



ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ
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**Εθνική Αρχή
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Hellenic Authority
for Higher Education

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

Accreditation Report

for the Postgraduate Study Programme of:

Animal Welfare, Ethics, and the Law

Department: Philosophy

Institution: NKUA

Date: 15 September 2023



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



Report of the Panel appointed by the HAHE to undertake the review of the Postgraduate Study Programme **Animal Welfare, Ethics, and the Law** 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 postgraduate study programme **Animal Welfare, Ethics, and the Law** of the **National and Kapodistrian University of Athens** comprised the following four (4) members, drawn from the HAHE Register, in accordance with Laws 4009/2011 & 4653/2020:

- 1. Prof. Dr. Nikolaos Psarros (Chair)**
University of Leipzig
- 2. Prof. Dr. Panagiotis Christias**
University of Cyprus
- 3. Prof. Dr. Nickolas Pappas**
City University of New York
- 4. Theofilos Perperidis**
Aristotelian University Thessaloniki

II. Review Procedure and Documentation

The accreditation procedure took place in digital form from September 11th to September 13th, 2023. Prior to the sessions, the members of the External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel (EEAP) had the opportunity to study all accreditation support materials supplied to them by HAHE in advance, including:

- HAHE Materials such as the Guidelines for EEA Panel, the M12_PSP MAPPING GRID, and the European Qualifications Framework.
- the Department's Proposal for Accreditation along with several annexes.

In the early afternoon of September 11th, 2023, the EEAP met to discuss the process and to divide tasks among its members. The sessions with the Department took place on September 11th between 15:00 h and 19:00 h EEST, and on September 12th 2023, between 15:00 h and 20:00 h EEST.

The EEAP members were welcomed by Prof. Dr. Vana Nicolaidou-Kyrianidou, Head of the Department of Philosophy, the Directors of the two PSP, PSP1 "Philosophy", Prof. Dr. Georgios Arabatzis, and PSP2 "Animal Welfare, Ethics and the Law", Associate Prof. Dr. Evangelos Protopapadakis, the Quality Assurance Unit (MODIP) members, Mr. Konstantinos Bourletidis, Secretary of MODIP, and Mr. Theodoros Chajitheodorou, MODIP member, the members of the Steering Committees of the two PSP, Prof Dr. Georgios Politis (PSP1) and Dr. Dimitra Thomaidou (PSP2), and the Internal Evaluation Unit (OMEA) members Prof. Dr. Georgios Steiris and Prof. Dr. Georgios Vasilaros.

Prof. Arabatzis and Prof. Protopapadakis gave a short presentation of the respective study program, explaining the aims, the structure of the curricula and the methods involved.

In the second part of the meeting following Persons joined the session:

Administrative staff members:

Department of Philosophy administrator (general PSP duties): Mr Georgios Rompolas

- PSP1_Philosophy: Ms Katerina Karounia, Dr. Katerina Michala
- PSP2_Animal Welfare Ethics and the Law: Ms Vicky Protopapadaki, Mrs Vicky Bafataki

Teaching staff members:

- PSP1_Philosophy: Assistant Professor Spyridon Tegos, University of Crete (both PSP), Dr. Konstantinos Irodotou, Teaching Assistant
- PSP2_Animal Welfare Ethics and the Law: Dr. Giorgos Kosteletos (both PSP), Dr. Konstantina Mylona-Giannakakou (both PSP)

During this part of the meeting, a guided tour of the facilities was provided in the form of a short film and EEAP members discussed in detail the structure of both programs with the Directors and the teaching staff members.

The sessions with the persons involved in the PSP2 took place on Wednesday September 13th, 2023 and included subsequent meetings with:

a) Teaching staff members of PSP2:

- Dr Athanasios Anagnostopoulos, NKUA
- Associate Professor Spyridon Tegos, University of Crete

- Associate Professor Dimitrios Gougoulis, University of Thessaly
- Dr Vasileios Pantazis, Special Teaching Staff, University of Thessaly
- Dr Alkiviadis Gounaris, NKUA
- Dr Konstantina Mylona Giannakakou, NKUA
- Dr Eirini Fragiadaki, PhD, DVM, Staff Research Scientist, Hellenic Pasteur Institute
- Dr Georgios Kosteletos, NKUA

The EEAP discussed with the teaching staff various topics regarding the PSP, namely the admission procedures for students, the problems of integrating admitted students with a broad background of former studies into coherent learning groups, the methods of teaching, the introduction of the students to philosophical research methods, and the future career prospects of the graduates.

b) Students of the PSP2:

The EEAP met with ten (10) students from the 1st and the 2nd year of the PSP. The students reported on their experience of studying at the Department and their career plans. All interviewed students were professionals who attended the PSP either for obtaining an additional qualification for their current field of employment (mostly veterinarians and teachers in the secondary education sector) or because the PSP piqued their interest.

All students expressed very positive opinions about the PSP and the good working relationships they had with members of the teaching staff. The students agreed that the involvement in research projects via the research laboratories of the Department and the focus on preparing essays on research topics are the strongest aspects of the PSP. The EEAP was particularly interested in the possibilities they had of participating in research activities and their expectations concerning their career prospects.

Points of criticism were the access to bibliography and missing special methods in distance teaching. Regarding the fact that the PSP charges the students tuition fees of 750 € per semester, the students stated that the fees were a relevant factor in their life planning, but that they regard them as an investment that paid off.

There were complaints that some of the admitted students lacked an adequate academic background.

c) PSP2 graduates:

The EEAP met with five graduates of the PSP, namely

- Ms Athina Aggelopoulou, Veterinarian, Attica Prefecture
- Mr Evangelos Mantafounis, Counselor, Special Secretariat for the Protection of Companion Animals in the Ministry of Interior
- Ms Marina Masouri, Public Servant – Lawyer, Independent Authority for Public Revenue (AADE)
- Ms Aikaterini Argyrakopoulou, Commander HCG, Harbor Master, Hellenic Coast Guard
- Ms Marina Riga, Educator Mr Georgios Papadimitriou, Lawyer, European Lawyers in Lesbos/ Animal Welfare Law

All graduates praised the study conditions and the cooperative environment created by the teaching staff. They stated that the studies broadened their horizons of knowledge. The graduates who are employed in secondary education stated that they also benefited greatly with regard to their teaching. Regarding the tuition fees, the graduates agreed that, despite the fact that some of them had to retrench some other expenses, they were a very good investment that has paid off.

Asked about negative aspects of the PSP, the graduates mentioned the focus of the PSP on pet and laboratory animals and the neglect of the treatment of livestock and livestock farming. Some graduates said that the curriculum would have benefited from including courses in sociology. Graduates also expressed the opinion that the quality of the studies would improve if a fourth semester was added.

d) Employers and social partners:

Following the meeting with the students, the committee met with following representatives of employers and social partners:

- Ms Marianthi Dimopoulou – Lawyer, Head of the Special Secretariat for the Protection of Companion Animals in the Ministry of Interior
- Dr. Maria Linou, PhD, DVM - President of the Hellenic Veterinary Medical Society
- Rev. Deacon in line Fr. Varnavas Grigoriadis – Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople
- Professor Emeritus Ismini Kriari – Member of the National Commission for Bioethics and Technoethics
- Dr. Christos Giannopoulos, Managing Director, Centre for Hellenic Studies in Greece, Harvard University

Here again the overall judgment of the PSP was very positive. Asked about career possibilities of the graduates, Prof. Kriari stated that the National Commission for Bioethics and Technoethics offers opportunities for practical application of material covered for the students, and that employment opportunities also exist in NGOs and in animal management. However, Dr. Linou, the President of the Hellenic Veterinary Medical Society, stated that the PSP is more focused on pet and laboratory animals and does not provide expertise applicable to veterinary clinics.

High praise for the PSP came from Dr. Giannopoulos, Managing Director at the Centre for Hellenic Studies in Greece, Harvard University, who emphasized the high academic standards of the PSP and its innovative concept.

After the conclusion of the meetings, the EEAP held a debriefing session to discuss first findings and critical points, and to prepare for the last meeting.

The digital visit concluded with a closing meeting with the Head of the Department Prof. Dr. Vana Nicolaidou-Kyrianidou; the Director of PSP2 Animal Welfare, Ethics and the Law, Associate Professor Evangelos Protopapadakis; the Quality Assurance Unit (MODIP) staff/members, Mr. Konstantinos Bourletidis (Secretary of MODIP) and Mr. Theodoros Chajitheodorou (MODIP member); the Curriculum Committee member Dr. Dimitra Thomaidou, (Researcher Director, Hellenic Pasteur Institute); and the Internal Evaluation Unit (OMEA) members Professor Georgios Steiris and Professor Georgios Vasilaros. During this meeting, the EEAP discussed their first impressions and received the Department's feedback. It also requested and received supplemental materials from the Quality Assurance Unit (MODIP).

III. Postgraduate Study Programme Profile

The Department of Philosophy of the University of Athens, as it exists today, was established by Law no. 4589/2019 (article 16FEK13/A/29.01.2019), as a continuation of the first Chair of Philosophy at the School of Philosophy of the University of Athens (1837) and the historical "Department of Philosophy". It is the oldest Department of Philosophy in Greece and the South-eastern Mediterranean. The scientific field of the Department is part of the internationally established scientific fields of Higher Education, as defined by the International Association of Higher Education.

The Department of Philosophy offers one Undergraduate Studies Program and three Postgraduate Studies Programs (PSP "Philosophy" with three foci, interdepartmental PSP "Philosophy," and interdisciplinary PSP "Animals-Ethics-Law-Welfare"), along with Doctoral Studies. The structure and organisation of the studies is fully harmonised with the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS).

The Department employs 15 faculty members, 3 members of the HQA, 1 member of the ETH Board, 3 lecturers and 4 staff members.

The Department also has six research laboratories. Procedures for the immediate recruitment of two more faculty members are pending. The educational and research infrastructure of the Department is adequate and well maintained. Its staffing and infrastructure place it among the strongest of its academic counterparts, in line with international standards.

This Accreditation Report concerns the PSP "Animal Welfare, Ethics, and the Law". This PSP was established in 2020 in cooperation with the Hellenic *Institute Pasteur* and with the support of the Laboratory of Applied Philosophy of the Department of Philosophy of the NKUA, the Animals and Society Institute (ASI), and the Humane Society Institute for Science and Policy of the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS).

The proposal to establish this PSP was submitted in 2016 to the Human-Animal Studies (HAS) International Development Program international competition by the Applied Philosophy Laboratory of the Department of Philosophy of the NKUA and received the First Prize.

The PSP is the first inter-institutional study program implemented in a Greek university. It is jointly operated by the Department of Philosophy of the NKUA and the Hellenic *Institute Pasteur*. The teaching staff is recruited from the veterinary, the law and the philosophical faculties of many Greek universities and includes also regular teaching staff from universities abroad.

Additionally, the PSP invites internationally renowned scientists from the fields of philosophy, jurisprudence, philosophy of law, applied ethics, metaethics, life sciences, as well as sciences related to the rights, well-being, and moral status of animals. The lectures are offered to the students and teachers of the PSP, and to the members of the founding partners, the Philosophy Department of the NKUA and the Hellenic Pasteur Institute, as well as to the Applied Philosophy Laboratory that supports its operation. In addition to the regular curriculum the program organizes study weekends, workshops, and conferences.

The PSP has a three-semester structure with a two-semester course part of 60 ECTS points and a semester devoted to the composition of the diploma thesis of 30 ECTS. The overall yield of the program is 90 ECTS points.

Each course semester consists of three mandatory courses of 8 ECTS points each and one elective course of 6 ECTS points. In the first semester the elective courses are two and in the second three. The topics covered in the first semester range from Bioethics to the methodology of Laboratory Research and in the

second semester from Animal Welfare to the Ontology of Living Being and issues regarding life together with pet animals.

The teaching form is characterized in the descriptions of the courses as “lecture”. The members of the teaching staff and the students described the teaching form as “seminar-like”, meaning that after a series of introductory lectures the students are encouraged to present the written essays, they prepare in fulfilment of the exam requirements in the sessions. Additionally the students are encouraged to participate in the research work of the laboratories, to attend conferences and workshops organized by the Department and to present the results of their research in the journals that are published by the Department and in other peer reviewed journals.

The students’ grades are based on one or more of the following evaluative criteria, depending on the needs of each teaching unit:

- Written scientific paper, which is submitted within 50 days (the deadline can be modified by a relevant decision of the PES) from the completion of each unity.
- Written examination.
- Oral exam.
- Oral presentation.
- Consideration by the instructor of the student's participation and presence during the seminars.

The admission of students takes place in accordance with the current legislation, the Regulation of Master's and Doctoral Studies of the NKUA, and the provisions of the charter of the PSP Animals: Ethics, Law, Welfare. Every May, by decision of the Curriculum Committee of the PSP the call for applications is announced and published on the website of the PSP (In the case of joint programs, the responsibilities of the Steering Committee fall upon the Curriculum Committee).

The applications together with the necessary supporting documents are submitted to the Secretariat of the PSP by e-mail or using a special platform.

The candidates are selected based on their qualifications as presented in their dossiers. The list of the admitted students is confirmed by the Curriculum Committee and the results are announced to the applicants by personal e-mail as required by the law and in accordance with the regulations that govern the protection of personal data.

The students are charged a tuition fee of 750 € per semester. Exemptions from tuition are granted according to the regulations of the study program. The tuition covers teaching-staff remuneration, administrative-technical support services, consumables and other supplies, publicity and promotion costs, conference and travel costs, expenses for infrastructure support, equipment, software, educational material, third party services, scholarships and prizes. About 30% of the amount collected by the fees goes to the NKUA special account for research funds management (ELKE). The management of the resources of the PSP is carried out by the NKUA special account for research funds (ELKE).

The staff of the PSP informs new students of the institutionalized steps necessary for completing their registration and for applying for exemption from tuition. The progress of the students is monitored via the e-class (course material, submission/correction of term papers) and the my-uni platforms (grades, attendance). Students are also informed about mobility options via the ERASMUS+ and the CIVIS programs. The secretariat of the Department provides graduates of the PSP with a “Diploma Supplement” containing information about the degree and the results achieved.

The PSP is managed by a seven-person Curriculum Committee. They appoint the teaching staff that also

includes members of other departments and institutions.

Despite the fact that teaching takes place exclusively in digital format at a distance, the PSP has a lecture hall for in-person meetings, an administrative office, the premises of the laboratories, and the auditorium of the Library of the Philosophical Faculty. The students also have full access to the services of the Library.

Other services provided to the students include:

- Eclass
- e-Secretariat services (my-uni)
- Webmail
- Multimedia Content Hosting and Search Service “Delos”
- Library and Information Centre
- Student ID
- Wireless network connection (Wi-Fi)
- Counselling services (academic advisor - NKUA Liaison Office for Career Guidance)
- NKUA Student Advocate
- Foreign Language Teaching Centre
- Students' Cultural Club
- Support for Students with Disabilities
- University Gym-Swimming Pool

PART B: COMPLIANCE WITH THE PRINCIPLES

PRINCIPLE 1: QUALITY ASSURANCE POLICY AND QUALITY GOAL SETTING FOR THE POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES OF THE INSTITUTION AND THE ACADEMIC UNIT

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD APPLY A QUALITY ASSURANCE POLICY AS PART OF THEIR STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT. THIS POLICY SHOULD EXPAND AND BE AIMED (WITH THE COLLABORATION OF EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS) AT THE POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES OF THE INSTITUTION AND THE ACADEMIC UNIT. THIS POLICY SHOULD BE PUBLISHED AND IMPLEMENTED BY ALL STAKEHOLDERS.

The quality assurance policy of the academic unit should be in line with the quality assurance policy of the Institution 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 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 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 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 the 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 review and audit of the quality assurance system of the PSP through the cooperation of the Internal Evaluation Group (IEG) with the Institution's Quality Assurance Unit (QAU)*

Documentation

- *Quality Assurance Policy of the PSP*
- *Quality goal setting of the PSP*

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The Department of Philosophy has a full functioning departmental quality assurance group and conducts evaluations of the performance of the teaching staff and the department on a regular basis. The Department has formulated a development policy that is closely monitored by the departmental Quality Assurance Unit (QAU).

The QAU provided the EEAP data regarding the results of the quality monitoring. The data in the Quality Assessment Report of December 2022 show that with respect to the teaching staff's academic excellence, teaching competence, and research activity, the Department has a very good national and international standing. The report indicates, however, several points that are capable of further improvement, namely:

- Strengthening the research dynamics of the Masters Program Studies with an emphasis on international research collaborations, enhancing the mobility of graduate students, and facilitating their participation in international scientific conferences.
- Closer coordination and cooperation of postgraduate students with their Academic Advisor and the teachers of each course.
- Supporting teaching with new methods and techniques.
- Promotion of electronic questionnaires.
- Search for businesses/organizations that could cooperate with the PMS in the implementation of the practice/diploma.
- Strengthening the flexibility of students in planning their studies through enhanced choice of course mix.
- Provision of funds to encourage journal publications open access by PMS students.
- Informing PMS Students about the possibilities of continuing their studies at the doctoral level.

The interviews with selected students showed that the degree of satisfaction with the structure and the contents of the PSP “Animals – Ethics – Law – Welfare” and with the teaching and the mentoring provided by the academic staff is very high.

II. Analysis

The findings show that the PSP “Animals – Ethics – Law – Welfare” is well structured and meets the expectations of the students.

III. Conclusions

The overall impression of the EEAP is that the quality assurance practices and structures are adequate and fulfil their purpose.

Panel Judgement

Principle 1: Quality assurance policy and quality goal setting for the postgraduate study programmes of the institution and the academic unit	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

None.

PRINCIPLE 2: DESIGN AND APPROVAL OF 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 POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES. THE OBJECTIVES, THE EXPECTED LEARNING OUTCOMES AND THE EMPLOYMENT PROSPECTS ARE SET OUT IN THE PROGRAMME DESIGN. DURING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 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, and specialisations 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. For each 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 of 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 EQF, 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 (name list including of areas of specialisation, its relation to the courses taught, employment relationship, and teaching assignment in hours as well as other teaching commitments in hours)*

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The PSP "Animals – Ethics, Law, Welfare" has operated since the academic year 2020-2021. It comprises three semesters and provides 90 ECTS points. The first two semesters offer various courses ranging from

bioethics to ontological questions and scientific research methodology. Each semester consists of three mandatory courses, each of which provides 8 ECTS points and one elective course of 6 ECTS points. In the first semester the students can choose between two elective courses and in the second from among three.

The courses are designated as lectures, but students are encouraged to participate actively and present the exam essays that they prepare for discussions with the class. The classes are held in digital format, i.e. the teaching takes place completely at a distance. However, there are opportunities for the students and the teachers to convene in person during special events like workshops, conferences, or weekend meetings. Physical meetings can be held in a lecture hall specially devoted to the PSP in the building of the Philosophical Faculty at the Zografou Campus of the NKUA, in the premises of the laboratory for Applied Ethics and in the auditorium of the library of the Philosophical Faculty. Outside class, students can contact the teaching staff individually and discuss their work.

Two of the three mandatory 8 ECTS courses of the first semester comprise a workload of 239 hours per semester, with 39 of these hours devoted to synchronous teaching, i.e., 3 hours per week. The third course (Methodology of Scientific Research) comprises a workload of 240 hours, with 39 of these hours devoted to synchronous teaching. One elective course of 6 ECTS points (Transgenic Species and Animal Eugenics) comprises a workload of 180 hours with 36 hours of synchronous teaching and the other 6 ECTS point courses comprise a workload of 180 hours, but with 39 hours of synchronous teaching.

All three mandatory courses of the second semester provide 8 ECTS points for a total workload of 240 hours including 39 hours of synchronous teaching. However, from the three elective 6 ECTS point courses with a workload of 180 hours each, two include 39 hours of synchronous teaching and one 36 hours. The descriptions of the courses provide no justification for these discrepancies.

During their studies, the students have access to electronic platforms like e-class and my-uni and to electronic resources via the Library of the Philosophical Faculty.

The study program offers the possibility of a practical exercise or an internship during the studies. Participation in student mobility is encouraged, but there is yet not much use of the possibilities offered by the ERASMUS+ and the CIVIS exchange programs.

The Diploma theses are compulsory in each focus of the PSP and must provide original research work in the chosen topic. For the composition of the theses all research resources of the Department are at the disposition of the students.

II. Analysis

The topics of the courses adequately reflect the PSP's focus on ethical issues regarding treatment of animals used in scientific research and the treatment of pet animals. The care and handling of livestock animals is underrepresented in the topics of the courses with the exception of the course "Introduction to Animal Welfare Science" and one course devoted to transgenic animals. In the study program and the description of the structure of the PSP there is no explicit mention of institutions concerned with the welfare of livestock as for example the European Food Safety Authority, an autonomous EU agency, that is concerned with the welfare of livestock in the member states of the European Union and that issues recommendations to improve the welfare of farmed animals.

The academic load of four courses per semester is adequate for a specialized postgraduate study program. Also, the distribution of introductory and more specialized courses is well chosen. The quality of the teaching staff is excellent and the possibility of appointing staff external to the Department of Philosophy offers the student the opportunity to get acquainted with a broad spectrum of individual teaching and research styles, and to profit from the experience of persons who are not permanently employed at the Department.

However, the EEAP has detected some problematic issues that must be addressed in the future in order to improve the quality of the PSP as a whole and to increase the transparency of the teaching procedures. These issues are:

1. It is not clear from the description of the courses how the three-hour teaching sessions are divided between teaching input and student contributions. This is especially important since the majority of the teaching form has been described as “seminar-like”. Additionally, it is not clear why three hours per week are sufficient for giving the participants in the course the opportunity to furnish their contributions.
2. There is no clear reason given in the description of the courses why the mandatory courses provide 8 and the elective courses 6 ECTS points.
3. There is no clear reason given in the course descriptions why some of the mandatory courses comprise a total workload of 239 and some 240 hours per semester.
4. There is no clear reason given in the descriptions why in some courses the synchronous teaching amounts to 39 and some to 36 hours per semester.
5. Although the teaching takes place at a distance, there is no implementation of teaching methods that are specifically adapted to this mode of teaching. Furthermore, among the teaching staff there are no persons who can provide expert knowledge on this matter.
6. Despite its excellent innovative character and the breadth of the topics taught, the PSP curriculum has a lacuna concerning the welfare, legal status, and ethics of farm animals. This neglect has been pointed out also by some stakeholders and some students.

III. Conclusions

Having examined carefully the structure the PSP “Animals – Ethics – Law – Welfare”, the EEAP comes to the conclusion that the PSP is a very innovative study program that takes a unique place among postgraduate programs on an international scale, and in its current form complies along general lines with the needs and aims of a modern specialized interdisciplinary postgraduate study program. However, there is still room for profound improvements. These improvements regard the structure of the teaching sessions, the methods implemented in them, and the possibility to enlarge the scope of the curriculum setting a focus on the welfare of farmed animals.

Panel Judgement

Principle 2: Design and approval of postgraduate study programmes	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	X
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

- The EEAP recommends more transparency in course descriptions stating the reasons for the discrepancies among the course descriptions regarding the total workload, the hours of synchronous teaching, and the difference in the provided ECTS points between the mandatory and the elective courses. The summary reference to the law that allows such variations is not sufficient. The necessity of the workloads and the hours of synchronous teaching must be explained with regard to the content and the teaching needs of each course.
- The EEAP recommends increasing the time for synchronous teaching in the mandatory courses from 39 to 52 hours, reducing the off-class workload of the students.
- The EEAP **strongly** recommends the implementation of state-of-the-art methods of distance learning, and the appointment of staff specialized in the reform of teaching according to these methods.
- The EEAP **strongly** recommends the setting of an additional focus on the welfare of animal farming and seeking cooperation with the European Food Safety Authority on this topic.

PRINCIPLE 3: STUDENT-CENTRED LEARNING, TEACHING, AND ASSESSMENT

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD ENSURE THAT POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES PROVIDE THE NECESSARY CONDITIONS TO ENCOURAGE STUDENTS TO TAKE AN ACTIVE ROLE IN THE LEARNING PROCESS. THE ASSESSMENT METHODS SHOULD REFLECT THIS APPROACH.

Student-centred learning and teaching plays an important role in enhancing students' motivation, their self-evaluation, and their active participation in the learning process. The above entail continuous consideration of the Programme's delivery and the assessment of the related outcomes.

The student-centred learning and teaching process

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

In addition

- *The academic staff are familiar with the existing examination system and methods and are supported in developing their own skills in this field.*
- *The assessment criteria and methods are published in advance. The assessment allows students to demonstrate the extent to which the intended learning outcomes have been achieved. Students are given feedback, which, if necessary is linked to advice on the learning process.*
- *Student assessment is conducted by more than one examiner, where possible.*
- *Assessment is consistent, fairly applied to all students and conducted in accordance with the stated procedures.*
- *A formal procedure for student appeals is in place.*
- *The function of the academic advisor runs smoothly.*

Documentation

- *Sample of a fully completed questionnaire for the evaluation of the PSP by the students*
- *Regulations for dealing with students' complaints and appeals*
- *Regulation for the function of academic advisor*
- *Reference to the teaching modes and assessment methods*

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The curriculum of the Postgraduate Study Programme is organized into three (3) academic semesters. The completion of studies through the programme Animals: Ethics, Law, Welfare requires a total of ninety (90) credit points (ECTS). All courses are taught weekly. The educational work of each academic year is structured in two semesters, the winter and spring semesters, each of which includes at least thirteen (13) weeks of teaching and three (3) weeks of examinations. Courses in the winter and spring semesters are re-examined during the September term. Attendance at class meetings is compulsory. A postgraduate student is considered to have attended a course (and therefore is eligible to sit the examinations) only if he/she has attended at least 75% of the course hours. During their studies, postgraduate students are required to

attend and successfully complete postgraduate courses, research and writing of scientific papers, as well as the preparation of a postgraduate thesis. The thesis is carried out in the third semester of studies and is credited with thirty credit points (30 ECTS). There is the possibility of internships - which are optional - in companies/research centers/non-profit organizations and other institutions to gain required practical experience, under the supervision/cooperation of the supervising faculty member.

The programme is student-centered, and the teaching methods are progressively adapting to the requirements of digital distance learning while maintaining a flexible schedule to fit the students' needs. According to the students, the academic staff makes good use of a variety of pedagogical methods as well as of available e-learning tools. Moreover, students' suggestions for the programme's improvement are taken into consideration. A special mechanism has been established for the management of student complaints that ensures that the latter are dealt with promptly and fairly with efficiency and confidentiality. The teaching staff guides and supports students adequately through their studies and in preparation for their theses. The students have access to extensive literature, albeit not extensive enough. In addition, the students are properly informed with regards to their assessment methods.

The program has a system of course evaluation by the students through an electronic digital questionnaire. Students can anonymously evaluate the lecturer and the course by completing the questionnaires on the relevant website. It includes questions about the course (objectives, organization of the course, quality of textbooks, and level of difficulty), the teacher (organization and mode of delivery, answering questions, punctuality, and accessibility), the student (attendance and response to academic obligations) and academic services.

The University of Athens maintains an electronic platform accessible to persons with disabilities, through which asynchronous distance learning services are provided. The electronic platform may post educational material per course, which may include notes, presentations, exercises, indicative solutions and video lectures, provided that the applicable legislation on personal data protection is respected. The University ensures that students with disabilities and/or special educational needs have accessibility to the proposed texts and teaching.

II. Analysis

The postgraduate programme is considerably student-centered, since it provides its students with a variety of modules that enrich their academic experience and with plenty of tools that enable them to actively participate and productively interact with their teachers and fellow students. Moreover, the students have sufficient access to literature and learn how to conduct proper academic research. The programme is interdisciplinary, as it comprises courses on Law, Ethics, Philosophy and Welfare, thus providing a multidimensional and in-depth view of animals' position in the human-dominated world. The students have the chance to participate in conventions and publish articles in academic journals. They also have the ability to communicate with plenty of institutions and entities such as national committees, societies and authorities that deal with animal well-being and protection, as well as schools, departments and research centers. The students participate in lectures and seminars where they delve into the different disciplines and become familiar with the research conducted respectively in those disciplines. The variety of pedagogical modes and courses encourages critical thinking and offers a uniquely comprehensive view on animals and their well-being. The students are fostered to develop their skills and to become autonomous and responsible researchers. Last but not least, the discussion with the students revealed that some of

them would like more courses in Philosophy, some more courses in Law, while others expressed their desire for the programme to include more courses on animal behaviour and training, as well as to focus more on farm animals from a legal perspective.

III. Conclusions

The Postgraduate Study Programme on Animal Welfare, Ethics, and the Law is fully compliant with Principle 3, as it provides the necessary conditions to encourage students to take an active role in the learning process, helps them develop their skills and learn new ones, as well as commits to the higher standards of student and teacher assessment methods.

Panel Judgement

Principle 3: Student-centred learning, teaching, and assessment	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

None.

PRINCIPLE 4: 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).

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

- *the student 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*

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

Documentation

- *Internal regulation for the operation of the Postgraduate Study Programme*
- *Research Ethics Regulation*
- *Regulation of studies, internship, mobility, and student assignments*
- *Degree certificate template*

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The programme has a set of regulations covering all aspects of the students' progression towards their degree. All the necessary information about courses, teaching and administrative staff, student mobility, and student life in general is available on the website and in the Handbook of Studies. Students' progress is monitored by their performance on intermediate tests and oral presentations (where these exist), their performance on assignments, and their seminar papers, the final examinations and the thesis. In addition, through the course evaluation process and students' comments, it is possible to obtain information on the course of study and the students' own observations about how they understand the degree of their own learning progress. The ETCs system is applied across the programme.

The completion of studies through the programme Animals: Ethics, Law, Welfare requires a total of ninety (90) credit points (ECTS). The language of teaching and writing of the postgraduate thesis is Greek, but it can also be written in English after consultation with the supervisor. There is the possibility of internships in companies/research centers/non-profit organizations and other institutions to gain the required practical experience, under the supervision/cooperation of the supervising faculty member. The internship is twelve (12) weeks in duration and is optional. Students have the opportunity to join the ERASMUS+ Programme and study for a certain period of time at a University of Higher Education Institution of another participating country. They also can participate in the CIVIS (European Civic University), an alliance collaboration of European Universities. All the information is accessible on the Department's website.

Students may do internships in companies/research centers/non-profit organizations and other institutions

to gain required practical experience, under the supervision/cooperation of the supervising faculty member. The internship is optional and does not receive ECTS. Internships may also be undertaken through exchange programmes, such as Erasmus+, in accordance with the relevant legislation. The mobility of students for internships abroad aims at gaining work experience relevant to the subject of their studies and can be carried out in person at the host institution in the host country. It should be noted that attending courses at a higher education institution/institute or carrying out part of their postgraduate/doctoral thesis cannot be considered as an internship. Students may move for study or practical training in all study cycles (1st cycle: undergraduate studies, 2nd cycle: postgraduate studies, 3rd cycle: doctoral studies) from two (2) to twelve (12) months in each study cycle, regardless of the number of moves and the type of move (study or practical). Any public or private organization active in the labour market or in the fields of education, training, youth, research and innovation may be an eligible host organization.

The assignment of a postgraduate thesis is made after the completion of all the courses of the programme of study and the successful passage of examinations in them. The thesis must be individual, original, of the nature of research, and written in compliance with the writing guidelines contained in the MA Animals Study Guide: Ethics, Law, and Welfare. The language of the postgraduate thesis may be English or Greek and shall be specified together with the definition of the topic. In order for the thesis to be approved, the student must defend it before the three-member examination committee. The length of the thesis is set at 20,000 words (+/-20%). Prior to its evaluation, each thesis is checked for plagiarism through the available tools of the University of Athens. If plagiarism is found, sanctions will be imposed, including permanent withdrawal from the Programme. The postgraduate theses are evaluated by the three-member examination committee on a scale of ten (10). Following their approval, the theses are deposited in the electronic repository Pergamos, while the MA website maintains a file of titles and abstracts in Greek and English.

II. Analysis of judgment

The programme provides a study guide with institutional regulations, encompassing all the essential information that a student is entitled to have. The students' rights and obligations are well defined. The students have access to information on internship issues, granting of scholarships, and the procedures and terms for writing the thesis. In addition, the study guide includes detailed description of the courses, the teaching modules, and methods, as well as the criteria of the students' assessment. The details of the procedure of award and recognition of degrees, the duration of studies, the conditions for progression and assurance of the progress of students in their studies are all adequately defined and open to every student. The terms and conditions for enhancing student mobility are also available and students are able to apply for the respective programmes.

III. Conclusions

All procedures concerning student's admission, progression, recognition, and certification are based on institutional study regulations. This panel wishes to underscore that this Postgraduate Study Programme offers a unique academic specialization to its students who complete their studies having acquired a particular set of skills and expertise. The programme has also managed to generate a very positive

atmosphere and an excellent relationship between the teachers and the students. All in all, the programme appears to adhere successfully to its principles and fulfil its pedagogical goals.

Panel Judgement

Principle 4: Student admission, progression, recognition of postgraduate studies and certification	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

The program should maintain and expand its reach to external actors in the public and the private sector in order to offer more internship and future employment opportunities to its students, so that the students can make good use of their acquired expertise.

PRINCIPLE 5: TEACHING STAFF OF 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 of the teaching staff of the academic unit teaching at the PSP, the appropriate staff-student ratio, the appropriate staff categories, the appropriate subject areas, the fair and objective recruitment process, the high research performance, the training- development, the staff development policy (including participation in mobility schemes, conferences, and educational leaves-as mandated by law).

More specifically, the academic unit should set up and follow clear, transparent and fair processes for the recruitment of properly qualified staff 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*
- *Employment regulations or contracts, and obligations of the teaching staff*
- *Policy for staff support and development*
- *Individual performance of the teaching staff in scientific-research and teaching work, based on internationally recognised systems of scientific evaluation (e.g. Google Scholar, Scopus, etc.)*
- *List of teaching staff including subject areas, employment relationship, Institution of origin, Department of origin*

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The programme in Animal Ethics, Justice, and Welfare brings together faculty members from different disciplines to make possible a course of study that is unique among Greek institutions. In the documentation submitted, 23 or 25 faculty members are listed as belonging to the “teaching staff,” along with evidence of their activity in research and their success at communicating the fruits of their research to other members of the discipline.

The faculty members’ institutional homes are university departments of philosophy, but not only philosophy. Researchers representing neurobiology and veterinary science are also present. In every case, these faculty members have been amply credentialed and reviewed by their universities, and this review has nothing to add to the general approval of their merits.

Faculty members’ areas of research specialization cover:

- Ancient philosophy
- Animal ethics
- Applied ethics
- History of classical antiquity and its reception
- Neurobiology
- Philosophy of mind

- Political philosophy
- Social philosophy
- Veterinary science

These specializations apply nicely to the topics taught in the programme, which include:

- Ethics and Animals
- Animals and Education
- Intelligence and consciousness in animals
- The methodology of scientific research
- The ethics of animal experiments
- Ontology, Metaphysics, Ethics, and Non-Human Living Organisms

It would have been very useful for the EEAP if the submitted materials had explained more about the content of these courses and included reading lists. But their titles and their instructors' credentials indicate that this is serious postgraduate study.

The faculty members participating in this programme have been appointed and subsequently promoted according to the standard framework for Greece (laws.4009/2011, 4386/2016, 4405/2016, 4452/2017, 4485/2017, 4521/2018). The committee that decides matters of tenure and promotion includes faculty members from other universities, who assess the staff members' teaching and research credentials. As for recruitment and hiring, the program follows clearly established and transparent regulations.

II. Analysis

The faculty's merits are evident not only from their formal credentials but also from the experiences reported by their students. This committee met with a group of enrolled students and another group consisting of graduates from the program, and both groups expressed respect for their professors' knowledge and educational standards.

The present and former students also seemed happy with the faculty's responsiveness. That is always a desirable feature of academic programs, but absolutely essential when a program consists entirely of distance learning.

The committee found it difficult to ascertain 1) precisely who makes up the faculty and 2) how many of the faculty members identified are available for teaching courses on a regular basis. The precise identification of the faculty was complicated by the presence of two similar though not identical lists of teaching staff submitted to this committee, which is why the number of instructors was given as either 23 or 25. But that is a minor clerical issue. The matter of pedagogical practice is that, given that not all faculty members teach in this program's courses every semester, it would be good for students to know, before enrolling, which of the instructors they may reasonably expect to study with.

III. Conclusion

As in other sections of this report, the committee recommends that the faculty explore the potential available in technology for distance learning. At many institutions, faculty members who teach online on a regular basis undertake some formalized preparation for such teaching. The preparation may take the form of coursework with an online educator, a faculty retreat to share ideas, or other options.

Panel Judgement

Principle 5: Teaching staff of postgraduate study programmes	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

This programme could build on its already considerable strengths if it organized a strategy for exploring and then implementing a better use of its technological potential. In a first phase, the faculty could solicit and assess ideas for enhancing distance learning and the experience of its students. In a second phase, the faculty could begin to implement the best among those ideas.

PRINICPLE 6: LEARNING RESOURCES AND STUDENT SUPPORT

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD HAVE ADEQUATE FUNDING TO COVER THE TEACHING AND LEARNING NEEDS OF THE POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMME. 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, 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 students, students with disabilities), in addition to the shift towards student-centred learning and the adoption of flexible modes of learning and teaching. Support activities and facilities may be organised in various ways, depending on the institutional context. 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 Animal Welfare programme takes place entirely online. During the height of the pandemic most academic institutions conducted their academic activities over the internet, but this program has been defined, and looks to proceed for the foreseeable future, as a virtual department engaged in distance learning. All seminars, lectures, consultations with advisers, and public events are conducted, whether synchronously or asynchronously, by means of internet technologies.

The distance learning makes it possible for students to engage in asynchronous and synchronous learning no matter where they are located, and indeed the enrolled students' locations range widely over Greece. (The student body is largely confined to Greece, with little or no mobility of students to other European programs or vice versa.)

The programme's curriculum covers ethical, political, and practical aspects of animal welfare. Although it would have been nice to see more details about what topics are covered in the courses and what books are assigned, the subject matter itself seems unobjectionable.

The student body does not match with a typical group of students pursuing postgraduate degrees in the

humanities. As a rule, the present and graduated students in this programme are 1) older than traditional-age students, 2) already employed in a non-academic occupation they want to stay in, and 3) often the products of an undergraduate education other than philosophy. The subject of animal rights and welfare matters to the students for a combination of personal and professional reasons, but not because they contemplate progressing from this program to a PhD.

II. Analysis

The distance-learning feature of this programme needs to be emphasized, because questions of facilities, scheduled events, and infrastructure take on new meanings under these circumstances. This is not to say that such questions go away. The challenges have simply moved to different places.

For example, the students and recent graduates interviewed by the committee all expressed satisfaction or even great satisfaction with their access to program faculty. They spoke of quick replies to their e-mails. Such responsiveness marks an improvement over what graduate students traditionally have found at many universities, in many countries.

But students' interactions with one another seem to have suffered. This point was made by more than one participant when the enrolled students met with this committee, and again when the graduates did. The students volunteered this frustration. They would have liked to meet their colleagues.

The "study weekends" that the programme has set up are excellent. They should be continued, emphasized, and enhanced. The programme should consider adding one or two more such weekends to its school year.

The program also ought to consider other proposals to increase students' interactions with one another. Such interactions can still take place in a programme built on distance learning, but they call for premeditation and institutional encouragement.

For one thing, students may create groups on WhatsApp or a similar communications platform. It is understandable that they prefer such self-generated groups to a similar online collection organized by the instructor or the programme. But instructors and programs still have a role to play even here. They can encourage their students' construction of online groups and regular participation in them. Some assignments, like presentations, may be set to the class as a whole, so that they have to consult with one another in producing them. Instructors may propose and encourage reading groups devoted to a given book or a given author.

Above all, the programme ought to survey the students themselves on the question: "What would best help you know your fellow students?"

III. Conclusion

This programme has many satisfied students and alumni. It would only improve that condition if it facilitated more opportunities for students to come to know one another.

Panel Judgement

Principle 6: Learning resources and student support	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

The programme should explore both online and in-person means to enhance the students' acquaintance with one another, enlarging on the success and popularity of its study weekends.

PRINCIPLE 7: INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

INSTITUTIONS BEAR FULL RESPONSIBILITY FOR COLLECTING, ANALYSING AND USING INFORMATION, AIMED AT THE EFFICIENT MANAGEMENT OF POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES AND RELATED ACTIVITIES, IN AN INTEGRATED, EFFECTIVE AND EASILY ACCESSIBLE WAY.

Institutions are expected to establish and operate an information system for the management and monitoring of data concerning students, teaching staff, course structure and organisation, teaching and provision of services to students.

Reliable data is essential for accurate information and decision-making, as well as for identifying areas of smooth operation and areas for improvement. Effective procedures for collecting and analysing information on postgraduate study programmes and other activities feed data into the internal system of quality assurance.

The information collected depends, to some extent, on the type and mission of the Institution. The following are of interest:

- *key performance indicators*
- *student population profile*
- *student progression, success, and drop-out rates*
- *student satisfaction with their programmes*
- *availability of learning resources and student support*

A number of methods may be used to collect information. It is important that students and staff are involved in providing and analysing information and planning follow-up activities.

Documentation

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

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

As part of the Quality Assurance procedures applied in the PSP “Animal Welfare, Ethics, and the Law” of the Department of Philosophy, the critical information that is required to be collected in a transparent, uniform and standardized manner is guiding the PSP “Animal Welfare, Ethics, and the Law” to improve the quality of the education provided and, in general, of the work provided to all its participants and to social stakeholders, to all its participants and to the social, cultural and productive institutions with which it cooperates. The management team of the PSP “Animal Welfare, Ethics, and the Law” takes pains to record, manage, and monitor the data of the students, the structure and organization of courses, teaching and service provision. to students and the academic community in order to provide accurate information on a range of critical (planning, evaluation, information) and services provided to students, graduates and the academic community faculty.

II. Analysis

The collection of detailed quantitative and qualitative information permits the PSP “Animal, Welfare, Ethics, and the Law”, and the Department of Philosophy, to confirm the pace and efficiency of their operations

and to identify points where additional, new or different improvement actions are required. The process of utilizing the results of internal evaluation is defined in the relevant Regulations and aims to improve the quality of the studies and the programme's services, to ensure the sustainability and adequacy of the resources and infrastructure required for its implementation, and to provide feedback to faculty members in order to improve their teaching approach. They are based on the collection of information through the specific software and are carried out under the responsibility of the Committee of Programme Studies, with the participation of staff members and students and for all levels of operation. The data are collected through procedures of common acceptance among the members of the MA adopting, inter alia, the standards, criteria and indicators of Quality Assurance defined by the HAHE with the oversight and support of the Institution's MODIP.

III. Conclusions

The PSP “Animal Welfare, Ethics, and the Law” has access to stable reference points, with which it can independently control and redefine the quality of its operations and, more generally, its progress in relation to the objectives it sets itself.

Panel Judgement

Principle 7: Information management	
Fully compliant	x
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendation

None.

PRINCIPLE 8: PUBLIC INFORMATION CONCERNING THE POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD PUBLISH INFORMATION ABOUT THEIR TEACHING AND ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES RELATED TO THE POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES IN A DIRECT AND READILY ACCESSIBLE WAY. THE RELEVANT INFORMATION SHOULD BE UP-TO-DATE, OBJECTIVE AND CLEAR.

Information on the Institutions' activities is useful for prospective and current students, graduates, other stakeholders, and the public.

Therefore, Institutions and their academic units must provide information about their activities, including the PSP they offer, the intended learning outcomes, the degrees awarded, the teaching, learning and assessment procedures applied, the pass rates, and the learning opportunities available to their students. Information is also provided on the employment perspectives of PSP graduates.

Documentation

- *Dedicated segment on the website of the Department for the promotion of the PSP*
- *Bilingual version of the PSP website with complete, clear and objective information*
- *Provision for website maintenance and updating*

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The PSP "Animal Welfare, Ethics, and the Law" of the Department of Philosophy provides public information through its own dedicated website, the Department's website, the website of the School of Philosophy, its social media pages, as well as through information leaflets, posters and invitations that are posted at key points of the Department (secretariats, student offices, laboratories), and promoted electronically in order to inform students, lecturers and all interested parties about the activities of the main components and activities of its academic daily life.

II. Analysis

The PSP "Animal Welfare, Ethics, and the Law" of the Department of Philosophy attaches great importance to the effective and timely information of all stakeholders about its curriculum (current and future students, researchers, members of the academic community, alumni). For this reason, the Department has a very well organized and easily accessible website (<https://animaethics.philosophy.uoa.gr/>, and <https://animaethics.en.philosophy.uoa.gr/> - in English) where all relevant information about the Department's PSP is presented in an easy-to-understand way and is accessible to all interested parties. The information on the website is available in Greek and English. One of the main actions-initiatives in the immediate future is the upgrade and further enrichment of the English version of the website.

III. Conclusions

All information provided by the PSP on its website and other communication channels is constantly checked and updated. The Committee of the PSP is responsible for the daily updating of the information on the website, improving its form and functionality, controlling its content, etc. The Committee is responsible for the objectivity and clarity of the information provided.

Panel Judgement

Principle 8: Public information concerning the postgraduate study programmes	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

None.

PRINCIPLE 9: ONGOING MONITORING AND PERIODIC INTERNAL EVALUATION OF POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES

INSTITUTIONS AND ACADEMIC UNITS SHOULD HAVE IN PLACE AN INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM FOR THE AUDIT AND ANNUAL INTERNAL REVIEW OF THEIR POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES, SO AS TO ACHIEVE THE OBJECTIVES SET FOR THEM, THROUGH MONITORING AND POSSIBLE AMENDMENTS, WITH A VIEW TO CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT. ANY ACTIONS TAKEN IN THE ABOVE CONTEXT SHOULD BE COMMUNICATED TO ALL PARTIES CONCERNED.

The regular monitoring, review, and revision of postgraduate study programmes aim at maintaining the level of educational provision and creating a supportive and effective learning environment for students.

The above comprise the evaluation of:

- a) the content of the Programme in the light of the latest research in the given discipline, thus ensuring that the PSP is up to date*
- b) the changing needs of society*
- c) the students' workload, progression and completion of the postgraduate studies*
- d) the effectiveness of the procedures for the assessment of students*
- e) the students' expectations, needs and satisfaction in relation to the Programme*
- f) the learning environment, support services, and their fitness for purpose for the PSP in question*

Postgraduate study programmes are reviewed and revised regularly involving students and other stakeholders. The information collected is analysed and the Programme is adapted to ensure that it is up-to-date.

Documentation

- *Procedure for the re-evaluation, redefinition and updating of the PSP curriculum*
- *Procedure for mitigating weaknesses and upgrading the structure of the PSP and the learning process*
- *Feedback processes concerning the strategy and quality goal setting of the PSP and relevant decision-making processes (students, external stakeholders)*
- *Results of the annual internal evaluation of the PSP by the Quality Assurance Unit (QAU), and the relevant minutes*

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

Since the establishment of the PSP "Animal Welfare, Ethics, and the Law" quality assurance and evaluation procedures have been adopted, which are carried out based on process 4 of the "Internal Evaluation" procedures. These evaluation procedures include an assessment of the teaching work as well as other academic functions and activities. The Curriculum is systematically evaluated on an ongoing basis with the participation of students, faculty and the suggestions of other stakeholders.

II. Analysis

The results of this evaluation determine the need to revise some important aspects of the programme, such as updating the course syllabus, introducing alternative forms of assessment, adding or removing courses, etc. Important factors that will be discussed and possibly lead to changes are changes in the institutional framework, current data and perspectives of the specific scientific field and market developments, as well as suggestions from students and faculty regarding points that need improvement. The recurring meeting takes place before the completion of the process of setting the annual objectives of the Programme in order to include in both the annual objectives and the required actions the changes to be initiated and

implemented during the academic year. Through this process, it is expected that negative and/or weak points of the PSP structure will be addressed in a collaborative, creative and constructive spirit.

III. Conclusions

Through the internal evaluation procedures of the PSP “Animal Welfare, Ethics, and the Law,” the Department seeks to continuously improve the quality of the programme's studies and services, to ensure the sustainability and adequacy of the resources and infrastructure required for its implementation, to provide feedback to the lecturers in order to improve the teaching approach, and more generally to improve all the processes on the basis of which the PSP is implemented.

Panel Judgement

Principle 9: On-going monitoring and periodic internal evaluation of postgraduate study programmes	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

None.

PRINCIPLE 10: REGULAR EXTERNAL EVALUATION OF POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES

THE POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES SHOULD REGULARLY UNDERGO EVALUATION BY PANELS OF EXTERNAL EXPERTS SET BY HAHE, AIMING AT ACCREDITATION. THE TERM OF VALIDITY OF THE ACCREDITATION IS DETERMINED BY HAHE.

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

Documentation

- Progress report of the PSP in question, on the results from the utilisation of possible recommendations included in the External Evaluation Report of the Institution, and in the IQAS Accreditation Report, with relation to the postgraduate study programmes

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

There has been no previous external evaluation report specifically for the PSP “Animal Welfare, Ethics, and the Law”. Therefore, the panel’s judgment is based on its interviews with members of the teaching staff, students, graduates, alumni and stakeholders and on the results of the last external evaluation report of the UGP “Philosophy” conducted in 2023.

II. Analysis

The PSP has a state-of-the-art evaluation procedure in operation.

III. Conclusions

The PSP is fully compliant with the requirements of Principle 10.

Panel Judgement

Principle 10: Regular external evaluation of postgraduate study programmes	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

None.

PART C: CONCLUSIONS

I. Features of Good Practice

- Very innovative study program that takes a unique place among postgraduate programs on an international scale.
- High added value regarding the specialization of Animal Ethics and Bioethics.
- Regular internal evaluation according to the guidelines proposed by the NKUA.
- Inter-Institutional cooperation (with the Hellenic *Institute Pasteur*).
- Excellent teaching staff specialized in the various aspects of the topic.
- High degree of satisfaction among students, graduates, and stakeholders.
- Good networking with the relevant sectors of the private and the public sector.
- Good opportunities of employment in the private and public sector.

II. Areas of Weakness

- Despite its excellent innovative character and the breadth of the topics taught, the PSP curriculum has a lacuna concerning the welfare, legal status, and ethics of farmed animals. This neglect has been pointed out also by some stakeholders and some students.
- It is not clear from the description of the courses how the three-hour teaching sessions are divided between teaching input and student contributions. This is especially important since the majority of the teaching form has been described as “seminar-like”. Additionally, it is not clear why three hours per week are sufficient for giving the participants in the course the opportunity to furnish their contributions.
- There is no clear reason given in the description of the courses why the mandatory courses provide 8 and the elective courses 6 ECTS points.
- There is no clear reason given in the course descriptions why some of the mandatory courses comprise a total workload of 239 and some 240 hours per semester.
- There is no clear reason given in the descriptions why in some courses the synchronous teaching amounts to 39 and some to 36 hours per semester.
- Although the teaching takes place at a distance, there is no implementation of teaching methods that are specifically adapted to this mode of teaching. Furthermore, among the teaching staff there are no persons that can provide expert knowledge on this matter.

III. Recommendations for Follow-up Actions

- Implementation of state-of-the-art methods of distance learning, and the appointment of staff specialized in the reform of teaching according to these methods.
- Setting an additional focus on the welfare of animal farming and seeking cooperation with the European Food Safety Authority on this topic.
- Exploration of online and in-person means to enhance the students’ acquaintance with one another,

enlarging on the success and popularity of its study weekends.

- Strengthening the research dynamics of the Masters Program Studies with an emphasis on international research collaborations, its strengthening mobility of graduate students and their participation in international scientific conferences.
- Closer coordination and cooperation of postgraduate students with their Academic Advisor and the teachers of each course.
- Supporting teaching with new methods and techniques.
- Provision of funds to encourage journal publications open access by PMS students.
- Informing PMS Students about the possibilities of continuing their studies at the doctoral level.
- Organization of a strategy for exploring and then implementing a better use of the program's technological potential. In a first phase, the faculty could solicit and assess ideas for enhancing distance learning and the experience of its students. In a second phase, the faculty could begin to implement the best among those ideas.
- Maintain and expand the program's reach to external actors in the public and the private sector in order to offer more internship and future employment opportunities to its students in order for them to be able to make good use of their acquired expertise.
- More transparency in the course descriptions stating the reasons for the discrepancies between the course descriptions regarding the total workload, the hours of synchronous teaching and the difference in the provided ECTS points between the mandatory and the elective courses.
- Increasing the time for synchronous teaching in the mandatory courses from 39 to 52 hours, reducing the off-class workload of the students.

IV. Summary & Overall Assessment

The Principles where full compliance has been achieved are: **1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10.**

The Principles where substantial compliance has been achieved are: **2.**

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. Prof. Dr. Nikolaos Psarros (Chair)

University of Leipzig

2. Prof. Dr. Panagiotis Christias

University of Cyprus

3. Prof. Dr. Nickolas Pappas

City University of New York

4. Theofilos Perperidis

Aristotelian University