement

<b>Principle 7: EXTERNAL EVALUATION AND ACCREDITATION OF THE IQAS</b>	
Compliance	X
Partial compliance	
Non-compliance	

### Panel Recommendations

R7.1: Formalize communications between NKUA and its stakeholders, especially external stakeholders like industry, business, and public sector entities, beyond the ad-hoc or personal relations that already exist with members of the teaching staff.

R7.2: Institutionalize a system, in addition to the website, that provides feedback to all stakeholders (especially external). Continue and enhance the publication of all information on the NKUA website.

R7.3: Organize events to update external stakeholders on the quality assurance procedures and their results.



## **PART C: CONCLUSIONS**

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

- The IQAS is well-designed.
- MODIP is staffed with skilled and professional members.
- Overall, there is a friendly and collegial environment, across all Units of NKUA.
- eClass appears to be well-functioning.

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

- The list of KPIs is extended and complicated, resulting in extra administrative burden.
- QA Units are understaffed, considering the necessary workload.
- There is a lack of systematic engagement of external stakeholders in quality assurance.
- The participation of students in providing feedback is relatively low.

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

- KPIs should be streamlined to ensure relevancy and reduce the administrative burden.
- QA Units would benefit from additional members of staff.
- Formalize the collection of information from external stakeholders by establishing an Advisory Board.
- Examine ways for further engagement of the students in the feedback surveys.

#### **IV. Summary & Overall Assessment**

The Principles where compliance has been achieved are:

**1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7.**

The Principles where partial compliance has been achieved are:

**None.**

The Principles where failure of compliance was identified are:

**None.**

<b>Overall Judgement</b>	
Compliance	<b>X</b>
Partial compliance	
Non-compliance	

## The members of the External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel

**Name and Surname**

**Signature**

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