



ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ
HELLENIC REPUBLIC



**Εθνική Αρχή
Ανώτατης Εκπαίδευσης**
Hellenic Authority
for Higher Education

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Accreditation Report

for the Postgraduate Study Programme of:

Social Neuroscience, Social Pedagogy and Education

Institution: National and Kapodistrian University of Athens

Date: 16 November 2023



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Report of the Panel appointed by the HAHE to undertake the review of the Postgraduate Study Programme of **Social Neuroscience, Social Pedagogy and Education** 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 **Social Neuroscience, Social Pedagogy and Education** 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 Zoe LEFKOFRIDI (Zoi Lefkofrydi)**
University of Salzburg, Salzburg, Austria (Chair)

- 2. Professor Anna TRAIANOU**
Goldsmiths, University of London, London, UK

- 3. Assist. Prof. Christina SIINA (Chinas)**
Durham University, Durham, UK

- 4. Professor Andreas PAVLAKIS**
Philips University, Nicosia, Cyprus

- 5. Mr. Konstantinos VAGIATIS**
PhD Student, University of the Aegean, Mytilene, Greece

II. Review Procedure and Documentation

We have been supplied with enough information to help with our deliberations. The meetings and discussions were conducted online and lasted three days, from the 14th until 16th of November 2023. Additional panel meetings were conducted during the same week as well as in the weeks that followed until submission of the report. Below we list 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 National and Kapodistrian University of Athens (Department of Pedagogy and Primary Education, School of Medicine and Biology Department)

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:

- Utilization of Tuition Fees
- Indicative list of lectures, seminars and workshops
- Internship of students in socio-pedagogical programs(optional)
- Photographic material from students' workshops

In addition to these documents, we also had the opportunity to meet (online) with several actors related to the programme in order to get more information and discuss aspects as specified in the Accreditation Guidelines.

- 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.
- the 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.
- Graduates of the programme to discuss their experience of their postgraduate studies and their career path.
- Current students of the programme to discuss their satisfaction from their study experience and School/Institution facilities; their opportunity to have an input in quality assurance; priority issues concerning student welfare and employability.
- Stakeholders to discuss relations of the PSP1 with external stakeholders from the private and the public sector. These were employers and social partners.

In addition to these teleconferences, we were given an on-line guided 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.

The entire process was conducted in a spirit of collaboration, staff were helpful and honest

with 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.

As members of the EEC, 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 Programme's Teaching staff. The staff members in question showed admirable readiness and willingness to provide additional information so that we are fully informed of the PSP'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 global academic community has urged for interdisciplinary approaches to address the high degree of complexity of contemporary issues. At the same time, in the international arena, there is continuous increase in interest in both neuroscientific research and its exploitation for advancing pedagogical thinking and educational practice. The Programme is unique in Greece; internationally, there are three more such programmes (Harvard, US; Bristol, UK and Linz, AT).

The general purpose of the interdepartmental PSP is to provide students with a higher level of postgraduate education in modern, cutting edge educational and social pedagogical issues. It was founded as interdepartmental in October 2019 and started in 2020. In 2023 its operating regulations were revised. Currently, it is credited with 120 ECTS and has a duration of 4 semesters including the preparation of a master level dissertation. A PSP with the same had title had been originally offered solely by the Pedagogy and Education Department at NKUA. During its operation for 4 years (2015 -19), teaching staff from the Medical School and the Department of Biology participated in this program. The interdepartmental programme is different from the original version regarding the following aspects:

- the teaching staff has grown and thus
- the teaching offer has been significantly expanded. Besides more courses of the classical type of university education, such as “Brain, Cognition and Education” the interdepartmental version of the programme included experiential learning workshops and seminars, as well as theatre and somatic techniques.
- the synergies between the disciplines involved have been strengthened.

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 NKUA.

The Programme involves a practicum (e.g., in jail, at the psychiatric clinic, at a refugee camp), which also involves a collaboration with a British University.

The qualification award is «Diploma Metaptichiakon Spoudon», equivalent to a master’s degree in «**Social Neuroscience, Social Pedagogy and Education**».

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

Attendance of courses/workshops etc. is compulsory. The teaching of the courses in all academic semesters normally takes place in person (but it was conducted online in the period of the COVID-19 pandemic due to social distancing and lockdown policies of the government). Courses are conducted on a weekly basis in the facilities of the NKUA. By decision of the PSP committee, some courses may be offered using the distance-learning methodologies.

In addition to the books provided to students, educational material is posted on the online platform, which includes notes, lecturers' deliveries, videos, CDs, and other materials.

In detail, the PSP «**Social Neuroscience, Social Pedagogy and Education**» aims at the interdisciplinary interconnection and exploitation of Pedagogy and related Neurosciences, emphasizing the interdisciplinary constructive collaboration of Social Pedagogy, Education and Social Neuroscience.

PSP graduates are able to study and understand the research results of social neuroscience and utilize them in:

- Design programming
- The organization and development of educational programs
- Social pedagogy Interventions
- Educational policy making
- The fields of formal, non- formal and informal education.

It is Evident that the design of the PSP took into account:

- the overall strategy of the NKUA
- the active participation of students
- the expected burden of studies according to the European transport system
- the ability to provide work experience opportunities to the students
- Action between teaching and education and practice with research

It is known that the in-depth study of the synergy of social pedagogy and social neuroscience results, inter alia, in the improvement of

- educational processes
- social learning
- decision making and
- prevention and/or management of adverse situations

Also, emphasis is placed on the promotion of research, and critical thinking for graduates to be able to meet the increased demands of science.

Consequentially, graduates of the program can:

- build on knowledge about the interaction of the social brain with the cognitive, emotional, and social skills of children and adults
- apply methods and techniques for exploiting brain plasticity, so that they can create more effective learning experiences
- recognise the dual (biological and social) basis of learning
- integrate research results from Social Neuroscience into the education of children and adults, as well as into socio-pedagogical interventions!
- exploit theoretical, epistemological, and methodological dimensions and applications of multidisciplinary spaces of Social Pedagogy and Education
- develop the methodological capabilities and practices of education and socio-pedagogical research
- design, implement and evaluate socio-pedagogical actions, interventions, as well as educational programs in formal, non-formal fields and non-formal education
- produce new knowledge through the study of interactions, interdisciplinary interdependencies and interconnections of biological mechanisms, human ethics, and pedagogical and social processes
- research educational, social, and cultural conditions in different environments and fields of formal, non-formal and informal education
- contribute to the respect for and protection of human rights

So, based on the three pillars of the programme (Social Neuroscience, Social Pedagogy and

Education) high-level postgraduate education is provided and specialized scientists are trained as social educators, who can study and understand the research results of Social Neuroscience and utilize them interdisciplinary:

- designing, organizing, and developing educational socio-pedagogical programs and interventions in the fields of formal, non-formal and informal education,
- enriching scientific research and promoting scientific knowledge
- educational policy making.

PART B: COMPLIANCE WITH THE PRINCIPLES

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

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

The quality assurance policy of the academic unit should be in line with the quality assurance policy of the Institution and must be formulated in the form of a public statement, which is implemented by all stakeholders. It focuses on the achievement of special goals related to the quality assurance of the study programmes offered by the academic unit.

Indicatively, the quality policy statement of the academic unit includes its commitment to implement a quality policy that will promote the academic profile and orientation of the postgraduate study programme (PSP), its purpose and field of study; it will realise the programme's goals and it will determine the means and ways for attaining them; it will implement appropriate quality procedures, aiming at the programme's improvement.

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

- a) the suitability of the structure and organisation of postgraduate study programmes*
- b) the pursuit of learning outcomes and qualifications in accordance with the European and National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education - level 7*
- c) the promotion of the quality and effectiveness of teaching at the PSP*
- d) the appropriateness of the qualifications of the teaching staff for the PSP*
- e) the drafting, implementation, and review of specific annual quality goals for the improvement of the PSP*
- f) the level of demand for the graduates' qualifications in the labour market*
- g) the quality of support services, such as the administrative services, the libraries and the student welfare office for the PSP*
- h) the efficient utilisation of the financial resources of the PSP that may be drawn from tuition fees*

i) the conduct of an annual review and audit of the quality assurance system of the PSP through the cooperation of the Internal Evaluation Group (IEG) with the Institution's Quality Assurance Unit (QAU)

Documentation

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

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The PSP «**Social Neuroscience, Social Pedagogy and Education**» of NKUA is fully compliant regarding principle 1 for Quality Assurance Policy of the Institution and the Academic Unit.

II. Analysis

The NKUA internal evaluation committee (OMEA) and the Quality Assurance Unit (ΜΟΔΙΠ) are responsible to ensure 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 in order to ensure the quality of the institution and the PSP under evaluation.

The NKUA, 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, relatively. Also, according to the quality policy of the NKUA, the relative information will be posted on the website of the Universities, which is fully operated.

The University has issued a quality manual for the uniform application of policies and procedures for the achievement and continuous quality improvement of its offered work.

III. Conclusion

The Institution has developed the correct methods for the establishment of the necessary committees for internal evaluation and continuous improvement. Notably, includes 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

For courses offered with the distance-learning methodologies, the Director could consult with the Hellenic Open University about relevant methodology it applies (also: the relevant Study Guides for this type of teaching and learning). The Programme might get insights on how to support students through the Study Guide or each course's syllabus. To strengthen the effectiveness of methods of distance learning the Study Guide/Course Syllabus could include, inter alia, the following:

- Clearly stated objectives and expected results of the programme, structured in modules
- Presentation of the topics and readings for every session
- the activities and exercises with clear instructions for posting, discussion and feedback.

We acknowledge that contrary to the Hellenic Open University the NKUA is not a distance-learning University; we are also aware that many of the tools used by Open may not be applicable, for example in the experiential learning activities and theatre workshops. In any event, the students did not complain at all about this aspect.

The primary focus of questionnaires should always be the quality of the programme (course materials, teaching staff, etc.). However, these questionnaires could also be used in order to evaluate the Institution in all its parameters (administrative support, facilities provided etc) in addition to course offered. This may increase the utility of questionnaires given to students. While the institution could, in this way, collect more information, the questionnaire should not

become too long.

PRINCIPLE 2: DESIGN AND APPROVAL OF POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES

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

The academic units develop their postgraduate study programmes following a well-defined procedure. The academic profile and orientation of the programme, the research character, the scientific objectives, the specific subject areas, and specialisations are described at this stage.

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

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

In addition, the design of PSP must consider:

- *the Institutional strategy*
- *the active involvement of students*
- *the experience of external stakeholders from the labour market*

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

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

Documentation

- *Senate decision for the establishment of the PSP*
- *PSP curriculum structure: courses, course categories, ECTS awarded, expected learning outcomes according to the EQF, internship, mobility opportunities*
- *Labour market data regarding the employment of graduates, international experience in a relevant scientific field*
- *PSP Student Guide*
- *Course and thesis outlines*
- *Teaching staff (name list including of areas of specialisation, its relation to the ~~curriculum~~ taught, employment relationship, and teaching assignment in hours as well as other teaching commitments in hours)*

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The PSP «**Social Neuroscience, Social Pedagogy and Education**» of NKUA is fully compliant regarding principle 2.

II. Analysis

The interdepartmental programme that was established in 2019, run for the first time in 2020 and was modified in 2023 (see relevant ΦΕΚ) has been designed according to the Institutional strategy and the European Framework of qualifications for Higher Education.

The programme is clearly structured as indicated. It is a cross-disciplinary, interdepartmental programme with very innovative content. Social neuroscience is a rapidly developing field and its combination with social pedagogy and education (the three pillars of the programme) makes this MA programme incredibly rich and sophisticated. Similar programmes can be found in the UK (University of Bristol) and the US (Harvard Graduate School of Education).

The programme's structure is progressive. This is a two-year programme (4 semesters, 120 ECTS). The programme includes internships (practicum) and workshops as well as taught seminars. Its 12 courses build towards deepening student understanding both in theoretical and empirical terms. For example, students are introduced to the theoretical elements of the programme and to the main methods and methodologies of social/educational research. In the final semester students complete a dissertation in which they are asked to apply their theoretical and empirical knowledge to their own research projects. The programme handbook, which provides is accessible to the students and it is very clear and detailed.

Assessment takes place through a range of appropriate methods (e.g. reflective diaries, essays, presentations, dissertation). The criteria and methods of assessment are clearly communicated to the students at the start of the course and are included in the programme handbook. A strong element of the programme is its internship. Students are required to carry out their practice in different contexts including schools, refugee camps, psychiatric hospitals, and prisons. This allows them to apply the theoretical and empirical elements of the courses they study in practical contexts.

Internships also offer students opportunities to make links with the labour market. MA Graduates appear able to find employment though no formal data was available. There are clear links with a range of different external stakeholders which is a further indication of the need of programme graduates in the Greek labour market.

All staff are well qualified to teach the different modules of this MA as indicated in their CVs. Most of them are well established researchers in the fields they teach. During our meetings, members of staff clearly demonstrated their commitment to the courses they teach and to supporting students to achieve their learning outcomes. Student evaluations play an important role in the permanent appointment of staff members, which is a very good practice.

III. Conclusions

The Institution has developed appropriate procedures for the development of this postgraduate programme.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

The panel wishes to propose to the Institution offering this programme to consider using the collected data on graduate employability to advertise the programme more effectively. Offering such information would help prospective students visualize possible career paths. The group of graduates we met online exhibited diverse career paths, e.g., in the social sector, in domains of prevention, etc. Perhaps a short video where the graduates speak about their experiences after the

programme would be very effective.

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

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

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

The student-centred learning and teaching process

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

In addition

- *The academic staff are familiar with the existing examination system and methods and are supported in developing their own skills in this field.*

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

Documentation

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

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The EEAP determined that the PSP meets the necessary conditions connected with the relevant principle after reviewing submitted evidence and conducting interviews with staff members and students.

II. Analysis

During the deliberations EEAP discovered that the teaching faculty and staff employ a variety of student-centred teaching methodologies. During lectures, instructors encourage participatory discussion with students, as well as questioning and exchanging ideas. Students are offered opportunities and assistance in developing personal, intellectual, and research abilities. Students told us that communicating with instructors is simple and direct. Faculty, for example, answers emails quickly and is available outside of established office hours. Furthermore, students mentioned the personal relationships they had with faculty members. Faculty staff members have structured their lessons so that there is a designated time for questions, making them more student-centred. It should also be noted that students highlighted the need for more research opportunities as well as the need to interact with the professional field through on-site visits to relevant professional or scientific institutions.

Assessment approaches and evaluations exhibit diversity, encompassing formal measures such as end-of-semester exams, both written and oral, as well as ongoing assignments distributed throughout the academic term. Emphasis is placed on mitigating the sole reliance on final exam scores to determine students' overall performance. Instead, the inclusion of intermediate assessments throughout the academic year is prioritized. Students highlighted in interviews that they benefit from consistent monitoring and feedback, facilitating improvement in their academic endeavours. Detailed information regarding grade components and assessment methods is pre-emptively disclosed and can be accessed in the course syllabi.

The evaluation of the educational process occurs through questionnaires, ensuring anonymity. The system generates only average statistics for each question, preventing the identification of individual students. Students are actively encouraged and supported to participate in both teaching and assessment. The PSP has implemented initiatives to enhance student involvement in the assessment process, aiming to make informed decisions for the continuous improvement of the PSP's operations.

The PSP Committee established a regulation about the Management of Student Complaints and Appeals through a Committee which acts as a receiver of complaints and concerns of students in order to address any issues before they become more serious, building confidence among the academic community and ensuring accountability and legitimacy.

Finally, regarding the Academic Advisor, the Department has established relevant regulations. Students are aware of it and describe it as extremely helpful.

Based on this information, the PSP adheres to the principles of student-centred learning, teaching, and assessment. The results emphasize the importance of active student involvement in the learning process, where they play an active role rather than being passive recipients of knowledge. This active engagement empowers students to build their own understanding, ask questions, participate in meaningful discussions, and collaborate with peers. Additionally, the PSP acknowledges the significance of assessment methods that align with the student-centred approach, recognizing that traditional methods may not adequately gauge the depth of understanding and critical thinking associated with active learning. The assessment strategies not only measure factual knowledge but also assess the ability to analyse, synthesize, and apply concepts in complex and practical scenarios, in accordance with the holistic educational objectives of a student-centred approach. The student feedback

survey is in line with the principles of student-centred learning, valuing the perspectives of students and involving them as active contributors to shaping their educational experiences. The PSP has implemented a structured process for handling student appeals through established regulations.

I. Conclusions

The EEAP found that the PSP promotes the importance of student-centred learning and teaching. Measures are examined to enhance students' participation both in the course evaluation process and, more broadly, throughout all stages of the learning journey. The PSP also cultivates and promotes mutual respect between the students and the faculty and staff.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

Continue to operate in such an efficient manner.

PRINCIPLE 4: STUDENT ADMISSION, PROGRESSION, RECOGNITION OF POSTGRADUATE STUDIES, AND CERTIFICATION

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

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

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

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

Documentation

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

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The panel found that all the areas from the beginning to the end of studies are governed by appropriate internal regulations. The PSP «**Social Neuroscience, Social Pedagogy and Education**» of NKUA is fully compliant regarding principle 4.

II. Analysis

Following the Institution's regulation there are specific committees (e.g. Committee for the Programme of Studies, committee for the evaluation of candidates and the

selection of students) involved in the selection of new students. The application and evaluation process are clearly described in the internal regulation document. Because of its popularity, the programme has capped the number of students accepted every academic year to 50. The announcement for applying to the course is made online in the spring semester. The selection criteria, a combination of interview and types/numbers of qualifications, are also clearly described in the internal regulation document. The results are publicly announced. They are also communicated to candidates via personal email. The panel found these procedures fair; that said, more information about the selection process would be welcome. For example, the interview could give some flexibility to members of the selection panel to select candidates from disadvantaged backgrounds, who may not have had opportunities to gain additional qualifications.

A thirty per cent of the students accepted on the course are entitled to a fee waiver. There are also scholarships available which are usually competitive.

The students' rights and obligations during the duration of the studies are clearly included in the internal regulation document. Students are provided with information about the duration of the studies, the number and kind of courses that are compulsory and elective, the processes involved in applying for internships and for an extension to their studies.

The procedures for the drafting of assignments and dissertation are clearly described in the relevant documents. The dissertation topic is decided by the student with the support of tutors. It is approved by a special academic committee before a dissertation supervisor is allocated to support the student. There is a lot of space available to the students to choose their topic of specialization for their thesis. These are not "assigned to them" by instructors (top- down) but students choose them (bottom-up).

Students of this Programme are entitled to participate in student mobility programmes. Students who wished to participate in such programmes are supported by the department. In our meetings, students were particularly keen for such programmes to continue.

There are clear procedures for monitoring student progress towards the completion of their studies (e.g., information included in individual student cards). Perhaps, there is scope for further improvement in this area. More information for example

regarding student retention would be welcome and about the support offered to students who, for various reasons (e.g. mental health issues), are struggling to complete the programme.

There is an established university research ethics committee, which approves research ethics applications. There is perhaps scope for monitoring student research ethics at departmental level (e.g., departmental research ethics committee) to accelerate ethical clearance for no high-risk projects (usually student projects).

III. Conclusions

The panel found that the Institution has good governance procedures and regulations in place regarding student admission, progression and recognition of this programme of study.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

We advise the institution to consider collecting information regarding student retention and establishing formal strategies for supporting struggling students. We would also strongly advise the institution to consider establishing formal procedures for widening participation.

At the institutional level (University), we would welcome the consideration of the establishment of departmental research ethics committees, which would speed up processes and support the advancement of their research projects.

PRINCIPLE 5: TEACHING STAFF OF POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES

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

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

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

Documentation

- *Procedures and criteria for teaching staff recruitment*
- *Employment regulations or contracts, and obligations of the teaching staff*
- *Policy for staff support and development*
- *Individual performance of the teaching staff in scientific-research and teaching*

work, based on internationally recognised systems of scientific evaluation (e.g. Google Scholar, Scopus, etc.)

- List of teaching staff including subject areas, employment relationship, Institution of origin,
Department of origin

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The PSP «**Social Neuroscience, Social Pedagogy and Education**» of NKUA is fully compliant regarding principle 5.

II. Analysis

Ensuring a high level of knowledge and skills among the teaching staff of postgraduate study programs is crucial for maintaining academic excellence and student satisfaction with the programme and, ultimately, for the overall success of the programme. This program recruits mainly from the three departments that participate in the programme (tenured faculty has been recruited based on established processes of selection, including search committees etc.). In addition, it recruits external collaborators (e.g., specialized scientists) based in Greece as well as distinguished scientists from abroad. All members are chosen based on their expertise and specializations. As a result, the programme is impressive for the proficiency and disciplinary diversity of its teaching staff (e.g. doctors, biologists, social pedagogues, social workers, psychologists, and others), who possess the requisite knowledge and effective teaching methodologies. The programme relies on established indicators such as citation metrics to evaluate the performance of this staff in research.

To further enhance the capabilities of their teaching staff, the institution invests in continuous training and professional development, such as supporting their participation at conferences. This shows that a member of the teaching staff is expected and encouraged to grow as researchers through their participation in national and international conferences (besides their publication activities). As participation to this PSP facilitates participation in national and international conferences, it also encourages networking and exposure to diverse perspectives,

contributing to the enrichment of the teaching staff's knowledge base. This is of outmost importance. Given that students are also able to participate in conferences with a paper, conferences can also provide different opportunities for interaction between students and the teaching staff.

This program also leverages technology to enhance the knowledge and skills of their teaching staff. For instance, the online platforms provides a convenient avenue for educators to stay organized and updated, while making interaction with students easier. While the faculty has been encouraged to engage in online platforms or distance-learning, the covid reality fostered this development.

III. Conclusions

In conclusion, a combination of expertise-based recruitment processes, opportunities to grow as a researcher, feedback through student evaluations, and the integration of technology collectively assures not only a very high level of knowledge and skills possessed by their teaching staff but also that this staff develops with the programme, rather than remaining stagnant. These strategies not only contribute to the academic rigor of this postgraduate study program but also foster a culture of continuous improvement and innovation in teaching methodologies.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

Besides the evaluation through the students, the PSP could also consider conducting peer review and peer-to-peer feedback. Implementing peer review processes can be instrumental in maintaining teaching standards. By fostering a culture of collaboration and constructive feedback, institutions enable their teaching staff to learn from each other's experiences. Periodic classroom observations, peer evaluations, would add to the feedback from students and could contribute to a comprehensive understanding of teaching effectiveness. This approach ensures accountability and helps identify areas for improvement, fostering a continuous cycle of growth among the teaching faculty.

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 specialised libraries and possibilities for access to electronic databases, study rooms, educational and scientific equipment, IT and communication services, support and counselling services.

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

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

Documentation

- *Detailed description of the infrastructure and services made available by the Institution to the academic unit for the PSP, to support learning and academic activity (human resources, infrastructure, services, etc.) and the corresponding firm commitment of the Institution to financially cover these infrastructure-services from state or other resources*
- *Administrative support staff of the PSP (job descriptions, qualifications and responsibilities)*

- *Informative / promotional material given to students with reference to the available services*
- *Tuition utilisation plan (if applicable)*

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The institution offers a range of services and facilities to meet the teaching and learning needs of PSP students. Examining the provided materials and speaking with professors and students during interviews demonstrates this principle.

II. Analysis

In terms of building infrastructure, courses are offered in appropriate classrooms that have the required equipment, audiovisual teaching aids and accessibility for people with disability. PSP's students have access to libraries with specialized journals and books and electronic databases supporting their studies. This initiative adopts a dual strategy by giving equal weight to electronic and printed resources, ensuring rapid access to essential information.

Additionally, the PSP is supported by the course platform, which allows students to access and complete all of their tasks, including studying course materials, turning in assignments, and receiving information about assessment results. The Student Service Centre is responsible for processing all student affairs and handles all correspondence with students. Other services offered to students are the Career Office, the Centre for Counselling and Psychological Support, the Accessibility Unit for Students with Disabilities and the office of Student Advocate. Feedback indicates that the services are generally easy to use. Administrative personnel offer thorough direction and phone or email support for technical issues.

Furthermore, the PSP offers a range of electronic services to its students, including email services, wireless network connectivity (Wi-Fi), the creation of personal websites, access to a virtual private network (VPN), participation in the alumni

network, enrolment in open academic courses, viewing academic video lectures, tuning into live broadcasts of lectures, and the completion of online questionnaires.

All the above services and infrastructures rely on various financial resources, which are generally considered sufficient to achieve PSP's objectives. Finally, there is a tuition utilization plan which describes the percentage distribution of fees.

After a thorough investigation, the EEAP reviewed these results and emphasized the PSP's strong basis for offering its students vital support services. The library is in line with modern educational needs, providing quick access to vital information that is necessary for academic success. The extensive array of support services provided by the institution demonstrates its dedication to the overall development of its students. Graduates and students acknowledged their satisfaction with the academic, technological, and administrative support they received throughout their studies, and they were aware of the resources and activities offered by the Department and the program. The panel found the material and the online tour in classrooms, lecture halls, libraries, labs, and other facilities to be satisfactory despite not having the chance to visit lectures and resources.

III. Conclusions

In summary, the PSP exhibits a strong dedication to providing its students with a range of services and resources such as necessary means and facilities, general and more specialised libraries and access to electronic databases, study rooms, educational and scientific equipment, IT and communication services, support, and administrative and counselling services.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

Continue to operate in such an efficient and effective manner.

PRINCIPLE 7: INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

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

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

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

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

The following are of interest:

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

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

Documentation

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

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The PSP «**Social Neuroscience, Social Pedagogy and Education**» of NKUA is fully compliant regarding principle 7.

II. Analysis

The assessment of information management within this Study Program at the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens is critical for ensuring the quality and effectiveness of the program. Information management is the 7th principle for accreditation, highlighting its significance in supporting the overall goals and objectives of the academic curriculum. Indeed data is collected in a transparent, uniform, and standardized manner. There is appropriate infrastructure, namely technological resources available to students and faculty for managing information. The tools and platforms used for research, collaboration, and data analysis are usable and accessible. For example, there exist safe tools for submission of grades to the Secretariats, for announcing dates of exam etc., that support faculty and ensure transparency. At the same time, there is the possibility to get customized /personalized information based on person identification (optional). This data is used to improve the program continuously, though sensitive data is safeguarded, and privacy standards are upheld.

III. Conclusions

In conclusion, there is an information management framework that is appropriate and functional. This is essential for the success of the MA Study Program "Social Neuroscience, Social Pedagogy, and Education" at the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens.

Panel Judgement

Principle 7: Information management

Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

The program is doing a great job in preparing students to navigate the evolving landscape of information; the program should consider using social media to disseminate information, where applicable (e.g., upcoming conferences).

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 National and Kapodistrian University of Athens (NKUA) has demonstrated a robust approach in its Internal Quality Assurance System (IQAS) for the postgraduate program in "Social Neuroscience, Social Pedagogy and Education" and thus complies with this principle (8).

II. Analysis

The PSP has set up a mechanism for public information and it primarily disseminates information through its website (<https://snspe.primedu.uoa.gr/>) and the Department's website (<http://www.primedu.uoa.gr/metapyxiakes-spoydes/metapyxiaka-programmata/diatmhmatiko-programma-metapyxiakon-spoydon-koinwniki-neyroepistimh-koinwniki-paidagwgiki-kai-ekpaideysh.html>) to all interested parties (current and future students, researchers, alumni, etc.).

The PSP's website contains detailed and comprehensive information about its structure, mode of attendance, degree awarded, tuition fees and admission procedures. All the regulations concerning the PSP are available on the website, including the study regulation, regulation of academic advisor, regulation about student's complaints and dissertation regulation. In addition, Departments' academic unit Policy for Quality Assurance is accessible online on the website underscoring the PSP's commitment to maintaining academic excellence and quality standards. Moreover, all course outlines for the Programme and course schedules are available online on the website. Information about academic staff is fully available. Finally, all scientific events, collaborations and activities organised by the PSP and its members are announced on the website. All information is provided both in Greek and English language. In general, the PSP website can be described as user-friendly, accessible and accurate.

The Department's website in the Greek language provides fragmentary information about the PSP and redirects users to the PSP's website. There is no English version of Department's website. Apart from the website, the members of the academic community of the PSP are further informed about its activities through e-mails were sent to their personal e-mail addresses and through the official social media. Also, the PSP ensures that there is printed information material which is posted at focal points of the Department.

The EEAP discussed with staff, students, and stakeholders, examined relevant materials and thoroughly studied the PSP' public information system. The Coordination Committee, as well as the Secretariat, plays a key role in monitoring, controlling, and ensuring the quality, validity and timeliness of public information concerning the PSP. The PSP distinguishes itself by ensuring that information is up-to-date, clear and objective to interested parties in multiple ways as described above. In addition, the PSP promotes transparency, accountability and relevance, providing comprehensive information about quality, regulations and admission issues. In general, the analysis showed that the PSP has put much effort into presenting itself to its students and the public.

III. Conclusions

In general, the EEAP asserts that the PSP offers a comprehensive range of valuable information for stakeholders. This commitment aligns with the expectations for institutions to furnish precise and up-to-date details about their postgraduate study programs. This benefits both the institutions and individuals, facilitating well-informed decision-making, ensuring

accountability, and contributing to the overall quality of higher education.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

The EEAP encourages update of the Department's website section.

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 analysed and the programme is adapted to ensure that it is up-to-date.

Documentation

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

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The National and Kapodistrian University of Athens (NKUA) has demonstrated a robust approach in its Internal Quality Assurance System (IQAS) for the postgraduate program in "Social Neuroscience, Social Pedagogy and Education" and thus complies with this principle (9).

II. Analysis

This approach is characterized by several key initiatives:

- **Program Content Evaluation:**
 - The curriculum is regularly updated with input from faculty active in research, ensuring that course content remains at the cutting edge of the discipline.
 - Special seminars and guest lectures are organized, featuring leading experts to provide students with the latest insights in the field.
- **Societal Needs and Student Workload:**
 - The program conducts annual surveys to understand societal trends and labour market demands, adjusting the curriculum to meet these evolving needs.
 - A balanced approach is taken towards student workload, with adjustments made based on student feedback and performance data.
- **Student Assessment Procedures:**
 - The program uses a mix of traditional and innovative assessment methods, regularly reviewed and updated to ensure they accurately reflect student learning.
- **Student Feedback and Satisfaction:**
 - Regular focus groups and feedback sessions are held with students to gauge their satisfaction and gather insights for program improvement.

- Learning Environment and Support Services:
 - The program periodically reviews its facilities, technology, and support services, ensuring they are conducive to learning and meet students' needs.
- The program's systematic approach to internal quality assurance highlights its commitment to maintaining high educational standards. By continuously aligning its curriculum with the latest research and societal needs, and actively engaging students in the feedback process, the program ensures its relevance and efficacy. However, there is room for enhancing stakeholder engagement and expanding the feedback loop to include a broader range of perspectives.

III. Conclusions

The NKUA's postgraduate program in "Social Neuroscience, Social Pedagogy and Education" substantially complies with Principle 9, demonstrating a clear commitment to continuous improvement and responsiveness to educational and societal trends. The program's proactive approach to curriculum review, student engagement, and assessment methods positions it effectively for ongoing development.

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

For further improvement, the program could benefit from:

- Enhanced External Stakeholder Engagement:
 - Engaging with social and industry partners for curriculum development and offering internship opportunities.
- Transparent Reporting of Changes:
 - Creating a public-facing document outlining how student and stakeholder feedback has led to specific changes in the program.
- Regular Publication of Program Updates:
 - Establishing a bi-annual open forum for all stakeholders, including students, faculty, and industry partners, to discuss the program's progress and future direction.
- In-depth Analysis of Student Workload:
 - Implementing a longitudinal study to track student workload and stress levels across different stages of the program, using this data to inform future curriculum adjustments and to adjust course requirements accordingly to balance academic challenges with well-being.

- These enhancements will further strengthen the program's alignment with Principle 9, ensuring its continued success and relevance in the field.

PRINCIPLE 10: REGULAR EXTERNAL EVALUATION OF POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES

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

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

Documentation

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

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The postgraduate program in "**Social Neuroscience, Social Pedagogy and Education**" at the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens has undergone a rigorous external evaluation process administered by the Hellenic Authority for Higher Education (HAHE) and thus complies with this principle.

II. Analysis

To assess the PSP in this domain, we begin by structuring our findings according to the following analytical categories:

- Accreditation and Compliance:

- The program has been accredited by HAHE, with a compliance rating based on a thorough assessment by external experts.
- Utilization of Recommendations:
 - The program has actively integrated recommendations from previous external evaluations into its curriculum and operational structure.
- Quality and Standards Compliance:
 - The program's alignment with international standards and academic benchmarks has been evaluated, contributing to its international recognition.
- Continuous Improvement Initiatives:

Ongoing efforts to improve the program based on external feedback are evident, displaying a commitment to educational excellence.

The external evaluation process demonstrates the program's commitment to maintaining high standards of academic quality and relevance. The utilization of recommendations from external experts has led to significant improvements, particularly in curriculum development, student support services, and research opportunities. However, there is a need for more systematic implementation of these recommendations and regular documentation of their impact.

III. Conclusions

The external evaluation by HAHE indicates that the postgraduate program in "**Social Neuroscience, Social Pedagogy and Education**" at NKUA fully meets the requirements set by Principle 10. The program shows a strong commitment to quality assurance, continuous improvement, and alignment with international educational standards.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

To further enhance compliance with Principle 10, the program should consider the following:

- Systematic Implementation of Recommendations:
 - Develop a structured plan for implementing external recommendations, including timelines and responsible parties.
- Enhanced International Collaboration:
 - Establish partnerships with internationally renowned institutions to exchange best practices and insights, thereby enhancing program quality.
- Regular Reporting on Implementation:
 - Produce annual reports detailing how external recommendations have been implemented and their impact on the program's quality.
- Strengthening Research Opportunities:
 - Increase research opportunities for students and faculty, especially in collaboration with international research centres, to enhance the program's academic standing and innovation.

By focusing on these areas, the program can achieve full compliance with Principle 10 and further solidify its position as a leading postgraduate program in its field.

Part C: Conclusions

I. Features of Good Practice

Overall, the PSP is both impressive and inspiring; in the case of this program, the NKUA seems to be doing pioneer work in this interdisciplinary field of education. The PSP not only engages with the arts, but it also cooperates with local actors and institutions (Theatre M. Kakoyannis) – an aspect of the programme that was praised by all participants in our deliberations. Also, the PSP, which has already engaged in international cooperation with a British University, could make use of the CIVIS alliance to expand opportunities for students and graduates.

The PSP is an excellent and innovative interdisciplinary programme with clear evaluation mechanisms, strategies for improvement and good links with social partners. The PSP follows the proven quality of NKUA (internal quality assurance system), and it is easily accessible to all involved. The PSP structure is offered in such a way that students, after acquiring the necessary theoretical training, can apply in it during their internship.

Moreover, the PSP teaching staff appears fully committed and well qualified. The teaching staff expressed enthusiasm and readiness to support students in achieving their goals. Therefore, it is obvious that student centred learning is key, and that necessary relevant support of students is provided. We observed a continuous updating of PSP in the fields of program content, social needs and student learning burden, feedback and learning and supporting environment.

The NKUA should be very proud of this programme, which is novel for the Greek educational landscape. The University should help this PSP sustain its quality and attractiveness. The University should also push for the recognition of social pedagogues in Greece and the establishment of their professional rights.

II. Areas of Weakness

The PSP is strong in all dimensions of evaluation. However, the hosting Department's website has no English version (in addition to the Greek language) is not regularly updated. This weakness is important in the context of the CIVIS alliance.

III. Recommendations for Follow-up Actions

For the purpose of sustaining its excellence and attractiveness as a programme, we highlight a few aspects where we see potential for improvement - mainly at the institutional but also at programme levels.

We advise the Institution and the PSP to consider:

- establishing formal mechanisms/strategies for student retention and support
- creating (more) opportunities to engage students in focus group discussions about the programme's improvement
- creating a public-facing document outlining how student and stakeholder feedback has led to specific changes in the programme
- consulting with experienced actors (e.g., the Open University) on issues of distant methodology.
- making most of data on employment/employability of graduates
- experimenting with peer review or similar processes to enhance teaching and research standards.
- upgrading and regularly updating the website, including the departmental one

IV. Summary & Overall Assessment

The Principles where full compliance has been achieved are:

1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10.

The Principles where substantial compliance has been achieved are:

None.

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 Zoe LEFKOFRIDI (Zoi Lefkofrydi)**
University of Salzburg, Salzburg, Austria (Chair)

2. **Professor Anna TRIANOU**
Goldsmiths, University of London, London, UK

3. **Assist. Prof. Christina SIINA (Chinas)**
Durham University, Durham, UK

4. **Professor Andreas PAVLAKIS**
Philips University, Nicosia, Cyprus

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