Accreditation Report
for the Undergraduate Study Programme of:

Food Science and Nutrition
Institution: University of the Aegean
Date: 19 December 2020
Report of the Panel appointed by the HAHE to undertake the review of the Undergraduate Study Programme of Food Science and Nutrition of the University of the Aegean for the purposes of granting accreditation
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I. The External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel

The Panel responsible for the Accreditation Review of the Undergraduate Study Programme of the Food Science and Nutrition of the University of the Aegean comprised the following four (4) members, drawn from the HAHE Register, in accordance with Laws 4009/2011 & 4653/2020:

1. **Associate Professor Vasileios Valdramidis (Chair)**  
   University of Malta, Malta

2. **Dr Demetrios Kazantzis**  
   President Food and Beverages Consultants, U.S.A.

3. **Associate Professor George Manganaris**  
   Cyprus University of Technology, Cyprus

4. **Mr Loukianos Kontelas**  
   Member of the Geotechnical Chamber of Greece (President of the An. Ster. Annex), Greece
II. Review Procedure and Documentation

Due to the current Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, and following the measures taken to limit its further spread, the Hellenic Authority for Higher Education (HAHE), 1 decided to implement the accreditation review process of the undergraduate study programme of the Department of Food Science and Nutrition of the University of the Aegean (UoA) via teleconferences. All briefings and meetings were conducted efficiently and within the allotted time frame through the Zoom platform. Replacing the on-site visits with virtual meetings was a challenge for all participating parties. The videoconferences proceeded without any technical problems. However, the lack of face-to-face contact and physical presence of the Panel members at the premises of the Institution was a missing element.

On Tuesday 1\textsuperscript{st} of December 2020, all External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel (EEAP) members received a HAHE Cloud link from where they could download the Accreditation support material. They also received guidelines for using the Zoom teleconference platform. On Monday, the 7\textsuperscript{th} of December 2020, a two-hour orientation meeting was held with the HAHE’s Director General Dr. Besta via Zoom. The EEAP members, Vasileios Valdramidis, Demetrios Kazantzis, Loukianos Kontelas and George Manganaris joined the meeting. Dr Besta presented information on HAHE mission, standards and guidelines of QA accreditation process, and national framework of HEIs. The provided material was very informative for the members of our Panel. The EEAP received the final timetable for the teleconferences on the 10\textsuperscript{th} of December 2020 and the Chair of the Panel was requested to act as the host for all debriefing and private meetings among the EEAP members. Before the ‘virtual’ visit to UoA, the EEAP members had a private zoom meeting on the 14\textsuperscript{th} of December 2020 and discussed the strategy and issues to be considered during the visit.

The Chair allocated the tasks to be undertaken by each Panel member. On the 15\textsuperscript{th} of December 2020 at 15.00 a teleconference with the Vice-Rector/President of MODIP (Prof. Elena Theodoropoulou) & the Head of the Department Assoc. Prof. Konstantinos Gkatzionis (Head since 1\textsuperscript{st} of September 2020), and Assoc. Prof Charalampos Karantonis (Head until 31 August 2020) was held at 14.00. Prof. Elena Theodoropoulou provided a brief comprehensive presentation of the history and academic profile of UoA. Prof. Konstantinos Gkatzionis presented a short overview of the Department of Food Science and Nutrition including a structure of the UoA units, history and structure of the Department, lecturing facilities, outline of undergraduate course, current strategies, research activities, programme revisions, and international network activities.

The teleconference meetings continued with 10 members of the MODIP and OMEA including the Head of MODIP Prof. Elena Theodoropoulou and the Head of the Department Assoc. Prof.

\footnote{Abbreviated terms: Hellenic Authority for Higher Education (HAHE), External Evaluation and Accreditation Panel (EEAP), Quality Assurance Unit (QAU/MODIP), Internal Evaluation Group (IEG/OMEA), Agricultural University of Athens (AUA), Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), Quality Assurance Policy (QAP)}
Konstantinos Gkatzionis. Assoc. Prof. Charalampos Karantonis (previous Head of Department) presented the compliance degree of their UP with each principle of the “Standards for Quality Accreditation of Undergraduate Programmes” in a very comprehensive and analytical way.

Following this presentation, a variety of issues were discussed, focusing mainly on the curriculum revisions since the last external evaluation in 2013, the students’ progression, and assignments, as well as graduates’ professional opportunities. Concerns were expressed and ideas were put forward towards addressing the issue of the professional rights of the graduates and the need of diversified new academic staff members with complementary expertise. The admission to the programme of students with low qualifications was also discussed in relation to the adaptation of study units to address any weaknesses. Finally, the recent creation of new undergraduate programmes with relevant or overlapping UPs was highlighted and its impact on students’ redistribution was discussed. The teleconference continued with the participation of 5 members of the teaching staff who thoroughly discussed the undergraduate study programme, the interrelations between teaching and research activities, the professional development opportunities, the faculty workload, projects and research activities, the summer placements and the undergraduate students’ questionnaire evaluations.

Subsequently, the EEAP met and discussed with a group of 10 students. One or two representatives of each study year (from 1st to the 6th) were present. Discussions were held about issues related to their studies, the Departmental/Institutional facilities, and the student life welfare. At the end of the first day, the EEAP held a private debriefing meeting to reflect on the impressions of the teleconferences and forwarded to the Chair of the Department a request list for supplementary material that included: i) presentations of Assoc. Prof. Konstantinos Gkatzionis and Assoc. Prof. Charalampos Karantonis, ii) the original files of the periodic internal review of programmes, iii) example of the degree certificate and its supplementary in Greek and English, iv) calls of the recent academic positions, v) distribution of teaching workload between academics, teaching and technical staff, vi) ratio of bibliographic/research dissertations, vii) example of three dissertations that resulted in research publications. Additional material was requested the next days including: i) teaching academic contribution per staff member, ii) drop-out students, iii) availability of any scholarships to award undergraduate students’ excellence, iv) any professional development opportunities of the teaching staff. Replies were provided very promptly to EEAP, which helped to continue its assessment smoothly.

The teleconferences continued the following day, 16th of December 2020 with 5 administrative and teaching staff members. The EEAP members have been ‘guided’ virtually at the premises of the Department Laboratories, including Institutional facilities with the previously prepared video. The expansions of the laboratory facilities were showcased while current limitations were also highlighted considering the high number of admitted students per year. The next teleconference meetings involved alumni graduates of the Department currently located in Greece or abroad who expressed their opinion for the study programme, teaching and research, facilities, and the career paths they have followed.
Following this session, a group of external stakeholders from the private and the public sector had a meeting with EEAP. The EEAP discussed their contacts, links to the Department, and their experiences with graduates and Departmental staff as well as the current impact of the Departmental activities on the public and private sector. The second day of the review ended with a joint teleconference meeting of OMEA & MODIP representatives along with the Vice Rector and the Department Head. During this meeting, the discussions focused on issues that needed further clarification. The Chair of the EEAP concluded the meeting presenting the key findings of the review highlighting the impressive progress since the external evaluation that was held back in 2013. From Thursday, the 17th of December to Saturday, the 19th of December, the EEAP members worked both independently and as a team on their assigned tasks on the Accreditation Report. The teamwork was accomplished via teleconferences, as organized by the Chair.

The EEAP acknowledges the spirit of cooperation shown from the entire Department’s staff and their willingness to collaborate and work towards supporting the University’s Quality Assurance policy at all levels and towards contributing to the upgrading of the quality standards of the Department. The process of accreditation review via teleconference was deemed sufficient and efficient. All individuals who participated in the e-meetings had the opportunity to voice their views.
III. Study Programme Profile

The University of the Aegean was founded in 1984 (Presidential Decree 83/1984) and is one of the newest Universities in Greece. The headquarters of the University of the Aegean is in Mytilene, while its Schools and Departments now operate in the island cities of Mytilene, Chios, Samos, Rhodes, Syros and Lemnos forming a University-Network in the Aegean. The University of the Aegean consists of 6 schools, i.e., Engineering, Social science, Environment, Business, Sciences, and Humanities. The Department of Food Science and Nutrition (located in Lemnos) and is part of the School of the Environment.

The Department of Food Science and Nutrition (DFSN) was established in 2007 (Presidential Decree 35 / 21-2-2007, Sheet No. 32, Issue A). It is the 17th Department of the University of the Aegean and the 1st in the University Unit of Lemnos. The Department of Food Science and Nutrition (DFSN) aims at the comprehensive study of food, through the thorough training of its students, so that, as future Food and Nutrition Scientists, they will be able to make a decisive contribution to the production, processing and handling of foods that will cover in quality, quantity and nutritional value the needs of human subjects.

The Department of Food Science and Nutrition is housed in several existing buildings that have been offered and upgraded by local stakeholders. The buildings are short distance away and most of them are located in the city centre of Myrina. The bodies governing the Department of Food Science and Nutrition are the Assembly, which is composed of the President, the other faculty members, the representative of Special Laboratory and Teaching Staff (SLTS) members, the representative Laboratory Technical Staff (LTS) members and the representative of the students.

The structure of the undergraduate curriculum in Food Science and Nutrition, which covers 8 semesters, is based on the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS). In order to obtain a Degree from Department of Food Science and Nutrition students must pass all 35 required courses including the Undergraduate Thesis. Students must also pass 10 elective courses (courses that students must choose -based on her/his interests). The total number of T.C. (Teaching Credits) and ECTS credits must be at least 160 and 240, respectively. The Ministry of Education allows the admission of 128 students in average annually, out of whom around 80 actually pursue their studies. This leads to a total of ca. 606 students following the undergraduate programme in Food Science and Nutrition.
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

- The quality assurance policy (QAP) has been developed and approved recently, i.e., 6.5.2020.
• The QAP of the Department is available online in a downloadable format in accordance with the guiding document by HAHE. No English version of the QAP is available.
• QAP is being communicated through the Departmental website solely.
• The quality policy statement of the academic unit includes its commitment to implement a quality policy and has identified specific Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) which aim at the programme’s continuous improvement.
• The EEAP realizes that the accreditation process and QAP is a newly introduced policy and the Department is encouraged to take practical steps towards its implementation.

Panel Judgement

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Panel Recommendations

• QAP is recommended to be amended, and further elaborate on how it aims to meet the mentioned principles and quality procedures.
• The English version of QAP should be developed, reflecting the content of the Greek version, outlining Department’s strategic vision towards quality assurance procedures of its current study programme. This document will need to be uploaded in the English version of the Departmental website.
• The Department needs to explore further ways to disseminate and render most prominently available its revised QAP to an array of target audiences (undergraduate students, alumni, stakeholders and social partners, policy makers) and wider for the general public.
• The main outputs of the internal annual reviews and audits of the quality assurance system of the undergraduate programme needs to be made available on the dedicated Department’s website where the external evaluation reports and the QAP are included.
• A review and an internal audit of the undergraduate programme should be conducted and then communicated annually.


To be adjusted to the character and special requirements of the current study programme, explain abbreviated terms (ΟΜΕΑ, ΜΟΔΙΠ) and correct a minor typesetting error in a headline
Principle 2: Design and Approval of Programmes


**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 current curriculum comprises both mandatory and elective courses, a 2-month internship (offered as elective course), and a thesis. The thesis in its majority (80% according to OMEA statement) is laboratory – research based which is a good track record, and some examples of undergraduate research activities leading to peer-reviewed scientific publications have been also mentioned.

- The undergraduate curriculum was developed by following a defined written process. It includes appropriate information about learning outcomes, general abilities, course outline, teaching methods and structure, student assessment and recommended bibliographic sources. The curricula and practices of other international (Pen State, Utah State) and National (University of Thessaly, Agricultural University of Athens) Departments of Food Science and Nutrition have been appropriately consulted.

- The Student Guide is a well-articulated document that was provided in both Greek and English languages. Another file is providing the syllabi that contains information about learning outcomes, general abilities, course outlines, teaching methods and structure, student assessment and recommended reference sources.
Students participate on the evaluation of all courses (theoretical and laboratory) anonymously through well-articulated written/electronic questionnaires, yet in exceptionally low numbers (ca. 15%). Evaluation includes every aspect of the educational process, including instructor’s ability and teaching methodology, supervisory means, educational material, etc.

Continuous improvement of all aspects of teaching is based on the results of the students’ evaluation, students’ performance, and other data related to registered students. Statistics on course evaluation are available in the MODIP Portal. Questionnaires are examined by the course instructors and the Department’s OMEA Committee. OMEA reports the results to the Undergraduate Studies Committee and propose improvements to the General Assembly of the Department. Through this process, improvement and continuous update of the curriculum occurs efficiently.

The Department effectively manages to integrate its students and staff in the local community and cooperates well with stakeholders and relative health services that actively support its activities and mission. An advisory board with external stakeholders is in place and is expected to be formalised soon. Its members already expressed their interest in contributing to future Departmental initiatives, including assistance in the revision of the undergraduate study programme.

The stages of the programme contribute to a smooth progress of students as it includes basic and specialized courses related to the pre-defined objectives of the Department for the provision of comprehensive knowledge on Food Science and Nutrition. Basic scientific background at the level of Physical Chemistry, Mathematics and Biology is obtained ensuring the smooth transition of students to the next stage of study, where they focus on more specialized interdisciplinary subjects. An imbalanced exposure to Nutritional subjects is evident.

The student workload is not fully aligned according to the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System since the number of ECTS differ among semesters.

The attendance of theoretical courses is rather low. The EEAP felt that a number of offered courses may not be attractive for physical attendance and instructors need to apply mitigation measures were appropriate.

Current curriculum revision procedure appears not to involve actively stakeholders, external experts, students, and graduates.

Panel Judgement

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Panel Recommendations

Considering that DFSN is part of the 3rd Scientific Field (Health Sciences), based on the
current system of admission to Higher Education, more courses in the field of Nutrition should be included in the next revision of the programme towards a more balanced curriculum.

- The practical placement (via sponsored internship at the local industry or other local stakeholders) should be considered to become mandatory for all undergraduate students.
- The external advisory board should be activated and be more operational with active participation in the restructure of the newly developed undergraduate study programme.
- To activate participation of students to the evaluation of the courses either by revision of the questionnaire or by its obligatory completion.
- Featured research thesis [graded with distinction (10,0)] should be uploaded in a dedicated area (in addition to the library website https://www.lib.aegean.gr/el/parartima-limnoy) on the Departmental website to serve as examples of best practices.
- More recent bibliography (of the past 10 years) of study units should be provided for some modules.
- Curriculum revision procedures should be implemented with active involvement of alumni, stakeholders, policy makers and external experts.
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

- The student-centred character of the undergraduate programme is satisfactorily expressed. The 2/3 of the courses is linked with an experimental component. Students can select among a number of electives during the last year of their studies.
- The graduation rate of active students (4+2 years), based on the data received for three consecutive years, is exceptionally low.
- Interviewed students and graduates appeared to be positive of the overall knowledge received and how this is expected to contribute to their professional development and careers.
The participation rate in the theoretical part of some courses is very low.
Course material is available to the students through e-class or Moodle, although it is not evident the percentage of modules that are promptly uploaded online.
Students are required to complete evaluation questionnaires for all courses taught through well-articulated questionnaires. The low participation in these surveys need to be addressed.
The EEAP was not informed about any complaints by the students but additionally is not aware of any formal appeal procedure.
The research-oriented thesis is a good proof of evidence of the nature of the student-centred character.

Panel Judgement

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Panel Recommendations

- Higher success graduation rates [for active students (v+2)] to enhance the standing of the Department at national level.
- The Department needs to dissect the option to offer areas of specialization via an adequate number of elective courses within the full facet of food science and nutrition. Considering that an amended study programme will be soon developed, the Department may consider the option during the 4th year to offer courses in two directions (Food Science and Food Nutrition).
- Courses with low attendance and/or poor results by the student’s feedback (<3.7) should be re-evaluated and revamped as needed and the teaching faculty. Recommended mitigation actions could include mid-term examinations, homework leading to major unit examinations, online periodic computer graded assessment over reading assignments.
- The Department and the University should further encourage or identify measures for increasing the completion level of the questionnaire.
- Electronic course material (.pptx presentations in pdf format) should be readily available for all modules via the e-class platform.
- Communication and feedback input should be enhanced with current and past students, utilizing social media platforms with an academic orientation.
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

- The Department organizes welcoming and orientation sessions for incoming students, informing them about the Department, the curriculum, the research laboratories, facilities, and other topics.
- Students are informed through the Departments’ website about the courses offered, the learning outcomes, level, and content of studies.
- An academic advisor is assigned for each incoming student and for every year of the studies to monitor student progression.
- A Diploma Supplement is produced by the Department, which explains thoroughly the qualification(s) gained, the content, and the status of the studies that were pursued and is in both Greek and English.
- The ECTS system is applied in all courses taught. In order to obtain a Degree from Department of Food Science and Nutrition students must pass all 35 required courses including the Undergraduate Thesis. Students must also pass 10 elective courses (courses that students must choose -based on her/his interests). The total number of T.C. (Teaching Credits) and ECTS credits must be at least 160 and 240, respectively. The Ministry of Education allows the admission of ca. 130 students on annual basis, out of whom around 80 actually pursue their studies.
- Student mobility is promoted by the Department, which has developed mainly bilateral agreements with Universities inside and outside the EU. There is no incoming mobility of students and/or academic staff so far which allows further room for improvement. Current year’s plans for incoming motilities were hampered by the current COVID-19 lockdowns. Specific KPIs for mobility have been set by the Department.
- Practical training (internship) starting after completing the 4th semester of studies lasts for 2 months. Students can participate in the Food Industry and other private entities.

- Scholarship awards for undergraduate students’ excellence were implemented in some cases in the past.

Panel Judgement

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Panel Recommendations

- The total ECTS for graduation, including Diploma thesis and Internship, should be in total 240 ECTS and each semester to account for a total of 30 ECTS.

- Incoming mobilities should be enhanced and a dedicated area should be developed in the Departmental website in addition to the existing Erasmus page of the institution. [https://erasmus.aegean.gr/el/synergazomena-idrymata](https://erasmus.aegean.gr/el/synergazomena-idrymata).

- The role of Academic Advisor should be further enhanced as a means to monitor student progression and at the same time reduce the years of attendance and enhance student graduation rates.

- The outstanding performance of undergraduate students should be further rewarded through sponsored scholarships (to be attracted by stakeholders) as a means of student’s performance recognition at an annual basis.
**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.*

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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.

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**Study Programme Compliance**

- The Departmental recruitment and promotion policies are consistent with the practices and the rules and regulations of both the University and the Ministry of Education. It is important that the new academic positions have attracted a considerable number of applications.

- There are no professional development opportunities of the teaching staff (i.e., start-up grant, mentoring). This is understandable considering the limited Departmental budget.

- The Department’s Accreditation proposal has not provided a strategy to enhance mobility opportunities through Erasmus+, whereas sabbatical leaves are difficult to undertake due to the limited staff in most laboratories.

- The students expressed a general satisfaction with the majority of the courses. The average rating per course is 3.9 out of 5.0, based on the evaluation questionnaires.

- The average weekly teaching load of the Faculty is 9 h, well above the threshold of 6 h that is set by the law.

- The research carried out by Departmental staff is being funded almost exclusively by national funds and a considerable number of projects have been recently awarded that is expected to give a dynamic in the Department.

- The performance of academic personnel regarding their publication record has been provided through the HAHE templates. A number of Faculty has decent publication record and recognition (reflected in the number of publications in referred journals, citations, and h-index), yet in some other cases scores are lower than what was is normally expected.
The Department has adopted a research strategy focusing on specific scientific areas and research activities, evidenced by the establishment of three research Laboratories.

Panel Judgement

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Panel Recommendations

- After the recruitment of the 4 new positions, the new Department positions should be filled strategically and in disciplines that will maximize the potential for growth in research and teaching capacity.
- The Department should consider hiring candidates with qualifications that will ensure the seeding of new ideas and the introduction of innovative teaching methods.
- Promotion rules are set by the Ministry of Education. It is at the discretion of the Department to consider establishing internal quality standards criteria for promotion with appropriate adjustments for the unique needs of each specialization.
- Staff members are encouraged to be actively involved in organization of Conferences, training seminars, day-long events and symposia that will help the outreach and increase visibility of the Department to the scientific community and wider.
- It is advised that an Action Plan that will encourage the professional development of the Academic staff with particular attention to Assistant/Associate Professors, as well as to Special Scientific Personnel [ΕΔΙΠ] with significant scientific outputs.
- A strategy for attracting lecturers/researchers from abroad for short, medium, and long-term visits (i.e., sabbaticals) and lecturing in the Department need to be established.
- A policy of promoting and rewarding excellence in teaching needs to be adopted based on the students’ questionnaire surveys and other related achievements and activities of the teaching staff.
- The EEAP wishes to highlight that the necessity to develop expertise in fish (as reported in the early evaluation report) and meat products should be better addressed.
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

- Based on the comprehensive virtual tour, the Department is housed in five different buildings in the Centre of Myrina (Lemnos) without a main campus. The buildings include classrooms, teaching and research laboratories. The staff has included PowerPoint presentations and short videos of all the workshops on the Department's website.

- The Department’s teaching facilities comprise quite a small number of lecture rooms, two research laboratories and analytical equipment. There is only one large lecture room (amphitheatre) which is explicitly assigned to each undergraduate semester. Furthermore, the one Amphitheatre has the possibility to be divided into two smaller lecture rooms.

- The newly acquired equipment are state-of-the-art but more equipment are needed to fulfil the requirements of both teaching and research needs. The Department got funding through National and regional projects. Moreover, every laboratory has well-equipped rooms-offices and research facilities to mostly cover the needs of both the academic and technical staff, along with the research students. There are two botanical gardens for teaching and research purposes.

- The Administrative staff comprises of three members. The EEAP felt during the e-meetings that both academic staff and students were highly satisfied by their services.

- The Department has dormitory facilities for a rather limited number of students.
- There is a restaurant in the Dormitory’s ground floor, which serves mainly Greek menus to all students. Students expressed their satisfaction with the facilities and the quality of meals.
- The Department does not have its own sport facilities, and student athletic clubs but there are some municipal infrastructures for adequate extracurricular activities.

Panel Judgement

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Panel Recommendations

- The Laboratories need to be expanded with more equipment tightly aligned with the growing number of admissions (in the undergraduate and graduate programme), teaching staff and research activities.
- The Department should additionally invest in infrastructure that is tightly linked with the need of a modern Department that serves the disciplines of food science and food nutrition.
- Botanical gardens should be further considered for research activities related to health-promoting medicinal plants
- More supportive teaching staff (ΕΕΔΙΠ/ΕΤΕΠ) will need to be hired to address future teaching and research activities.
- Dissect options for further support of low-income students and deterring them from distant learning and enhance physical attendance of the courses and interaction with Faculty.
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

- The Department has established and operates an information system for managing and monitoring data of students, teaching staff and course structure that has been aligned with KPIs. These data were used to prepare the Department’s accreditation proposal and the presentation of the Department to the EEAP. Information on student population profiles and student and staff satisfaction surveys was adequately summarized. The presentation of data in graphs allowed the EEAP in demonstrating trends and allowing direct interpretations and comparisons. This information is communicated to all Faculty and staff.

- Staff satisfaction surveys and exploitation of data related to the availability and accessibility of resources (i.e., equipment, social services, website visits, other social services) do not appear to be available.

- An Alumni Association is currently under development. Such an Association would prove useful in tracking the career of graduates, finding jobs for new graduates, and securing support when needed.
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Panel Recommendations

- Establish an official Alumni Association and track their employability
- Track career paths of alumni and keep them involved with the Department’s students.
- Regular implementation of student and staff satisfaction surveys must be carried out and communication of the main findings should be realized towards further improvement.
- Regularly conducted staff satisfaction surveys and exploitation of data related to the availability and accessibility of resources (i.e., equipment, social services, website visits, other social services) will further help the information management.
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

- The Department communicates its teaching and academic activities mainly through its website.

- Undergraduate Programme Guide curriculum is available online in a downloadable format both in Greek and English as a single file, yet the curriculum needs to be updated with the most amended versions.

- The website provides details about the structure, human resources, laboratories, and infrastructure.

- Announcements and press releases are available on the Home page without distinct separation mode.

- The QAP is available online (Greek version) and needs to be amended based on the recommendations provided in Principle 1.

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Panel Recommendations

- EEAP feels that the restructuring and maintenance of Departmental website need to be re-developed, be updated, become more user-friendly. To this aim, the contribution of Institutional IT services is critical.
- Data and links of the website need to be substantially updated and presented in an integrated and easily accessible manner. It should include brief bio and research activities of each faculty member in a user-friendly manner, individual syllabi per module, procedures, outreach activities, etc.
- A dedicated section referring to academic staff should be developed aligned with brief bio, teaching assignments, research interests etc.
- The English version of the website should be substantially amended reflect the respective content depicted in the Greek version.
- The Department is encouraged to take advantage of social media presence with academic nature to increase visibility of its research and teaching activities.
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

- The Department of Food Science and Nutrition of the University of the Aegean in Lemnos has self-assessment procedures in place, but it was not clear that they were implemented annually.
- The outcome of the self-assessment was recorded extensively and in detail for the benefit of the QAU/MODIP of the department. This is a small department, and the majority is sharing the outcome within the department. Implementation procedures are in place and are communicated effectively.
- The EEAP feels that the curriculum content must be revised in the light of the new personnel that will be recruited and the latest research, thus ensuring that the programme is up-to-date. It is also uncertain whether the content is revised based on the changing needs of society, given that alumni and stakeholders are not involved in the process.
- The addition of new teaching and lab faculty, as well as new labs facilitated in the application of the latest research and knowledge. However, this is a fluid concept and should be revisited very frequently. The major influence on the changing needs of society depends on whether faculty members utilize up-to-date information in their lessons. Unfortunately, this is difficult to measure accurately.
- Student expectations with the programme was sufficiently successful, given the current conditions of partial student distance learning and percentage of attendance. The students attending the programme felt comfortable in all different years of progress with the learning environment, available labs, faculty support and administrative services. Additionally, they carried the necessary knowledge and skills to be effective in their chosen careers. Student workload, progression, and completion was followed successfully.
Panel Judgement

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Panel Recommendations

- Curriculum reviews should be attended by alumni, stakeholders, and professional representatives to provide constructive feedback to build a more effective and up-to-date programme.

- The Department should consider establishing a policy of a mandatory (and if possible, longer) practical training (internships) in order to prepare the students adequately for real industry experience and probably future employment in this era of high unemployment and underemployment of the educated work-force.

- The annual self-assessment reports of the study programme should be publicly released through the Departmental website and via other dissemination and communication tools.
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

- The Department of Food Science and Nutrition of the University of Aegean underwent an external evaluation in 2013 administered by HQA, which was the previous name of HAHE.

- According to departmental documentation - the addition of newly established labs, an auditorium, and equipment - allowed the department to accomplish more than 75% of the recommendations suggested by the previous external evaluation committee. These accomplishments were also supported by hiring new faculty, grant activity, student awards and competition. Additionally, alumni testimony verified these accomplishments. Taking into consideration the financial restrictions and space accommodations, the department has done an excellent job in performing their uphill task.

- The department has not undergone any other external review other than their HQA evaluation in 2013.

- All stakeholders are familiar and fully aware of the importance of the external review process, especially for the benefits of the recommendations and eventual compliance towards the recent upgrades and requirements of an awarded degree by the aforementioned department, according to the template requirements.

- The Department of Food Science and Nutrition of the University of the Aegean located on the sun-drenched and picturesque island of Lemnos with its unique history from the Homeric, Byzantine, and modern times, presents a study of continuous modernizing challenges. It offers a location close to the border of a foreign country and at the same time an abundance of natural resources – rich soil, free sun – as well as close proximity to a fertile
sea that provides a treasure ready to be discovered and introduced to the always-hungry consumer.

- The Department has been developing in the right direction and the improvements are obvious. The Panel was pleasantly impressed with a positive outcome despite the specific restrictions of available land, buildings, and the concentration of the institution in a single location. The fact that the University and the department are fairly young, does not stop them from trying to achieve the best of their abilities.

- The presentations by the President and the supporting members of the staff were clear with attention to the details and created a picture of an institution that cares about the quality and the development of the required standards by the Greek Educational directives. They covered a whole array of basic statistical requirements in terms of the progress of the department with good results to match, but always plenty of room for improvement.

Panel Judgement

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Panel Recommendations

- Dissect additional avenues of self-assessment of the study programme, such as monitoring student expectations, degree of satisfaction, face to face exit interviews, and social media, at an annual or bi-annual basis.

- The Department in conjunction with an external advisory board (composed of members of Academic, alumni, local stakeholders, policy makers) should develop a strategic plan with detailed action plans and implementation timelines, providing a roadmap of activities for future accreditations/evaluations that should include frequent assessments in form of self-evaluation, audits etc.
PART C: CONCLUSIONS

I. Features of Good Practice

A summary of the features of good practice of the Undergraduate Study Programme of Food Science and Nutrition of the University of the Aegean are outlined hereunder:

- Graduates from the department continuing to Post-Graduate School or to the food industry locally, nationally, and internationally.
- Appreciation of students of the available tools to start their careers when work was presented to them.
- A very good diversity of research topics and grant awards, of wide interest scope, in areas for local, national, and international audience.
- Research and development of a food product innovation that presented in Greek competitions and won top placements.
- Recommendations from the evaluation committee of 2013 were appropriately addressed and implemented by over ¾.
- Dedicated academic and administrative staff.
- A brand-new teaching and research lab – with new equipment and furniture – which allows for a clean, inviting, and attractive space for all students, researchers and faculty alike.
- A new computer lab with individual laptops per student desk, allow for teaching and quick approaches to modernizations.
- An extensive library building with scientific literature available in texts and computer learning.
- The addition of a new modern auditorium.
- A new botanical garden of health promoting and pharmaceutical plants and spices, giving a different perspective in teaching and commerce opportunities.
- Strong support from the local community/governing body that expressed pride for the institution on their island.
- Integration of Department’s students and staff in the local community and cooperation with stakeholders and relative health services that actively support its activities and mission.
- Interest in developing locally produced food and beverage crops/products and introducing them in the highly competitive and diversified food and beverage markets. These include new type of cheese – “Melihorο”, bread from Lemnos, or Yellow Bread Limnou, made from Lemnos wheat.
- Interest of the department to be externally evaluated/accredited and openness to implement any recommendations by the evaluation body.
II. Areas of Weakness

A number of weaknesses are presented as follows:

- There is still a shortage of academic and supporting teaching staff.
- Lack of academic personnel to support core subjects dealing with Food Science and Nutrition.
- The exceptionally low rate of graduation for active students.
- Lack of graduates’ professional rights despite the efforts of the Department.
- Teaching material of several courses appears not to be online timely for the students and current measures on that issue should be implemented for all offered courses.
- Nutrition courses are in need of being more prominent.
- Lack of Nutrition and Food Science computer programs for:
  - Human Nutrition Analysis
  - Food Product Analysis for European and U.S. Standards
- Modest research outputs from some Faculty members.
- Department website requires improvements and uniformity.
- Lack of publication of annual self-evaluation audits.
- Need of a building for a Food Pilot Plant

III. Recommendations for Follow-up Actions

Finally, some recommendations for follow-up actions are summarised hereunder:

- Assure the professional rights of the Department graduates.
- Internship to become an integrated part of the amended undergraduate study programme.
- Enhance mobility opportunities both for the Faculty and the students through establishment of bilateral agreements through the Erasmus programme.
- Attract additional faculty members with research interests in seafood and/or meat products.
- Access to advanced software packages related to Food Science and Nutrition and incorporation of:
  - Human Nutrition Computer Programmes – For the Nutrition Curriculum.
  - Food Product Analysis Computer Programmes – For the Food Science Curriculum.
- Formalize the Establishment of an External Advisory Board.
- Substantially enhance participation of students in the questionnaires about modules and the Department to put into place exit interviews and/or satisfaction surveys.
- Build a Food Pilot plant with the appropriate equipment to prepare food science and nutrition students to make products for the food industry.
- Contribute additional funds from research projects to bolster faculty salaries and request incremental extra compensation for border location of the island.
- Develop centers of research excellence within the Department with meaningful research outputs that will assist in enhancing the visibility of the Department nationally and beyond...
- Better awareness of local Limnean product lines through marketing departments in adjoining universities, toward wider national, European and International distribution.
- Expand shelf-life of existing local products (i.e., cheese, etc.) with new ways of packaging and/or processing techniques.
- Expansion of course work and research in aquatic products including, but not limited to, salted, smoked, and/or brined fish with expressed high nutritional value.
- Need to discover the value of ancient food eating theories and the power of healing that have been long passed by word of mouth throughout history. This includes the Byzantine era and the menus offered at the Limnean Byzantine castle.
- Examine the possibility of building an oyster farm for national consumption and beyond.
- Introduce students to available options for continuing their studies internationally through distance learning available through online programmes (e.g., coursera.com, edx.com)
- Consider the expansion of curriculum to five years and division of Food Science and Nutrition from the third year on, or six years with a final Masters degree.
- Consider the creation of a Board of trustees to establish recommendations and possible disputes.

IV. Summary & Overall Assessment

The Principles where full compliance has been achieved are: 7, 10

The Principles where substantial compliance has been achieved are: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 9

The Principles where partial compliance has been achieved are: 8

The Principles where failure of compliance was identified are: None

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# The members of the External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel

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<td>1. Associate Professor Vasileios Valdramidis (Chair)</td>
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<td>University of Malta, Malta</td>
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<td>2. Dr Demetrios Kazantzis</td>
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<td>President Food and Beverages Consultants, U.S.A.</td>
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<td>3. Associate Professor George Manganaris</td>
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<td>Cyprus University of Technology, Cyprus</td>
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<td>4. Mr Loukianos Kontelas</td>
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<td>Member of the Geotechnical Chamber of Greece (President of the An. Ster. Annex), Greece</td>
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