Accreditation Report
for the Undergraduate Study Programme of:

English Language and Literature
Institution: Aristotle University of Thessaloniki
Date: 18 December 2021

Report of the Panel appointed by the HAHE to undertake the review of the Undergraduate Study Programme of **English Language and Literature** of the **Aristotle University of Thessaloniki** 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 Undergraduate Study Programme of **English Language and Literature** of the **Aristotle University of Thessaloniki** comprised the following five (5) members, drawn from the HAHE Register, in accordance with Laws 4009/2011 & 4653/2020:

1. **Professor Margaritis Fourakis** (Chair)
   University of Maryland, Maryland, United States

2. **Dr Maria Aretoulaki**
   DialogCONNECTION Ltd., United Kingdom

3. **Dr Sofia Malamatidou**
   University of Birmingham, United Kingdom

4. **Dr Eleni Markou**
   University of Surrey, United Kingdom

5. **Professor George Tsoulas**
   University of York, United Kingdom

II.   Review Procedure and Documentation

The External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel (EEAP) was provided with the following documents about two weeks before the online meetings with the School of English Language and Literature (henceforth ELL):

The ELL accreditation proposal, supporting documents for each Principle, the previous external evaluation report dated January 2014, the Undergraduate Study Programme (UGP) Guide, ten Quality Indicator Control Documents, an extensive description of the Student Survey instrument, and several HAHE supplied documents including guidelines, templates, etc.

In addition, during the week of the meetings, ELL supplied the EEAP with additional material including the PowerPoint presentations by faculty members, information on publications, teaching materials, research projects, a copy of the exit interview questionnaire for graduating students and publication records.

The EEAP started its online visit on December 13 conferring with Prof. Dimitrios Koveos, Vice Rector for Academic & Student Affairs / President of MODIP and Prof. Anastasios Tsangalidis, Head of ELL. Professor Koveos gave a short presentation of the overall structure of the University and the preeminent position of ELL within the University. Professor Tsangalidis also gave a more specific presentation of the department's history and current status. Following this meeting the EEAP was joined by members of MODIP and OMEA including the Head of MODIP, Prof. Vasilios K. Gounaris, School of History and Archaeology, and members of the OMEA, Prof. Zoe Detsi, Coordinator of OMEA, Assoc. Prof. Fotini Apostolou, Prof. Aikaterini Nikolaidou, Assoc. Prof. Maria Schoina, Assoc. Prof. Nina Topintzi, and Prof. Anastasios Tsangalidis. Also present were administrative members of MODIP, Ms. Alexandra Tzaneraki, MODIP Secretary, Dr. Konstantinos Aivazidis, Quality Management Official, and Ms. Eleni Bitsiadou, MODIP Secretariat. At this meeting the EEAP was given detailed presentations of ELL's strategic goals, academic profile, Quality Assurance Policies, Study Programme structure, teaching staff etc. Members of the EEAP asked questions regarding these topics which were satisfactorily answered.

Following this meeting the EEAP met privately to discuss the information gleaned so far and their overall impressions.

On Tuesday, December 14, the EEAP first met with ten members of the teaching staff. In this meeting the EEAP and the faculty members discussed topics related to teaching methodologies, connections between teaching and research, financial issues, mobility, workload, career development, research opportunities and possible areas of improvement. Following this meeting, the EEAP met with current students from all years of enrollment and discussed with them their overall satisfaction with the programme, the relations with faculty members and administrative staff, and issues of curriculum, requirements, etc. After this meeting, the EEAP met with members of the support staff and the directors of the research laboratories in ELL. This meeting included presentations on the infrastructure, the technical support, and details of laboratory facilities. Next on the agenda was a meeting with graduates of ELL, during which the students talked about their experiences in the years of study at ELL and their career paths after graduation. The final meeting of this day was with employers and social partners. Most of the

persons present at this meeting were social partners, which the members of the EEAP expressed concerns about (cf. below in the evaluation section).

On Wednesday, December 15, the EEAP initially met briefly with the members of MODIP and OMEA and several clarification questions were asked and answered. The meeting was then joined by Prof. Nikolaos G. Papaioannou, Rector of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki and Prof. Anastasios Tsangalidis, Head of ELL. The EEAP expressed its overall satisfaction with the visit and conferences and its overall extremely positive impression that ELL made on the Panel.

In compiling its final report, the EEAP has to point out that there is considerable overlap between Principles and, as result, there is overlap in observations and recommendations.

III.   Study Programme Profile

The School of English Language and Literature (ELL) was established by law in 1982, but is pre-dated, in the older system of Chairs, by the Chair in English Language - Linguistics (1977) and the Chair in English Literature (1980). However, even these Chairs are predated by the establishment in 1951 of a department of English Language and Literature within the Institute of Foreign Languages and Literatures at the University of Thessaloniki. Currently ELL is one of eight schools comprising the Faculty of Philosophy at the University.

ELL currently has 21 regular faculty members and 20 members with special teaching and administrative assignments.

ELL has four Departments: English Language and Culture, American Literature and Culture, Theoretical and Applied Linguistics, and Translation and Intercultural studies.

The course of study requires successfully completing about 40 different courses over 8 semesters and accumulating 240 credit units in the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS). All courses taken in the first two years are required and cover a wide variety of topics. In the last two years students are required to select courses offered by the different sections of ELL as well as by other Schools in the Faculty of Philosophy. All students are required to take a Practicum in Teaching Methods as well as acquire teaching experience by being placed in various schools throughout Greece. All courses within the Department are taught in English and all interactions between instructors and students take place in English.

PART B: COMPLIANCE WITH THE PRINCIPLES

Principle 1: Academic Unit Policy for Quality Assurance

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD APPLY A QUALITY ASSURANCE POLICY AS PART OF THEIR STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT. THIS POLICY SHOULD EXPAND AND BE AIMED (WITH THE COLLABORATION OF EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS) AT ALL INSTITUTION'S AREAS OF ACTIVITY, AND PARTICULARLY AT THE FULFILMENT OF QUALITY REQUIREMENTS OF UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMMES. THIS POLICY SHOULD BE PUBLISHED AND IMPLEMENTED BY ALL STAKEHOLDERS.

The quality assurance policy of the academic unit is in line with the Institutional policy on quality, and is included in a published statement that is implemented by all stakeholders. It focuses on the achievement of special objectives related to the quality assurance of study programmes offered by the academic unit.

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 programme, its purpose and field of study; it will realise the programme's strategic goals and it will determine the means and ways for attaining them; it will implement the appropriate quality procedures, aiming at the programme's continuous improvement.

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

a) *the suitability of the structure and organization of the curriculum;*
b) *the pursuit of learning outcomes and qualifications in accordance with the European and the National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education;*
c) *the promotion of the quality and effectiveness of teaching;*
d) *the appropriateness of the qualifications of the teaching staff;*
e) *the enhancement of the quality and quantity of the research output among faculty members of the academic unit;*
f) *ways for linking teaching and research;*
g) *the level of demand for qualifications acquired by graduates, in the labour market;*
h) *the quality of support services such as the administrative services, the Library, and the student welfare office;*
i) *the conduct of an annual review and an internal audit of the quality assurance system of the undergraduate programme(s) offered, as well as the collaboration of the Internal Evaluation Group (IEG) with the Institution's Quality Assurance Unit (QAU).*

Study Programme Compliance

ELL has established a Quality Assurance Policy (QAP) for the Undergraduate Studies Programme that is in agreement with the University's Institutional Policy on Quality. The parties responsible for implementation are the Internal Evaluation Group (OMEA) in collaboration with The Institutional Quality Assurance Unit (MODIP).

The main strategic goals of the department include the maintenance of high quality of instruction, updating and revising the curriculum, and attention to the needs of students. This is accomplished by administering two instruments of evaluation, one for current students at the end of each semester and one for graduating students at the time they receive their diplomas. Copies of both these instruments were supplied to the EEAP. The current student questionnaire is made up of 13 questions covering all aspects of instruction and an optional space for particular comments and suggestions. This is submitted anonymously and voluntarily by the students. Participation rates have been steadily rising from 31% of enrolled students in 2018-19, to 49.9% in 2019-20, to 58.3% in 2020-21. The EEAP was given examples of using the results of this questionnaire to adapt and/or change the content, instruction, requirements of courses.

The questionnaire for graduating students asks for the evaluation of each course the student has taken and each instructor they took the course with. This is invaluable information. However, the EEAP was not supplied with any quantitative results of this instrument, unlike the report on current student evaluations which was extremely detailed and useful.

In terms of connecting research to every day instruction, the EEAP found the existence of very well equipped laboratories to aid in actually involving students in research.

Annual internal evaluations are also compiled by the OMEA and submitted to the MODIP. These are discussed by the sections and by the general faculty assembly.

The Panel also found a high level of satisfaction by current and former students.

The EEAP found that ELL uses collected data to continuously adapt and upgrade the quality of its UGP. The instructional staff is competent, enthusiastic, and cares about the students as a whole and individually. However, a perennial issue with all departments in Greek Universities is understaffing, exacerbated by the financial crisis of the last decade.

In conclusion, the EEAP deems that ELL is fully compliant with Principle 1.

Panel Judgement

Principle 1: Academic Unit Policy for Quality Assurance	
Fully compliant	x
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

None

Principle 2: Design and Approval of Programmes

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD DEVELOP THEIR 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.

Academic units develop their programmes following a well-defined procedure. The academic profile 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 National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education are described at this stage. The approval or revision process for programmes includes a check of compliance with the basic requirements described in the Standards, on behalf of the Institution's Quality Assurance Unit (QAU).

Furthermore, the programme design should take into consideration the following:
- *the Institutional strategy*
- *the active participation of students*
- *the experience of external stakeholders from the labour market*
- *the smooth progression of students throughout the stages of the programme*
- *the anticipated student workload according to the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System*
- *the option to provide work experience to the students*
- *the linking of teaching and research*
- *the relevant regulatory framework and the official procedure for the approval of the programme by the Institution*

Study Programme Compliance

The process of design and approval of the UGP or changes to the UGP starts at the level of the Departments in response to student evaluations and/or theoretical and practical changes in the field, both locally and internationally. The process continues with the involvement of the Undergraduate Studies committee, the Strategic Planning committee, and the OMEA. Finally, the proposed plan is submitted to the MODIP, which has the final decision authority.

Each Department of ELL is responsible for setting goals appropriate for the field the Department covers. The curriculum is set to cover the first two years of required courses and the following two years of electives. These may include laboratory based courses, which afford students the opportunities to connect research with learning.

The advisor system helps students progress through the programme's 8 semesters and the ratio of graduating to incoming students stood at 85% for 2019-20 (Document B8).

Work experience is provided through the student teaching practicum, which is required for all students, and informal arrangements with a number of different external partners, including

translation and subtitling companies, the European Parliament and the US Embassy for interested students.

There are several productive research laboratories providing opportunities for students and linking research to teaching for the instructional staff.

ELL follows a well-documented procedure for the design and implementation of changes to the UGP. It tracks student progress and has an impressive record of students graduating at regular intervals.

In conclusion, the EEAP deems ELL to be fully compliant with this Principle.

Panel Judgement

Principle 2: Design and Approval of Programmes	
Fully compliant	**x**
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

- Try to create connections with publishing houses, translation companies, etc. in order to provide more opportunities for students not interested in teaching as a career to gain work experience.
- Change the advisor system (cf. final recommendations)

Principle 3: Student-centred Learning, Teaching and Assessment

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD ENSURE THAT THE 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.

Student-centred learning and teaching plays an important role in stimulating students' motivation, self-reflection and engagement in the learning process. The above entail continuous consideration of the programme's delivery and the assessment of the related outcomes.

The student-centred learning and teaching process
- *respects and attends to the diversity of students and their needs, 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 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.*

In addition:
- *the academic staff are familiar with the existing examination system and methods and are supported in developing their own skills in this field;*
- *the assessment criteria and methods are published in advance;*
- *the assessment allows students to demonstrate the extent to which the intended learning outcomes have been achieved. Students are given feedback, which, if necessary is linked to advice on the learning process;*
- *student assessment is conducted by more than one examiner, where possible;*
- *the regulations for assessment take into account mitigating circumstances;*
- *assessment is consistent, fairly applied to all students and carried out in accordance with the stated procedures;*
- *a formal procedure for student appeals is in place.*

Study Programme Compliance

ELL clearly exhibits a student-centred approach in terms of course and module content, teaching methods, learning goals and outcomes, student and teaching staff assessment and the coupling of theory and practice.

Variety, flexibility but also depth characterise the course content, which both provides a sound foundation for the smooth transition of students from Secondary to Tertiary education and caters for the students' individual interests, inclinations and professional and academic goals. This is exemplified by the multitude of elective courses (65.31%) provided by both the School of ELL itself (e.g. on specialised translation) but also other relevant AUTh Departments, if the student so chooses (e.g. Digital Humanities). Flexibility is also demonstrated in the delivery and

the teaching methods employed for each module; e.g. passive lectures in big 200-seat halls but also interactive seminars and labs in small 20-seat classrooms and, of course, digital tools and work placements at schools and other organisations. Finally, flexibility is also exhibited in the student assessment and examination methods: written and oral exams, classroom presentations, dissertations, research project participation, but also provisions for Special physical and developmental needs (e.g. sight problems, dyslexia).

All the assessment criteria and evaluation methods are published in advance and can be found in great detail in the Study Guide and online. Noteworthy is the existence of individual webpages for each module detailing its content, learning goals, ECT information, assessment methods and attendance requirements.

Students are encouraged to develop individual skills through research projects with one of the 5 research laboratories, participation in Summer Schools, international Conferences and Webinars, work placements, but also active participation in student fora and regular communication with their tutors.

Although the teaching certification is a strong point of ELL, students with no interest in becoming teachers are less well served in that they have no option to strengthen their skills and knowledge in the other areas of ELL's activity (Translation, Linguistics, and Literature).

Course content and teaching effectiveness are evaluated through regular student satisfaction surveys at the end of every semester. Participation in 2019-20 was almost 50% and indicated particularly high satisfaction rates of both course modules and the teaching staff (70-80%). The surveys and the online feedback and comments form are two of several ways for the students to provide feedback and help shape and update the study programme and its delivery.

Individual special student needs are respected and addressed on both departmental and University level through institutions such as the Academic Advisor and the AUTh-wide Social Policy Committee, all of which provide Health, Psychological, Pastoral, as well as Accessibility support; e.g. students with sight problems receive direct support from staff proficient in Braille or Text-to-speech tools; other students may be eligible for oral instead of written exams or for additional time to complete their examination.

Finally, there is a University-wide formal procedure for handling student complaints and appeals, e.g. through the Student Ombudsman.

In conclusion, the UGP of ELL has been found to be fully compliant with this Principle, as it exhibits great flexibility, adaptability and sensitivity towards the needs of its students, while always maintaining rigour and accountability.

Panel Judgement

Principle 3: Student- centred Learning, Teaching and Assessment	
Fully compliant	x
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

- ELL has exhibited great flexibility, efficiency and effectiveness in addressing the high student-staff ratio (43 active students per teaching staff member) by employing support teaching staff and PhD students. Although the oversubscription of the course (170%), the number of new registrations (223%), as well as the number of new hires are all out of ELL's control, the Panel encourages the hiring of additional permanent staff in order to alleviate the heavy workload of its regular teaching staff.

- The number of Academic Advisors should be increased (e.g. to 4) in order to alleviate the workload on the current 2 members of staff. Consider the establishment of a volunteer corps of fourth year/ post-graduate students who would be available, maybe for an hour per week, to help first year students with their transition from high school to university life.

- ELL should also continue its excellent initiatives to encourage higher student participation in the regular satisfaction surveys in order to collect more valuable feedback on ways to optimise the content and delivery and assessment methodologies of the course.

- Although ELL has already put some effort in identifying and contacting the "stagnating" students (46%), the Panel encourages the intensification of efforts to encourage them to complete their studies, always in the framework of the latest GDPR provisions.

- The Panel also recommends that the links to translation, interpreting and subtitling companies and organisations are strengthened and more contacts are established in that regard, in order to provide more translation work experience to the students who would like to follow that career path.

- Finally, given the recent explosion of interest in various language technologies (Natural Language Processing / NLP, Voice Assistants, such as Amazon Alexa, Chatbots) and the current high demand in suitable specialists (e.g. Conversation Designers with a Linguistics background), the Panel recommends offering some introduction to the field of Language applications. This could certainly be in the form of visiting Lectureships or extended External Seminars.

Principle 4: Student Admission, Progression, Recognition and Certification

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

> *Institutions and academic units need to put in place both processes and tools to collect, manage and act on information regarding student progression.*
>
> *Procedures concerning the award and recognition of higher education degrees, the duration of studies, rules ensuring students progression, terms and conditions for student mobility should be based on the institutional study regulations. Appropriate recognition procedures rely on institutional practice for recognition of credits among various European academic departments and Institutions, in line with the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention.*
>
> *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).*

Study Programme Compliance

Students have access to information pertaining to all aspects and stages of their studies mainly through the ELL website and especially through the section on Undergraduate Studies. More detailed information is provided in published regulations available on the abovementioned page, which can be downloaded in pdf format (Greek only). Specifically, students can download the UGP Handbook with detailed information on the structure, content (including ECTS), and learning outcomes of the UGP and practical information on admission, progression and graduation of students, student mobility, examinations, and work placement. There is also separate detailed information on the Dissertation, which is an optional module. Information on graduation is provided on the website, with some details on the modules required based on the year of entry available on the ELL website and further general information available in the UGP Handbook.

Information on student mobility is available on ELL's website under the section 'School', although it would probably be easier to find under the section on Undergraduate studies or even as a separate section to increase its visibility. Here, interested students can find some general information about Erasmus+ and other bilateral agreements of the University, as well as a list of participating institutions for Erasmus+. Additional information can be found on relevant university webpages and through Erasmus+ coordinators.

Practical training is a compulsory element of the UGP and involves a teaching placement in different schools across the country, which is a key element in order to ensure that students receive a teacher status certification upon graduation. Relevant information is provided on the ELL website under the Undergraduate section. Very useful is the FAQ section regarding the teaching placement. Some further opportunities for work placements (e.g. in subtitling or translation) are unofficially provided as part of optional modules, but as these are not formalised opportunities, no information on these is provided on the website.

For more details on information available on the ELL website, please also see Principle 8.

In addition to information available on the website, students also attend events, such as the "Welcome Events" for 1st year students.

The administration supports students by processing their related requests (e.g. enrolling them on modules, issuing transcripts, etc.), which are submitted online through a special platform. Students are provided with all relevant official documents regarding their studies, including transcripts, certificates, etc.

There are clear procedures in place for monitoring student progression. OMEA receives relevant data regarding student performance and the responses to the student surveys and processes it before communicating the results to the Programme Committee and the School Assembly.

The above indicate that all necessary mechanisms are in place to collect, manage and act on information on student progression. Information is clearly presented and generally easy to find. More detailed information could be, however, provided on areas such as registering as a new student (which might also help reduce the number of questions Academic Advisors receive at the beginning of the academic year), examinations, and graduation, particularly considering how complicated the bureaucratic procedure for graduating and obtaining a degree might often appear to students. More parts of the website could also be made available in English.

In conclusion, ELL has offered clear evidence that it develops and applies published regulations that cover all aspects and phases of the UGP.

Panel Judgement

Principle 4: Student Admission, Progression, Recognition and Certification	
Fully compliant	x
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

- Review the website and provide more detailed information where necessary. Frequent questions or requests to Academic Advisors related to registration and graduation might help inform this process.
- Translate more parts of the ELL website into English.
- Make information on student mobility more visible.

Principle 5: Teaching Staff

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD ASSURE THEMSELVES OF THE QUALIFICATIONS AND COMPETENCE OF THE TEACHING STAFF. THEY SHOULD APPLY FAIR AND TRANSPARENT PROCESSES FOR THE RECRUITMENT AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE TEACHING STAFF.

> *The Institutions and their academic units have a major responsibility as to the standard of their teaching staff providing them with a supportive environment that promotes the advancement of their scientific work. In particular, 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 recognize the importance of teaching and research;*
> - *offer opportunities and promote the professional development of the teaching staff;*
> - *encourage scholarly activity to strengthen the link between education and research;*
> - *encourage innovation in teaching methods and the use of new technologies;*
> - *promote the increase of the volume and quality of the research output within the academic unit;*
> - *follow quality assurance processes for all staff members (with respect to attendance requirements, performance, self-assessment, training etc.);*
> - *develop policies to attract highly qualified academic staff.*

Study Programme Compliance

ELL numbers 21 teaching faculty, 11 teaching assistants, plus a small number of visiting scholars, contractors and PhD students who hold teaching scholarships. The staff-student ratio is high (42.7 in 2019-2020 for all students up to v+2), as is the proportion of female members of staff (89.47% in 2019-2020). The excellent reputation of the department puts it in an ideal position to attract highly qualified staff in a wide range of disciplinary areas, which are decided following relevant procedures through the School's Assembly. The processes and criteria for recruitment and promotion are clearly stated and are transparent in accordance with the legal framework.

The teaching workload is heavy with each member of the instructional staff teaching a minimum of 6 hours per week (with some members of staff teaching up to 9) and also offering 3-4 office hours each week for one-to-one meetings with students. The workload is further aggravated by teaching postgraduate courses, supervising students, and meeting with students to monitor their progress. Staff is also involved in a wide range of administrative activities, such as Academic Advisor, Head of School/Department, Head of Research Laboratories, Erasmus coordinator, etc.).

Academic staff also actively participate in diverse research activities, which are mainly facilitated by longer or shorter study leave periods and mobility placements (e.g. Erasmus+), as defined by the current legal framework. Staff mobility is encouraged and the department is a member of the Erasmus+ network and has a bilateral agreement with Fulbright, while it also participates in 54 further university-wide bilateral agreements. The Research Laboratories and Research Teams are excellent initiatives, offering much needed structure in terms of research, opportunities for students to actively take part in research, while also promoting collaborative projects. Linking

Research and Teaching is well supported: members of staff are offered the opportunity to teach on their areas of research expertise while students can participate in research projects.

Research publications mainly include articles in peer-reviewed journals, conference proceedings, monographs, books and chapters in edited volumes. The latest quality indicators from 2019-2020 suggest a good number of articles in peer-reviewed journals and chapters in edited volumes. Quantity and quality of research is encouraged mainly through the formal processes of promotion, but also to a large extent by the existence of the abovementioned Laboratories. ELL is also active in terms of funding applications, with 26 successful applications in the last 10 years. Supporting data suggests that 40 applications have been submitted during this time to a wide range of funding bodies. Based on these data, the success rate for applications submitted in the last 10 years is 65%, which is commendable, while some of the projects have attracted funding of over 200K Euros.

There are some opportunities for Continuous Professional Development (CPD), such as reflection on student feedback, participation in professional bodies, presenting at and attending conferences, while the Library also offers CPD opportunities (e.g. training on new technologies), and staff can attend various workshops (e.g. on putting together funding applications). The Panel considers these opportunities indispensable for staff development and finds particularly noteworthy the unofficial mentoring programme that the department runs for new members of staff.

The above data indicate that despite resource limitations, mainly in terms of permanent academic staff, the department successfully manages to address the teaching needs of the UGP and it performs really well in terms of research. More opportunities could be offered to members of staff to attend formal professional development courses (e.g. on supervising students, managing big projects, or student welfare), and particularly regarding administration duties (e.g. managing others, leadership in HE).

In conclusion, ELL makes an excellent effort to offer staff with a supportive environment that promotes and advances their teaching and scientific work.

Panel Judgement

Principle 5: Teaching Staff	
Fully compliant	x
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

- Although this is an area where the department has limited control over, the number of permanent teaching staff needs to be increased to relieve the heavy workload, which will also improve the staff-student ratio. Steps should also be taken to improve gender balance.
- More CPD opportunities for staff, especially regarding administrative duties.

Principle 6: Learning Resources and Student Support

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD HAVE ADEQUATE FUNDING TO COVER 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 funding and means to support learning and academic activity in general, so that they can offer to students the best possible level of studies. The above means could include facilities such as libraries, study rooms, educational and scientific equipment, information and communications services, support or 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 or international students, students with disabilities) and the shift towards student-centred learning and the adoption of flexible modes of learning and teaching. Support activities and facilities may be organised in various ways, depending on the institutional context. However, the internal quality assurance ensures that all resources are appropriate, adequate, and accessible, and that students are informed about the services available to them.*
>
> *In delivering support services the role of support and administrative staff is crucial and therefore they need to be qualified and have opportunities to develop their competences.*

Study Programme Compliance

ELL provides both its students and staff with all the necessary and appropriate facilities expected from a conductive learning, teaching and work environment. These include: large lecture halls, small intimate seminar classrooms, 5 research laboratories, a Teaching Resource Centre, Computer rooms for teaching and study, as well as teleconferencing and video recording equipment. The laboratories (e.g. the Phonetics Laboratory) are particularly well equipped with state-of-the-art software and hardware. In addition, students have access to other AUTh resources, e.g. the Digital Humanities Laboratory.

Apart from the necessary physical infrastructure, ELL promotes and heavily depends on several electronic services for learning, communication and administrative services, most notably the e-learning platform (class schedules, module content uploads, assignment submission, feedback and grading, plagiarism checks, daily updates, forums and communication with tutors), e-registrar (student registration, grade uploads, form submissions, certifications), the myAuth mobile app, e-library, personal e-mail, digital signature, cloud services and even personal websites for the students, access to the MODIP documentation. IT Support deserves special mention, as its staff received high praise during the Panel's interviews with alumni.

There seems to be a good distribution of physical and digital services between ELL and the University as a whole.

There is a host of other student support services available, some ELL-specific, such as the 2 Academic Advisors and the Student Mobility advisors, and others provided by AUTh (Special Needs, Health, Psychological Support, Accommodation and Boarding infrastructure, Alumni & Career Service).

Students are informed about all the available services both through the very detailed Study Guide and through dedicated pages on the ELL website. They also have the opportunity to ask questions and provide feedback through an online form.

The administrative staff, although low in number, manage to address all of the student needs, in particular after the digitalisation of most admin tasks (e.g. student registration, submission of grades).

In conclusion, ELL is fully compliant in the context of this Principle and is meeting all of the student needs, despite any University or national budget restrictions.

Panel Judgement

Principle 6: Learning Resources and Student Support	
Fully compliant	x
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

None

Principle 7: Information Management

INSTITUTIONS 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.

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

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

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

- *key performance indicators*
- *student population profile*
- *student progression, success and drop-out rates*
- *student satisfaction with their programme(s)*
- *availability of learning resources and student support*
- *career paths of graduates*

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

Study Programme Compliance

ELL collects a wide variety of data regarding the student body, teaching methods and to the extent that it is possible, the career paths of students. The last point is particularly difficult given the changes in the legal frameworks following the introduction of GDPR. The Panel notes, however, that ELL has made distinct efforts to collect such data within the relevant legal strictures and, moreover, that there is an ongoing, national project to streamline the collection of data regarding career paths and that this as well as every other School and department in the county will benefit from that.

ELL collects student evaluation data for modules electronically and, at the University level (MODIP) data is further collected regarding the overall levels of satisfaction of the students with their degree programme as a whole (the exit questionnaire was made available to the Panel by MODIP). ELL uses the University's general information systems (sis.auth.gr) for the management of student data, marks, courses, staff etc.

The members of staff further contribute by filling in staff questionnaires where the various University facilities and services are evaluated.

ELL also collects information on research activity (Publications, Research Grants, Research Infrastructure, etc.) as well as staffing levels and categories alongside data in gender distribution etc.

The data that ELL collects are processed and the relevant statistical information is presented appropriately in tables, graphs and lists as required and is more relevant to the questions at hand each time.

ELL also maintains a very informative website keeping students informed of the different activities in the School.

The above findings indicate a nearly optimal use of the resources made available to ELL. It is clear from the documentation and the discussion that the Panel conducted with various constituencies of ELL that staff make significant use of the data collected in order to improve both the modules but also the Degree programmes as a whole. The information feeds directly into the strategic planning ELL.

In conclusion, ELL places significant emphasis on the collection and analysis of as much data as it is useful and feasible and responds appropriately to statistically significant patterns in terms of programme design and strategic direction within the general legal, financial and other discipline specific constraints.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

None

Principle 8: Public Information

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD PUBLISH INFORMATION ABOUT THEIR TEACHING AND ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES WHICH IS CLEAR, ACCURATE, OBJECTIVE, UP-TO-DATE AND READILY ACCESSIBLE.

Information on Institution's activities is useful for prospective and current students, graduates, other stakeholders and the public.
Therefore, institutions and their academic units provide information about their activities, including the programmes they offer, the intended learning outcomes, the qualifications awarded, the teaching, learning and assessment procedures used, the pass rates and the learning opportunities available to their students, as well as graduate employment information.

Study Programme Compliance

All key information regarding ELL, undergraduate and postgraduate studies, research, announcements, activities, conferences and symposia and contact information is available in separate tabs both in Greek and English, and easily accessible on the website.

The undergraduate studies information is clearly laid out and detailed, describing the four departments comprising ELL. Each department's general description, the courses available, a description of each course, a downloadable course outline, ECTS and mode of assessment are clearly laid out.

On a separate section there is information about the members of the staff with their contact details, brief description of research interests and a link to their CV together with the current courses each member of the staff teaches is also available.

Also available is the programme of studies, the current year's study guide, which can be downloaded, information on registration on the course with a link to the electronic registration webpage, a brief description of the assistance offered by academic advisors together with a form that can be filled in and submitted. The information in this section is very brief.

It should be noted that there are some sections that are available only in Greek. These are: Graduation criteria, teaching certificate, the course registration section includes FAQs and announcements only in Greek. Also only in Greek is information on work experience.

The Quality Assurance policy and its implementation are available in Greek in the general information for the department, together with the two latest internal evaluation reports and the last external evaluation report. Although the external evaluation report is in English no relevant information is available on the English part of the site.

Please see also principle 4 for relevant information.

In conclusion, the Panel has found that the UGP is fully compliant with the principle.

Panel Judgement

Principle 8: Public Information	
Fully compliant	x
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

● Offer more information on academic advisors in the relevant section of the student handbook.

● Make all relevant information for undergraduates available in both languages on the website.

Principle 9: On-going Monitoring and Periodic Internal Review of Programmes

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD HAVE IN PLACE AN INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM FOR THE AUDIT AND ANNUAL INTERNAL REVIEW OF THEIR 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 study programmes aim to maintain the level of educational provision and to create 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. Revised programme specifications are published.

Study Programme Compliance

ELL has in place a robust system of internal evaluation following the current legal requirements and the requirements specific to the AUTH. Furthermore, ELL provides a significant amount of data to the HAHE which further contribute to the evaluation process.

ELL's internal evaluation group (OMEA) draws on a variety of data sources in order to measure the effectiveness of teaching, research productivity, Departmental visibility etc. In collaboration with the University's unit for quality assurance (MODIP) it conducts annual audits and recommends/undertakes relevant actions aiming at the continuous improvement of ELL in all aspects of its activity (Teaching, Research, Administration, External relations and so on). We have seen concrete examples relating to student workload, the cohesion of the programme, updates to the programme with a focus in interdisciplinary, the integration of electronic assessment methods (beyond what was needed for the Pandemic) etc.

ELL monitors the rate of completion and acts when needed. (See also principle 7 in connection with data regarding student satisfaction etc.)

The accreditation proposal contains a wealth of examples of recommendations and how they were taken forward. The Panel had the opportunity to discuss with members of ELL the process, recommendations and schedules for implementation.

These findings show that the processes of self-evaluation, critical reflection that leads to concrete action in order to bring about the continuous improvement of the programme ELL in general across the range of its activities is well embedded within the fabric of the Department leading to significant improvement over time.

ELL keeps a watchful eye on the programme and through mechanisms in place can take appropriate action when such action is needed. In conclusion, ELL is fully compliant with this principle.

Panel Judgement

Principle 9: On-going Monitoring and Periodic Internal Review of Programmes	
Fully compliant	**x**
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

● Ensure that more recent internal evaluations (where they exist) are uploaded to the website. Perhaps also link to that page from the English version of the site (noting of course that some of the reports are in Greek).

Principle 10: Regular External Evaluation of Undergraduate Programmes

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

> *HAHE is responsible for administrating the programme accreditation process which is realised as an external evaluation procedure, and implemented by a committee of independent experts. HAHE grants accreditation of programmes, 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 template's requirements, and as a catalyst for improvement, while opening new perspectives towards the international standing of the awarded degrees.*
>
> *Both academic units and institutions participate in the regular external quality assurance process, while respecting the requirements of the legislative framework in which they operate.*
>
> *The quality assurance, in this case the accreditation, is an on-going process that does not end with the external feedback, or report or its follow-up process within the Institution. Therefore, Institutions and their academic units ensure that the progress made since the last external quality assurance activity is taken into consideration when preparing for the next one.*

Study Programme Compliance

ELL had one external evaluation in 2013 by HQA, HAHE's predecessor. It has also undergone two internal evaluations by OMEA, one in 2010-11 and one in 2012-13. All evaluation reports are available online.

The members of staff are fully aware of the value of the external evaluation and were helpful, willing to provide information and happy to offer their viewpoints and experiences from ELL. The staff is keen on receiving the relevant accreditation. The measures and steps taken for the improvement according to the previous external report's recommendations and the ways improvements were achieved because of them were emphasized to the Panel members.

It is very encouraging to see that ELL takes into account both internal and external evaluations as well as student and staff evaluations.

Current and past students were happy to participate in the discussions and apart from minor criticisms with regards to the administration, they had very positive comments about the ELL and its departments. They were also fully aware of the value of the external evaluation process but did not express any certainty that they would get any further feedback about it. One student in particular, said that they were not aware of the reports until they were invited to participate in the process.

Stakeholders on the other hand, explained that they do hear about evaluations and expressed the certainty that they would hear both the results as well as the measures taken after this one.

In conclusion, the EEAP deems that ELL is fully compliant with this Principle.

Panel Judgement

Principle 10: Regular External Evaluation of Undergraduate Programmes	
Fully compliant	**x**
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

- Encourage students to read evaluation reports and expect feedback from external evaluations.

- Suggest that stakeholders look with a critical eye at the ELL and offer recommendations rather than feel that they only have to give positive feedback.

PART C: CONCLUSIONS

I.   Features of Good Practice

Excellent teaching staff, as evidenced by current and former student comments.

Many activities (esp. theatre and cultural events) taking place in many known places of the city in an effort to promote cultural awareness and strengthen connections with the people of Thessaloniki.

Cooperation with organisations such as the Hellenic Association for American Studies and the Hellenic Association for the Study of English, whereby cooperation and closer relationships with similar departments is encouraged.

Certificate of teaching proficiency to students is advantageous as it offers graduates the opportunity to immediately embark on a teaching career.

High quality of research as demonstrated particularly by the cutting edge Laboratories and the number of successful funding applications. Equipment and technologies used in these Laboratories are impressive.

A well-designed and intellectually stimulating UGP, catering for different intellectual needs and interests of students.

Excellent Information Technology support by the staff member responsible, as evidenced by the comments of all involved parties, both instructors and students.

II.   Areas of Weakness

Work placements opportunities are rather limited and do not seem to sufficiently cater for students who are not interested in teaching English as a foreign language.

Loss of permanent teaching positions in the preceding years has resulted in very high workloads and negatively impacts the staff-student ratio.

Academic advisors have got a very heavy workload during peak demand times, e.g. initial registrations, etc.

III.   Recommendations for Follow-up Actions

1. Although this is an area where the department has limited control over, the number of permanent teaching staff needs to be increased to relieve the heavy workload.
2. Offer staff more CPD opportunities to develop their research and academic profile, focusing also on supporting them in administrative duties.

3. Consider reviewing the compulsory work placement module and explore ways in which alternative or additional work placement options (e.g. in the translation or cultural sectors or elsewhere in industry).

4. The current arrangement provides for two faculty members to be available as advisors to students in all years of attendance. The two members currently serving are both recent additions in their pre-tenure years. Consider increasing the number of advisors to 4, 2 for students in their first two years of enrollment and 2 for students in the third year of enrollment and beyond. Consider dividing the workload between junior and senior faculty.

5. Higher student participation in the regular satisfaction surveys should be promoted.

6. Intensify efforts to encourage the "stagnating" students (v + 2) to complete their studies, always in the framework of the latest GDPR provisions.

7. Likewise, gather more data on the Alumni and particularly their career progression.

8. Offer some introduction to the field of Language applications (e.g. Conversation Design for Chatbots or voice assistants with a Linguistics and Creative writing focus), e.g. through visiting Lectureships or extended ad-hoc External Seminars.

IV.   Summary & Overall Assessment

The Principles where full compliance has been achieved are: **1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10**

The Principles where substantial compliance has been achieved are: **None**

The Principles where partial compliance has been achieved are: **None**

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

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

The members of the External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel

Name and Surname   **Signature**

1. **Professor Margaritis Fourakis** (Chair)
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2. **Dr Maria Aretoulaki**
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