



**ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ**  
HELLENIC REPUBLIC



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Ανώτατης Εκπαίδευσης**  
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**Accreditation Report**  
**for the New Undergraduate Study Programme in**  
**operation of:**

**Interior Architecture**

**Institution: International Hellenic University**

**Date: 22 June 2024**



Με τη συγχρηματοδότηση  
της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης



Πρόγραμμα  
Ανθρώπινο Δυναμικό και  
Κοινωνική Συνοχή



Report of the Panel appointed by the HAHE to undertake the review of the New Undergraduate Study Programme in operation of **Interior Architecture** of the **International Hellenic University** 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 new undergraduate study programme in operation of **Interior Architecture** of the **International Hellenic University** comprised the following four (4) members, drawn from the HAHE Register, in accordance with Laws 4009/2011 & 4653/2020:

- 1. Professor Marios C. Phocas (Chair)**  
University of Cyprus, Nicosia, Cyprus
  
- 2. Associate Professor Giorgos Nikoleris**  
Lund University, Lund, Sweden
  
- 3. Professor Dimitrios Skarlatos**  
Cyprus University of Technology, Limassol, Cyprus
  
- 4. Ms Ioanna Kerefiadou**  
Student of Fine Arts, Athens School of Fine Arts, Athens, Greece

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

In preparation for the visit, the External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel (EEAP) reviewed multitude of material provided by the Hellenic Authority of Higher Education (HAHE), which included background information and guidance on the accreditation process, detailed material and data related to the programme under evaluation, such as the programme accreditation proposal and associated appendices.

The programme review was conducted via teleconference, organized and coordinated by HAHE with the help of the International Hellenic University. The schedule and agenda of the review were as stated below.

### **Monday, 17.06.2024**

- a) Preliminary private meeting of the EEAP. Discussion of the programme under review; assignment of writing parts of the accreditation report draft to the members of the EEAP.
- b) Welcome meeting and short overview of the undergraduate study programme (UP) of Interior Architecture (IA) with the University Vice-Rector/President of MODIP, Prof. Panagiotis Tzionas, and the Head of the Department of Interior Architecture, Associate Prof. Sakis Pantazopoulos: short presentation of the Undergraduate programme history, academic profile, current status, strengths and possible areas of concern, etc.
- c) Meeting with the University Vice-Rector/President of MODIP, Prof. Panagiotis Tzionas, MODIP member, Prof. Faidra Eleftheriou, MODIP staff, Ms. Katerina Karavasili, and OMEA members, Assistant Prof. Paraskevi Kertemelidou and Assistant Prof. Stelios Kouzeleas: short discussion on the degree compliance of the UP to the quality standards for accreditation, internal procedures, course examinations, review of students' progress, course/instructor evaluations, etc.
- d) Private debriefing meeting (EEAP members only).

### **Tuesday, 18.06.2024**

- a) Meeting with teaching staff members, Assistant Prof. Paraskevi Kertemelidou, Assistant Prof. Stelios Kouzeleas, Ms. Zoi Fragkou, EEP (special educational staff) and Mr. Spyros Kokkinos, EDIP (special teaching staff): discussion about 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.
- b) Meeting with eight (8) current students of the Department of Interior Architecture: discussion about students' satisfaction from their study experience and facilities of the Department; student input in quality assurance; priority issues concerning student life and welfare.

- c) Meeting with administrative staff members, Mr. Nikolaos Koufotolis, Secretary, and Ms. Agni Sioula, Librarian, and teaching staff members, Associate Prof. Athanasios Pantazopoulos, Head of the Department of Interior Architecture, Assistant Prof. Stelios Kouzeleas, Ms. Zoi Fragkou, EEP (special educational staff), Mr. Spyros Kokkinos, EDIP (special teaching staff), Dr. Kalliopi Chourmouziadou, Architect Engineer, Acoustic Consultant, Academic Scholar, and Mr. Kostas Papagoutis, Architect Engineer, Academic Scholar: on-line tour of classrooms, lecture halls, libraries laboratories, and other facilities; discussion about the facilities presented in the video, learning materials, equipment for the provision of the programme.
- c) Meeting and discussion with employers and social partners of the Department of Interior Architecture from the private sector: Mr. Vasilis Chintzios, CEO of the construction company BROS CHINTZIOS G.P in Serres, Mr. Andreas Vakalos, Architect Engineer, owner of the Andreas Vakalos Architectural Office in Serres, Mr. Christos Paschalias, Civil Engineer, owner of the Christos Paschalias Engineering Office in Thessaloniki, and Ms. Thomai Kastrinou, Interior Architect in Serres: discussion about the relations of the Department with external stakeholders from the private sector.
- e) Private debriefing meeting (EEAP members only): discussion of the outcomes and findings of the virtual visit; preparation of oral report.
- f) Closure meetings with the University Vice-Rector/President of MODIP, the Head of the Department of Interior Architecture, MODIP members and staff, and OMEA members: informal, oral presentation of the EEAP key findings, and clarifications.

### **Wednesday 19.06.2024 to Saturday 22.06.2024**

Draft report writing. EEAP virtual meetings. Review and finalization of draft report.

Throughout the review and evaluation process, the EEAP was in close communication with the University MODIP, which was very accommodating in providing additional information requested by the EEAP. The EEAP found that MODIP and OMEA representatives, as well as the faculty, students and staff interviewed were eager and helpful in our discussions, providing all additional information requested by the EEAP.

### **III. New Undergraduate Study Programme in operation Profile**

The undergraduate study programme (UP) of Interior Architecture (IA) is organized and offered in Serres by the International Hellenic University. The University's headquarters are located in Thessaloniki. The UP is one of the two programmes offered in Greece at a higher education level, the other offered by the University of Western Attica. The programme was originally established in 2009 with the name 'Interior Architecture, Decoration and Object Design' and was offered by the Central Macedonian TEI (Government Gazette 24/2009). In 2019, the programme joined the International Hellenic University and was renamed in "Interior Architecture" (Government Gazette 4610/2019). The Department of Interior Architecture is located in Serres and operates within the facilities of the TEI campus of Serres.

The purpose of the Department of Interior Architecture is to promote the science, theory and practice of interior and small-scale exterior architecture, both by analogue and digital means, as well as to develop the applied arts and design of furniture, industrial and decorative objects. The Department of Interior Architecture aims at providing quality education to the undergraduate students in the field of study for the development of architectural design and applied arts, creating thus a future body of scientists with broad scientific knowledge, as well as scientific research and application skills in multiple related topics. Consequently, the educational objectives of the programme refer to the support and enhancement of the scientific and professional potential in the design and artistic studies in the area, locally and internationally. Graduates from the Department can be employed, either independently or in collaboration with other professionals and visual artists, in all areas of the Department's subject topics, in the private and public sector, or as self-employed. In particular, the scientific field of the Department is between the expanded fields 02 and 05 UNESCO (ISCED 1997), or 02 and 07 UNESCO (ISCED-F 2013). This means that the academic subject treated by the programme is determined between the expanded field of Humanities and Arts and that of Engineering and Construction.

The undergraduate study programme consists of related courses corresponding to 240 ECTS and concludes with the award of the bachelor's degree in interior architecture. The undergraduate study programme is conducted based on the semester system and the minimum number of semesters required to receive the degree is set at eight (8) semesters distributed over four (4) academic years. In particular, the first seven semesters include individual courses (theoretical and design courses), while the final semester requires with the completion of courses, the preparation of a thesis as well. The students are required to successfully attend at least 52 compulsory courses and the final thesis for their graduation from the undergraduate study programme. The individual courses refer to historical, theoretical and philosophical concepts, which constitute a field of investigation for the purpose of design and the spatial construction implementation.

The Department employs a teaching staff of 20 people, of which 3 faculty members, 1 EEP member, 1 EDIP member and 15 part-time instructors (external teaching staff). In total, the teaching staff provides in more than 250 hours of teaching theoretical, as well as laboratory and design courses, in a ratio of 1:5. The faculty staff to students' ratio is approximately 1:125. The 3 faculty members of the Department carry out all the required tasks of the Department

with the help of the two members (EEP and EDIP), while additional support by the members of the teaching staff (external members) is often requested.

In the academic year 2022-23, the Department of Interior Architecture operated with a full cycle of studies and the total number of active students amounted to 299. In the 1st year, 117 students were enrolled including 19 transfer students from the previous programme, in the 2<sup>nd</sup> year, 79, in the 3<sup>rd</sup> year, 76, in the 4<sup>th</sup> year, 49. In the last academic year, the programme registered 9 graduates.

The Department has interdepartmental collaborations, participates in further undergraduate exchange programmes, and enables the students to attend practical training as a free elective course. The Department does not support postgraduate studies, nevertheless in the meantime, the Ph.D. programme of study has been approved by the Senate and will commence in September 2024.



## PART B: COMPLIANCE WITH THE PRINCIPLES

### Principle 1: Strategic Planning, Feasibility and Sustainability of the Academic Unit

Institutions must have developed an appropriate strategy for the establishment and operation of new academic units and the provision of new undergraduate study programmes. This strategy should be documented by specific feasibility and sustainability studies.

*By decision of the institutional Senate, the Institutions should address in their strategy issues related to their academic structure in academic units and study programmes, which support the profile, the vision, the mission, and the strategic goal setting of the Institution, within a specific time frame. The strategy of the Institution should articulate the potential benefits, weaknesses, opportunities or risks from the operation of new academic units and study programmes, and plan all the necessary actions towards the achievement of their goals.*

*The strategy of their academic structure should be documented by specific feasibility and sustainability studies, especially for new academic units and new study programmes.*

*More specifically, the feasibility study of the new undergraduate study programmes should be accompanied by a four-year business plan to meet specific needs in infrastructure, services, human resources, procedures, financial resources, and management systems.*

*During the evaluation of the Institutions and their individual academic units in terms of meeting the criteria for the organisation of undergraduate study programmes, particular attention must be placed upon:*

***a. The academic profile and the mission of the academic unit***

*The profile and mission of the department should be specified. The scientific field of the department should be included in the internationally established scientific fields of Higher Education, as they are designated by the international categorisation of scientific fields in education, by UNESCO (ISCED 2013).*

***b. The strategy of the Institution for its academic development***

*The academic development strategy for the operation of the department and the new study programme should be set out. This strategy should result from the investigation of the factors that influence the studies and the research in the scientific field, the investigation of the institutional, economic, developmental, and social parameters that apply in the external environment of the Institution, as well as the possibilities and capabilities that exist within the internal environment (as reflected in a SWOT Analysis: strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats). This specific analysis should demonstrate the reason for selecting the scientific field of the new department.*

***c. The documentation of the feasibility of the operation of the department and the study programme***

*The feasibility of the operation of the new department should be justified based on:*

- *the needs of the national and regional economy (economic sectors, employment, supply-demand, expected academic and professional qualifications)*
- *comparison with other national and international study programmes of the same scientific field*
- *the state-of-the-art developments*

- *the existing academic map; the differentiation of the proposed department from the already existing ones needs to be analysed, in addition to the implications of the current image of the academic map in the specific scientific field.*

**d. The documentation of the sustainability of the new department**

*Mention must be made to the infrastructure, human resources, funding perspective, services, and all other available resources in terms of:*

- *educational and research facilities (buildings, rooms, laboratories, equipment, etc.)*
- *staff (existing and new, by category, specialty, rank and laboratory). A distinct five-year plan is required, documenting the commitment of the School and of the Institution for filling in the necessary faculty positions to cover at least the entire pre-defined core curriculum*
- *funding (funding possibility from public or non-public sources)*
- *services (central, departmental / student support, digital, administrative, etc.)*

**e. The structure of studies**

*The structure of the studies should be briefly presented, namely:*

- **The organisation of studies:** *The courses and the categories to which they belong; the distribution of the courses into semesters; the alignment of the courses with the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS).*
- **Learning process:** *Documentation must be provided as to how the student-centered approach is ensured (modes of teaching and evaluation of students beyond the traditional methods).*
- **Learning outcomes:** *Knowledge, skills and competences acquired by graduates, as well as the professional rights awarded must be mentioned.*

**f. The number of admitted students**

- *The proposed number of admitted students over a five-year period should be specified.*
- *Any similar departments in other HEIs with the possibility of student transfers from / to the proposed department should be mentioned.*

**g. Postgraduate studies and research**

- *It is necessary to indicate research priorities in the scientific field, the opportunities for interdisciplinary research, the challenges towards new knowledge, possible research collaborations, etc.*
- *In addition, the postgraduate and doctoral programmes offered by the academic unit, the research projects performed, and the research performance of the faculty members should be mentioned.*

**Relevant documentation**

- *Introductory Report by the Quality Assurance Unit (QAU) addressing the above points with the necessary documentation*
- *Updated Strategic Plan of the Institution that will include its proposed academic reconstruction, in view of the planned operation of new department(s) (incl. updated SWOT analysis at institutional level)*
- *Feasibility and sustainability studies for the establishment and operation of the new academic unit and the new study programme*
- *Four-year business plan*

## Study Programme Compliance

### I. Findings

The Department of Interior Architecture is one of two Institutions in Greece (together with the University of Western Attica) that offers a corresponding programme of study at higher education level. As stated by the Department of Interior Architecture, its purpose is to promote the science, theory and practice of interior architecture and small-scale exterior architecture, both by analogue and digital means, and to develop the applied arts and design of furniture, industrial and decorative objects. The Department of Interior Architecture aims at providing quality education to the undergraduate students in the field of study for the development of architectural design and applied arts, creating thus a future body of scientists with broad scientific knowledge, as well as scientific research and application skills in multiple related topics. In particular, the scientific field of the Department is between the expanded fields 02 and 05 UNESCO (ISCED 1997), or 02 and 07 UNESCO (ISCED-F 2013). This means that the academic subject treated by the programme of study is determined between the expanded field of Humanities and Arts and that of Engineering and Construction.

In the context of achieving its mission and goals, the Department aims at strengthening the academic unit with teaching and administrative staff, achieving professional recognition for its graduates, developing its educational and research infrastructure and activities, nationally and internationally, and introducing postgraduate studies in the area.

In terms of sustainability of the programme of study, the Department promotes its uniqueness of including in the curriculum the use of methodologies and practices of spatial digital modelling and representations. The building facilities of the Department are temporarily housed in the premises of the former School of Technological Applications (TEI), while some laboratories are housed in a semi-basement area of the building. The Department employs a teaching staff of 20 people, of which 3 faculty members, 1 EEP member, 1 EDIP member and 15 part-time instructors (external teaching staff). At the moment, the financial state support is extremely low, and the Department exploits several funding possibilities resulting from actions of national, European and international networks in the fields of research, technological development and innovation. The Secretariat is staffed with one administrative officer and the Head of the Department (a faculty member of another Department) located in a separate office, in the Institution's Administration building. The secretarial office offers support to the students, and within the campus there is a student restaurant. Limited accommodation is also offered in student housing in the campus to Erasmus students. Information about supporting infrastructures, provided from the Student Welfare Directorate, is available through the University website and the Secretariat of the Department of Architecture. The Department does not have its own library but is served by the central campus library. The Department has its own new functional website in Greek and in English with all the necessary functions (curriculum, relevant useful information for students, announcements, digital exhibitions, portfolios, etc.).

The programme of study is structured with theory and design courses, in which theory and practice are interrelated. In the first two semesters the fundamentals in applied arts and

theory are provided to the students. In the following semesters, technical and practical knowledge, as well as computer aided design and automated modelling techniques complement the knowledge provided and skills cultivated for a corresponding integration within the design exercises. In the final academic year, the programme of study consists of practice oriented and theory courses, as well as a final thesis of minimum one semester duration. The programme covers a broad range of architectural, historical, theoretical, and visual art courses and the application of analogue and digital design and presentation methods, digital interior spaces reproductions, multimedia applications and innovative interactive digital applications. The individual courses of the Department (general, constraint elective and specialization courses) are classified into four course sectors: i) architectural design, theory, and criticism; ii) industrial design, theory and criticism; iii) visual arts and space; iv) digital representations and technology.

In the academic year 2022-23, the Department operated with a full cycle of studies and the total number of active students amounted to 299. In the 1st year, 117 students were enrolled including 19 transfer students from the previous programme. In the last academic year, the programme registered 9 graduates.

The faculty members are already involved in national and international research projects in collaboration with social partners and scientific institutions, despite the relatively limited time available due to their high teaching load. The Department does not support postgraduate studies; nevertheless, in the meantime, the Ph.D. programme of study has been approved by the Senate and is planned to commence in September 2024.

## **II. Analysis**

The educational objectives of the programme refer to the support and enhancement of the scientific and professional potential in interior architecture, locally and internationally. Graduates of the Department can be employed, either independently or in collaboration with other professionals and visual artists, in all areas of the Department's subject topics, in the private and public sector, or as self-employed.

Presently, the operation of the Department is managed by an extremely low number of faculty members and a high number of external teaching staff. The academic staff is highly qualified, enthusiastic, devoted to the mission of the programme and motivated. There is also a very good and productive collaboration and teamwork that ensures among the tutors and the students, despite the very low teaching staff/student ratio. The EEAP finds that there is a highly committed faculty. The faculty is highly respected by the students and the faculty members often act as role-models to the students. Furthermore, synergies with social and professional partners are sought after, as well as the use of common infrastructure and facilities within the University due to very limited financial state support.

A general profile of the graduates of the programme with individual possible emphasis areas covered is rather evident, than a distinct and specific profile. The programme of study addresses a broad range of relevant courses in the area of interior architecture. The structure of the curriculum provides a gradual advancement of knowledge and skills to the

students, from the fundamentals to special topics, such as acoustics, 3d-modelling, digital applications, automated fabrication etc.

The research projects conducted by the faculty members correspond to their expertise in design-based, performance and scientific research.

### **III. Conclusions**

Even though the educational objectives of the programme refer to the support and enhancement of the broader discipline of interior architecture, at its present initial state of development, the Department needs to reformulate its goals, prioritize actions and restructure its programme of study based on the realistic and sustainable composition and size of the academic unit available and a distinct and specific profile.

The extremely low teaching staff/student ratio and the disproportionate faculty/external teaching staff ratio, despite a constant high student body, act disadvantageously in preserving sustainability to the programme, a high level of teaching and the advancement of research activities by the faculty members. Therefore, the University should prioritize an increase of the faculty members and the Department reformulate its mission goals accordingly. In addition, interdisciplinary collaborations and synergies with other Departments of the University, social and professional partners are expected to act positively in the development of research activities by the faculty.

The relatively high number of compulsory and constraint elective courses and the widespread of course sectors within the programme hinder the achievement of high integration of the theoretical and technical subjects within the main design (composition) courses each semester. Furthermore, this also hinders the development of a distinct and specific profile of the programme of study and its graduates, also given the extremely low number of faculty staff presently at the Department.

Interdepartmental collaborations and the participation in further undergraduate exchange programmes will enhance the visibility of the programme and serve the synergistic development of educational activities. At the same time, the practical training component for the students of the programme should be further supported and acknowledged in their study.

A related potential in research activities by the faculty members is evident. This is expected to develop further following corresponding increase of the number of faculty members in the Department, active support by the University, and the introduction of postgraduate studies. For this reason, the Principle 1g is considered as substantially compliant.

The Ph.D. programme of study planned to commence in September 2024, should be perceived as an opportunity to support the profile of the programme and develop a research body of competence within the academic unit, while equally supporting design-based and scientific research in related fields of interior architecture.

## Panel Judgement

<b>Principle 1: Strategic planning, feasibility and sustainability of the academic unit</b>	
<b>a. The academic profile and the mission of the academic unit</b>	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	<b>X</b>
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	
<b>b. The strategy of the Institution for its academic development</b>	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	<b>X</b>
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	
<b>c. The documentation of the feasibility of the operation of the department and the study programme</b>	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	<b>X</b>
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	
<b>d. The documentation of the sustainability of the new department</b>	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	<b>X</b>
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	
<b>e. The structure of studies</b>	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	<b>X</b>
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	
<b>f. The number of admitted students</b>	
Fully compliant	<b>X</b>
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	
<b>g. Postgraduate studies</b>	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	<b>X</b>
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

<b>Principle 1: Strategic planning, feasibility and sustainability of the academic unit (overall)</b>	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	<b>X</b>
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

### **Panel Recommendations**

- R1.1** The EEAP recommends the Department to reformulate its goals, prioritize actions and restructure its programme of study based on a realistic and sustainable composition and size of the faculty body and its distinct profile.
- R1.2** The EEAP strongly recommends the University to prioritize an increase of the number of faculty members of the Department.
- R1.3** Interdisciplinary collaborations and synergies with other Departments of the University, social and professional partners should be developed to enhance research activities by the faculty.
- R1.4** The EEAP recommends the Department to revise its curriculum; to consolidate individual courses offered within and to integrate theoretical and technical subjects within the main design (composition) courses. Such a revision will help the development of a distinct and specific profile of the programme of study and its graduates.
- R1.5** Interdepartmental collaborations and participation in further undergraduate exchange programmes will enhance the visibility of the programme and serve the synergistic development of educational activities.
- R1.6** The Ph.D. programme of study should be perceived as an opportunity in support of the profile of the programme and development of a research body within the academic unit.

## Principle 2: Quality Assurance Policy of the Institution and the Academic Unit

The Institution should have in place an accredited Internal Quality Assurance System, and should formulate and apply a Quality Assurance Policy, which is part of its strategy, specialises in the operation of the new academic units and the new study programmes, and is accompanied by annual quality assurance goals for the continuous development and improvement of the academic units and the study programmes.

*The quality assurance policy of the Institution must be formulated in the form of a published statement, which is implemented by all stakeholders. It focuses on the achievement of special annual quality goals related to the quality assurance of the new study programme offered by the academic unit. In order to implement this policy, the Institution, among others, commits itself to put into practice quality procedures that will demonstrate: the adequacy and quality of the academic unit's resources; the suitability of the structure and organisation of the curriculum; the appropriateness of the qualifications of the teaching staff; the quality of support services of the academic unit and its staffing with appropriate administrative personnel. The Institution also commits itself to conduct an annual internal evaluation of the new undergraduate programme (UGP), realised by the Internal Evaluation Group (IEG) in collaboration with the Quality Assurance Unit (QAU) of the Institution.*

*The quality assurance policy of the academic unit includes its commitment to implement quality procedures that will demonstrate: a) the adequacy of the structure and organisation of the curriculum, b) the pursuit of learning outcomes and qualifications in accordance with the European and National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education, c) the promotion of the quality and effectiveness of the teaching work, d) the adequacy of the qualifications of the teaching staff, e) the promotion of the quality and quantity of the research work of the members of the academic unit, f) the ways of linking teaching with research, g) the level of demand for graduates' qualifications in the labour market, h) the quality of support services, such as administration, libraries and student care, i) the implementation of an annual review and audit of the quality assurance system of the UGP through the cooperation of the Internal Evaluation Group (IEG) with the Quality Assurance Unit (QAU) of the Institution.*

### Relevant documentation

- Revised Quality Assurance Policy of the Institution
- Quality Assurance Policy of the academic unit
- Quality target setting of the Institution and the academic unit (utilising the S.M.A.R.T. methodology)

### Study Programme Compliance

#### I. Findings

The Quality Assurance Policy of the Department of Interior Architecture of the International Hellenic University is coordinated with the Institution's Quality Policy. The Department's Policy is formulated and published in a prominent place on the Department's website, publicized and implemented with the participation of all interested parties. In this framework, the Department of Interior Architecture has instituted a quality assurance body of faculty members that is responsible for reviewing the appropriateness of the structure and organization of the curriculum and the pursuit of learning outcomes and qualifications in accordance with the European and National Framework for Higher



Education Qualifications. Furthermore, internationalization issues, teaching, and research activities, supporting services, students' participation in evaluation procedures and the operation of the Department, the transparency of activities and decisions, and the public presence of the programme and the Department are decisive. The quality assurance body of the Department is also responsible for supporting the academic profile and orientation of the programme of study, promoting its purpose and objectives, and applying appropriate quality procedures, aiming at its continuous improvement.

The programme of study is structured with theory and design courses, in which theory and practice are interrelated. The programme covers a broad range of architectural, historical, theoretical and visual art courses and the application of analogue and digital design and presentation methods, digital interior spaces reproductions, multimedia applications and innovative interactive digital applications. The individual courses of the Department (general, constraint elective and specialization courses) are classified into four course sectors: i) architectural design, theory, and criticism; ii) industrial design, theory, and criticism; iii) visual arts and space; iv) digital representations and technology.

## **II. Analysis**

The quality of the support services was considered satisfactory by the academic staff and students although influenced by the extremely reduced number of faculty members and administrative staff of the Department. An immediate increase of the faculty members and administrative personnel and lab assistants is imperative. A strategic planning of the lab infrastructure of the Department through the development of research lab equipment and redefinition of related research activities within, will act positively on the further development of the Department. The structure of the Department, the programme of study and the teaching and research activities by the faculty are well documented on the web sites of the Department.

The academic staff of the programme is highly qualified and motivated. It appears also that there is a very good and productive collaboration and teamwork among the faculty and the students that ensures a very good result in terms of quality of the programme. The faculty is respected and appreciated by the students.

## **III. Conclusions**

In conclusion, the Department's QA policy is fully compliant with the HAHE policy and guidelines, as well as the EU QA standards on Higher Education. Its curriculum aims at promoting theoretical and technical knowledge in the design and practice of interior architecture with an emphasis on digital representation, media, and applications. However, the programme must develop further its identity to achieve best results in terms of a clear profile in interior architecture, while including evolving innovations and new technologies in the areas of practice and research. The updating of the curriculum and the programme should be perceived as a continuous and dynamic internal evaluation process

that involves several constituents including faculty, students, alumni, and external partners.

Due to economic constraints, the Department still lacks critical physical facilities and equipment for the academic staff and the students and there is very limited financial support by the University or the government for the Department's operation and the faculty's research activities, affecting its operation in teaching and research.

The programme participates in Erasmus+. Its internationalization through organization of international conferences, collaboration with academic staff from other Universities, as well as the students' and graduates' employment and activities must be further developed.

### Panel Judgement

<b>Principle 2: Quality assurance policy of the Institution and the academic unit</b>	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

### Panel Recommendations

- R2.1** The EEAP recommends a review of the Department of Interior Architecture identity, vision and goals, through an independent advisory board, ad-hoc expert panels and/or a dedicated international workshop. Annual internal reviews need to be further institutionalized by the Department, as well as external evaluations, organized by the Department itself every four years. This will help to constantly revise and further promote the profile and mission of the Department, as well as to set up long-term development aims and policies at multiple levels of operation.
- R2.2** The programme of study needs to be revised. A higher integration and synergy between individual courses and the main design (composition) courses will act positively on the educational mission of the programme. Evolving innovations and new technologies in practice and research should be included and highlighted within the curriculum.
- R2.3** The updating of the curriculum and the programme should be perceived as a continuous and dynamic internal evaluation process that involves a number of constituents including faculty, students, alumni, and external partners. This committee should include, in an advisory capacity all stakeholders, and should have a tight time schedule of meetings and consultations with the aim of a comprehensive proposal to be discussed and approved by the faculty. The central administration should facilitate such endeavours.

### **Principle 3: Design, Approval and Monitoring of the Quality of the New Undergraduate Programmes**

Institutions should design the new undergraduate programmes following a defined written process, which will involve the participants, information sources and the approval committees for the programme. The objectives, the expected learning outcomes, the intended professional qualifications and the ways to achieve them are set out in the programme design. The above details, as well as information on the programme's structure, are published in the Student Guide.

*The Institutions develop their new undergraduate study programmes, following a well-defined procedure. The academic profile, the identity and orientation of the programme, the objectives, the subject areas, the structure and organisation, the expected learning outcomes and the intended professional qualifications according to the European and National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education are described at this stage. An important new element in the structure of the programmes is the introduction of courses for the acquisition of digital skills. The above components should be taken into consideration and constitute the subject of the programme design, which, among other things, should include: elements of the Institution's strategy, labour market data and employment prospects of graduates, smooth progression of students throughout the stages of the programme, the anticipated student workload according to the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS), the option of providing work experience to the students, the linking of teaching and research, the international experience in study programmes of similar disciplines, the relevant regulatory framework, and the official procedure for the approval of the programme 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 Quality Assurance Unit (QAU).*

#### **Relevant documentation**

- *Senate decision for the establishment of the UGP*
- *Curriculum structure: courses, course categories (including courses for the acquisition of digital skills), ECTS awarded, expected learning outcomes according to the EQF, internship, mobility opportunities.*
- *Labour market data regarding the employment of graduates, international experience in a related scientific field.*
- *Student Guide*
- *Course outlines*
- *Teaching staff (list of areas of specialisation, its relation to the courses taught, employment relationship)*
- *QAU minutes for the internal evaluation of the new study programme and its compliance with the Standards*

## Study Programme Compliance

### I. Findings

The undergraduate programme of Interior Architecture has been operating by the International Hellenic University since 2019. The programme of study was initially established in 2009 with the name 'Interior Architecture, Decoration and Object Design' and was offered by the Central Macedonian TEI. The programme of study has a minimum duration of eight semesters (240 ECTS) and leads to the bachelor's degree in interior architecture.

The programme's specific contents, objectives and aims comply with the academic and scientific guidelines set by the International Hellenic University. The purpose of the programme is to provide knowledge and skills to its graduates in interior architecture and related fields. In particular, it aims at promoting the science, theory and practice of interior and small-scale exterior architecture, both by analogue and digital means, as well as to develop the applied arts and design of furniture, industrial and decorative objects.

The students are required to successfully attend at least 52 compulsory courses and conduct the final thesis for their graduation from the undergraduate study programme. The individual courses refer to historical, theoretical, and philosophical concepts, which constitute a field of investigation for the purpose of design and the spatial construction implementation. In the first two semesters the fundamentals in applied arts and theory are provided to the students. In the following semesters, technical and practical knowledge, as well as computer aided design and automated modelling techniques complement the knowledge provided and skills cultivated for a corresponding integration within the design exercises. In the final academic year, the programme of study consists of practice oriented and theory courses, as well as a final thesis of minimum one semester duration. The programme covers a broad range of architectural, historical, theoretical, and visual art courses and the application of analogue and digital design and presentation methods, digital interior spaces reproductions, multimedia applications and innovative interactive digital applications. The individual courses of the Department (general, constraint elective and specialization courses) are classified into four course sectors: i) architectural design, theory, and criticism; ii) industrial design, theory and criticism; iii) visual arts and space; iv) digital representations and technology.

Practical training is an optional full-time activity of two calendar months in the private or public sector prior to receiving the degree. The practical training comprises an elective course, corresponding to 3 ECTS and is equivalent to an elective course. The practical training may take place after the end of the fourth semester of studies.

As stated by the Department, the structure and contents of the programme of study aim at providing a coherent and integrated body of knowledge, with contemporary concepts, methods and practices of the theoretical, technological and artistic aspects in the area. An additional component of the programme of study comprises the provision of digital skills. The curriculum includes the application of modern digital methods of study and presentation of architectural or visual projects, digital reproductions multimedia,

intelligent design systems in buildings and functional objects and innovative interactive digital applications.

The Department employs a teaching staff of 20 people, of which 3 faculty members, 1 EEP member, 1 EDIP member and 15 part-time instructors (external teaching staff). The selection procedure of the faculty members takes into consideration scientific, research and teaching work of the candidates, as well as any previous education experience.

The quality assurance body and the faculty support the existing structure and contents of the programme as formulated above. The EEAP believes that the contents, objectives and aims of the programme are successfully reflected in its structure. The programme reflects the interests and specializations of the faculty and the practice of interior architecture.

## **II. Analysis**

The curriculum accommodates the evolutionary dynamic nature of Interior Architecture and its innovative applications. It is well perceived that critical thinking capabilities, fundamental theories and concepts, as well as representation skills need to be provided to the students in the area and incorporated within the design (composition) process. Nevertheless, the EEAP noted that the relatively high number of compulsory and constraint elective courses and the widespread of course sectors within the programme hinder the achievement of high integration of the theoretical and technical subjects within the main design (composition) courses each semester. This is considered significant given the extremely low number of faculty members and the necessity to develop a distinct and specific profile of the programme. Furthermore, the significance of the practical training was equally acknowledged by the students and the professional partners of the programme. Given its benefits for preparation to the practice of the profession, the Department could reconsider a practical training unit to be compulsory within the curriculum.

In total, the teaching staff provides in more than 250 hours of teaching theoretical, as well as laboratory and design courses, in a ratio of 1:5. The faculty staff to student ratio is approximately 1:125. The 3 faculty members of the Department carry out all the required tasks of the Department with the help of the two members (EEP and EDIP), while additional support by the members of the teaching staff (external members) is often requested.

There are procedures and regulations for the revisions of the programme, and the EEAP was made aware that the programme of study has been internally monitored and assessed periodically. External consultations and collaborative activities with the private and public sector are realized in systematic but unofficial way. Students have contributed by submitting course and faculty evaluations.

## **III. Conclusions**

In conclusion, the study programme is substantially compliant with the HAHE policy and guidelines. Individual theoretical and technical courses offered within the curriculum can

be consolidated and further integrated within the main design (composition) courses. Such a revision will help the development of a distinct and specific profile of the programme of study and its graduates. Further collaborations in project developments and implementations with social and professional bodies of competence and community authorities need to be facilitated.

### Panel Judgement

<b>Principle 3: Design, approval and monitoring of the quality of the new undergraduate programmes</b>	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	<b>X</b>
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

### Panel Recommendations

- R3.1** The curriculum committee should consult, with all stakeholders, and should have a tight time schedule of meetings and consultations for the programme of study revisions. The central administration should facilitate such endeavours.
- R3.2** Theoretical and technical courses of the curriculum can be consolidated and further integrated within the main design (composition) courses.
- R3.3** The Department could reconsider a practical training unit to be compulsory within the curriculum.
- R3.4** Collaborations in project developments and implementations with social and professional bodies of competence and community authorities need to be facilitated.

## Principle 4: Student-centred Approach in Learning, Teaching and Assessment of Students

The academic unit should ensure that the new undergraduate programmes are delivered in a way that encourages students to take an active role in creating the learning process. The assessment methods should reflect this approach.

*In the implementation of student-centered learning and teaching, the academic unit:*

- ✓ *respects and attends to the diversity of students and their needs, enabling 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 application of pedagogical methods aiming at improvement*
- ✓ *regularly evaluates the quality and effectiveness of teaching, as documented especially through student surveys*
- ✓ *reinforces 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 students' complaints*

### **Relevant documentation**

- *Questionnaires for assessment by the students*
- *Regulation for dealing with students' complaints and appeals*
- *Regulation for the function of the academic advisor*
- *Reference to the planned teaching modes and assessment methods*

### **Study Programme Compliance**

#### **I. Findings**

In the Interior Architecture Undergraduate Programme, emphasis is placed on the interaction between teachers/teachers and students during both theoretical and laboratory courses with the possibility of direct communication, either in person or through technology (e-class, MS Teams, email). An innovative learning content is offered, with interactive multimedia, screens rendering digital representations, etc.), as well as educational practices aiming at developing the abilities and skills of students. Also, organization of new learning approaches – groups, visits, guest speakers by attracting high-level faculty members from Greece and abroad. In the above framework, it is possible to choose the way to evaluate the courses (final exams, group work and activities, etc.).

In the evaluation of the teaching process through evaluation by the students of the course, the Teacher and the services offered by the Department are important. In order to evaluate the courses and the teachers, the students complete and send evaluation questionnaires electronically, after the end of the courses, with absolute assurance of their anonymity, through a special digital platform provided by the Quality Assurance Unit (MO.DI .P.). The

completed questionnaires are processed by the Internal Assessment Team (IAG) and the members of the academic community. Through evaluation of the students' courses, improvement actions for the benefit of the students are possible.

The teaching of all courses in the Department is conducted both with modern methods such as lectures, laboratory and tutorial exercises, seminar courses and with educational methods of asynchronous learning. Each course in the undergraduate curriculum has a page in the Institution's Learning Management System, e-class. Assessing student performance in a variety of ways allows students with increased analytical or synthetic thinking skills to respond as closely as possible to all courses in the curriculum.

The subject matter of the Department provides only one more Higher University Institution. It provides an innovative curriculum which is structured with theory courses and composition with architectural, historical, theoretical and visual approaches and application of analogue and digital methods of study and presentation of an architectural project, digital reproductions of indoor, multimedia applications and innovative interactive digital applications using up-to-date cutting-edge technologies globally. The Department has the institution of the Academic Advisor, who supports and facilitates first-year students in their transition from secondary to higher education. The Academic Advisor welcomes students who need help in understanding the curriculum and optimally planning their individual options. The Academic Advisor is responsible for academic issues, such as course content, participation in workshops, and the use of the infrastructure of the Department's laboratories. In addition, he informs about the methods of evaluating course performance, encourages the student to participate in progress, tests, series of exercises, supplementary teaching with additional tutorials, etc., to understand and successfully complete the courses, study methods and bibliography.

In order to resolve any complaints or objections by the students, the Department has established and communicated the Regulations for the Operation of the Complaints and Objections Management Mechanism, which guides and informs the student of the course his request will take, attempting to deal at the origin and in the lowest level of accidental failures and misunderstandings. Complaints and objections may concern, among others, issues related to student, educational, administrative, or other procedures and services related to the Department.

## **II. Analysis**

The programme is structured in a way to ensure a personalized curriculum. A student-centred approach to student learning, teaching and assessment is evident, as there is a variety of teaching styles and methods, program evaluation by students and remedial action and procedures for handling student objections and complaints. The promotion of mutual respect in the student-professor relationship is a purpose and the personalized support for students.

## **III. Conclusions**

The academic unit complies fully with Principle 4.



## Panel Judgement

<b>Principle 4: Student-centred approach in learning, teaching and assessment of students</b>	
Fully compliant	<b>X</b>
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

## Panel Recommendations

**R4.1** No recommendations

## **Principle 5: Student Admission, Progression, Recognition of Academic Qualifications and Award of Degrees and Certificates of Competence of the New Study Programmes**

**Academic units should develop and apply published regulations addressing all aspects and phases of studies of the programme (admission, progression, recognition and degree award).**

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

- ✓ *the registration procedure of the admitted students and the necessary documents - according to the law - and the support of the newly admitted students*
- ✓ *student rights and obligations, and monitoring of student progression*
- ✓ *internship issues, granting of scholarships*
- ✓ *the procedures and terms for writing the thesis (diploma or degree)*
- ✓ *the procedure of award and recognition of degrees, the duration of studies, the conditions for progression and assurance of the progress of students in their studies*

*as well as*

- ✓ *the terms and conditions for enhancing student mobility*

*Appropriate recognition procedures rely on relevant academic practice for recognition of credits among various European academic departments and Institutions in line with the principles of the Lisbon Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region. Graduation represents the culmination of the students' study period. Students need to receive documentation explaining the qualification gained, including achieved learning outcomes, and the context, level, content and status of the studies that were pursued and successfully completed (Diploma Supplement).*

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

### **Relevant documentation**

- *Internal regulation for the operation of the new study programme*
- *Regulation of studies, internship, mobility and student assignments*
- *Printed Diploma Supplement*

*Certificate from the President of the academic unit that the diploma supplement is awarded to all graduates without exception together with the degree or the certificate of completion of studies*

### **Study Programme Compliance**

#### **I. Findings**

At the beginning of each academic year, new students are informed by the president of the Department and members of the teaching and administrative staff about the structure and content of the UP, the identity and actions of the Department, as well as the professional rehabilitation prospects of the graduates.

The progress of the students is monitored through the Electronic Secretariat and recorded in the annual Internal Evaluation Reports which are posted on the MO.DI.P. platform. In addition, in order to monitor the progress of the students, the MO.DI.P.'s quality indicators, such as the graduation rate and student performance, are used annually.

The study programme meets the specifications of the European ECTS system of credit accumulation and transfer. The total workload of each semester is 750 hours. Each typical semester includes a total of 30 teaching units, which are distributed among each course according to the teaching hours and the corresponding workload for each course. The study programme is structured on the minimum compulsory study of eight semesters. In particular, the first seven semesters include only courses, while the last, eighth semester includes courses and the preparation of a thesis.

The Department actively supports student mobility by providing facilities for procedural issues or other study issues of the students who move. The possibility of traveling by the students, as well as by members of the teaching and administrative staff is offered, through Erasmus+, in order to visit the Collaborating Institutions of the Department. At the same time, it is possible to host foreign students (but also members of the teaching and administrative staff) from other Institutions respectively. Enrolled students can move to study at a partner institution abroad, with full recognition, for the duration of their studies, with a duration of mobility from 3-12 months.

The Student Internship is a course taken by students during the 8th semester of study. The responsibility for the administrative organization of the P.A. has the Internship Committee of the Department. In the context of continuous extroversion, the Department develops multiple partnerships with the business world. Internship is an optional full-time job of two (2) calendar months in the private or public sector prior to receiving the degree. It is a free choice course, corresponds to 3 ECTS and is equivalent to an elective course.

Also, a Bachelor's Thesis is prepared, which is a compulsory course (16 ECTS) for every student in the last standard semester, which is prepared under the supervision of the teaching staff, focuses on the application of the knowledge of the Department and is an obligation for obtaining the degree.

The Diploma Supplement is issued to graduates together with their degree. The Department currently does not have a Master's Program (MPS) and Doctoral Studies (Ph.D.). However, the recent election of faculty members (2020), permanent Teaching Staff as well as the contribution of Temporary Teaching Staff creates conditions for development and research support. There are currently no institutionalized scholarships for students other than those of the IKY.

## **II. Analysis**

The University has developed and implemented published regulations concerning all aspects and phases of the programme's studies. All matters from the beginning to the end of the studies are governed by the internal regulations of the academic unit. The students

have the feeling of support and acceptance from the beginning of their studies throughout the course and development of their student life.

### III. Conclusions

All procedures concerning the admission, development, recognition, and certification of the students are based on the regulation of the institutional studies. The Department complies fully with principle 5.

#### Panel Judgement

<b>Principle 5: Student admission, progression, recognition of academic qualifications, and award of degrees and certificates of competence of the new study programmes</b>	
Fully compliant	<b>X</b>
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

#### Panel Recommendations

**R5.1** No recommendations

## **Principle 6: Ensuring the Competence and High Quality of the Teaching Staff of the New Undergraduate Study Programmes**

**Institutions should assure themselves of the competence, the level of knowledge and skills of the teaching staff of the academic units, 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, the appropriate staff-student ratio, the suitable categories of staff, the appropriate subject areas and specialisations, 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 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 members (with respect to attendance requirements, performance, self-assessment, training, etc.); develop policies to attract highly qualified academic staff.*

### **Relevant documentation**

- *Procedures and criteria for teaching staff recruitment*
- *Regulations or employment contracts, and obligations of the teaching staff*
- *Policy for staff recruitment, support and development*
- *Performance of the teaching staff in scientific-research and teaching work, also based on internationally recognised systems of scientific evaluation (e.g., Google Scholar, Scopus, etc.)*

## **Study Programme Compliance**

### **I. Findings**

The Department is not autonomous and as such it is chaired by Associate Prof. Sakis Pantazopoulos, from the Mechanical Engineering Department. Currently the Department consists of three Assistant Professors, one EEP, one EDIP, and one administrative personnel, hence a total of five internal teaching personnel. One new position is at the final stage of recruitment and another one has already been released to the Department. The internal teaching personnel cannot cover all appropriate subject areas, specialisations, dexterities, nor serve all taught courses. Therefore, they are supported by 15 bi-annually contracted tutors. The tutor/student ratio is approximately 1/125, which is dysfunctional for any academic institution, moreover for creative studies.

Recruitment process both for internal and external teaching personnel are prescribed by law, hence at the same level of any other State University. The workload of the existing teaching personnel both in terms of courses and administration is double to what expected

as an average, in a university. It is evident that faculty members devote themselves to fulfil pressing teaching needs and do not have enough time for personal development and research activities. Additionally, limited resources impend their ability to attend prestigious conferences or submit papers to Open Access journals.

## **II. Analysis**

The Department heavily relies on the contracted tutors to fulfil the pressing requirements for the UP. The upcoming legal changes on the contracted tutors, will have significant impact on the ability of the Department to support the UP.

Given that the research production of any Department is associated with faculty members, rather than contracted tutors, the research production is below average, for university standards. Despite the odds, the faculty has participated in applied research and innovation projects successfully, while applies for future funding in competitive calls. Nevertheless, given that authoring manuscripts is a tedious and time-consuming task, the research production in terms of publications is low. Lack of internal funding, incentives and time do not foster research.

The institution of sabbatical leave, which is the main means for training and development in academia, cannot be accommodated because of teaching load. Short term Erasmus visits are helpful for training, networking and starting small research projects in collaboration with institutions abroad but cannot substitute the need for conferences and training opportunities.

## **III. Conclusions**

Despite the best efforts of the existing members of the Department, at its current state of growth, the conditions of employment that recognise important teaching and research, while offering opportunities for professional development, are not met. Teaching and administrative workload of the two faculty members do not allow time to increase the volume and quality of the research output of the academic unit.

A quality assurance process for all staff members is not established (with respect to attendance requirements, performance, self-assessment, training, etc.). Given that the Department is at a growth stage and tries to attract new faculty members, there is no established policy for incentives and motivation for existing of future faculty members.

## Panel Judgement

<b>Principle 6: Ensuring the competence and high quality of the teaching staff of the new undergraduate study programmes</b>	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	<b>X</b>
Non-compliant	

## Panel Recommendations

- R6.1** It is an urgent need for the University to support this Department and the UP with personnel and resources and equipment. Current personnel, both administrative and teaching, are doing their best given the circumstances, even beyond their best efforts to ensure the continuity of the UP. Nevertheless, the University's administration needs to take urgent actions for this UP to maintain its status, by investing and supporting the Department.
- R6.2** Attracting capable faculty members of all levels is critical for the survival of the Department. Establish incentives and policies to attract experienced and aspiring faculty members (a starting fund for equipment and personnel costs for new faculty members).
- R6.3** Prioritize University's research funding towards the Department, to support synergies with similar or complementary departments. This will help in attracting Ph.D. students or post-doctoral students to augment research output of the unit.
- R6.4** Allocate more funding for open access journals, travelling and conferences for dissemination and networking, while fully supporting Erasmus exchange to 'substitute' sabbatical leaves, which are indeed difficult at this critical stage of Department's growth.
- R6.5** Establish track record of annual self-assessment criteria to follow personal development (such as annual citations, publication record, conference attendance, seminar attendance, visits abroad, proposal submissions, etc).

## **Principle 7: Learning Resources and Student Support of the New Undergraduate Programmes**

**Institutions should have adequate funding to meet the needs for the operation of the academic unit and the new study programme as well as the means to cover all their teaching and learning needs. 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, boarding, career and social policy services, etc.).**

*Institutions and their academic units must have sufficient resources, on a planned and long-term basis, to support learning and academic activity in general, in order to offer students the best possible level of studies. The above means include facilities such as, the necessary general and specific libraries and possibilities for access to electronic databases, study rooms, educational and scientific equipment, information 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. Students should be informed about 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.*

### **Relevant documentation**

- *Detailed description of the infrastructure and services made available by the Institution to the academic unit to support learning and academic activity (human resources, infrastructure, services, etc.) and the corresponding specific commitment of the Institution to financially cover these infrastructure-services from state or other resources*
- *Administrative support staff of the new undergraduate programme (job descriptions, qualifications and responsibilities)*
- *Informative / promotional material given to students with reference to the available services*

### **Study Programme Compliance**

#### **I. Findings**

The Department has a number of study rooms and special rooms (with special equipment for the Department's synthetic courses). Teaching auditorium 3rd floor, Teaching room with special configuration, Classroom, Painting Workshop, Workshop, Computer Design Workshop, Drafting Workshop, Drafting Workshop, Computer Design Workshop, Mock-up Workshop, Mock-up Workshop, Industrial Design Workshop Classroom, Design Laboratory with PC, Ceramics Laboratory small and large room). However, it should be noted that the newly established Department of Interior Architecture which recently has only 3 faculty members does not yet have certified research laboratories (although it has been planned in the 4-year business plan).



The students and staff of the Department have access to the DIPAE Library of the Serres Campus. The library has documented information in all kinds of formats (printed and audio-visual material, electronic journals, legal access to network services, etc.) with parallel information and guidance to users for its immediate use and, in addition, the continuous investigation of both the educational goals, as well as the social role of the Foundation.

Since July 2000, the Department has been housed in a newly built three-story building, with a total area of 2,500 m<sup>2</sup>. The library provides access services to electronic resources (central library of the Serres Campus) using a secure remote connection to the data network (Virtual Private Network - VPN).

The Department's website is also considered a tool for collecting and disseminating data and since it has evolved into a functional tool for accessing necessary documents, disseminating student and diploma theses, statistical information, internal and external Links (Assessments, Certification Reports, Eudoxos, Services, Applications, Contact). Complementary tools for collecting, processing and disseminating information are both the Department's annual internal evaluation and the Foundation's ELKE and MODIP.

The Department's new website displays (on all media – PC, Tablet, Mobile) the new curriculum in an interactive and complete way (each course has its own page and outline). In addition, the Department's website contains basic information about the DIPAE institution (structure, administration, access, DIPAE units), basic information about the Department (description, administrative and academic organization and Infrastructure), Detailed information on the studies with general information (regulation, study guide and curriculum, timetable, qualifying exams), with study subjects (semester exams, internship, boarding-housing, library, student rights, student care, Bachelor's theses, student applications) and outreach issues (Erasmus, research, research programs, events, while the topics of student portfolios, digital exhibitions are being prepared). It also has information on the Staff (individual pages of permanent educational staff, DEP EEP EDIP, while the pages for temporary educational staff are being prepared), announcements (permanent members, secretariat, news, announcements).

## **II. Analysis**

The Department has infrastructure and services for student learning and support and generally facilitates direct access to them by establishing internal rules for this purpose. But it seems that there are some problems. The students consider that the basic IT laboratory is housed in an inappropriate room (very little margin from the ceiling, since it is located in a loft) and does not have a good internet connection, which makes the educational learning process difficult.

## **III. Conclusions**

The section is partially compliant with principle 7.

## Panel Judgement

<b>Principle 7: Learning resources and student support of the new undergraduate programmes</b>	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	<b>X</b>
Non-compliant	

## Panel Recommendations

- R7.1** Transfer of the main laboratory to another place with natural lighting and adequate ventilation.
- R7.2** All laboratories of the Department should have a fast and stable internet connection.
- R7.3** Acquire contemporary computing and software facilities for the IT laboratory.

## **Principle 8: Collection, Analysis and Use of Information for the Organisation and Operation of New Undergraduate Programmes**

**The Institutions and their academic units bear full responsibility for collecting, analysing and using information, aimed at the efficient management of undergraduate programmes of study and related activities, in an integrated, effective and easily accessible way.**

*Effective procedures for collecting and analysing information on the operation of Institutions, academic units and study programmes feed data into the internal quality assurance system. The following data is of interest: key performance indicators for the student body profile, student progression, success and drop-out rates, student satisfaction with the programme, availability of learning resources and student support. The completion of the fields of National Information System for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (NISQA) should be correct and complete with the exception of the fields that concern graduates in which a null value is registered.*

### **Relevant documentation**

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

### **Study Programme Compliance**

#### **I. Findings**

The Department operates an information system for collecting administrative data related to the study programme (Student's Record). In this system, students enrol each semester, while instructors upload grades and monitor students' progress. The Student's Record facilitates optimal adaptation in teaching content, instructional methods, and exam preparation. Key information about admissions and exam thresholds is communicated by the Department's administration via email and website announcements. Each semester students fill in evaluation questionnaires for each course they were taught (adequate response rate). There is evidence that key performance indicators for the students' profile, student progression, success and dropout rates, student satisfaction with the programme, availability of learning resources are indeed being kept. Staff satisfaction surveys are not being conducted since the faculty consists of only four people and such information is orally circulated and disseminated during the Department's meetings. Results from student evaluations, educational and administrative staff, are analysed by the Department's Quality Assurance Unit (OMEA) and selected and published on the Department's website. The OMEA's analysis encompasses both quantitative and qualitative aspects, informing potential revisions to the study programme after its initial four years of operation (2023-24). Supplementary tools for data collection, processing, and dissemination include the annual internal evaluation of the Department, as well as the Research and Development Office (ELKE) and the Career Office (MODIP) of the institution.

During the interviews our committee has been informed that based on the gathered data, a reformed study programme with revisions is almost ready, and will be evaluated next year. Although a thorough Student's Record is being kept for undergraduate students, there is no equivalent system for graduate students of the previous UP, to follow their professional progression, employability and career path. Given the very good relation among tutors and graduates, such data are unofficially acquired through personal contacts. There is intention to establish such system in the following years, for the graduates of the new UP, provided the Department is augmented with more faculty members.

Although there is no plan to analyse a number of evaluated data related to the availability and accessibility of resources, it became apparent from the interviews that the faculty is aware of the student's needs and the Department is acting to get funding from the University to fulfil them.

## **II. Analysis**

Given the number of faculty members and supporting personnel there has been a significant effort to gather and analyse feedback from alumni. The faculty is aware the professional achievements of almost all graduates of the previous UP, aware of the problems current students are facing in terms of resources and wish to support them as much as possible. An excellent relation among faculty and students is apparent and it is the main reason for the Department's achievements so far. All gaps and shortcomings regarding this aspect, have been spotted and it is the Department's intention to address them.

## **III. Conclusions**

The Department full addresses collection analysis and use of alumni information and needs. Despite the Department's best intentions and efforts there is a documented gap of data collection over the alumni and their professional progression, a vital information considering that graduates do not have any professional rights. Since there are no graduate students yet, this is not a major issue. The Department must establish procedures for gathering such data and in doing so it will need help in terms of tools, and expertise from the University.

## Panel Judgement

<b>Principle 8: Collection, analysis and use of information for the organisation and operation of new undergraduate programmes</b>	
Fully compliant	<b>X</b>
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

## Panel Recommendations

**R8.1** Apart from the urgent need to establish a monitoring system for the professional progression of Department's graduates there is no other significant issue to be addressed. To do so, the Department should be supported from the University in terms of resources and personnel.

## **Principle 9: Public Information Concerning the New Undergraduate Programmes**

**Institutions and academic units should publish information about their teaching and academic activities in a direct and readily accessible way. The relevant information should be up-to-date, clear and objective.**

*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 new undergraduate programmes they offer, the intended learning outcomes, the degrees awarded, the teaching, learning and assessment procedures used, the pass rates and the learning opportunities available to their students. Information is also provided, to the extent possible, on graduate employment perspectives.*

### **Relevant documentation**

- *Dedicated segment on the website of the department for the promotion of the new study programme*
- *Bilingual version of the website of the academic unit with complete, clear and objective information*
- *Provision for website maintenance and updating*

### **Study Programme Compliance**

#### **I. Findings**

The Department's new website (<https://ia.ihu.gr>) was developed internally by a faculty member and is updated weekly. The website showcases the new UP interactively and comprehensively, with a dedicated page for each course and its outline. It is bilingual (Greek-English), and the website's maintenance and updates adhere to internet security standards. The website also allows for direct communication between administrative, educational staff, and web administrator for timely updates. The website includes detailed information about the Institution, Department, studies, student issues, and external relations, as well as personal pages for faculty members and announcements. The Department is also expanding its presence on social media, starting with a YouTube channel (<https://www.youtube.com/@iaihugr>) to facilitate dissemination of students' projects, and other academic, and research-related information.

The web site provides access and links to external sites (evaluations, certification reports, Eudoxus, services, application templates, campus maps, student welfare issues, etc). During the interviews several students reported that the information found in the web page was detailed enough to make them decide selecting the Department for their studies.

## II. Analysis

The public information concerning the undergraduate programme and the Department itself is well disseminated through the new web page of the Department. Given that the web page was recently created it is up to date.

## III. Conclusions

The web page and the YouTube channel are considered strong points of the Department. Despite the excessive workload of the faculty member who have developed and maintains it, they must remain up to date and regularly updated to attract students and much needed synergies and collaborations for the Department.

### Panel Judgement

<b>Principle 9: Public information concerning the new undergraduate programmes</b>	
Fully compliant	<b>X</b>
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

### Panel Recommendations

**R9.1** No recommendations

## Principle 10: Periodic Internal Review of the New Study Programmes

Institutions and academic units should have in place an internal quality assurance system, for the audit and annual internal review of their new programmes, so as to achieve the objectives set for them, through monitoring and amendments, with a view to continuous improvement. Any actions taken in the above context, should be communicated to all parties concerned.

*Regular monitoring, review and revision of the new 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: the content of the programme in the light of the latest research in the given discipline, thus ensuring that the programme is up to date; the changing needs of society; the students' workload, progression and completion; the effectiveness of the procedures for the assessment of students; the students' expectations, needs and satisfaction in relation to the programme; the learning environment, support services, and their fitness for purpose for the programme. 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.*

### **Relevant documentation**

- Procedure for the re-evaluation, redefinition and updating of the curriculum
- Procedure for mitigating weaknesses and upgrading the structure of the UGP and the learning process
- Feedback processes on strategy implementation and quality targeting of the new UGP and relevant decision-making processes (students, external stakeholders)
- Results of the annual internal evaluation of the study programme by the QAU and the relevant minutes

### **Study Programme Compliance**

#### **I. Findings**

The Department has established procedures for the monitoring and periodic review of the undergraduate program. There is a clear distribution of responsibilities and roles of all parties involved in this process. The assessment of the evaluation is carried out under the responsibility of the Internal Evaluation Group (OMEA) of the Department, in collaboration with the Quality Assurance Unit (MODIP) of the International Hellenic University (DI.PA.E.). The evaluation is taking place annually, covering all necessary aspects (program content, workload, student assessment, etc.) and its findings are reported to the University's Quality Assurance Unit (MODIP) for final approval. The documentation presented by the Department shows that the findings of the monitoring exercise were taken into account for improvements and updates. The involvement of the students by means of filling questionnaires has been reported to be adequate.



## II. Analysis

Overall, an effective mechanism is in place for internal feedback that is used for annual internal reviews and audits. The level of student participation should be improved.

A number of negative factors have been pointed out in the last internal evaluation report. The core issue is the low number of faculty members along with laboratories spaces in inadequate underground spaces. Both issues are being dealt with.

## III. Conclusions

The EEAP considers this criterion as fully satisfied.

### Panel Judgement

<b>Principle 10: Periodic internal review of the new study programmes</b>	
Fully compliant	<b>X</b>
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

### Panel Recommendations

**R10.1** Find ways to include the external stakeholders (employers, etc) in the periodic internal review of the program.

## **Principle 11: Regular External Evaluation and Accreditation of the New Undergraduate Programmes**

The new undergraduate study programmes should regularly undergo evaluation by panels of external experts set by HAHE, aiming at accreditation. The results of the external evaluation and accreditation are used for the continuous improvement of the Institutions, academic units and study programmes. The term of validity of the accreditation is determined by HAHE.

*HAHE is responsible for administrating the programme accreditation process which is realised as an external evaluation procedure and implemented by a panel of independent experts. HAHE grants accreditation of programmes, based on the Reports submitted by the panels, with a specific term of validity, following to which revision is required. The accreditation of the quality of the programmes acts as a means of verification of the compliance of the programme with 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.*

### **Relevant documentation**

- *Progress report on the results from the utilisation of the recommendations of the external evaluation of the Institution and of the IQAS Accreditation Report.*

### **Study Programme Compliance**

#### **I. Findings**

As this is the first time the programme is undergoing an external assessment, there cannot be a full and accurate analysis of judgment and conclusions regarding the compliance and/or utilization of the recommendations of previous external evaluations. The EEAP found that the curriculum was designed and established in accordance with the relevant policies of the organization in cooperation with the internal quality assurance system (MODIP). Faculty and staff are aware of the importance of external review and the benefits it brings to the continuous improvement of the programme.

#### **II. Analysis**

Throughout the evaluation process, the EEAP found that the faculty was fully aware of the importance of external assessment. Also, stakeholders appear to be interested in participating in future program assessment activities. Due to the recent establishment of the program, an external evaluation and accreditation cannot be fully evaluated. However, taking into consideration the documentation provided and submitted by the Department, the EEAP is confident that the Department will be able to successfully conduct external audits in the future.

### III. Conclusions

The Department's commitment to the spirit and processes of quality assurance is clear. Devoted faculty and staff self-assess the program and its courses and demonstrate outstanding teamwork and hard work. The rating provided by EEAP is based on the above considerations.

#### Panel Judgement

<b>Principle 11: Regular external evaluation and accreditation of the new undergraduate programmes</b>	
Fully compliant	<b>X</b>
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

#### Panel Recommendations

**R11.1** No recommendations

## **Principle 12: Monitoring the Transition from Previous Undergraduate Study Programmes to the New Ones**

**Institutions and academic units apply procedures for the transition from previously existing undergraduate study programmes to new ones, in order to ensure compliance with the requirements of the Standards.**

*Applies in cases where the department implements, in addition to the new UGPs, any pre-existing UGPs from departments of former Technological Educational Institutions (TEI) or from departments that were merged / renamed / abolished.*

*Institutions should implement procedures for the transition from former UGPs to new ones, in order to ensure their compliance with the requirements of the Standards. More specifically, the institution and the academic unit must have a) the necessary learning resources, b) appropriate teaching staff, c) structured curriculum (courses, ECTS, learning outcomes), d) study regulations, award of diploma and diploma supplement, and e) system of data collection and use, with particular reference to the data of the graduates of the pre-existing UGP. In this context, the Institutions and the academic units prepare a plan for the foreseen transition period of the existing UGP until its completion, the costs caused to the Institution by its operation as well as possible measures and proposals for its smooth delivery and termination. This planning includes data on the transition and subsequent progression of students in the respective new UGP of the academic unit, as well as the specific graduation forecast for students enrolled under the previous status.*

### **Relevant documentation**

- *The planning of the Institution for the foreseen transition period, the operating costs and the specific measures or proposals for the smooth implementation and completion of the programme*
- *The study regulations, template for the degree and the diploma supplement*
- *Name list of teaching staff, status, subject and the course they teach / examine*
- *Report of Quality Assurance Unit (QAU) on the progress of the transition and the degree of completion of the programme. In the case of UGP of a former Technological Educational Institution (TEI), the report must include a specific reference to how the internship was implemented*

### **Study Programme Compliance**

#### **I. Findings**

The Department has established rules to facilitate for students from the former TEI programme to finish their studies in a flexible way, either resulting to a TEI or a university-level degree.

#### **II. Analysis**

The Department supports students of the former TEI to attend a supplemental credit programme that grants them a university-level degree.

### III. Conclusions

The EEAP finds the program to be fully compliant with Principle 12.

#### Panel Judgement

<b>Principle 12: Monitoring the transition from previous undergraduate study programmes to the new ones</b>	
Fully compliant	<b>X</b>
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

#### Panel Recommendations

**R12.1** No recommendations

## **PART C: CONCLUSIONS**

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

- The Department has implemented efficient mechanisms for monitoring and ensuring high quality of work and services relative to the UP. The UP align with the strategic objectives of the University.
- The faculty and staff are enthusiastic and dedicated to their mission. The students' overall experience is very positive.
- Collaborations in project developments and implementations with other Departments of the University, social and professional bodies of competence and community authorities.
- The public information concerning the UP and the Department itself is well disseminated through the web page of the Department and social media channels.
- Clear commitment of the Department to the quality assurance spirit and processes.

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

- Extremely low teaching staff/student ratio and disproportionate faculty/external teaching staff ratio.
- Limited personnel, resources, and equipment at the Department.
- Lack of track record of annual self-assessment criteria of the faculty to follow personal development.
- Limited interactions with alumni after graduation.
- Lack of an External Advisory Board.

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

- Reformulate the Department's goals, prioritize actions and restructure the programme of study based on a distinct and specific profile.
- Increase the number of faculty members of the Department.
- Revise the curriculum: consolidate and integrate theoretical and technical courses within the main design (composition) courses.
- Reconsider a practical training unit to be compulsory within the curriculum.
- Provide internal research funding to the faculty.
- Improve physical infrastructure and collaborative working spaces for the Department. Laboratories and workshop infrastructure need to be immediately expanded.
- Provide opportunities for further faculty development.

#### IV. Summary & Overall Assessment

The Principles where full compliance has been achieved are: **2, 4, 5, 8, 9, 10, 11, and 12.**

The Principles where substantial compliance has been achieved are: **1 and 3.**

The Principles where partial compliance has been achieved are: **6 and 7.**

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

Overall Judgement	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	<b>X</b>
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

## The members of the External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel

Name and Surname

Signature

- 1. Professor Marios C. Phocas (Chair)**  
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