



ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ
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Εθνική Αρχή
Ανώτατης Εκπαίδευσης
Hellenic Authority
for Higher Education

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

Accreditation Report

for the Postgraduate Study Programme of:

Intensive Care Units - Cardiology, Medical and Nursing Care

Department: Medicine

Institution: National and Kapodistrian University of Athens

Date: 5 July 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 of **Intensive Care Units - Cardiology, Medical and Nursing Care** 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 of **Intensive Care Units – Cardiology, Medical and Nursing Care** 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. Professor Andreas PAVLAKIS (Chair)**
Philips University, Nicosia, Cyprus
- 2. Professor Dan BENARDOT**
Emory University, Atlanta, USA
- 3. Professor Panagiotis KARANIS**
University of Nicosia, Nicosia, Cyprus
- 4. Professor Nicholas KTISTAKIS**
Babraham Institute, Cambridge, UK
- 5. Mr. Georgios PETMEZAS**
PhD Candidate, Department of Medicine, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Thessaloniki

II. Review Procedure and Documentation

The review panel met on the 3rd of July 2023 to review all documents supplied, which we all had pre-read, and agreed on key questions and issues to focus on during our evaluation. We were supplied with sufficient information to help with our deliberations. The meetings and discussions were conducted online over three days, from the 3rd until 5th of July 2023. The below list shows all the documents we have received (with indicative translations to the actual name of the original file name in Greek):

- A1. Proposition of Accreditation from the School of Medicine
- A2. Policy of Quality
- A3. Goals of quality assurance for the University
- A4. Decision of the Senate
- A5. Student Study Guide
- A6. Courses Outline
- A7. Teaching Staff
- A8. Internal Evaluation Outcomes
- A9. Evaluation from the Students
- A10. Complaints Management Guide
- A11. Academic Counsellor Rules
- A12. Internal Rules of the PSP
- A13. Deontology of Research Rules
- A14. Rules of Practical /Clinical Practice, Mobility & Assignments
- A15. Sample of Diploma Supplement (in Greek & English language)
- A16. Performance Report of Academic Personnel in Scientific, Research and Teaching work
- A17. Report of the Integrated Information National Quality System
- A18. Compliant on Previous External Evaluation Report
- A19. Additional Documentation:
 - i. Utilization of Tuition Fees
 - ii. Evaluation by Students of PSP (Graphics)

We also had an online Teleconference with the Director of the PSP and OMEA & MODIP representatives (EEAP, OMEA & MODIP members, MODIP staff) to discuss the degree of compliance of the postgraduate programme to the Quality Standards for Accreditation. Teleconference with teaching staff members to discuss professional development opportunities, mobility, workload, student evaluations; competence and adequacy of the teaching staff to ensure learning outcomes; link between teaching and research; teaching staff's involvement in applied research, projects and research activities directly related to the programme; possible areas of weakness. Students who participated during the teleconference expressed clear satisfaction with their study experiences and School/Institution facilities; their

opportunity to have an input in quality assurance; priority issues concerning student welfare and employability.

We had an on-line tour of lecture halls, laboratories, and other facilities /discussion about the facilities presented in the video produced for this purpose to evaluate facilities and learning resources to ascertain that the learning materials, equipment, and facilities are adequate for a successful provision of the programme. In addition, we held a teleconference with employers and social partners to discuss relations of the school with external stakeholders from the private and public sectors. The entire process was conducted in a spirit of collaboration, staff have been helpful and honest of the issues of the programme, and they were very much willing to supplement information with whatever we had requested to assess. We thank everybody for the open and helpful discussions and arrangements.

Given that the entire process of evaluation is aimed at improving program quality, as the EP we wish to point out that we had a simultaneous and time-pressured evaluation of two PSPs. We are concerned that this parallel evaluation may have diminished our full understanding of the unique programs that were evaluated.

As members of the EP, we feel obliged to point out that the three-day evaluation process was carried out in a spirit of cordial cooperation with the staff members of the involved bodies (OMEA and MODIP) of the University of NKUA as well as with all the staff of the program's Teaching staff. The participating staff members showed admirable readiness and willingness to provide additional information to help the EP become fully informed of the school's activities in general. Finally, we would like to thank everyone for the productive and helpful discussions and arrangements that made our work easier.

III. Postgraduate Study Programme Profile

The PSP **Intensive Care Units – Cardiology, Medical and Nursing Care** is one of the first postgraduate programmes of the NKUA School of Medicine and the first of Nursing Department of the University of West Attica and the first in collaboration between the two Universities. The program was founded on 18/02/2005 and re-established on 20/09/2018, is credited with 120 ECTS and has a duration of 4 semesters including the preparation of a master level dissertation. In addition, part-time study is possible under certain conditions.

The Programme is flexible due to it implements the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) providing the guarantees for international academic and professional recognition of the qualifications awarded by the School of Medicine. The qualification award is the «**Diploma Metaptichiakon Spoudon**», which is equivalent to a master's degree in “**Intensive Care Units– Cardiology, Medical and Nursing Care**”.

The level, according to the Greek system of study, is post-graduate:

- Level according to the Bologna Process structure: 2nd cycle
- Level according to the National Qualifications Framework: 7
- Level according to UNESCO's International Standard Classification of Education ISCED 2013: 7

It is well established that cardiovascular diseases afflict a large proportion of the Greek population, constituting the leading cause of death in Greece and worldwide. It is a programme goal for graduates, as health professionals, to be capable of meeting the increased demands of providing health care that can properly address the patient needs in this high-demand area. It is critically important, therefore that programs address the scientific and care issues in students seeking professional development in this highly important area.

The aim of the PSP "Intensive Care Units - Cardiology, Medical and Nursing Care" is to provide high quality postgraduate education in the scientific field of Intensive Care Units, Cardiology and Cardiology Nursing. Particular emphasis is placed on the promotion of research, and critical thinking in order for graduates to be able to meet the increased demands of science and to be able to safely manage life-threatening situations and health and illness in general. In particular, the following areas are covered in depth:

- The correct and internationally accepted terminology, methodology and way of dealing with the scientific and technological fields that make up the teaching programme and in the context of its interdisciplinary nature.
- The modern methods of research and development, production, control and quality assurance of the health services provided, as appropriate.
- Modern analytical methods and approaches to issues related to ICU and cardiology.
- The methodology of statistical thinking, analysis and presentation of data in order to draw scientifically sound and therefore rational conclusions.

- The modern approaches and methods for the management of cardiac and critically ill patients in ICUs.
- The approved and newest technologies and therapeutic approaches. — The correct methodology, execution and writing of research/interventional papers.
- The techniques of public presentation of the research results of their studies to special and untrained audiences.
- The actual requirements of health care facilities by discipline-specific scientists.
- To apply their theoretical and technical knowledge correctly in the workplace.
- To have the necessary learning skills that allow them to continue their studies at doctoral level in the field of ICU, Cardiology and Cardiac Nursing, but also in any field of medicine and nursing.

The teaching of the courses in all four academic semesters takes place in-person. During the COVID-19 period, lectures were delivered online while clinical training was compulsory with physical presence and were conducted on a weekly basis in the facilities of the School of Medicine of the NKUA and the UWA. This is also consistent with the facilities of the University clinics of the Hospitals under the supervision and organization of the School of Medicine of the NKUA. In addition to the books provided to students, educational material is posted on the platform, which includes notes, lecturers' deliveries, videos, CDs, and others.

Attendance at courses/workshops/clinical training etc. is compulsory, and the student has the right to be absent from only 10% of the assigned courses. In clinical practice students must complete 100% of the assigned clinical experiences. A failure to satisfy this requirement requires that the course or clinical exercise must be re-taken.

The PSP leads to the award of the Diploma of Postgraduate Studies (Programme) in "Intensive Care Units - Cardiology, Medicine and Nursing Care", after the full and successful completion of the studies according to the relevant curriculum. The renewal of the Programme is performed every 4-5 years and is currently valid until the academic year 2023-24, at which time a reauthorization is sought. In accordance with the current legislation and provided it meets the internal and external evaluation criteria, the newly authorized programme will continue until 2031-32.

The committee wishes to stress that for the courses offered with the distance methodology, the relevant methodology applied at the Hellenic Open University must be followed (i.e., each course must be accompanied by a Study Guide that is consistent with the methodology of distance education and the need for students to interact with the educational material). The Study Guide includes the following for each week of the course:

- Clearly stated objectives and expected results of the programme, modules.
- Presentation of the material, per week and
- the activities and exercises with clear instructions for posting, discussion and feedback.

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 realize 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 organization 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 utilization 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

The PSP of **Intensive Care Units – Cardiology, Medical and Nursing Care** of NKUA is fully compliant regarding principle 1 for Quality Assurance Policy of the Institution and the Academic Unit.

The NKUA internal evaluation committee (OMEA) and the Quality Assurance Unit (ΜΟΔΙΠ) are responsible for ensuring the quality and ongoing improvement of the university and the PSP under evaluation. The above-mentioned committees were elected and have established responsibilities according to directives that have to be followed to ensure the quality of the institution and the PSP under evaluation.

The NKUA and the University of West Attica (UWA), through the Internal Quality Assurance System have created all the conditions and has adopted the procedures for the evaluation and improvement of quality, covering all relevant functions and actions of the University. The Internal Quality Assurance System acts within the framework of the mission and responsibilities of the Quality Assurance Unit (MODIP).

For the above, all involved parties (students, academic and administrative staff) are informed via e-mail. Also, according to the quality policy of the NKUA and UWA, the relative information will be posted on the website of the Universities, which is currently being reconstructed. The Universities has issued a quality manual for the uniform application of policies and procedures for the achievement and continuous quality improvement of its offered work.

In conclusion, the Institutions have developed the correct methods for the establishment of necessary committees for internal evaluation and continuous improvement. As Institutions they appropriately include the opinion of students through the correct resolution methods.

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

- The questionnaire provided to students for program evaluation currently focuses mainly on courses. The program should consider providing students with programme evaluation questionnaires with factors that address *all* programme parameters, including administrative support, facilities provided, educational materials, courses, clinical experiences, etc).
- Bearing in mind that courses are offered with distance methodology, it would be useful for the heads of the PSP to study and analyse the learning analytics, which is: *«the measurement, collection, analysis and reporting of data about the progress of learners and the contexts in which learning takes place, for purposes of understanding and optimising learning and the environments in which it occurs»*.
- Due to the relatively small number of students, it would be more efficient and more useful to organize, at least annually, focus groups to discuss the issues of the PSP with the goal of improving the educational experience.
- Due to programme similarities, the Internal Quality Assurance System could establish a process for comparing findings and quality indicators between the two PSPs (a) ***Cardiopulmonary Rehabilitation and Rehabilitation of ICU Patients*** and (b) ***ICUs Cardiology and Nursing Care***.

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 specializations are described at this stage.

The structure, content and organization 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 specialization, 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. Institutional Strategy

I. Findings

Department of Medicine takes logical and strategic steps to provide quality Greek and foreign language higher education to attending students. The stated goal is to provide postgraduate and doctoral programs of high academic standards in the fields of ICU cardiology, medicine, and nursing care. As part of this goal is the development of a creative research environment that enables free scientific expression and in its academic community. The Department of Medicine is committed to the implementation of a quality policy that enables continuous programmatic improvement. Through this Quality Policy, the academic profile and orientation of postgraduate programs are enhanced, their purpose and object are promoted, and the implementation of specific program enhancement goals are established each year in a way that helps to assure established goals are achieved.

This includes the following processes:

1) **The Implementation of a Quality Assurance Policy** of the Postgraduate Programs, which includes specific quality assurance actions, aiming at creating a framework within which the Postgraduate Programs must operate.

2) **The allocation and management of the resources of the Postgraduate Programs** of the Department of Medicine creates procedures that contribute to the best choices for achieving the creation of an appropriate environment for established programmatic objectives, with the goal ensuring the provision of the necessary resources for personnel, funding, infrastructure and equipment. This focus will help to assure the continuous improvement and effectiveness of the Postgraduate Degree Programs within established quality goals.

3) **The Establishment of Quality Assurance Objectives on an annual basis** by all Postgraduate Programs of the Department of Medicine that operate or will begin their operation within the academic year. Specific measurable and directly observable annual quantitative and qualitative targets are selected for each Postgraduate Program following consultation and agreement of the administration of the Postgraduate Program Departments. The reviewed factors are measured by specific indicators from established objectives to assure postgraduate program improvement in administration, education, and research.

4) **The Periodic Internal Evaluation and Monitoring on an annual basis** of all the Postgraduate Programs of the Department of Medicine are performed in collaboration and support of the Quality Assurance Unit of the Foundation. In all Postgraduate Programs, an internal evaluation and evaluation of all procedures implemented in them is carried out, so that through the identification of data and issues for correction by implementing improvements is agreed to jointly with the Quality Assurance Unit to achieve the objectives set, ultimately resulting in the improvement of the Department's Postgraduate Programs.

5) **The collection of quality data: measurement, analysis and improvement** of the Postgraduate Programs of the Department of Medicine Effective procedures are applied to collect and analyse information about postgraduate programs (student data, teaching staff, structure and organization of courses, teaching and provision of services to students of the Postgraduate Programs, etc.) and the information system is fed with data HAHE's OPPEP as well as internal information systems of the Departments and the Foundation.

6) **The Publication of Information on the Postgraduate Programs of the Department of Medicine.** Through this process, all information concerning the Postgraduate Programs is immediately accessible, up-to-date, and formulated with objectivity and clarity. The existence of a specialized space on the website of the Department for the promotion of the Postgraduate Programs, the existence of a special bilingual page for them, as well as the procedures for checking and updating their content are checked.

7) **The External Evaluation of the Postgraduate Programs of the Department of Medicine** in all the Postgraduate Programs of the Department of Medicine, procedures for their periodic certification by HAHEA are applied, which is carried out through external evaluation procedures by committees of independent experts.

The stated goals of implementing the above procedures are to assure the following:

- a) the appropriateness of the structure and organization of the Postgraduate Programs of the Department of Medicine;
- b) that the learning outcomes and the resulting qualifications of the graduates of the Postgraduate Programs are sought to correspond to the maximum possible extent with the European and National Qualifications Framework of Higher Education Level 7;
- c) that the qualifications of teaching staff, especially external collaborators, are suitable for the education of postgraduate students;
- d) that the qualifications of teaching staff, especially external collaborators, are suitable for the education of postgraduate students;
- e) the drafting, implementation and review of specific annual quality objectives for the improvement of the Programme "Intensive Care Units-Cardiology, Medical and Nursing Care";
- f) the level of demand for the acquired qualifications of graduates in the labour market through the regular investigation of the needs of the labour market and monitoring of the progress of graduates of the Postgraduate Programs;
- g) that the support services provided to postgraduate students – including Students with Disabilities – are of high quality – meet their needs for effective monitoring, e.g., easily accessible, and available administrative services and libraries, online services, scholarships, and student welfare services suitable for the Programme.
- h) the efficient utilization of the financial resources of the Postgraduate Programs deriving from tuition fees in order to provide the necessary services to

postgraduate students and to facilitate the operation of programs at the premises of the Department of Medicine but also in anything else required, (e.g., site visits to places outside the Department for their comprehensive education).

- i) conducting the annual internal evaluation and review of the quality assurance system for the Postgraduate Programs in collaboration with the EOTC and the Quality Assurance Unit of the Foundation.

The emphasis of these goals are to continuously strengthen the educational process through student-centred learning, to improve the program graduation rate, to improve the connection of program students with the labour markets, to enhance student research projects, to create improved connections between students and specialized scientists at other institutions, to upgrade and improve accessibility of the electronic infrastructure for students, and to facilitate program accessibility for people with disabilities. In addition, a program goal is to enhance the interaction of existing students with new students to enhance new student program completion.

II. Analysis

The program evaluation strongly suggests that the Department of Medicine takes important actions to sustain a high-quality educational environment for attending students. Importantly, the academic research environment is one that provides students with important interactions with faculty undergoing research projects and helps provide them with real-time objective experiences with the intricacies involved in research. Importantly, the faculty students interact with and learn from have productive research projects with associated publications. This administrative focus helps to enable a high-quality educational environment that helps to prepare graduates for issues that are likely to occur in medical practice.

The institutional strategy for preparing students to be competent and successful in a practice environment are well-planned and have the desired outcomes. The quality assurance policy helps to assure that the program sustains an up-to-date curricular experience that helps to assure a desired knowledge base in graduating students.

II. Active Involvement of Students

I. Findings

A clear program goal is the continuous strengthening of the educational process through student-centred learning. Integral to this is the program goal of enhancing the participation of postgraduate students in all aspects of program quality improvement. This includes the following goals:

1. The continuous strengthening of the educational process – student-centred learning

2. Improving the graduation rate of postgraduate students
3. The Implementation of the Quality Policy of the Programme "Intensive Care Units- Cardiology, Medical and Nursing Care"
4. The Activation of Counselling Studies - Strengthening the institution of academic advisor and the interconnection of graduates with the Labor Market
5. Enhancing the participation of postgraduate students in the quality assurance procedures
6. Improving the Connection of Studies with Research and the elaboration of PhDs Theses
7. The Utilization, Cooperation and Networking with the Graduates of the Department and the Programme
8. The further development of mobility and extroversion through the interaction of students with specialized scientists from institutions outside the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens and strengthening international collaborations
9. Enhancing student participation in international research and educational programs and international scientific conferences
10. Strengthening the adequacy of educational infrastructure and support services for the student community of the IPPS
11. The further facilitation of accessibility for people with disabilities - Enhancement of the adequacy of educational infrastructure and support services of the IPPS for students with disabilities
12. Upgrading the electronic infrastructure and services to the students of the IPPS and enhancing the access of the students of the IPPS to new technologies

In addition, a stated strategic objective of the program is to enhance the active participation of students and alumni in the internal program evaluation process. The percentage of enrolled students in the programme who participated in the internal evaluation procedures is currently 85%, with a stated goal of elevating this to 100%. The percentage of program graduates from the past academic year (2021-2022) who participated in the internal evaluation procedure of the programme was 70%, with the goal of increasing this to 90%.

Having an accessible academic advisor is an important factor for students, and current data suggest that 70% of existing students accessed the academic advisor during the past academic year, with the goal of increasing this to 100%.

II. Analysis

It is clear from the committee evaluation of the materials provided and interviews with administrators, students, and faculty, that the active involvement of students is an important part of the program's educational strategy. The current internal evaluation process has included 85% of all students, with the goal of increasing this to 100%. The emphasis on student-centred learning is made clear through multiple programmatic strategies that include clinical work experiences, integrating student suggestions into the educational experience, incorporating students into the research environment, and creating an environment that enhances the probability of success for students with disabilities.

III. Conclusions

One of the clear highlights of the program is the importance the program administration places on creating opportunities for the active involvement of students in the educational/programmatic experience. This emphasis on student involvement strongly suggests that the program satisfies this component of the program review.

III. Experience of External Stakeholders from the Labour Market

I. Findings

A clear goal of the program is to improve connections between program graduates and the labour market and local community. This is enabled through a reception of new students with strategic community members who are part of the local community, local government, and region to improve interconnectivity. A liaison office has been established for this purpose, with the goal of improving interconnectivity of the program students with the labour market and community. In addition, this interaction enables a better understanding of the needs of the labour market so that the educational system can make appropriate curricular experiential changes to satisfy needs.

The curriculum committee and the coordinating committee of the Programme attend other Postgraduate Programs of related content in Greece and abroad. Many graduates are active and work in hospitals abroad and specifically in departments related to intensive care units of various categories, but also in cardiology departments and units. Also, graduates consult the members of the curriculum committee for continuation of their postgraduate studies at the level of dissertations or postdoctoral theses. This enables a better understanding of the labour needs in different medical environments, enabling the program to focus on areas that can help satisfy these needs.

Interaction from external labour market stakeholders suggest that the program creates graduates who are well prepared and who make a significant positive difference in the workplace.

II. Analysis

The program has a clear goal of creating a solid relationship with the labour market, which is a clearly important focus to help assure that students have the educational and experiential focus to fully satisfy the needs of the market. This is accomplished through program committees interacting with hospitals and clinical environments in Greece and other countries to sustain an ongoing understanding of critical needs. Interviews with market stakeholders suggests that the program graduates successfully meet the needs of hospitals and clinical environments.

III. Conclusions

Our conclusion is that the program sees satisfying labour market needs as a critically important aspect of the education students receive. Based on the materials provided and comments from representatives of the labour market, it seems clear that the program satisfies this requirement.

IV. Anticipated Student Workload According to the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System for Level 7

I. Findings

The ICU-KINF Programme begins in the winter semester of each academic year.

A total of one hundred and twenty (120) ECTS credits are required to obtain a BMI. During their studies, postgraduate students are required to attend and successfully examine all courses, as well as to prepare a postgraduate dissertation. The courses in all four academic semesters are taught in person and take place on a weekly basis at the premises of the Medical School of the University of Athens and the University of Athens, as well as at the facilities of the University Clinics of the Hospitals under the supervision and organization of the Medical School of the NKUA. The courses are taught in Greek. In case of invited speakers from abroad and in the organization of seminars with invited speakers from abroad, the language can be English. In addition, if more than 30% of students have as their mother tongue a language other than Greek, the courses may be conducted in English.

Compulsory Courses (Semester A):

- Cardiology-Cardiology Nursing
- Pathology
- Electrophysiology-Pacemakers
- Clinical pharmacology
- Clinical Semiotics

Elective Compulsory Courses include the following:

- Healthy Systems
- Intercultural Medicine-Nursing

Compulsory Courses (Semester B)

- Infections
- Biostatistics
- Intensive and Emergency Care
- Interventional Cardiology
- Intensive and Emergency Nursing

Elective Compulsory Courses include the following:

- Management of Nursing Units
- Communication-Interpersonal Relationships

Compulsory Courses (Semester C)

- Health Informatics
- Research Methodology
- Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation
- Anaesthesiology
- Diagnostic and Therapeutic Methods of Coronary Artery Disease

Elective Compulsory Courses include the following:

- Bioethical Dilemmas and Concerns
- Mass Disaster Medicine-Nursing

Compulsory Courses (Semester D)

- Intensive Care Units
- Hemodynamic Laboratory
- Paediatric Cardiology
- Cardiology Clinic
- Heart Attack Unit
- Cardiac Surgery Unit

To obtain a degree, each postgraduate student must attend and be successfully examined in all the offered courses, plus prepare a postgraduate dissertation. Completion results in 120 ECTS.

II. Analysis

The curricular organization for students is clear and well-documented. In addition, the compulsory courses, elective courses, and postgraduate dissertation are well-defined and clearly organized to assure satisfying European credit transfer requirements.

III. Conclusions

The student workload for achieving a post-graduate degree is clearly presented and satisfies the requirements of the committee.

V. Option of Providing Work Experience to Students

I. Findings

During their clinical practice, students actively participate in all procedures, medical and nursing interventions and undertake corresponding work under the supervision of specialized scientific staff and faculty members. This includes working in the following areas:

- Intensive Care Units
- Hemodynamic Laboratory
- Cardiac Surgery
- Clinic Cardiology Clinic
- Cardiac Surgery
- ICU Paediatric Cardiology Unit

II. Analysis

While students do have multiple options for a variety of clinical environments to work in, the presented information suggests that working in these clinical environments is a standard, non-optional part of acquiring the degree. It also seems clear that a number of students are working in these environments in parallel to their current job/position. It is suggested that for the next review the program better defines 'work experience' and what constitutes work that is an integral component of the degree requirements.

III. Conclusions

The program has established a number of clinically based work environments for students, which is a positive aspect of the program. For future reviews it is suggested that the program clearly define how these work environments are an integral and requirement part of the program.

VI. Linking of Teaching and Research

I. Findings

Postgraduate students are sensitized to research issues. The diploma theses they prepare concern only a research study. The IPPS is generally active and conducts research studies in collaboration with postgraduate students and collaborates with institutions outside the IPPS. Also, apart from their research diploma thesis, students participate in clinical studies of university clinics of medicine and other university departments. In addition, many graduates of the IPPS continue their research work in their workplace and this is confirmed by their publications, while many have also prepared a doctoral dissertation and are in the process of preparing it. It is also a stated goal to enhancing student participation in international research and educational programs and international scientific conferences.

The Programme "Intensive Care Units-Cardiology, Medical and Nursing Care" combines academic and theoretical learning with practical/clinical training so that future graduates can work in all areas of Medicine and Nursing. A focus of this training is to enhance research competency in the students so that they can play an essential role in clinical research organizations, in simple clinics and special laboratories and ICUs, as well as in education at undergraduate and postgraduate level.

As it is a stated goal to enhancing student participation in international research and educational programs, the Department of Medicine seeks to develop a creative research environment, with free scientific expression for its academic community. The achievement of these objectives is considered decisive for improving the effectiveness of the internal functions (administrative, educational, research) of the Postgraduate Programs.

II. Analysis

The program has clearly described the importance of linking teaching and research, and the curricular strategies followed to help assure that students learn about clinical research issues before preparing their own research thesis. This is accomplished through both classes that teach about relevant research issues, and clinical research exposure to enable a clear understanding of how to optimally pursue research projects to obtain the desired data and findings.

III. Conclusions

The review committee has concluded that linking teaching and research is an important and integral part of the program structure and is satisfied that this aspect of the requirement is fully satisfied.

VII. Relevant Regulatory Framework and Official Procedure for the Approval of the PSP by the Institution

I. Findings

The Quality Assurance Policy of the School of Medicine is fully harmonized with the Quality Policy of the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, making the Department of Medicine fully committed to providing high quality Greek and foreign language higher education to the students who choose it, organizing and implementing Undergraduate, Postgraduate and Doctoral Programs of high academic standards and significant added value, both in Greek and English, in the most important fields and fields of science of the Department of Medicine. In addition, the Department seeks to develop a creative research environment, free scientific expression and work for all staff and members of its academic community. The Department of Medicine is committed to the implementation of this quality policy in all postgraduate programs it

offers, implementing the quality procedures provided by the Foundation's ESDP, with the goal of their continuous improvement. Through this Quality Policy, the academic profile and orientation of postgraduate programs are enhanced, their purpose and object are promoted, as well as the implementation of specific goals set each year, while the means and ways of achieving the above are determined and the participation of stakeholders in their evaluation and redesign processes is ensured.

The Department of Medicine is committed to the implementation of this quality policy, also in the IPPS Intensive Care Units-Cardiology, Medical and Nursing Care which it offers and will offer in the future, implementing the quality procedures provided by the EQMS of the Foundation, with the goal of its continuous improvement. This Quality Policy strengthens the academic profile and orientation of this postgraduate program, promotes its purpose and object, as well as the implementation of specific goals set each year, while determining the means and ways of achieving the above and ensuring the participation of stakeholders in its evaluation and redesign processes.

The strategic objectives of the “Intensive Care Units-Cardiology, Medical and Nursing Care” are as follows:

- Improvement of the basic academic activities of the Programme "INTENSIVE CARE UNITS – CARDIOLOGY, MEDICAL AND NURSING CARE
- Flexibility of Studies with an emphasis on student-centred learning
- Activation of counselling studies
- Strengthening and promoting the research activity of Innovation and Excellence in Research
- Participation of Programme students in research processes
- Connection of the Programme with doctoral studies
- Improving Interconnection with society and the labour Market
- Upgrading the University Environment - Infrastructure Improvement and Human Resources Development
- Renewal of offices, rooms and laboratories equipment
- Adequate staffing of the administrative staff of the Programme (individuals)
- Promoting gender equity

II. Analysis

The program is organized in a way that fully demonstrates the institutional commitment to assuring program success. This is done via multiple means, including assuring an infrastructure (laboratories, offices, classrooms, clinics, etc.) that fully satisfy programmatic requirements. Importantly, clinical units that are potential hiring facilities for graduates are integrated into planning strategies to help assure that graduates are fully prepared to satisfy the needs of those organization that hire them.

III. Conclusions

The program has taken appropriate steps to assure that planning for present and future needs are satisfied in a way that helps to assure programmatic success.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

The panel encourages the program to continue its institutional strategy for preparing students to be competent and successful in a practice environment. In particular, continued focus on creating active involvement of students in the educational experience, sustaining interactions with the labour market, and integrating research with education, are all important for programme features that should be continued.

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

Based on the panel's findings, the PSP partially provides a student-centred approach. Teaching methods and student assessment are presented in detail in Appendix A6, however, following the panel's assessment, it was found that all PSP's courses are delivered using distance

learning, which contradicts what is stated in Appendix A6. The PSP adopts a "Complaints Management Procedure" to handle student complaints (as presented in Appendix A10). Postgraduate students address the members of the curriculum committee, the steering committee of the PSP, the course directors or the PSP's secretariat who informs the committee members to resolve any of their complaints or requests. Apart from the conventional education with lectures and laboratory exercises, the PSP implements a compulsory one-semester clinical internship (4th semester) of 16 hours per week in clinical and diagnostic laboratories related to the theory. Also, during their last semester of studies and in parallel with the clinical practice, the postgraduate students are asked to prepare their thesis, which involves research work. Since the academic year 2017-18, the PSP has initiated the activation of the Academic Advisor. The academic advisor is required to be a professor from the two collaborating departments and is announced to the postgraduate students during their admission to the PSP. Furthermore, the students have the opportunity to evaluate teaching as a whole (teacher, subject and teaching method) through anonymous surveys (as presented in Appendix A9) that are conducted electronically, usually in every semester through the following websites: a) <https://survey.uoa.gr/portal/mainMenu> and b) <https://docs.google.com/forms>. In this way, the students may answer questions and to write their comments and suggestions. These surveys serve as feedback to the faculty for making the appropriate changes.

II. Analysis

Based on the details provided in Appendix A6 regarding the PSP's teaching methods, all courses are delivered both through face-to-face and distance lectures that cannot exceed 35% of the teaching hours, according to the stated Regulation of Postgraduate Studies, provided for in Article 45 of Law 4485/2017. However, based on the panel's audit, all courses in the 2022-23 academic year were delivered through distance learning, which was established as the primary course delivery method by all Greek universities during the COVID-19 outbreak. Nevertheless, under the country's legislation, since May 2022, COVID-19 is no longer treated as a health emergency and, thus, remote teaching cannot be adequately justified.

Moreover, the PSP implements a compulsory one-semester clinical internship (4th semester) of 16 hours per week in clinical and diagnostic laboratories related to the theory. Nonetheless, there have been cases in which postgraduate students have completed their clinical training in only a few days. Based on the Appendix A6, during the 4th semester of their studies, the postgraduate students are also asked to prepared their research thesis. Based on the panel's findings, the subject of the thesis can potentially be agreed in the 3rd semester in order that the students have more time to conduct their research work and prepare their thesis. However, it has been observed that the majority of the students are unable to complete their thesis within the two years of their postgraduate studies.

For the recording of the complaints and objections of the PSP's students, a "Complaints Submission Form" is available in electronic form on the PSP's website, which the students can fill in to report any of their complaints. The academic advisor, who is appointed by the steering committee, after examining the complaint, takes all necessary actions and informs the competent authorities of the PSP.

Also, the evaluation of courses and lecturers of the PSP is obtained through electronic questionnaires completed by postgraduate students every semester, oral discussions with the PSP supervisors, and daily discussions with the teaching staff. In general terms, the existing student survey questionnaires for assessment of the PSP appear adequate. Based on the findings of the PSP's steering committee, about 40-50% of the postgraduate students participate in the evaluation process by completing the questionnaires. This number, if true, is usually recommended and acceptable.

Finally, the academic advisor is announced to graduate students during their admission to the PSP. The academic advisor informs, guides, and advises the postgraduate students on a scientific level regarding the functioning of the PSP, their participation in research projects, special courses of continuing education, and choice of their research thesis. Importantly, the academic advisors are constantly available until students successfully complete their studies.

III. Conclusions

The panel found that this principle is partially covered by the PSP. A student-centred learning and teaching process was confirmed. The teaching methods and assessment criteria applied in each course are published in advance, however, they do not always comply with those applied. The 4th semester's clinical practice is considered compulsory, yet in individual cases it can be partially bypassed. Also, during the same semester, the postgraduate students are asked to prepare their thesis, which usually involves research work. Most of the students fail to complete their thesis within the timetable set by the PSP and usually get an extension of one or more semesters. Moreover, the PSP has adopted a mechanism for the management of student complaints and appeals, according to which the students can report their complaints by filling in the "Complaints Submission Form". The teaching staff, the courses' subject and the applied learning methods are evaluated periodically through anonymous online surveys. Finally, the academic advisor provides appropriate guidance to the postgraduate students in order to prepare their thesis and complete their studies.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

The panel's suggestions for improvements could be summarized as follows:

- Limit distance learning to a minimum and restore face-to-face lectures.
- Move/divide the compulsory clinical practice to/over previous semesters.
- Set a stricter framework whereby all students, with no exception, must complete a certain number of internship hours/days to be considered successful.
- Dedicate the last (4th) semester exclusively to the students' thesis.
- Motivate and tutor students to complete their studies within the set timetable.
- Generate a registry of complaints and the specific measures taken by the PSP's steering committee in response to each complaint and provide them to future panels for a more direct and accurate evaluation of the appealing process.
- Encourage more students to fill in the provided questionnaires.

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

Student admission for the PSP CNMC is restricted to 35 per year, with a small upwards variation in case that additional students have obtained fellowships or belong to some special categories determined by the PSP. Eligible for admission are graduates of medical schools or of allied health professions. Student fees are 1000 euros per semester, for a total of 4000 euros for the duration of studies. Some students are eligible for scholarships.

As noted during the presentations, this PSP is one of the first to be offered by the University of Athens Medical school, numbering more than 10 years of existence in its various reincarnations. Common to other PSPs, although originally there were many applicants, the numbers are decreasing currently, and, notably, the proportion of medicine graduates is considerably low right now.

The minimum duration of the PSP is 2 years, but students rarely complete the program in this timeframe, as discussed by students and faculty. It is not unusual for students to require 3-4 years to finish, and the panel met one student who took 10 years to complete the program, albeit due to several extenuating circumstances. Of note, the PSP showed flexibility and understanding for this student, and she was able to finish her degree.

Progress of the students of the PSP is followed closely by the faculty, and it was clear by all discussions that whenever the students required assistance, help was always available.

Part of the requirement for graduation is a practical training module.

Another requirement for graduation is work on a thesis, which must be experimental on topics offered by the faculty. Thesis work can start earlier, but mostly happens during the last semester and takes place in clinics and departments affiliated with the medical school.

The panel met with several current and past students of the PSP. All were positive about their experience and the training that they have received. Notably, one of the graduates did most of the degree while working in Germany, taking advantage of the remote learning during covid-19. Some items of concern brought up by the students included the large number of courses required, and the fact that the pre-requisites for some courses were not completely clear so as to allow the students to be able to follow the course work easily. All current and past students mentioned that the PSP is difficult but rewarding, and this was also emphasised several times by the faculty.

II. Analysis

As one of the oldest PSPs in the medical school, this programme provides some interesting points for analysis. It is clear that the programme fulfils an important need for education and training of medical professionals working in cardiology units, either during acute phase of treatment or during rehabilitation.

The length of studies is significantly longer than mentioned in the documents, and this may have a historical reason. However, if other similar PSPs maintain the 2-year limit, this can have negative consequences for the number of applicants of this programme. Another issue is the decreasing number of applicants and, notably, of medical graduates. Is this due to the length of the PSP, to the fact that many doctors have left Greece due to the economic crisis, to the abundance of PSPs currently on offer (the medical school in Athens offers 77!) or to a combination of the above? These are issues worth contemplating.

Another issue is that most students of the PSP have full time jobs. This plays a significant role in the length of studies, and in the availability of the students for in-person tuition.

III. Conclusions

Well-designed PSP on an important and timeless topic. Length of studies will need to be more strictly controlled.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

More strictly enforce the length of studies to maximum 2.5 years unless a student can be classified as part-time. Anything longer encroaches on the timing for initiating a PhD.

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 recognize 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 recognized 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 faculty of the PSP consists of 106 members drawn from the University of Athens Medical School, the collaborating Department of Nursing at University of West Attica, and a large number of additional members from other Universities hospitals and Private clinics in Greece. Although information on faculty accomplishments was not individually provided, the panel believes that they are of high quality and eminently suitable to participate in this PSP. As far as could be determined by the panel, there is no formal body of the whole faculty that meets regularly to discuss issues relating to the PSP, or to the evaluation by the students.

The panel met with a small subset of the faculty during the evaluation, and the feedback received about the PSP was very positive. It was clear from this sample that the faculty enjoy being part of the PSP and having contact with the attending students during the course work and in the clinics. Questions on faculty advancement and career prospects are not very relevant for PSPs, but it is important to note that participation in the programme enhances the professional CV of the faculty.

II. Analysis

This is a very large faculty body and it unclear as to how the more peripheral members can influence how the programme is run. Although there is a core group that administers the PSP consisting of 4 members from Athens medical school, 3 from West Attica and two more from both Institutions, their term is only for 2 years and it is hard to see how they can design, implement, and follow policies and procedures. It is clear from discussions that this PSP was the brainchild of Professors Kyritsi and Tousoulis. A new generation of more permanent leadership is now required.

III. Conclusions

The PSP serves a very important area of education and training, and it is a pioneer in post graduate education in Athens. However, the PSP requires formalisation in terms of its faculty body and leadership. The connection to West Attica is very admirable in the opinion of the panel, but questions can be envisaged as to whether, after the original founders of the programme leave, the new leadership will want to continue the program as it is.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

- Institute longer term of duty for the leadership of the PSP from University of Athens Medical School and University of West Attica Department of Nursing. A more stable leadership will nurture the PSP along the lines originally envisaged by its founders.
- Create a faculty body that will meet once or twice per year to discuss progress and problems of the PSP.
- Consider limiting the faculty dedicated to the programme to approximately 60 to enable better and more dedicated communication and administration.

PRINCIPLE 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 specialized 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-centered learning and the adoption of flexible modes of learning and teaching. Support activities and facilities may be organized 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 utilization plan (if applicable)*

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The panel has found that the PSP of the Department of Medicine of NKUA and the Department of Nursing of the PADA is hosted in the building of the School of Health Sciences of NKUA. The Department has at its disposal auditoriums and classrooms for the delivery of courses, a library, and computer laboratories for teaching laboratory courses. The postgraduate students can be informed about the provided services by the websites of the Department of Medicine and the NKUA. The teaching/administrative staff includes:

- Teaching and research faculty members of the Department of Medicine of NKUA,
- Teaching and research faculty members of the Department of Nursing of the PADA,
- Teaching and research faculty members from several other universities,
- Laboratory teaching staff of the Department of Medicine of NKUA,
- Administrative staff of the Department of Medicine, and

- External collaborators who have undertaken teaching work in the PSP.

The tuition fees per student are set at 1000€ per semester (4000€ in total) and constitute the stable source of income for the operation of the PSP. Finally, the PSP's website (<https://pmsmethkardiologia.med.uoa.gr/>) is currently under construction.

II. Analysis

Based on the provided information, the panel has found that, for the needs of the PSP, the following building infrastructure is available: a) clinics for the PSP courses of the Faculty of Health Sciences including university clinics of the General Hospital "IPOKRATEIO" and other specialized hospitals such as the Onassis Cardiac Surgery Centre and the Cardiac Surgery Department of the Children's Hospital "Agia Sophia", where the clinical training of the 4th semester is carried out, b) auditoriums and classrooms with audiovisual and computer equipment as well as high-speed network connection, c) research laboratories such as the Hemodynamic Laboratory of the ICU at the "IPOKRATEIO" General Hospital, d) the Library of the Faculty of Health Sciences, and e) the University Gym-Swimming Pool.

The PSP also offers other services such as the electronic classroom (e-class), e-Secretariat services, the Information Centre, the "Multimedia Content Hosting and Search Service", the Academic Identity, the Academic Advisor, advisory services, the Student Advocate, the Foreign Language Teaching Centre (with reduced tuition fees), the Students' Cultural Club, Support for Students with Disabilities (SDA), and a series of online/digital services that all NKUA students enjoy. The postgraduate students can be informed about the provided services using the websites of the Department of Medicine and NKUA. However, the PSP's website is still under construction and, thus, is not currently able to provide information regarding the services provided by the PSP.

The teaching staff consists of 56 faculty members (teaching and research staff) of the Department of Medicine of NKUA, the Department of Nursing of PADA, and faculty members of other universities. One faculty member (laboratory teaching staff) of the Department of Medicine of NKUA, an administrative staff member of the Department of Medicine, and 50 external collaborators have undertaken teaching work in the PSP. This large number of teaching staff members could, potentially, complicate the teaching process.

Based on the tuition utilization plan presented to the panel (Appendix A19), the tuition fees are used for:

- the payment of lecturers,
- administrative-technical support fees,
- consumables and other supplies,
- publicity and promotion of the PSP, conference costs, travel expenses, etc.,

- strengthening of the infrastructure, equipment, software, etc.,
- educational material,
- various third-party services,
- scholarships, and
- the management fees provided to ELKE (30%).

Moreover, the granting of scholarships for excellence occurs, the number of which depends on the available financial resources. Also, other stakeholders such as the Onassis Cardiac Surgery Centre regularly contribute to this end by supporting in total 5-10 scholarships per year.

III. Conclusions

Overall, the infrastructure and services offered by the PSP are considered adequate. The postgraduate students are mainly informed of the provided facilities via the websites of the Department of Medicine and NKUA. The completion of the construction and the regular update of the PSP's website could substantially contribute even more toward providing existing and potential students information regarding faculty and institutional resources. The teaching staff is deemed adequate, the large number of teachers participating in the PSP has the potential of complicating the smooth running of the educational process. The tuition utilization plan seems effective, but it fails to include a provision for scholarship funding by the PSP. Nevertheless, it is highly encouraging that other sources of funding such as the Onassis Cardiac Surgery Centre are also available for the postgraduate students.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

The panel's suggestions for improvements could be summarized as follows:

- Complete the construction of the PSP's website and update it regularly, so that current or new substantially interested students can be easily and efficiently informed about the services offered by the PSP.
- Re-evaluate the number of teaching staff members participating in the PSP, as the current number appears to be excessive.
- Include the scholarships funding in the tuition utilization plan or clarify the source of this funding.

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 organization, 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 analyzing 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 analyzing 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

Information that guides the Department of Medicine's Intensive Care Units-Cardiology, Medical and Nursing Care is collected in a transparent, uniform and standardized manner. It is improving the quality of education provided and, in general, is enhancing its work to all its participants and to social, cultural and productive entities with which it cooperates.

II. Analysis

The administrative team of the Intensive Care Units-Cardiology, Medical and Nursing Care (CMNC) takes care of recording, managing, and monitoring student data, the teaching staff, the structure and organization of the courses, and the teaching and the provision of services to the students and the academic community. It also provides valid information for a series of critical actions (planning, evaluation, communication), and services provided to students, graduates and professors.

The Intensive Care Units-Cardiology, Medicine and Nursing Care are supported by a single Information System (UniTron) that covers the needs of managing and monitoring the data of students, teaching staff, the structure and organization of courses, teaching and providing services to the students of PSP.

More specifically, the system includes the following basic subsystems:

- Management of Student Data and Study Programs
- Online Student Services
- Online Teacher Service
- Document Management
- Time Programming of Halls
- Report Management
- Statistics Management
- Student Care for Food, Housing and Care
- Download Records from an External File
- User Management

The system provides personalized online services, such as:

- For Students:
 - Course declarations with pre-filled data, depending on the study program followed by the student.
 - Automatic update of grades of courses that the student has participated in via the web.
 - Automatic issuance of certificates in pdf format upon request
 - Electronic information for teaching, courses, study programs, exam schedule
 - Personalized information about exam schedule, teaching schedule (identification required)
 - Track record, personal progress, degree eligibility and student benefit eligibility
 - Applications for student benefits and certificates and monitoring the application progress, etc.
- For Faculty Members:
 - Securely send teachers' scores to the secretariats
 - Automatic publication of calendars of teaching programs and course examinations
 - Registration of student scores.

The Secretariat of the DPMS Intensive Care Units-Cardiology, Medicine, and Nursing Care, in collaboration with the Secretariat of the Department of Medicine and the IT Department of the University of Athens, provides data, indicators and information to all public services and bodies authorized to request such data.

All those involved in the implementation of the PSP are informed through their e-mail accounts about the results of evaluations, and the changes made to the PSP as a result of the conclusions

and the improvement actions adopted and for the annual target of the subsequent academic years.

III. Conclusions

Information Management is the first and crucial step in the quality assurance process.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

- Continue to provide guides and information in transparent and compact form.
- Refrain from overloading all participants with unnecessary information; revise, re-check and update the systems to provide more consistent information in all communications.

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 DPMS Intensive Care Units-Cardiology, Medicine and Nursing Care of the Department of Medicine provide public information through its website, the website of the Department, the website of the EKPA, its social media pages, as well as through newsletters, posters and invitations that are posted at critical points of the Department (secretariats, studios, laboratories), and are forwarded electronically to communicate in this way to students, teachers and all interested parties, the actions, the essential components and activities of its academic daily life.

II. Analysis

DPMS Website Intensive Care Units-Cardiology, Medicine, and Nursing Care

Medical and Nursing Care

The DPMS Intensive Care Units-Cardiology, Medicine and Nursing Care of the Department of Medicine attach great importance to all interested parties' substantial and timely information about its curriculum (current and future students, researchers, members of the Academic Community, and Alumni). For this reason, it has a very well-organized and easily accessible website:

https://school.med.uoa.gr/metapychiakes_spydes/programmata_metapychiakon_spydon_eisachthentes_apo_to_akad_etos_2018_19/pms_diidrymatika/monades_entatikis_therapeias_kardiologia_iatriki_kai_nosileytiki_frontida/

All relevant information about the Department's PSP is displayed understandably and is accessible to all interested parties. Communication through the website is provided in Greek and English. One of the critical actions/initiatives in the immediate future is the upgrading and further enrichment of the English version.

The following has been posted on the website:

- The PSP quality policy, its objectives and learning outcomes.
- The Study Guide for the current academic year
- The Regulations for the operation of the mechanism for managing student complaints and objections
- The Regulation of operation of the institution of academic advisor
- The internal regulation of the PSP
- The Research Ethics Regulation
- The Regulation of studies, practical training, mobility, preparation of assignments
- The content and directions of the PSP Program
- The results of the annual internal evaluation of the PSP

Additional information on the Foundation's programs and actions (Erasmus, internships, CIVIS, etc.) and essential information on how the Department's postgraduate students can participate are also recorded. In addition, through the PSP website, students can be informed about lectures, seminars, conferences, and other events organized by the PSP and the Department of Medicine.

Faculty members of the Department who teach at the PSP, including the visiting professors and the collaborators of the PSP, are presented with biographies that include the research, writing and academic activity, and the administrative and technical staff that support the implementation of the PSP.

All scientific events, collaborations and actions organized by PSP and its members, sometimes in partnership with other bodies (Universities, Research Centres, etc.), are announced on the DPMS website. In addition, the Department's internal and external evaluation reports are posted on the website.

The sections for which information is provided are:

PSP (Post-Graduate-Programme)

- Human resources
- Students and Graduates and their Employment and Prospects
- General Announcements
- Events
- Announcements-Invitations
- Useful Documents
- Contact

The detailed study program of the DPMS Intensive Care Units-Cardiology, Medicine and Nursing Care is posted on the DPMS website. It includes the requirements for obtaining a degree and the mandatory and optional courses list.

In particular, the following are described for each course:

- The purpose and learning objective of the course

- The teaching content
- The teaching hours
- Teaching and credit units (ECTS)
- Recommended textbooks and notes

In addition to the PSP website, other means of communication are used to publicize the information. The members of the DPMS Intensive Care Units-Cardiology, Medicine and Nursing Care academic community are further informed about its activities through e-mails sent to their e-mail addresses. A Facebook (social media) page has also been created and used to provide programme information.

III. Conclusions

All information PSP provides on its website and the other communication channels listed above is constantly checked and updated. The Coordinating Committee of the DPMS is responsible for updating the information on the website daily, improving its aesthetics and functionality, its content, etc. The Commission is responsible for the objectivity and clarity of the information provided.

Reforming the DPMS website is underway to improve the quality and aesthetics of public information.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

- Complete the reforming process of the PSP website and improve its quality and aesthetics of public information.
- Provide a well-designed PSP with clinical relevance and emphasize its importance for public health.
- Revise, re-check, update the information, and monitor the pages regularly.
- Make the importance of clinically oriented education to the audiences, staff, students, and stakeholders.
- Provide information to the public about career advancement opportunities for cardiac nurses and recommend further cardiac nurse certifications to go deeper into the cardiovascular speciality.
- Provide information about cardiac nurse practitioners, how to educate patients and families in chronic cardiovascular diseases and their treatment.
- Provide information for further advancement options in the field. Professionals in the area are high performers, and they should have the appropriate experiences to elevate into management positions of cardiovascular nurses.

PRINCIPLE 9: ON-GOING 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 analyzed 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

It is clear from the presentations and the submitted documents that the PSP takes the process of internal evaluation seriously. The most recent internal evaluation was performed on December 2022 by Mrs Amalia Nippi, scientific collaborator of NKUA and member of MODIP. It was concluded during this prior evaluation that the PSP uses a good infrastructure for teaching and thesis work, it is a popular destination for many graduates, it offers very good levels of employment post-graduation, and the faculty are of high calibre. Less satisfying were levels of participation in international research programmes, and the proximity of the offices of the faculty to the teaching areas. In addition, internet access to all areas participating in the PSP could be improved.

The panel was given some completed questionnaires of faculty evaluation by the students, which appear to show a high level of satisfaction with their provided theoretical and practical training. The percentage of students taking part in the evaluation was very high (over 70%) and this reflects well on the processes that are in place for internal evaluation of the PSP.

It is important to note that the panel was not shown any documents that summarize faculty performance relating to course work and thesis supervision.

II. Analysis

Although internal evaluation of PSPs may be somewhat less crucial than evaluations of undergraduate programmes where the needs and number of students are very high, it is important to have such mechanisms in place and to administer them regularly. The internal evaluation of this PSP appears to be very positive, and this is something that the panel accepts.

III. Conclusions

Internal evaluation of this PSP has highlighted some areas that need improvement, and many areas where things are working well.

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

- Continue to improve in the areas highlighted by the recent internal evaluation.
- Provide some documentation on faculty discussions concerning the recruitment of faculty, the progress of the PSP and the areas that need improvement from the point of view of the faculty.

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 realized 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 utilization 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

Faculty members of the PSP are aware of the importance of the external review and its contributions to the programme's continuous improvement according to input provided to the EP during the online evaluation. A sufficient number of the members of the academic unit actively participated in the external review and appeared ready to be involved in the entailed follow-up actions.

As presented by members of MODIP during the current evaluation, issues identified during the first external evaluation some years ago and the recommendations provided by the EP for continuous improvement of the PSP at that time have been considered and the faculty have followed-up and implemented these recommendations. (Appendix 18: Progress report for PSP shows the recommendations, the relative actions, and the achieved results.)

At the same time, the PSP has set the following five objectives to achieve its qualitative improvement:

- Improving core academic activities
- Strengthening research production
- Improving Labour Market Connectivity
- Improving Extroversion
- Human resources development - Improvement of infrastructure

For each objective, it is expected to be implemented, with specific measurable indicators, the implementation schedule, and the respective managers.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

In addition to our suggestions for the PSP, the review committee is confident the programme will continue to improve all aspects of the educational process, as has been done in the past. This is an important programme component toward the desired continuous improvement of quality and it is useful to apply relevant good practices, including the adoption of mentors for internships/clinical internships.

PART C: CONCLUSIONS

I. Characteristics of Good Practice

- Through the Internal Quality Assurance System, the National and Kapodistrian University and the West Attica University have created all the conditions and adopted the necessary procedures for evaluating and improving quality, covering all relevant functions and actions.
- At the same time, the academic profile and orientation of PSP, as well as the program purpose and subject matter, are promoted, and the implementation of specific and defined goals is determined every year.
- The above is supported by the quality assurance policy that helps students interact with the PSP and consequently to ensure the desired knowledge base to graduates. At the same time, students can actively participate in the revision of the PSP, which simultaneously satisfies the relevant market needs.
- Submitting complaints by students is an easy process, constituting tangible proof of the intended quality provision of educational services.

II. Areas of Weakness

- Although the restrictions imposed on face-to-face teaching due to the COVID-19 outbreak have been lifted, it was found that several courses, beyond the allowed percentage, are still provided by the distant learning methodology.
- Although the restrictions imposed on face-to-face teaching due to the COVID-19 outbreak have been lifted, it was found that the distant learning methodology is still used for several courses beyond the allowed percentage. The necessary adjustments must, therefore, be made.
- Students must complete the PSP in the required minimum time, but many students exceed the allotted minimum time requirements.

III. Recommendations for Follow-up Actions

- The PSP evaluation questionnaire by students should be expanded to include factors that address all aspects of the program, including administrative support, facilities provided, educational materials, courses, and clinical experiences. At the same time, the issues regarding the PSP should be regularly evaluated with a designated focus group.
- It is necessary to define a more specific framework for clinical practice with the simultaneous adoption of institution mentors for clinical practice. The aim is to improve, both qualitatively and quantitatively, the clinical practice provided.
- Enhanced administrative efficiency and program communication could be achieved with a reduction of the number of people involved in the educational process.

IV. Summary & Overall Assessment

The principles where full compliance has been achieved are: **1, 2, 5, 9, and 10.**

The principles where substantial compliance has been achieved are: **3, 4, 6, 7, and 8.**

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

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

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

The members of the External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel

Name and Surname

Signature

1. Professor **Andreas PAVLAKIS** (Chair)
Philips University, Nicosia, Cyprus
2. Professor **Dan BENARDOT**
Emory University, Atlanta, USA
3. Professor **Panagiotis KARANIS**
University of Nicosia, Nicosia, Cyprus
4. Professor **Nicholas KTISTAKIS**
Babraham Institute, Cambridge, UK
5. Mr. **Georgios PETMEZAS**
PhD Candidate, Department of Medicine, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki,
Thessaloniki