



ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ  
HELLENIC REPUBLIC



Εθνική Αρχή  
Ανώτατης Εκπαίδευσης  
Hellenic Authority  
for Higher Education

Αριστείδου 1 & Ευριπίδου 2 • 10559 Αθήνα | 1 Aristidou str. & 2 Evripidou str. • 10559 Athens, Greece  
Τ. +30 211 1903 400 • E. secretariat@ethaae.gr • [www.ethaae.gr](http://www.ethaae.gr)

# Accreditation Report

## for the New Postgraduate Study Programme of:

Chemical Industry: Quality, Environment, Health and Safety, Security  
Management

Department: Chemistry  
Institution: Democritus University of Thrace  
Date: 12/01/2026



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 Postgraduate Study Programme of Chemical Industry: Quality, Environment, Health and Safety, Security Management of the Democritus University of Thrace for the purposes of granting accreditation.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Part A: Background and Context of the Review .....</b>	<b>4</b>
I. The External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel .....	4
II. Review Procedure and Documentation .....	5
III. Postgraduate Study Programme Profile .....	7
<b>Part B: Compliance with the Principles.....</b>	<b>9</b>
Principle 1: Strategy, Quality Assurance Policy and Quality Goal Setting for the New Postgraduate Study Programmes .....	9
Principle 2: Design and Approval of New Postgraduate Study Programmes .....	14
Principle 3: Regulations for Student Admission, Progression, Recognition of Postgraduate Studies, and certification .....	21
Principle 4: Teaching Staff of New Postgraduate Study Programmes.....	24
Principle 5: Learning Resources and Student Support .....	28
Principle 6: Initial Internal and External Evaluation and Monitoring of New Postgraduate Study Programmes .....	32
<b>Part C: Conclusions .....</b>	<b>35</b>
I. Features of Good Practice .....	35
II. Areas of Weakness.....	35
III. Recommendations for Follow-up Actions.....	36
IV. Summary & Overall Assessment .....	37

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

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

The Panel responsible for the Accreditation Review of the new postgraduate study programme of Chemical Industry: Quality, Environment, Health and Safety, Security Management of the Democritus University of Thrace comprised the following five (5) members, drawn from the HAHE Register, in accordance with Law 4653/2020:

- 1. PAVLOSTATHIS SPYROS (Chair)**  
*(Title, Name, Surname)*  
School of Civil and Environmental Engineering, Georgia Institute of Technology  
*(Institution of origin)*
  
- 2. ALVANIDES (ΑΛΒΑΝΙΔΗΣ) SERAPHIM (ΣΕΡΑΦΕΙΜ)**  
*(Title, Name, Surname)*  
Otto-Friedrich-Universität Bamberg  
*(Institution of origin)*
  
- 3. Androulakis Ioannis**  
*(Title, Name, Surname)*  
Rutgers University  
*(Institution of origin)*
  
- 4. ARGYROPOULOS DIMITRIOS**  
*(Title, Name, Surname)*  
North Carolina State University (NCSU)  
*(Institution of origin)*
  
- 5. KOUTSOGIANNI ZOI-LINA**  
*(Title, Name, Surname)*  
Aristotle University of Thessaloniki  
*(Institution of origin)*

## II. Review Procedure and Documentation

*Brief reference to the Panel preparation for the new postgraduate study programme review, as well as to the documentation provided and considered by the Panel. Dates of the review, review schedule, meetings held and any additional information regarding the procedure.*

In preparation for the review and assessment of the Postgraduate Study Programme (PSP) Chemical Industry: Quality, Environment, Health and Safety, Security Management of the Democritus University of Thrace, the External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel (EEAP) reviewed a multitude of materials provided by the Hellenic Authority of Higher Education (HAHE), which included background information and guidance on the review and accreditation process, as well as detailed material and data related to the programme under evaluation, such as the programme accreditation proposal and associated appendices provided by the PSP through the HAHE. All programme evaluation material was submitted by the Democritus University of Thrace to HAHE in September 2025.

The programme review was conducted via teleconference, organized and coordinated by HAHE and the Democritus University of Thrace. The schedule and agenda of the review were as stated below.

Monday 15/12/2025

a) Preliminary private meeting of the EEAP. Discussion of the PSP under review; assignment of writing sections of the draft accreditation report to the EEAP members.

Tuesday 16/12/2025

a) Welcome meeting and an overview of the Department of Chemistry and PSP Chemical Industry: Quality, Environment, Health and Safety, Security Management with the University Vice-Rector and Head of the University Quality Assurance Unit (QAU/MODIP) Prof. M. Grigoriou, the Department Head Prof. G. Kyzas, the PSP Director Prof. M. Chalaris, and the University QAU (MODIP) Supervisor Mrs. S. Gkavaki: Brief presentation of the Department of Chemistry and PSP Chemical Industry: Quality, Environment, Health and Safety, Security Management history, structure, strengths, weaknesses and other futures.

b) Meeting with PSP teaching staff members, Profs. G. Karabelias, N. Mittas, Z. Metaxa, Ch. Nannou, A. Tsoupras, K. Kravari, Dr. M. Konstantinidou (NCSR Demokritos), and adjunct lecturers Dr. A. Targouzidis, Dr. S. Konstantopoulou, Dr. I. Yakoumis: Discussion of teaching involvement, learning resources and other features of the PSP, professional development, research activities, as well as the link between teaching and research.

c) Meeting with teaching staff Profs. K. Tarchanidis and A. Thysiadou; adjunct lecturer Dr. R. Kosheleva; and administrative staff Mr. D. Pappas, Head of the Kavala-Drama Department of Digital Governance; Ms. E. Ioannidou, Department of Chemistry Head of Secretariat; and Ms. K. Gkalimani, PSP Administrative Support Officer: Online (video) tour of facilities, discussion of facilities, equipment, learning resources, software availability, as well as administrative and technical staff needs.

d) Meeting and discussion with employers and social partners: Ms. R. Bardani, Chair of the Board of Hellenic Institute for Occupational Health and Safety (ELINYAE); Dr. I. Sitaras,

Director of the Laboratories Accreditation Division of ESYD-Hellenic Accreditation System & General Secretary of the Association of Greek Chemists; Dr. Ch. Alexandropoulou, Security & Market Safety Cluster Manager, SE Europe Philip Morris International; Dr. G. Panopoulos, Founder and CEO Management Force; Dr. Ch. Toufekoula, Head of Directorate, Senior OSH Inspectors Agency, Independent Authority “Hellenic Labour Inspectorate”; Mr. I. Marketos, Founder & CEO MRK Consulting; Dr. M. Despotidou, Director of Utilization Resources Division, Water Supply and Sewerage Company of Athens & Piraeus (EYDAP S.A.); Mr. A. Psarras, Head Directorate General Team for Home Affairs, Representation of the European Commission in Greece; Dr. M. Loukidou, Head of Division, General Chemical State Laboratory; Mr. G. Mylonakis, General Manager, Hellenic Institute for the Fire Protection of Structures (ELIPYKA); Mr. S. Peltekis, ex. Managing Director, TÜV HELLAS (TÜV NORD); and Mr. N. Paparoupas, Product Manager, TÜV HELLAS (TÜV NORD).

e) Private debriefing meeting (EEAP members only): Discussion of the outcomes and findings of the PSP virtual visit; preparation of oral report.

f) Closure meeting with the Head of the University QAU (MODIP), the Department Head, the PSP Director, and the University QAU (MODIP) Supervisor: Informal, oral presentation of the EEAP PSP key findings, discussion, and clarifications.

Wednesday 17/12/2025 to Saturday 20/12/2025

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

Throughout the review and evaluation process, the EEAP was in close communication with the Department and PSP administration, who were very accommodating in providing additional information requested by the EEAP. The EEAP found that the University, Department and PSP administration, as well as the faculty, technical and administrative staff, and the stakeholders interviewed were eager and helpful in our discussions, providing valuable additional information.

### III. Postgraduate Study Programme Profile

*Brief overview of the new postgraduate study programme with reference to the following: history, academic remit, duration of studies, qualification awarded, employment opportunities, orientation challenges or any other key background information. Short description of the home Department and Institution, with reference to student population, campus, or any other related facts.*

Upon the recommendation of the Department of Chemistry Assembly and the recommendation of the Graduate Studies Committee of the Democritus University of Thrace, the University Senate approved the establishment of the Postgraduate Study Programme (PSP) Chemical Industry: Quality, Environment, Health and Safety, Security Management (University Senate decision 43/131/15-5-2025). The PSP is offered by the Department of Chemistry, located in Kavala, Greece, in collaboration with Research Institutes, State Laboratories and Regulatory bodies, and other Greek organizations.

The objective of the programme is to provide high-level postgraduate education, the promotion of knowledge and research in the PSP scientific areas. Its goal is the comprehensive scientific, managerial and technical training of graduates who will assume the duties of Quality, Health, Safety and Environment, particularly in the chemical industry sector. The PSP also aims to meet social needs in the context of continuous and lifelong learning by providing postgraduate education with a foundation of advanced knowledge, methods, and analytical skills.

Teaching in the PSP is carried out by academic personnel of the Democritus University of Thrace, primarily five (5) faculty members of the Department of Chemistry, seven (7) faculty members in other departments of the Democritus University of Thrace, five (5) lecturers from other academic institutions, along with twenty-six (26) external lecturers with contract.

The PSP has set at one hundred twenty (120) the maximum number of admitted students and a minimum of five (5) students. The admission criteria and selection process are specified in the PSP Programme Guide. The entire programme tuition fees are € 4500.

The PSP is a three-semester study resulting in a PSP diploma, level 7 of the European and National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education. To obtain the diploma, the student must have successfully passed twelve (12) courses (60 ECTS) and completed a diploma thesis (30 ECTS). Elective courses are not offered. Teaching is via distance learning, 82% synchronous and 18% asynchronous. Attendance in synchronous teaching is mandatory.

Graduates of the PSP Chemical Industry: Quality, Environment, Health and Safety, Security Management are equipped with specific, advanced knowledge of quality, safety, security, health and environmental management, which prepares them for leadership roles in various industries, agencies, and organizations. Graduates can continue with doctoral studies and academic careers.

In addition to the PSP Chemical Industry: Quality, Environment, Health and Safety, Security Management, the Department of Chemistry offers three postgraduate studies programmes and participates in one inter-institutional postgraduate studies programme. The Department also supports doctoral studies.

## **PART B: COMPLIANCE WITH THE PRINCIPLES**

### **Principle 1: Strategy, Quality Assurance Policy and Quality Goal Setting for the New Postgraduate Study Programmes**

**INSTITUTIONS SHOULD INCLUDE IN THEIR STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT THE DEVELOPMENT, ORGANISATION, AND IMPLEMENTATION OF NEW POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES (PSP) IN SPECIFIC SCIENTIFIC FIELDS AFTER INVESTIGATING THEIR FEASIBILITY AND SUSTAINABILITY.**

**INSTITUTIONS SHOULD APPLY A QUALITY ASSURANCE POLICY FOR THE NEW POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES AS PART OF THEIR STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT.**

**THIS POLICY SHOULD EXPAND AND BE AIMED (WITH THE COLLABORATION OF EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS) AT THE PSP OF THE INSTITUTION AND THE ACADEMIC UNIT. THIS POLICY SHOULD BE PUBLISHED AND IMPLEMENTED BY ALL INTERESTED PARTIES.**

*By decision/s of the Institutional Senate, the Institutions should adapt their strategy to allow for the provision of postgraduate study programmes, in addition to attending to the profile, vision, mission and strategic objectives of the Institution. In this strategy, the Institutions should anticipate the potential benefits, difficulties or risks from the implementation of new postgraduate study programmes and plan all the necessary actions to achieve their goals. The Institution's strategic choices should be documented through specific feasibility and sustainability studies, especially for new postgraduate study programmes.*

*In the case of PSP delivered by distance methods, the Institution prepares and applies an e-learning strategy. The Institution's e-learning strategy is integrated into its overall strategy and identifies educational goals while keeping up to the rapid technological changes and to the developments in pedagogical models. The Institution should include in its strategy the justification and feasibility as to why e-learning has been selected as the appropriate learning strategy for the particular programmes of study where it is applied.*

*In the context of e-learning, innovation strategies, the possibility of programme revision, the linking between learning and research (requiring knowledge of the latest innovations in order to select the most appropriate means to achieve the learning outcomes) should be taken into account.*

*The quality assurance policy of the academic unit for postgraduate study programmes should be in line with the Institution's strategy and must be formulated in the form of a public statement, which is implemented by all stakeholders. It focuses on the achievement of special goals related to the quality assurance of the postgraduate study programmes offered by the academic unit. Indicatively, the quality policy statement of the academic unit includes its commitment to implement a quality policy that will promote the academic profile and orientation of the postgraduate study programme (PSP), its purpose and field of study; it will realise the programme's goals and it will determine the means and ways for attaining them; it will implement appropriate quality procedures, aiming at the programme's continuous improvement.*

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

- a. the suitability of the structure and organisation of postgraduate study programmes*
- b. the pursuit of learning outcomes and qualifications in accordance with the European and National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education - level 7*
- c. the promotion of the quality and effectiveness of teaching at the PSP*

- d. *the appropriateness of the qualifications and the availability of the teaching staff for the PSP*
- e. *the drafting, implementation, and review of specific annual quality goals for the improvement of the PSP*
- f. *the level of demand for the graduates' qualifications in the labour market*
- g. *the quality of support services, such as administrative services, the libraries, and the student welfare office for the PSP*
- h. *the efficient utilisation of the financial resources of the PSP that may be drawn from tuition fees*
- i. *the conduct of an annual internal review and audit of the quality assurance system for the PSP through the cooperation of the Internal Evaluation Group (IEG) with the Institution's Quality Assurance Unit (QAU)*

### **Documentation**

- *The Institutional strategy for postgraduate studies, which includes a special strategy for e-learning, as long as it is applied to the Institution's PSP*
- *Feasibility and sustainability studies for the new PSP*
- *Quality Policy of the academic unit for the development and improvement of PSP*
- *Quality Targeting of the academic unit for the PSP*

### **Study Programme Compliance**

#### **I. Findings**

Historically, in 2022-2023 the Department of Chemistry at the Democritus University of Thrace (DUTH) initiated a Postgraduate Studies Programme (PSP) entitled: MSc in Quality, Safety, Security, Health and Environmental Management in accordance with the provisions of Law 4485/2017 (Government Gazette A' 114). The proposed PSP under accreditation is practically the same programme in need of accreditation. The fact that a series of three student generations have been admitted and graduated, has created a sound foundation of PSP activities that formed the basis for the ensuing discussions.

The proposed fee-based, PSP under accreditation, entitled "Chemical Industry: Quality Environment, Health and Safety, Security Management" is based on extensive internal discussions and relevant documentation that formulated the realization for its formation. It is to be noted that the actual process was also ratified by a formal senate decision (No. 43/131/15-5-2025) and the document was provided to the EEAP.

In the documentation provided, it was mentioned that the University (DUTH) has a strategy regarding the development of postgraduate programmes that identifies the potential benefits and the possible difficulties or risks associated

with the establishment of new postgraduate programmes. In this respect the new PSP supports the identity, vision, mission, and strategic objectives of the Institution. The Department developed this programme by following a set of credible procedures that were adequately documented and provided to the EEAP. To this effect the department provided a thorough and substantiated report entitled: “Feasibility and Viability Studies for the Establishment and Operation of the New Postgraduate Study Programme”. This report described the key points that prompted the creation of the proposed PSP.

During its deliberations and discussions, the EEAP was able to extract valuable information from the documents and the ensuing discussions as they relate to the academic profile of the programme, its educational mission, its objectives, and the overall functioning. Adequate documentation was also provided related to the structure of the various courses, the teaching and assessment modes, the teaching staff and the necessary resources.

During the early three years of its existence, the programme operated with the following sets of incoming students; 15-28-25 students (with an admission success rate ranging between 40-50%). Of these students, about 60% have been absorbed and are employed. Another important feature that became apparent during the EEAP’s discussions is that a significant number of students attending the programme are already employed and in need of the knowledge and certification the PSP provides. Consequently, there is a logical justification for the need to have the classes operating during the last three days of the week (Friday, Saturday, Sunday) and via remote means of instruction.

Furthermore, the Institution's e-learning strategy is integrated into its overall strategy and defines its educational objectives. The documentation provided and the ensuing discussions with the EEAP provided ample justification and reasoning for selecting e-learning (at a rate of 82%) as the appropriate learning strategy for the new PSP. Overall, there was unequivocal and enthusiastic support for this mode of instruction amongst the faculty, administrators and the external stakeholders. Unfortunately, the committee had no opportunity to delve into the opinion pool of the present and the already graduated student body as the PSP under evaluation was designated as new by the HAHE.

The EEAP was also provided with the document, entitled: “Special Regulations for the Application of e-Learning”. Apparently, the overall distance learning strategy is based on Appendix 5 (Regulation for Postgraduate and Doctoral Studies of the Democritus University of Thrace related to the Internal Operating Regulation (Government Gazette, Part II, No. 4751/20-8-2024). Thus, the University’s e-learning strategy is integrated into the PSP’s strategy and identifies educational goals while keeping up with the rapid technological changes and developments in pedagogical models. The Department of Chemistry possesses appropriate infrastructure (certified teleconference rooms, software licenses,

equipped faculty offices), ensuring e-learning implementation. The programmatic strategy takes into account innovation strategies, the possibility of programme revision, and the research-learning connection, ensuring alignment with the most recent scientific developments for the achievement of the learning outcomes.

This last point was further questioned by the EEAP and the faculty's supportive response was favorable, convincing and credible. The modular structure of instruction and the existence of specialized learning tools and programmes were facts provided as major benefits to such advances and the essential flexibility required for such a complex educational programme. Trustworthy examination procedures are also undertaken under the auspice of the comprehensive e-learning environment used. The Department uses the Open e-Class platform (<https://eclass.duth.gr/>) that is a comprehensive Learning Management System (LMS) adopted for and by the Greek Universities Network (GUnet) in order to support asynchronous distance learning. It is designed so as to promote and augment the educational process, and it is based on open-source software, actively supported by GUnet, which is distributed freely.

The Department of Chemistry, in collaboration with the Quality Assurance Unit (QAU/MODIP) of the Democritus University of Thrace and the relevant services of the Institution has shown credible commitment to implementing a quality policy that supports the academic identity and orientation of the study programme that promotes its objectives and strategic goals with integrated aims of continuous improvement. A well-founded proposal entitled: "Justified Proposal Report with the required documentation on the key points of Principle 1 of the standards for the new PSP Chemical Industry: Quality, Environmental, Health, and Safety Management" was submitted to the EEAP.

Specifically, the programme aims to:

- Respond to modern scientific requirements and teaching needs.
- Achieve the learning outcomes and offers qualifications in accordance with the European Qualifications Framework for Higher Education, Level 7.
- Promote scientific knowledge and the development of research and technology that satisfies the country's educational, research, social, cultural, and developmental needs.
- Provide postgraduate students with a comprehensive understanding of Quality, Environment, Health, and Safety.

In addition, the programme intends to be in full alignment with the quality policy of the Department and the Institution regarding quality in teaching by: Selecting appropriate instructors; regularly evaluating the teaching work by the students (on a semester basis) by participating in the internal course/instructor evaluation process; by using a variety of teaching methods and techniques and overall by thoroughly caring for the progress and development of students during their studies.

Finally, the programme aims to promote the quality (and quantity) of the research work of the faculty members and students by encouraging participation in international and national conferences, research programmes, and international collaborations supporting their national and international mobility.

## **II. Analysis**

The new PSP's design displays strategic vision in the field of applied chemical sciences. There is an obvious alignment with the University's strategy that shows institutional commitment to quality for postgraduate education (Senate decision No. 43/131/15-5-2025). Overall, the quality policy demonstrates appropriate procedures being in place related to learning outcomes, teaching quality, faculty qualifications, and student support services.

The PSP develops a highly targeted set of skills for its graduates. Overall, it offers a complete integration of QEHS. Similar "QHSE Management" or "Integrated Management Systems" degrees, are often offered by Business Schools or Polytechnics. Similar, but more engineering and more in-depth technology-oriented programmes are offered by enlarge in chemical engineering departments (such as Bologna CHESS or TU Delft). These programmes qualify the students as engineers who specialize in safety and allied chemical endeavors. In this respect, the programme is unique and its efficacy remains to be seen.

The structure of the programme emphasizes its intentions to actualize a distance and relevant methodological training, with interdisciplinary exposure and exhibits a unique academic offering. Furthermore, the application of internal audits and collaboration with an excellent institutional MODIP (QAU) is in compliance with national expectations. Notably, the thoroughly elaborated Quality Assurance Unit (MODIP) document entitled: "Justified Proposal Report with the required documentation on the key points of Principle 1 of the standards for the new PMS Chemical Industry: Quality, Environmental, Health, and Safety Management", would have benefited from a detailed analysis aimed at defining Strengths and Weaknesses, and external Opportunities and Threats (SWOT). This would help to build on advantages and mitigate risks for better decision-making and goal setting. The inclusion, however, of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) within the document entitled: "Quality Objectives of the Academic Unit for the PSP" offers significant credible advantages.

Overall, the Quality Policy of the new PSP "Chemical Industry: Quality, Environment, Health and Safety Management" is aligned with the Quality Policy of the Department of Chemistry, which in turn is aligned with the strategy of the Democritus University of Thrace.

## **III. Conclusions**

The programme is in accordance with the expectations of Principle 1 as it is strategically in tune with that of the Institution, it is clearly articulated and supported by the University QAU (MODIP).

### Panel Judgement

<b>Principle 1: Strategy, Quality Assurance Policy and Quality Goal Setting for the New Postgraduate Study Programmes</b>	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

### Panel Recommendations

R1.1 For future periodic reviews it is recommended that the Quality Assurance Unit (MODIP) defines existing Strengths and Weaknesses, and external Opportunities and Threats, (SWOT) in order to build on advantages and mitigate risks for better decision-making and goal setting.

### Principle 2: Design and Approval of New Postgraduate Study Programmes

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

*The academic units develop their postgraduate study programmes following a well-defined procedure. The academic profile and orientation of the programme, the research character, the scientific objectives, the specific subject areas, the specialisations, the expected learning outcomes, the structure, the courses, the teaching and assessment modes, the teaching staff and the necessary resources are described at this stage.*

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

*The expected learning outcomes must be determined based on the European and National Qualifications Framework (EQF, NQF), and the Dublin Descriptors for level 7. During the implementation of the programme, the degree of achievement of the expected learning outcomes and the feedback of*

*the learning process must be assessed with the appropriate tools. In particular, for each expected learning outcome that is designed and made public, it is necessary that its evaluation criteria are also designed and made public.*

*In addition, the design of PSP must consider:*

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

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

### **Documentation**

- *Senate decision for the establishment of the PSP*
- *PSP curriculum structure: courses, course categories, ECTS awarded, expected learning outcomes according to the NQF, internship, mobility opportunities*
- *Labour market data regarding the employment of graduates, international experience in a relevant scientific field*
- *PSP Student Guide*
- *Course and thesis outlines*
- *Teaching staff: teaching assignments per subject area and per course*

### **Study Programme Compliance**

#### **I. Findings**

The actual educational structure of the proposed programme aims at awarding the PSP Diploma in three (3) semesters with a total number of European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) credits of 90, distributed over 3 semesters (30 ECTS each semester). The specific details are: twelve (12) courses with 3 hours per week, six (6) in the first (winter, 30 ECTS) and six (6) in the second (spring, 30 ECTS) semesters. Finally, a PSP Thesis needs to be completed in the third semester offering 30 ECTS. The above are included in the programme Study Guide the Department provides to the incoming students and is also posted on the programme website (<https://hssqe.chem.duth.gr/>).

Notably, all courses are mandatory, and they require the completion of tutorial exercises as well as the attendance of seminar and directed study courses

assigned. The students are also required to participate in practical exercises and field exercises which do not carry ECTS credits. The main language of instruction is Greek, but selected classes/courses can also be conducted in English if there is a need.

The student workload is in accordance with the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) for level 7 and it is deemed to be appropriate. The acquisition of research skills is ensured by the PSP Thesis project as it entails a well-executed research component.

As a large component of the educational experience of the students relies on distance learning, relevant documentation was thoroughly examined and discussed during the EEAP's deliberations. The documentation provided a pedagogical framework for designing and implementing distance learning methods and student assessment. According to internal documentation entitled: "Special Regulation for the Implementation of E-learning", the design and incorporation of this approach intends to offer to the curriculum: In-depth knowledge of the subject matter; detailed description of the educational-instructional processes; well-designed learning activities (tasks); continuous student support; two-way communication via a positive learning climate; technology infrastructure that effectively supports the learning processes; valid and reliable assessment of the educational outcome.

In these realms, the PSP adequately responds to the needs of the accreditation process. The overall academic profile, programme orientation, educational character, the scientific objectives and the specific courses were thoroughly described, delineated in the relevant study guide document provided, analyzed and discussed during the accreditation process. The linking of the educational experience of the students with research is also documented by the fact that the programme encourages every student to write articles, publish in reputable journals, and present at conferences. Overall, most such opportunities necessitate the actual execution of tangible research, and this is an aspect that is fulfilled by the execution of the PSP Thesis project elaborated below.

In this context the stated programmatic mission of "linking learning and research" the EEAP was provided with the following facts that convincingly justified the validity of this programmatic endeavour. PSP Thesis project activities are carried out (amongst others) under the auspice of a large School of Natural Sciences research laboratory named HYPHESTUS. This is an umbrella laboratory, with significant infrastructure capabilities, funded (amongst others) by national and international competitive and non-competitive funds. In addition, there are students that are already employed and use the needs of their employer to undertake a PSP Thesis project of relevance to their employment sector. Notably all PSP Thesis projects are carried out individually and mostly in person using the

departmental facilities requiring their physical presence in the Department. Appropriate programmatic arrangements are thus made to accommodate this need, especially for distance students. In addition, there are students that select to carry out their PSP Thesis project in national institutions located in other parts of the country that have faculty directly involved with the PSP.

As far as quality of instruction is concerned, it is to be noted that each course is evaluated by students and instructors at the end of the semester. During the evaluation process good practices and weaknesses are required to be identified. This evaluation is conducted via the Quality Evaluation Information System of the University's Quality Assurance Unit (MODIP) (<https://duth.gr/en/the-university/quality-assurance-unit/>). The questionnaire for the evaluation of a course and instructor by students includes closed-ended questions related to eight (8) evaluation dimensions and an open-ended question for comments. Separate evaluations are conducted for course(s) that include both theory and laboratory.

The quality involvement and support of the teaching staff, the students and the administration provide for an effective structure in place. It is to be noted that the academic caliber of the internal and external teaching staff is of quality, of international recognition and adequate excellent academic contributions in the area as evidenced by the respective matrices (h-indices and Google scholar information) provided to the EEAP.

The overall educational attributes of the PSP's success were discussed during the accreditation process, with input from a variety of stakeholders and teaching staff. This process offered a quality assessment and identified favourable areas and some areas in need for attention and improvement. The participation of the shareholders was noted in setting up the programme for success and promoting its efficacy at a national level. There was ample evidence that the external stakeholders actively participate in shaping the curriculum as a large number of them are actual enthusiastic contributors. Furthermore, the extreme professional diversity in stakeholders, and their unequivocal support, for the necessity for the existence of the programme, is indicative of their integration in the programme. The EEAP however, had no opportunity to discuss such issues with any existing or graduated students to identify and verify their involvement in the curriculum and the overall success of the programme.

Overall, the curriculum offers good standards for such diverse area of study. Furthermore, the structure of the programme is rational and clearly articulated. Issues related to effective procedures in place for periodic revisions of the curriculum were not thoroughly exemplified but relevant salient intentions were apparent.

## II. Analysis

The PSP “Chemical Industry: Quality Environment, Health and Safety, Security Management” of the Department of Chemistry of the Democritus University of Thrace has unique characteristics for Greece and Europe as a whole.

From a curriculum perspective the proposed programme assumes a prior background in chemistry/chemical engineering and a large variety of allied disciplines. When the necessary technical background is lacking, the programme offers remedial course modules to support the students. The PSP aims to promote the managerial, regulatory, and systemic frameworks (ISO standards, risk assessment methodologies, human factors) for implementing and auditing QHSE systems. Accordingly, the PSP embraces a large variety of professions such as chemists, chemical engineers, lab managers, production supervisors, health & safety officers etc., aspiring to move into management, coordination, auditing, and consultancy roles. It offers an Integration that uniquely combines Quality (Q), Safety/Health (SH), Environment (E), and Security ("QSSHE"). It focuses on breadth but provides sufficient background and skills for more in-depth enquiries (if needed) and covers a very wide range of topics. With courses like "Management Systems for Quality, Environment, and Health & Safety" it prepares personnel for auditor roles and implementing ISO 9001, 14001, 30001, 45001, etc. This is an admirable and complex programme considering the numerical and geographical multiplicity of faculty and students and the way it is structured as a distance education programme. Questions as to the efficacy and coordination of the teaching, the examinations and the PSP thesis components were posed by the EEAP and all were effectively addressed during the accreditation process as exemplified in Principles 1 and 2 of this document.

The PSP programme seems to be an integrative management-focused degree built on a very large variety of societal needs originating in chemical and allied foundations. Similar European programmes, particularly those in Process Safety, are technical-engineering counterparts, originate in Chemical Engineering departments and are highly valued by the European chemical industry.

The fact that many courses in the proposed PSP follow a multi-instructor model offers benefits especially for advanced, seminar-style, or capstone courses assuming the goal is to expose students to the breadth of a field and its cutting-edge aspects. However, this is only beneficial if it is meticulously coordinated. Without strong coordination, the multi-instructor model's disadvantages often outweigh its benefits. This aspect was thoroughly discussed with the faculty during the EEAP's discussions. The Department provides the PSP with secretarial support for the coordination of the logistics in question. The modular structure of the curriculum and the relevant instruction e-tools available also provide benefits in effectively addressing this concern. Finally, the large heterogeneity in subject matters the PSP deals with, is also reflected in the heterogeneous

composition of student skills and backgrounds. This last characteristic was actually considered as an integral revitalizing component of the PSP.

As a PSP’s success is evident from the quality of its graduates it is advised that the Department closely follows the development of its graduates as it pertains to functional positions of professional responsibility. These will be invaluable performance indicators ensuring the viability and sustainability of the programme.

In addition, including PSP educational activities to promote and develop soft and transferable skills to the students could be an area for improvement especially due to the fact that the graduates are eventually to assume leadership roles with intricate interpersonal demands in their skill set.

### III. Conclusions

The PSP in “Chemical Industry: Quality Environment, Health and Safety, Security Management” offers the possibilities of a good quality and efficacious programme for Greece and the EU. It complies with accepted standards and practices. The essential diversity and thematic relevance of the PSP are effective and appropriate so as to fill national and international needs.

### Panel Judgement

<b>Principle 2: Design and Approval of New Postgraduate Study Programmes</b>	
Fully compliant	<b>X</b>
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

### Panel Recommendations

R2.1 The Department should closely follow the development of its graduates as it pertains to functional positions of professional responsibility. These will be invaluable performance indicators ensuring the viability and sustainability of the programme.

R2.2 Educational activities to promote and develop soft and transferable skills to the students would be of benefit especially to individuals that are intended to assume leadership roles requiring intricate interpersonal skills.



### **Principle 3: Regulations for Student Admission, Progression, Recognition of Postgraduate Studies, and certification**

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

*The Institution should develop and publish the internal regulations prescribed by law which, among other things, should regulate all issues of postgraduate studies from the beginning to the end of the studies.*

*Indicatively:*

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

*In case that the PSP is offered through distance learning methods, the Institution should have in place a regulation for e-learning, including in particular the following issues:*

- *Services of the Institution to support e-learning*
- *Methodology for the development and implementation of courses*
- *Ways of providing teaching and variety of teaching and assessment modes*
- *General standard of course structure*
- *Student support system*
- *Support of faculty/teachers with mandatory e-learning training for new staff members*
- *Technological infrastructures made available by the Institution*
- *Student identity confirmation system (student identity check, assignment and exam writing process, security and certification issues).*
- ❖ *The Institution should establish rules for the provision of appropriate access and for the assurance of the participation of students affected by disability, illness, and other special circumstances.*
- ❖ *Ethical issues, such as those concerning data protection, intellectual property rights and rules for protection against fraud are governed by the e-learning regulation.*

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

#### **Documentation**

- *Internal regulation for the operation of the postgraduate study programme*
- *Special regulation for the implementation of e-learning if the PSP is delivered through distance methods*
- *Research Ethics Regulation*

- *Regulation of studies, internship, mobility, and student assignments*
- *Degree certificate template and Diploma Supplement template*

## **Study Programme Compliance**

### **I. Findings**

The Democritus University of Thrace and the Department of Chemistry have developed and published a comprehensive set of internal regulations covering all stages of postgraduate studies for the proposed PSP. These regulations clearly cover student submission procedures, progression rules, assessment methods, thesis drafting and examination, degree award and certification.

Admission criteria, required qualifications, supporting documentation, and selection procedures are transparently defined and publicly available through the Study Guide, which is also available at the PSP's website. Student rights and obligations are also well described and publicly available at the PSP's website.

Given that the programme is delivered through synchronous and asynchronous distance learning methods, a complete e-learning regulation is established by the Institution. The regulation describes in detail the teaching and assessment methods, necessary technological infrastructure/equipment for teaching and attending the lectures as well as the mechanisms for student identity verification during assessments. Ethical issues are also regulated.

The procedures for degree award and issuance of the Diploma Supplement are clearly defined and consistent with national legislation/standards.

The PSP has introduced the role of Academic Advisor to enhance student-centred education and improve educational and administrative services. In addition, towards the end of each semester the students fill in electronic questionnaires to rate the courses, lecturers, lecture content, etc., all organized by the University QAU (MODIP).

### **II. Analysis**

The regulatory framework of the PSP is well structured and fully aligned with institutional policies. The regulations demonstrate a systematic approach to managing the student lifecycle from admission to graduation, ensuring transparency and consistency. However, minor inconsistencies were observed across certain documents, reflecting variations in the information provided. These matters were clarified by the EEAP through meetings with the programme staff, the Programme Director, and the Head of the Department.

The regulation of distance learning defines the pedagogical model, assessment

methods, while the inclusion of identity verification procedures further strengthens trust in the assessment and certification process. The Study Guide contains all relevant regulatory information, making it easily accessible to students and other stakeholders. The implementation of research ethics, data protection rules and intellectual property rights are in alignment with international academic standards.

### III. Conclusions

The programme is in accordance with the expectations of Principle 3 relative to student admission, progression, recognition of postgraduate studies, and certification and meets the relevant HAHE standards.

#### Panel Judgement

<b>Principle 3: Regulations for Student Admission, Progression, Recognition of Postgraduate Studies, and certification</b>	
Fully compliant	<b>X</b>
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

#### Panel Recommendations

R3.1 Systematic alignment and cross-checking of all official programme documents is needed (regulations, study guide, website content, and other internal documentation) in order to ensure consistency and clarity of information.

## Principle 4: Teaching Staff of New Postgraduate Study Programmes

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

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

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

### **Documentation**

- *Procedures and criteria for teaching staff recruitment, policy for attracting highly qualified staff, and PSP Obligation Regulation*
- *List of the intended for recruitment teaching staff including subject areas, employment relationship, Institution of origin, Department of origin and relevant individual achievements*

### **Study Programme Compliance**

#### **I. Findings**

Staffing is a mix of departmental academic staff and external/specialist scientists with relevant expertise and documented research/professional activity, supporting adequate coverage per course module and overall programme coherence.

The Programme specifies eligible teaching staff categories and a formal allocation/approval process for teaching assignments, including contributions by members from other departments and other higher education institutions, where appropriate.

The Programme articulates active practices to attract high-calibre staff (targeted invitations to distinguished academics and researchers, collaborations with research centres, certification bodies and industry, co-teaching with domain experts, and use of Erasmus+/ICM networks).

Training of the PSP teaching staff is accomplished with the help of the University Centre for Teaching and Learning (<https://duth.gr/en/Services/Structures/Teaching-Support-Office>). The Teaching and Learning Support Center of the Democritus University of Thrace aims to promote University pedagogy through actions aimed at creating a community of learning, innovation and continuous improvement of teaching work at the University, supporting teaching staff to exchange and create good learning and teaching practices, to record their needs, to develop modern and effective educational actions in order to create learning environments that facilitate and support learning in the best possible way.

Teaching staff professional development is supported through institutional mobility schemes (Erasmus/ICM) and by encouraging conference participation and educational leaves, in line with institutional policy. Teaching workload is monitored via standardised load tables.

Quality assurance processes include semester-based, anonymous, electronic student evaluation of each course and instructor through the Institutional Quality Assurance unit (QAU/MODIP).

## **II. Analysis**

The submitted documentation demonstrates that the Programme has designed a structured and transparent framework for selecting and allocating teaching staff, based on recognised staff categories and institutional procedures. The planned mix of internal faculty and external/specialist contributors is well aligned with the Programme's applied and interdisciplinary scope, and the described attraction practices help secure cutting-edge expertise and strengthen the education-research-industry nexus.

Particularly positive elements of the PSP include: (i) explicit reference to staff development through mobility schemes and scholarly dissemination; (ii) systematic monitoring of teaching load and obligations; and (iii) an established quality assurance feedback loop through student evaluations each semester.

Areas where the evidence could be strengthened primarily relate to consolidation and clarity, rather than substantive deficiencies. The documentation would benefit from a single, comprehensive presentation of (a) the full intended teaching roster (including external contributors), mapped to modules and subject areas, with employment relationship, institution/department of origin, and brief relevant achievements; and (b) a clear projection of staff-student ratios under expected intake scenarios and the scaling of supervision/advising responsibilities (including any caps for supervision and allocation rules). Given the high proportion of synchronous distance teaching, a brief summary of staff training/support specific to distance pedagogy and

assessment would further strengthen compliance evidence.

### **III. Conclusions**

Overall, the Programme demonstrates strong alignment with Principle 4, with clear institutional processes for teaching allocation, active strategies to attract highly qualified staff, and mechanisms for staff development and quality assurance. Subject to minor clarifications and consolidation of the staffing evidence (roster and staff-student ratio), the Programme is judged to be fully compliant.

## Panel Judgement

<b>Principle 4: Teaching Staff of New Postgraduate Study Programmes</b>	
Fully compliant	<b>X</b>
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

### Panel Recommendations

R4.1 Provide a consolidated table of all teaching staff (including external/specialist contributors) mapped to modules and subject areas, indicating employment relationship, institution/department of origin, and brief relevant achievements, together with a contingency plan for replacement of key instructors.

R4.2 Include an explicit staff-student ratio projection for anticipated cohort sizes, and explain how teaching, supervision, and advising loads will scale as enrolment changes.

R4.3 Describe a focused staff development plan for high-percentage distance delivery (e.g., training/support in digital pedagogy, assessment integrity, and the use of educational technologies) and clarify how student evaluation outcomes will be used for targeted improvement actions.

## Principle 5: Learning Resources and Student Support

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD HAVE ADEQUATE FUNDING TO COVER THE TEACHING AND LEARNING NEEDS OF THE POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES. 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, CAREER AND SOCIAL POLICY SERVICES ETC.).

*Institutions and their academic units must have sufficient resources and means, on a planned and long-term basis, to support learning and academic activity in general, so as to offer PSP students the best possible level of studies. The above means include facilities such as the necessary general and more specialised libraries and possibilities for access to electronic databases, study rooms, educational and scientific equipment, IT and communication services, support, and counselling services.*

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

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

### Documentation

- Detailed description of the infrastructure and services made available by the Institution to the academic unit for the PSP, to support learning and academic activity (human resources, infrastructure, services, etc.) and the corresponding firm commitment of the Institution to financially cover these infrastructure-services from state or other resources
- Administrative support staff of the PSP (job descriptions, qualifications, and responsibilities)
- Informative / promotional material given to students with reference to the available services
- Tuition utilisation plan (if applicable)

### Study Programme Compliance

#### I. Findings

The University offers a complete support ecosystem that covers learning, the research and the daily activities of postgraduate students. The services are staffed by specialised support and administrative personnel, receiving continuous professional development in digital skills, accessibility and data protection. Access to the various services is well defined, transparent and documented in the Study Guide and the relevant web pages, while quality is monitored using a number of metrics, such as platform uptime, helpdesk response times and user satisfaction.

Postgraduate students can access information regarding their study status, course registrations, grades for each course, as well as requests for certificates through the Electronic Secretariat of the Democritus University of Thrace (platform: universis), accessible by students using their credentials. The learning process is supported by an online electronic classroom system (platform: eClass) which provides organized digital courses with a standardized structure (content, bibliography, announcements, activities, assessment). Each student enrolls for the corresponding courses and receives feedback through asynchronous/synchronous learning tools. Academic integrity policies are also supported, such as declaration of originality and plagiarism checks where applicable. In addition, the Philologus electronic platform provides linguistic correction and philological editing of texts written in Greek to all members of the University (students, faculty members, teaching assistants, research assistants and administrative staff).

The University operates a unified, decentralized, and independent Central Library Unit called the "Library and Information Center", based in Komotini, where the University administration resides. However, as a result of the geographical dispersion of the University across seven cities (Komotini, Xanthi, Drama, Kavala, Alexandroupoli, Didymoteicho, and Orestiada), the Central Library has developed nine Library Branches at the School level and Library Units at the Departmental level. Nevertheless, the Central Library website allows students to search for publications (books, journals, magazines, etc.) across all libraries and proceed with borrowing.

The University provides the following electronic services to postgraduate students: personal electronic account (at the registration point consisting of username and password), personal email account, access to the education support system, access to the electronic library, access to the electronic secretariat, course registration and other applications and certificates. At the start of each semester (after the grades for the previous exam period have been announced), postgraduate students are required to register for all the courses they wish to attend and be examined in during the current semester.

The University also has a comprehensive range of services for the personal and professional development, as well as for the wellbeing of the students. Academic Advisors are allocated to postgraduate students for support with issues related to academic life, their progress towards completing their studies, their career prospects, doctoral studies, etc. Student Counselling and Accessibility Services offer counselling and psychosocial support towards the personal development and improvement of the social life of students at all levels, while ensuring equal access to educational activities for all students. Accessibility services support the use of electronic means for accessing textbooks and educational materials, as

well as physical accessibility to buildings and infrastructure. The Student Ombudsman is an institution established by Law and its purpose is to mediate between students and academic staff or administrative services, addressing instances of maladministration, while safeguarding the smooth operation of the Institution.

## **II. Analysis**

In terms of learning resources, the University offers impressive modern facilities such as lecture theatres, seminar rooms, computer hubs and specialised research laboratories available to the students during their studies, as well as for their research towards their thesis.

In terms of student support, in addition to the teaching/learning resources and the tutoring/counselling, the following services are also in place supporting the professional development of the students. The Employment and Career Structure/Careers & Academic Liaison Office (DASTA) offers students the opportunity to experience the environment of their future professional career, while acquiring knowledge and skills that will allow them to claim their place in the professional arena on better terms. Students of all levels are eligible to apply for scholarships offered by various institutions and organizations, while information on scholarships is announced throughout the year and posted on the website of the Liaison Office. The terms and conditions for awarding scholarships are set out in the Internal Regulations of the Postgraduate Programmes.

The University's Innovation and Entrepreneurship Unit aims to develop the entrepreneurial mindset and culture of students through various activities, such as introduction and teaching of entrepreneurship courses in various departments of the University; production of educational materials for highlighting employment prospects for young people; organization of visits to industrial partners for strengthening the relations between the University and the businesses; conducting seminars and promoting good practices/cases of entrepreneurial activity, alongside events on specific topics; providing advisory services and monitoring on entrepreneurship and innovation, as well as information on funding opportunities for business ideas and research activities.

## **III. Conclusions**

The University offers an impressive array of facilities and support structures to the students for their learning, progression and wellbeing. All the relevant information is clearly explained, and the various facilities and services are clearly signposted in the Study Guide and the relevant websites, available in Greek and English. The University also has in place structures and processes for the regular evaluation of the Student Support Services, as well as a comprehensive utilization plan for the tuition fees.

## Panel Judgement

<b>Principle 5: Learning Resources and Student Support</b>	
Fully compliant	<b>X</b>
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

## Panel Recommendations

There are no specific recommendations for Principle 5.

## **Principle 6: Initial Internal and External Evaluation and Monitoring of New Postgraduate Study Programmes**

**INSTITUTIONS AND ACADEMIC UNITS SHOULD HAVE IN PLACE AN INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM, FOR THE AUDIT, INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL EVALUATION OF THE NEW POSTGRADUATE PROGRAMMES, THUS ENSURING COMPLIANCE WITH THE PRINCIPLES OF THE PRESENT STANDARDS. ANY ACTIONS TAKEN IN THE ABOVE CONTEXT SHOULD BE COMMUNICATED TO ALL PARTIES CONCERNED.**

*The internal evaluation of the new PSP includes the assessment of the accreditation proposal, as well as the documentation in accordance with the Principles of the present Standards and the quality procedures of the Institution's Internal Quality Assurance System (IQAS). The internal evaluation of new postgraduate study programmes also aims at maintaining the level of educational provision and creating a supportive and effective learning environment for students. The Institution, through its Quality Assurance Unit (QAU) and the corresponding academic units, organise and support the external evaluation procedures of the new PSP, according to the specific guidelines and directions provided by HAHE.*

*The above comprise the assessment of:*

- the objectives, content, and structure of the curriculum, the knowledge offered and the level of science and technology in the given discipline, thus ensuring that the PSP is up to date, according to the relevant documentation listed in the decisions of the pertinent bodies*
- the entailed students' workload for the progression and completion of postgraduate studies*
- the satisfaction of the students' expectations and needs in relation to the programme*
- the learning environment, support services, and their fitness for purpose for the PSP in question*

*Postgraduate study programmes are designed and established in accordance with the provisions of the Institution's internal regulations, involving students and other stakeholders.*

### **Documentation**

- The Quality Assurance Unit (QAU) procedure for verifying whether the requirements of the Standards for Quality Accreditation of New PSP are met, as well as the procedure for organising and supporting their external evaluation procedures*
- Assessment and feedback mechanisms of the PSP strategy and quality targeting, and relevant decision-making processes (students, external stakeholders)*

### **Study Programme Compliance**

#### **I. Findings**

Relative to HAHE requirements with respect to Principle 6, the accreditation proposal submitted to HAHE by the Democritus University of Thrace QAU (MODIP) elaborated on the specific processes and procedures relative to

Principle 6 requirements, such as the annual internal evaluation, the external evaluation and monitoring of the PSP in accordance with the University Internal Quality Assurance System (IQAS). Regarding the HAHE Principle 6 requirement for the initial internal evaluation, required for new PSPs, the University QAU (MODIP) prepared a report dated 27-8-2025, and submitted it to HAHE along with the accreditation proposal. However, the PSP accreditation proposal did not mention this report in Principle 6 and did not elaborate on the report's findings and recommendation.

The Programme has not undergone an external evaluation. Following HAHE instructions for Principle 6, the EEAP utilized the Democritus University of Thrace's Internal Quality Assurance System (IQAS) Accreditation Report, which was fully accredited by HAHE (4-7-2025). The IQAS Accreditation Report did not include any specific recommendations pertinent to postgraduate study programmes. However, the report made several recommendations, such as SWOT analysis and input by students and external stakeholders, which apply to all academic programmes. The Institution, through its QAU (MODIP), organizes and supports the external evaluation procedures of the PSP according to the specific guidelines and directions provided by HAHE.

## **II. Analysis**

The University QAU (MODIP)-approved report with respect to the initial internal evaluation, confirmed that all quality criteria were met, and concluded with a positive recommendation for the establishment of the PSP Chemical Industry: Quality, Environment, Health and Safety, Security Management. A SWOT analysis was not included in the above-mentioned report, which could have further substantiated the sustainability of the new PSP. SWOT analysis was a major recommendation in the 2025 IQAS Accreditation Report related to strategic planning and goal setting.

Previous recommendations in the 2025 IQAS Accreditation Report relative to greater student and external stakeholder input in the development of the new PSP seems to not have been fulfilled or documented. Measures should be taken regarding the systematic and documented feedback by future students, alumni, and external stakeholders, as well as the implementation of the programme's periodic internal evaluation findings. The participation of alumni and external stakeholders in the annual PSP evaluation should be made in a formal, structured, and documented manner. External stakeholders in the above statements are considered to be individuals outside those who actively participate in teaching in the new PSP.

Given the articulated quality assurance and control policy and procedures (see Principle 1), the experience of the Department, PSP administration and teaching staff, as well as the experience of the University QAU (MODIP) administration

and staff with the review and accreditation process, it is expected that the PSP will fulfil the expected requirements of Principle 6.

### III. Conclusions

The Department, PSP and University administration, faculty, and staff are aware of the importance of external evaluation and accreditation. However, recommendations made below, if adopted, will result in an enhanced implementation and documentation of the quality policy and the continuous development of the programme.

#### Panel Judgement

<b>Principle 6: Initial Internal and External Evaluation and Monitoring of New Postgraduate Study Programmes</b>	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	<b>X</b>
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

#### Panel Recommendations

R6.1 Develop a formal mechanism for the input of alumni and external stakeholders, as well as the systematic implementation and documentation of such input in the programme's annual internal evaluation.

R6.2 Develop a formal and systematic process for adopting the recommendations of external evaluations, along with a detailed and documented action plan, as well as implementation timelines.

## **PART C: CONCLUSIONS**

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

- The Programme has the necessary procedures for monitoring quality assurance and continuous improvement, which align with the strategic objectives of the Department and the University.
- Faculty and staff are knowledgeable, enthusiastic, and dedicated to PSP's mission, resulting in a very positive and professional environment.
- Infrastructure and other resources are generally adequate for the successful operation of the PSP.
- The employment potential of the PSP graduates in public and/or private sector is high.
- Stakeholders and social partners praised the PSP and believe there is a clear need for such graduates.
- The Programme addresses an area of critical expertise needed nationally and internationally.

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

- There was no formal, organized input in the design of the Programme by external stakeholders, i.e., individuals outside those who actively participate in teaching in the new PSP.
- A SWOT analysis was not included in the accreditation proposal submitted by the University, which could have further substantiated the sustainability of the new PSP, as well as the means to mitigate possible future threats/risks.
- The set minimum number of admitted students (5) is very low considering the large number of external teaching staff supporting the new PSP, which may affect its long-term financial viability.
- There is no established formal process for the active participation of students in the curriculum development of the Programme.

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

- 1) Develop a formal mechanism for the input of alumni and external stakeholders, i.e., individuals outside those who actively participate in teaching in the new PSP, as well as the systematic implementation and documentation of such input in the Programme's annual internal evaluation.
- 2) Establish a formal process for the active participation of students in the curriculum development of the programme.
- 3) Increase the number and target values of KPIs to set measurable goals, track outcomes, and identify areas for improvement, strengthening the overall quality and impact of the PSP.
- 4) Increase educational activities to promote and develop soft and transferable skills to the students, preparing them to assume leadership roles requiring intricate interpersonal skills.
- 5) Provide a consolidated table with all internal and external teaching staff, mapped to modules and subject areas, indicating employment relationship, institution/department of origin, together with a contingency plan for replacement of key instructors.
- 6) Provide an explicit staff-student ratio projection for anticipated cohort sizes, and explain how teaching, supervision, and advising loads will scale as enrolment changes.
- 7) Track the employment and career paths of PSP graduates.
- 8) Develop a formal and systematic process for adopting the recommendations of external evaluations, along with a detailed and documented action plan, as well as implementation timelines.
- 9) Establish an external Advisory Board with academic, social, industrial partners, and other stakeholders, i.e., individuals outside those who actively participate in teaching in the new PSP, to support continuous PSP review, curriculum development, and programme enhancement.

#### IV. Summary & Overall Assessment

The Principles where full compliance has been achieved are:

1, 2, 3, 4, and 5

The Principles where substantial compliance has been achieved are:

6

The Principles where partial compliance has been achieved are:

None

The Principles where failure of compliance was identified are:

None

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

## The members of the External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel

<b>Name and Surname</b>	<b>Signature</b>
PAVLOSTATHIS SPYROS	Signed by PAVLOSTATHIS SPYROS - 12/01/2026 16:26:37 +02:00
ALVANIDES (ΑΛΒΑΝΙΔΗΣ) SERAPHIM (ΣΕΡΑΦΕΙΜ) Androulakis Ioannis	Signed by ALVANIDES (ΑΛΒΑΝΙΔΗΣ) SERAPHIM (ΣΕΡΑΦΕΙΜ) - 12/01/2026 16:26:37 +02:00 Signed by Androulakis Ioannis - 12/01/2026 16:26:37 +02:00
ARGYROPOULOS DIMITRIOS	Signed by ARGYROPOULOS DIMITRIOS - 12/01/2026 16:26:37 +02:00
KOUTSOGIANNI ZOI-LINA	Signed by KOUTSOGIANNI ZOI-LINA - 12/01/2026 16:26:37 +02:00