EXTERNAL EVALUATION REPORT

TEI of Thessaly
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1. EXTERNAL EVALUATION COMMITTEE

The Committee responsible for the External Evaluation of the Technological Education Institution named:…TEI of Thessaly comprised the following four (4) expert evaluators drawn from the Registry kept by the HQA in accordance with Law 3374/2005 and the Law 4009/2011:

1. Professor Panayiotis Angelides, (Chairman)
   University of Nicosia, Cyprus

2. Professor Konstadinos Goulias
   University of California, Santa Barbara

3. Dr. Demetrios Kazantzis
   Del’s Lemonade & Refreshments Inc, Rhode Island

4. Dr. Athanasios Papaioannou
   Hafencity University, Hamburg
### 2. INTRODUCTION

#### 2.1 The External Evaluation Procedure

- Dates and brief account of the site visit
- Whom did the Committee meet?
- List of Reports, documents, other data examined by the EEC
- Groups of teaching and administrative staff and students interviewed
- Facilities visited by the EEC

**Dates and brief account of the site visit**

The evaluation of the institution by the EEC took place between the 4 and 7 of April, 2016. The external evaluation procedure was conducted effectively according to the agreed schedule. In some instances the length of meetings had to be extended to conclude the issues and to allow full participation.

**Whom did the Committee meet?**

During the first day of the visit, to the Larissa campus, the Committee met with the President, the Vice Presidents and the members of the Quality Assurance Unit (QAU/MODIP).

On the second day of the site visit the EEC met with the president and members of the institution’s administration council, visited the campus area (student restaurant, student sports facilities, school technological applications laboratories, farm facilities, school of agricultural studies laboratories, student residence halls and the library).

Later in the day, the EEC was split into two groups and met with the faculty members of the Schools (School of Technological Applications, School of Health and Welfare Professions School of Agricultural Studies, Nutrition and Dietetics and School of Finance and Business Administration) and their departments as well as with the IEGs/OMEA representatives, the academic staff representatives and a group of undergraduate students. The second day was concluded with the meetings with the chief administration officers and with the postgraduate students.

On the third day of the site visit at the Larissa campus, the EEC met with the (alumni) graduated students and with external partners and stakeholders such as companies and local authority officials. The site visit was concluded on the forth day with an oral presentation of the overall impressions of the EEC to the President, and members of MODIP.

All meetings were conducted as scheduled and the administration of the Institute provided the EEC with all documents and supporting materials that were requested. No visits were included in Karditsa and Trikala campuses.
### 2.2 The Self-Evaluation Procedure

*Please comment on:*

- **Appropriateness of sources and documentation used**  
  All documents and resources used for this evaluation were appropriate and have helped for the effective evaluation of the institution.

- **Quality and completeness of evidence provided and reviewed**  
  The reviewed documents and resources were complete and in good order. Explanations were given and details provided. Where necessary the website of the institution as well as the IT systems became available and helped the evaluation effectively.

- **The extent to which the objectives of the internal evaluation procedure have been met by the Institution**  
  There is evidence that the institution compiled voluminous documentation that was appropriate for the external evaluation and some evidence that strategic internal evaluation took place before the visit of the EEC.

- **Description and Analysis of the Self-Evaluation Procedure in the Institution**  
  The institution had set up all appropriate procedures to enable self-evaluation and their analysis.

- **Analysis of the positive elements and difficulties which arose during the self-evaluation procedure**  
  N/A

- **Whether the self-evaluation procedure was comprehensive and interactive**  
  The self-evaluation procedure provided the EEC with the appropriate documentation necessary for a thorough evaluation. The objectives of the evaluation were, in general, met by the Institution. The EEC was not in a position to check in detail all the above documentation. Minor inconsistencies in...
quantitative information or qualitative assessments did not deviate EEC from gaining a useful view of Institution’s current status.

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Justify your rating:

The EEC believes that tremendous amount of work went into preparing the documentation needed for the external evaluation however, there was no clarity for the procedures of the internal evaluation.
3. PROFILE OF THE INSTITUTION UNDER EVALUATION

3.1 Institutional Governance, Leadership & Strategy

Please comment on:

3.1.1 Vision, mission and goals of the Institution

- What are the Institution’s mission and goals
- Priorities set by goals
- How are the goals achieved
- Procedures established by the Institution to monitor the achievement of goals
- What is your assessment of the Institution’s ability to improve

- What are the Institution’s mission and goals?

The mission statement and goals of TEI as articulated in the Internal Evaluation Report emphasize infrastructural strengths of the institution and the listed goals and objectives cover a wide spectrum tailored to the institution. The vision and mission of the institution are not explicitly stated. Instead, they are presented in twelve bullet items of general goals and eight sections that include bullet points of general content that span from attractiveness to legislative initiatives and frameworks. The process, through which the mission, goals, and targets were established, was not stated or described in other sections. The EEC suggests that TEI of Thessaly reassess its published mission statement and goals so that they reflect its strengths, provide clarity and specificity about the role it plays in the Greek higher education system. To this end, the goals should be more specific, achievable, and usable to assess the performance of TEI of Thessaly in future evaluations.

The EEC also suggests that TEI of Thessaly sets up a continuous process through which the strategic plan of the Institution is established, becomes an all inclusive plan, and it is widely adopted by the internal stakeholders/constituents (i.e. faculty, staff, students, community). Such a framework will form the foundation to align school-specific and departmental individual mission statements and goals with those of the Institution as a whole.

In section §B.3 of the Internal Evaluation Report, it is stated that in spite of the external limitations the Institution aims at providing a plan of adaptation and expansion to include doctoral post-graduate studies. This was reaffirmed by meetings with the administration, faculty, and other researchers to achieve excellence not only in research but also teaching and business development.

- Priorities set by goals

To pursue excellence in teaching, the postgraduate degree programs are closely linked with industry local needs with exception a program in information technology that has international orientation. However, the majority of undergraduate and graduate programs are designed in a single discipline fashion. Also, there are no explicit plans to teach courses in English, which is a barrier to attract foreign students and thus internationalize the student body and also attract foreign income.

To pursue excellence in research, the priorities are to increase, the already rich in diversity and partnerships, research activity. Also, external funding for research can be enhanced by establishing additional partnerships with national and international institutions and other relevant entities. Explicit prioritization of the goals was not provided, inhibiting thus strategic implementation.

- How are the goals achieved?

The goals are achieved by actively pursuing all the goals described in the previous paragraph. More information is provided in subsequent sections. The lack of an explicit guiding plan with
roadmap is, however, apparent. This may hinder and delay the attainment of overall TEI of Thessaly strategic goals.

- Procedures established by the Institution to monitor the achievement of goals

TEI of Thessaly has established data collecting procedures through which progress in research funding can be monitored. A centralized unit for quality of teaching monitoring does not seem to exist and a better system of course evaluation and training revaluation is needed. Institution-wide written procedural manuals for evaluation exist but the effectiveness of procedures and adaptability to changing circumstances is unknown.

In addition, TEI of Thessaly needs to develop a set of specific target values for all the metrics in the strategic plan with a timeline for goal achievement. In addition, a feedback mechanism and contingency plans when the targets are not met are required with guidance for remedial action. The EEC believes that such a document (preferably in electronic form) is needed for the Institution to set benchmarks and successfully assess progress in all its activity.

- What is your assessment of the Institution’s ability to improve?

The TEI of Thessaly is populated by informed, highly skilled and extremely motivated faculty, staff, and students who have the potential, will, and ability to excel. In fact, the Institution overall and many of its individual faculty members are held in high esteem for their capabilities in applied research and immediate applications by practitioners. Under current circumstances, the EEC expects that the TEI of Thessaly would increasingly become more relevant to the local economy with potential for positive influence throughout Greece. At the time of this evaluation, however, circumstances were uncertain. The Institution, similarly to all academic entities in Greece, has been continuously confronted with an extensive and inflexible regulatory framework that has led during the last few years to major budget cuts, a dramatic increase of student numbers, decrease of administration staff (decrease of 66 members from 2010 to 2016) and accelerating loss of faculty members (a decrease of 102 faculty members of all ranks between 2010 and 2016).

These conditions severely affect the quality of teaching, research, and technology transfer programmes that is currently maintained through personal sacrifice and individual sense of duty. This is unsustainable and the national government should commit to maintaining faculty, staff, and student intake at broadly acceptable numbers to maintain the current quality of the teaching and research programmes. In contrast, the economic crisis is motivating TEI of Thessaly towards exploiting ways to stretch its limited budget and explore new ways of exploiting inventions and joint ventures with the private sector in areas of excellence.

The size of the Institution does not seem to be an issue that was raised by faculty, staff, and students during EEC’s visit. In addition, the fragmentation of programs across three locations (Larissa, Trikala, Karditsa) did not emerge during this evaluation as major issue with faculty and students. The EEC, however, believes that savings in resources and integration of programs may be achieved by an exploration of possible economies of scale. Further, the possibility of strategic mergers with University of Thessaly that are mission-specific appear to be mature and happening in an informal way that can be institutionalized to build a major centre of excellence of national and international importance and visibility.

TEI of Thessaly should be urged to develop case studies of synergies that are successful today and can be mimicked by its other units (departments and laboratories). Examples include the extrovert attitude and close relationships with industry in agricultural studies, internationalization of information technology, and patent development in material science. Lessons learned from these examples can be used and replicated by many other units (departments and laboratories).

In addition to all the financial obstacles, TEI of Thessaly is also faced with a set of national laws and decrees governing the operation of the Institution which are constantly changing and increasing in volume, irregular implementation and suspension of rules by the Ministry of Education. The majority of the Institute’s functions are inhibited and initiatives cannot be implemented making it difficult to implement initiatives that may lead to measurable improvements in quality.

The EEC was extremely satisfied with how well the Institution is functioning under these adverse conditions and are positively commended for these efforts.
Justify your rating:

TEI of Thessaly has an implied vision and mission that is heavily dictated by the National Institutional Framework that created the campus and its schools. The Institution articulates its vision and goals and expended good effort to record them and possibly achieve them. However, the Institution’s official mission and goals statement is too broad and too diverse and must be focused on a few pillars of national and international excellence. The Schools must align their mission and goals with those of the Institution. Clear, succinct, and unified official vision and mission statements, as well as, implementable goals, and measurable objectives are needed at all levels of the Institution. A time sequenced implementation plan and operational program with feedback and remedial action plan are also needed.

### 3.1.2 Organizational Development Strategy

- Effectiveness of administrative officials
- Existence of effective operation regulations
- Specific goals and timetables
- Measures taken to reach goals

**Effectiveness of administrative officials**

The EEC met with the TEI of Thessaly administrative team (the President and the Deputy Presidents) on several occasions. The administrative team is committed to solving both short- and long-term problems facing the Institution. It also appears to have a hands-on approach and good working relationships with the support staff, the faculty, and the TEI of Thessaly Schools. For some programs this good relationship includes the University of Thessaly in activities of educational excellence.

**Existence of effective operation regulations**

As reported earlier, TEI of Thessaly operates with a clear organization and operational structure. The administrative team appears to be carrying out its management task in an inclusive and effective manner.

**Specific goals and timetables**

The administrative team’s strategic goals and timetable are described in its internal evaluation report. At present staff members are only 60% of the 2010 number with several retirements on the horizon. This group of staff manages to keep the Institution functioning using creative task assignments, but further losses will result in critical operational deficiencies.

EEC finds an impressive performance in infrastructure assets with excellent success in building new infrastructure. This is a strategic priority of the Institution and a major asset in attracting funding and collaborations with private and public entities. A professional asset management
and exploitation administrative unit may need to be created to develop and implement a strategic plan for TEI of Thessaly to enhance and ensure the future maintenance and expansion of these assets.

- Measures taken to reach goals
  - These are described in detail in the report “Academic Development Strategy” dated 25/3/206 and the report “Research Strategy at TEI of Thessaly” dated March 2016. However, these reports are simply inventories of accomplishments and general guidelines for Key Performance Indicator (KPI) development and target setting.

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Justify your rating:

The administrative team is effectively governing the Institution. Actions of the national government are factors that historically inhibit this effort. The administrative team could be much more effective if true autonomy is granted and the legal framework under which it operates is stabilized for a substantial number of years by the national government. The EEC sees a need for identification of future critical gaps.

3.1.3 Academic Development Strategy

- Response of the Institution to Faculties and Departments
- Goals and timetables
- Measures taken to reach goals

- Response of the Institution to Faculties and Departments

TEI of Thessaly is organized into three Schools (Faculties) with each School offering undergraduate degrees equal in number to the Departments of the School, postgraduate (Master’s) degrees, and no PhD degrees by statute of TEIs. At this time there are twelve postgraduate degrees. Undergraduate degrees consist of the equivalent of 20 programs of which 1 has no faculty members and 2 are currently eliminated.

No plans exist to organize postgraduate degrees in English and all the courses are taught in Greek. Faculty members dedicate time on a volunteer basis to students that do not speak Greek supporting them in their studies on an ad-hoc basis. The Institution defers to the individual faculty to act on their own priorities and does not provide support to implement synergistic actions supporting English curricula.
The EEC urges a more direct communication between MODIP (the Quality Assurance Unit of the University) and the Schools in matters of academic quality assurance and enhancement. Furthermore, the Departmental Quality Assurance Teams (OMEA) should undertake a more proactive role in evaluating the collected data, developing metrics, and discussing procedures and issues with MODIP and their corresponding administrators.

* Goals and timetables

TEI of Thessaly faculty should explore developing new interdisciplinary MSc degrees which will be taught in English. These new degrees may follow the current successful model of charging fees to students who enrol in the programme. Such fees could become a substantial source of income for the Institution. The EEC suggests that any new campus-based postgraduate programmes be closely aligned with existing or proposed clusters of excellence discussed in the report “Research Strategy”. Revenue from the tuition fees paid by students can be used firstly to provide the University with operational expenses.

The Departments are recommended to check the correct integration of the ECTS units and learning outcomes in their curricula. They are also recommended to re-examine their approach of not enforcing prerequisites in student academic advancement.

The increasing influx of students and their background preparation should be seriously considered, since this is a major challenge of the Institution. Considering the differences in output and achievements among various Departments, EEC believes that lessons learned from successful departments can be used as case studies of excellence by all departments.

Most important, however, interdepartmental interaction and the creation of interdisciplinary postgraduate degree programmes will benefit from the creation of a separate entity as a Postgraduate Studies School to undertake the task of harmonizing degree requirements and developing multi-institution degree programs.

The EEC also suggests assessing the possibility of reaching economies of scale through joint course delivery among different academic units.

* Measures taken to reach goals

Many initiatives in TEI of Thessaly are based on individual faculty and their synergies. Institutionalization of activities may require authorization by the Ministry of Education, with the risk of major delays and inaction. This risk is detrimental to the positive development of educational and research initiatives that do not require centralized decisions and approvals may be the only way forward. However, granting added autonomy to the Institution is a highly desired action.

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*Justify your rating:*

TEI of Thessaly has many laudable academic development goals. Some have been implemented and a good inventory exists. A stronger implementation plan is needed and added synergies among departments and laboratories are highly desirable.
3.1.4 Research Strategy

- Key points in research strategy
- Research strategy objectives and timetables for achieving them
- Laboratory research support network
- Research excellence network
- Existence of research assistance mechanisms (for preparing proposals, capitalising on patents and innovations, finding partners for research programmes, etc.)

- Key points in research strategy

TEI of Thessaly administration’s research strategy for the future is to build on its successes in applied research and enhance research activity over the near future by increasing extramural funding for research, establishing partnerships with local, national and international institutions. In terms of research publications, TEI of Thessaly is active in journals and shows willingness to increase publications and citations. Individual departments have also identified qualitative targets for their future research. This can be further enhanced through interdepartmental initiatives developing research links among TEI of Thessaly departments and interdepartmental synergies to increase competitive advantages at the national and international levels. TEI of Thessaly administration promotes productivity through laboratory and other infrastructure provision to its faculty and this is reflected in external funding resources with significant progress.

The EEC considers that coordination can be further enhanced. Internally this can be accomplished by appointing a research development person at the vice-director level responsible for implementing the Institution’s research policy and functioning as the fulcrum of connectivity between post-graduate studies, research, and technology transfer.

Extramural research funding

Extramural research funding is at a level of 10.2 million Euro of new grant funds in the period 2010-2015, corresponding to 341 research projects. Principal Investigators of these programs were 56 faculty members and another 107 faculty served as collaborators. This is an exceptional number of faculty members involved in applied research and constitutes a vital strategy for cutting edge knowledge and skills are maintained in the Institution.

Clusters of Excellence

The idea of Clusters of Excellence is not clearly apparent in the TEI of Thessaly and may be due to the nature of research projects. As mentioned above clusters of excellence in tandem with multidisciplinary post-graduate research studies can become major pillars of development of international stature.

Partnerships

A substantial number of formal and informal partnerships with other entities were noticed, especially with local institutions and private companies for product development. TEI of Thessaly officials expressed enthusiastic intention to increase, enhance, and exploit its outward-looking policy.

Administrative support for submitting and managing grants

TEI of Thessaly maintains an office that assists with the preparation, submission, and management of grants (ELKE) and charges only 5% administrative fee making grant support very attractive. The EEC in discussions with several faculty members notes a general satisfaction with the services rendered. ELKE provides assistance to the faculty and the Institution at large for proposal preparation and execution. Partner identification, however, is done on an individual laboratory basis. In addition, patenting innovations is absent and fellowships emerging from research revenues do not exist (mainly due to the very low fee charged by ELKE). The EEC suggest to explore a small increase in the 5% ELKE fee to be used for the creation of research and proposal
development for junior faculty members and for ground breaking ideas with potentially high yield. Similarly, developing a donor-based funding mechanism can further enhance this activity.

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Justify your rating:
TEI of Thessaly is very productive in research and is striving to increase the number of publications, visibility, and research grant funding. The Institution’s administration is encouraging research productivity and partnerships with private and public entities and is very aggressive in ensuring laboratory and infrastructure to build further initiatives.

### 3.1.5 Financial Strategy

- General financial strategy and management of national and international funds
- Regular budget management strategy
- Public investment management strategy
- Organisation and strategy of the Special Account for Research Funds (SARF)
- Organisation and strategy of the University Property Development and Management Company
- Existence of a Quality System for Financial Management (e.g. ISO), computerisation management and Budget monitoring (Regular Budget, Public Investments Programme, SARF Budget, etc.)

Like all other Greek universities and institutions TEI of Thessaly has undergone dramatic cuts in its operating budget over the past six years.

From a comparative point of view, these occurrences are well below European and US standards (the average budget per student is 10,000 euros in some European countries and 15,000 USD in US institutions). The Institution does not have an explicit plan to cope with these cuts. However, it recognizes the need to exploit its competitive regional advantage and strong presence and is exploring synergies with the University of Thessaly.

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Justify your rating:

The excellent local and regional involvement with private companies as well as the postgraduate program could make important contributions to the Institution’s overall financial effectiveness.

### 3.1.6 Building and Grounds Infrastructure Strategy

- Strategy key points
- Objectives and timetables
- Measures taken to reach goals
- Deviations from model 1 campus/HEI

The TEI of Thessaly has a tremendously well-developed physical infrastructure and renovated laboratories that are admirable. These are a pole of attraction for education, research, technology transfer, and service to the community. Many of these facilities are on their way to completion and/or completed and an explicit plan for their exploitation is nascent. This includes the many facilities in Larissa and the two other locations of Karditsa and Trikala. There are no issues reported with facility security.

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Justify your rating:

The three locations of the TEI of Thessaly do not seem to be an issue of concern for communication and joint activities. The physical infrastructure and the Institution's laboratories are state of the art and a point of pride but also an indicator of excellent development strategy.
3.1.7 Environmental Strategy

- Recycling strategy and measures taken to reach goals
- Hazardous waste management and measures taken to reach goals
- Urban waste management and measures taken to reach goals
- Green energy strategy and measures taken to reach goals

TEI of Thessaly has a strong environmental policy, particularly in recycling and reuse. The policy not only involves services but is also part of the education and research objectives. The EEC believes energy consumption could receive added attention to ensure renewable resources are used to decrease the electricity and gas expenses. This is particularly important when the new buildings come online. The EEC also suggest the creation of an environmental committee that is active in promoting environmentally friendly behaviors, uses research to implement innovations, and creates a tracking mechanism to certify all buildings and facilities along the lines of development in the geothermal greenhouses created by TEI of Thessaly. Proposals for projects funded by national and European programmes for sustainable development should also be developed.

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Justify your rating:

TEI of Thessaly has the potential of implementing a wide variety of environmentally-friendly actions and policies.

3.1.8 Social Strategy

- Exploitation and dissemination of the Institution’s Research Activities for the benefit of society and economy
- Promotion of interaction between the Institution and the Labour Market
- Sustained relationships with key local and regional bodies
- Contribution to the cultural development of society, the city and the region
- Reciprocal and long-lasting relationship with the alumni community

A major field of interaction of TEI of Thessaly with society is evident by its activities and ongoing cultural and social interactions. Representatives form the local community were particularly complimentary about technical support, relationships with student and faculty initiatives, and the role TEI of Thessaly plays in governance applied research and consultation offered to solve local issues.

Many opportunities exist for students to obtain work placements in local companies and these were showcased by many different private companies with which EEC met. The stakeholders mentioned benefits that include knowledge and skills through seminars, networking opportunities, new
employees with properly defined skill set, practical training for their employees, new product development, joint research and development, national and international conferences, and use of facilities for experimentation.

On the negative side added information and support for graduates confidence is needed to release the anxiety of remuneration for the TEI of Thessaly graduates. Also, explore the possibility of developing postgraduate studies that include recognized internships as professional experience. Visibility and outreach is a major factor that inhibits the name recognition of the TEI of Thessaly that can be enhanced with strategically selected actions.

Relations with graduates of the TEI of Thessaly are ad hoc and a formally defined alumni association would benefit current students, alumni, and researchers.

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Justify your rating:

Many ad-hoc relations exist between the TEI of Thessaly and the local community exist. There is a need for a more co-ordinated approach to develop outward-looking policies and strategies with a wider network beyond the region of Thessaly.

### 3.1.9 Internationalization Strategy

- Integration of the international dimension in the curricula
- Integration of the international dimension in research
- Integration of the intercultural dimension within the campus
- Participation in international HEI networks
- Collaboration with HEIs in other countries (with a specific collaboration agreement)- measures taken to reach goals

By its fundamental constitution TEI of Thessaly was not designed as an international entity. However, the Institution attracts Erasmus students and is actively supporting its own students to participate in Erasmus visits. The Institution is also involved in Erasmus+ and has also intentions of increasing involvement in new European programs such as Horizon 2020.

A major barrier to internationalization is lack of courses in English and hesitation to adopt an outward attitude of engagement. To this end the Institution's Administration Council should develop and implement a strategy of international engagement at the level of teaching and training, research, and private partnerships. The TEI of Thessaly should make this area a major focus and a priority.
3.1.10 Student Welfare Strategy

- Student hostel operation and development strategy
- Student refectory development strategy
- Scholarships and prizes strategy
- Sports facilities operation and development strategy
- Cultural activities strategy
- Strategy for people with special needs

The student dormitories (Φοιτητική Εστία) is operated by the institution itself and houses approximately 600 students. The facility is in good condition and provides rooms for Erasmus students. The criteria for entry into the student dorms are social/economic. The student restaurant serves meals to some 3,100 entitled students and the Institution is proud for its size and quality. The institution’s strategy in the selection of refectory vendors includes a provision that the vendor is obliged to offer students who are not eligible for meal subsidies the same service at the same cost. There is also the possibility to purchase meals on a daily basis by other students or visiting researchers. Other facilities are available in the other two locations but the EEC did not visit them. The TEI of Thessaly campus possesses excellent facilities for a range of sports, including a multifunctional unit and a variety of athletic fields.

Health care was not addressed by the Internal Evaluation Report or the staff presentation during the EEC visit. No mention was made about policies for people with disabilities.

The institution offers to its students who wish to be employed (10 hrs per week) at different places within the institution 50 scholarships every semester. The scholarships are awarded after an open call for expression of interest and the selection of students is at the department level based on merit. A subsidy of 1000 euro per academic year to cover lodging costs is also offered to non-campus residing students based on academic progression criteria.

TEI of Thessaly commits significant amount of funds every year – despite the severe reductions in its operational budget - in upgrading and maintaining the sport facilities, organization and participation of its students in various athletic events, and also paying salaries for trainers out of its own budget after the government funding for non-academic personnel was discontinued due to the economic crisis. It is also the institution’s policy that students should have the opportunity to engage in athletic activities at no cost to them because we strongly believe that this is a valuable service to our students most of which cannot afford to get outside campus at a cost.

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Justify your rating:
3.2 Strategy for Study Programmes

3.2.1 Programmes of Undergraduate Studies (first cycle)

Please comment on:

- the main strengths and weaknesses of the Programmes
- the basic obligations of students, e.g. attendance of lectures, course requirements, etc.
- the way the Central Administration of the Institution deals with any remarks and recommendations that the external experts pointed out in the External Evaluation of Academic Units

The main strengths of the programmes are the following:

1. The technological applied character of the curriculum.
2. The direct connection of the curriculum with the job market.
3. Evaluation of the curricula that leads to potential adaptation of course content or introduction of new courses to follow the evolution of the discipline and meet local national and international academic trends.
4. The interface of students with the market place through the practical training.
5. Some of the teaching staff are experienced in teaching.
6. Connection of research with teaching.

The main weaknesses of the programmes are the following:

1. The Institution is understaffed.
2. Most teachers need PGCert in teacher training/education in accordance with European requirements.
3. As a result faculty are overloaded (some of them teach up to 16 hours per week to over a thousand students). Furthermore, they supervise a large number of final year projects and they also have administrative duties.
4. Because faculty are overloaded with teaching and administrative duties they have limited time for research.

5. There is only one foreign language taught (English)

6. The budget of the institution is reduced.

7. The equipment is not up to date in all departments.

8. Students do not seem to participate into decision making committees.

9. Student evaluations are not taken into account for further improvements of the courses. Compulsory and systematic use of student input is needed for improvement of the content and delivery of courses.

10. Average time to degree is close to 6 years.

- The basic obligations of students, e.g. attendance of lectures, course requirements, etc.

1. Register and successfully complete the courses that define the programme curriculum.


3. Obligatory 6 month practical training.

4. Obligatory at 80% attendance in labs.

5. Non-obligatory attendance in theoretical classes.

- the way the Central Administration of the Institution deals with any remarks and recommendations that the external experts pointed out in the External Evaluation of Academic Units

From among the departments of the Institution that received external evaluations took into account the remarks and recommendations of the external experts as these were pointed out in the external evaluations of the academic units. Some of the programmes were revised based on the comments of the external committees. In addition, certain laboratories were improved.

Do you wish to make any comment on a point not included above?

None.

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Justify your rating:

Overall performance is acceptable to the EEC. Added effort is need to improve the negative points listed in this section.
### 3.2.2 Programmes of Postgraduate Studies (second cycle)

*Please comment on:*

- the main strengths and weaknesses of the Programmes
- the basic obligations of students, e.g. attendance of lectures, course requirements, etc.
- the way the Central Administration of the Institution deals with any remarks and recommendations that the external experts pointed out in the External Evaluation of Academic Units

Do you wish to make any comment on a point not included above?

- the main strengths and weaknesses of the Programmes

The institution offers 12 Master programmes.

The main strengths of the Master programmes are the following:

1. Uniqueness of some of the programmes;
2. Teaching by experienced and eminent visiting professors
3. Connections of applied research with teaching
4. Interface of programmes with industry
5. Connections with international organisations
6. Strong social relevance of programmes (e.g. topics of course projects or thesis are motivated by immediate needs of broader society and local community)
7. High quality equipment (for some of the programmes)
8. The existing faculty are experienced in both teaching and industry.

The main weaknesses of the programmes are the following:

1. Reduced funding by the state. Shortage of funds impact the maintenance and expansion of laboratories.
2. Bureaucratic internal obstacles in attracting foreign students.
3. The institution is understaffed. There is a limited number of research and teaching staff. As a result, faculty are overloaded with teaching and administrative duties, therefore they have limited time for research.
4. Lack of processes of continuous staff performance monitoring and development.
5. Because of the reduction in budget there is difficulty in attracting part-time lecturers.
6. Limited use of student input through course evaluations to improve course content and delivery.

- the basic obligations of students, e.g. attendance of lectures, course requirements, etc.

1. The Master programmes require enrolled students to take courses and conduct research.
2. Master courses are different than the undergraduate courses and typically have much higher work-load which is reflected by a higher ECTS per course.
3. Attendance is mandatory for lectures and students show high interest and attended willingly.

- the way the Central Administration of the Institution deals with any remarks and recommendations that the external experts pointed out in the External Evaluation of Academic Units

The departments of the institution have taken into account the recommendations of the external experts and most of the programmes were revised according to these remarks. It was observed that most departments have reviewed their external evaluations and addressed the recommendations included in the reports. Most recommendations were addressed but some others are difficult to be implemented due to the reduction of the state funding.

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Justify your rating:

3.2.3 Programmes of Doctoral Studies (third cycle)

Please comment on:

- the main strengths and weaknesses of the Programmes
- the basic obligations of students, e.g. attendance of lectures, course requirements, etc.
- the way the Central Administration of the Institution deals with any remarks and recommendations that the external experts pointed out in the External Evaluation of Academic Units

Do you wish to make any comment on a point not included above?

The current legal framework does not allow the TEIs to offer PhD programmes. The administration and the academic staff expressed their strong desire to be able to develop and offer doctoral programmes. However, there is already a number of PhD students who carry out their research at the institution and under the supervision of local staff but they are registered at other Universities. This is a commendable activity of the TEI despite the inhibition of the state.
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Justify your rating:

3.3 Profile of the Institution under evaluation - Conclusions and recommendations

Please complete the following sections regarding the overall profile of the Institution under evaluation:

- Underline specific positive points:

  The Institution has a dynamic administration with ambitious goals for the future even under the current difficult economic conditions.

  The 12 post graduate MSc Programmes carried out by the Schools is a worth mentioning achievement.

  Departments have exhibited satisfactory research activity funded by both national and EU projects in the last 4 years.

- Underline specific negative points:

  The vision of the institution is not clear.

  Student attendance, time to graduation and other education related processes are areas that need attention.
Insufficient number of faculty and staff members in most departments (No permanent staff in the Department of Nutrition and Dietetics).

No planning of maintaining and servicing expensive research facilities.

Lack of central administration procedures.

- Make your suggestions for further development of the positive points:

- Make your suggestions on needed steps for improvement:

The EEC suggests that the TEI of Thessaly should focus on specific and achievable goals that are likely to be realized in the near future.

Some departments should follow the good practices of those departments that have proved good progress in their marketing research and internationalization efforts.

The Institution should seek ways of increasing its own funding.
4. INTERNAL SYSTEM OF QUALITY ASSURANCE

4.1 Quality Assurance (QA) Policy and Strategy

Please comment on:

- the Institution’s policy and goals regarding QA and Improvement
- whether the Institution has developed a specific system of QA
- how the Institution’s internal QA system has been organized
- how the students and staff of the Institution are protected from biased interventions and discriminations
- whether a detailed implementation guide has been put together, containing an analysis of the QA system’s operating procedures
- the involvement of students in QA
- how the Institution evaluates the effectiveness of its QA system regarding the achievement of its goals

Do you wish to make any comment on a point not included above?

TEI of Thessaly has implemented a specific Quality Assurance system according to the provisions of the law. MODIP has published detailed guides in how to implement QA. The relevant documents have been made available to the EEC both in print and online.

EEC evaluates as positive the fact that all information and report are widely available online. The QA system incorporates guidelines for the areas of teaching, services and administration. The institution uses various processes, such as records, examination results, evaluation forms etc., for QA. However the institution limits itself in the mandatory obligations foreseen by the law and has not been proactive in extending the processes and identifying new areas of interest.

Please decide in respect to the specific evaluation area (&4.1):

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Justify your rating:
4.2 Design, approval, monitoring and evaluation of the study programmes and degrees awarded

Please comment on:

- whether the learning outcomes have been clearly formulated and whether they have been published
- whether the programmes are designed in such a way as to involve students and other stakeholders in the work
- how the achievement of learning outcomes is monitored
- whether there is a published Guide regarding the organization of programmes of study
- whether the ECTS system is taken into consideration and implemented
- whether there is a periodic evaluation of the programmes according to set procedures and criteria aimed at safeguarding their consistency and regular updating
- the student participation in the QA procedure of the study programmes
- whether the programmes include well-structured international mobility and -where appropriate- placement opportunities

Do you wish to make any comment on a point not included above?

The implementation of the QA system includes a guide regarding the minimum requirements and the structure of the programmes of study. Moreover the QA system in combination with the internal and external evaluations foresee the regular evaluation and update of the programme of studies.

The interviews with students, stakeholders and faculty have noted that the quality of the programme of studies is satisfactory. The students have the opportunity to participate in the development and the QA procedures of the study programmes through an online platform for evaluating their courses. However, as noted by the interviews with the students, the short period that the system is accessible (1 week) in combination with concerns regarding their privacy (customised user specific credentials for logging in) has led to a small number of responses.

According to the internal evaluation report the guidelines of all programmes are published and the ECTS system is taken into consideration when planning programmes. This is implemented at both undergraduate and postgraduate programmes level. All departments offer and promote international mobility through the ERASMUS programme.
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Justify your rating:
4.3 Teaching and learning - Assessment by students

Please comment on:

- whether multiple and coherent learning paths are provided according to the needs of students in the Institution’s Departments / Faculties
- how proper guidance and support is offered to students by the Departments / Faculties’ teaching staff
- whether students are informed clearly and in detail regarding the strategy of evaluation that is implemented for their programme of study, the exams or other methods of assessment they will be subjected to, what is expected of them and which criteria will be applied for the evaluation of their performance
- whether there is a formal procedure for addressing complaints and objections by students in the Departments / Faculties of the Institution

Do you wish to make any comment on a point not included above?

The TEI of Thessaly divides courses in Theory, Exercises and Laboratories. The level of the students defines the concentration of efforts and the orientation. However it was evident that most courses are lecture-driven and a number of them seem not to regularly and systematically include a wide range of constructivist teaching approaches. Further, students confirmed the impression of the committee that in the lectures teaching follows frontal approach with limited opportunities of interaction between students and between students and the instructor. Both the faculty and students indicated that in many courses they are given the opportunity of interaction although this does not mean the systematic use of group projects, demonstrations, presentation of ideas, journaling and supplementary independent investigations/literature searches/reports. Moreover the interviews with the faculty and the students have made evident that students attend in large numbers the obligatory exercises and laboratories, whereas attendance in theory classes is significantly lower. Courses are evaluated based on the results of all 3 different classes. In that regards, it should be examined whether other forms of grading could prove more efficient in engaging students throughout the course.

EEC strongly suggests that the institution should investigate and include further teaching methods. Moreover the teaching stuff should take the course evaluations into consideration and adjust their methods in order to make the theoretical courses more attractive to the students. The faculty appears to be willing to discuss face-to-face with students offering their guidance and their support. The EEC would like to acknowledge their commitment.

According to the QA system implemented there is a formal procedure for addressing complaints and objections by students in the Departments. However some students said that although they have the right to see their final exam papers, in reality they were refused access to their documents. Moreover in one case a visiting instructor took the exam papers with him, making a re-evaluation impossible.
The overall impression was that the faculty promoted a friendly atmosphere in the classroom. The students appeared willing to participate lively in discussion and to contribute to the lesson. In the discussion with the committee members students spoke positively of the relationships they have with some faculty, as well as their accessibility both face-to-face and through email. The committee would like to acknowledge the motivation and commitment the faculty exhibit in their relationship to students in the undergraduate and postgraduate level.

The teaching approaches used by the faculty in the practical courses did not rely primarily on traditional, teacher-centered approaches.

The committee noticed that the faculty do not only teach in their area of expertise. As previously stated because the institution is understaffed some faculty have to teach courses that are outside of their expertise.

Most courses are exclusively evaluated by one final exam; however, some courses utilize alternative methods of assessment, but this is the exception. Nonetheless, the examination procedures do not systematically use a wide range of assessment strategies that go beyond the standard end of the term examination. In practicum there are no clear ways of assessment (e.g. portfolio, journals) and no use of quantitative metric to demonstrate learning outcomes, acquisition of knowledge and skills and evidence based practice.

The EEC suggests a new academic policy that enforces stricter sequencing of Theory, Exercises and Laboratories to ensure meeting the learning outcomes for each course.

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Justify your rating:
The EEC sees coherent learning paths with clarity in course outlines and learning outcomes but unclear course evaluation procedures in strict windows of opportunity to provide feedback.
### 4.4 Admission of students, progression and recognition of studies

**Please comment on:**

- whether the procedures and criteria for admission to the second and third cycle of studies are implemented with consistency and transparency
- whether there are clear and distinct procedures within the Departments/Faculties, as regards recognition of higher education degrees, periods of study and knowledge acquired at an earlier stage
- whether there are clear and distinct procedures of recognition of study periods and prior learning (including the recognition of non-formal and informal learning)
- whether there are clear procedures in place regarding the cooperation of other Institutions with national ENIC/NARIC centres for ensuring coherent recognition and mobility among programmes within / among Institution(s)
- whether students are provided with detailed information (e.g. Diploma Supplement) regarding the degrees conferred to them, the achieved learning outcomes as well as the framework, the level and the content of studies they successfully completed
- whether the Institution has in place processes and tools to collect, monitor and use information regarding student progression

Do you wish to make any comment on a point not included above?

The published study programmes define the admission requirements and procedures for the 2nd cycle of studies. Current legislation does not permit TEI of Thessaly to award PhD candidates. However, in cooperation with other institutions that do have that right (such as the University of Thessaly) TEI of Thessaly provides the opportunity to candidates to carry out their research in their laboratories.

All students are given a diploma supplement with details about their programme in Greek. The institution should investigate whether a diploma copy and diploma supplement in English could prove useful for the students and the internationalisation strategy.

TEI of Thessaly has implemented successfully a system for collecting and monitoring the student progression.
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Justify your rating:
4.5 Quality Assurance as regards the teaching staff

Please comment on:

- how it is guaranteed that the vacancy notices and recruitment of teaching staff include procedures which provide assurance that all new teaching staff members have at least the basic teaching skills
- opportunities offered to the teaching staff for their professional/scientific advancement
- how potential weaknesses of the teaching staff are identified as regards the delivery of their teaching courses
- the Institution’s procedures for the support of new teaching staff as regards the teaching and evaluation methods
- how scientific activity is assessed and encouraged among the teaching staff in order to strengthen the connection between education and research
- the procedures in place so that the teaching staff members receive the necessary feedback on their personal performance as well as on the opinion of students
- whether a regulatory framework is in place for the investigation of disciplinary and academic misconduct of the teaching staff

Do you wish to make any comment on a point not included above?

At the present time, faculty recruitment is stalled. There is a moratorium of new staff by the government. There are also limited opportunities for staff development and progression. Without state funding for travelling and attending conferences, the institution is encouraged to seek own funding by research grants consultancy and training. There are some opportunities offered to the faculty through collaborations with other Institutions, (through Erasmus programme, or sabbatical leave). It is therefore important for the institution and for all staff to agree on a plan of raising external funding where possible, and to operate as efficiently as possible so that they can develop their plans without always expecting financial support from the state.

Given the fact that higher education institutions are asked to go through quality assurance, the institution needs to also develop performance evaluation processes of the whole faculty. We did not notice any monitoring process for identifying potential weaknesses in delivering courses and services. These are normally identified through monitoring of course evaluation questionnaires completed by students and by examination results/assignment works. Faculty members have access to their own teaching performance evaluations but not comparative evaluations of the Institution as well as feedback from OMEAs.

The EEC suggests that the Institution develops some training mechanisms for enhancing the pedagogical skills of the teaching staff, since there is no government policy requiring this kind of training for lecturers.

A method for improving teaching would be the use of peer observation, where a colleague is invited by the lecturer to attend and observe his/her lecturing and provide feedback.
The EEC suggests to intensify the connection between teaching and research and the incorporation of new knowledge in course lectures and laboratories.

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Justify your rating:
### 4.6 Learning resources and student support

**Please comment on:**

- whether there are procedures for the systematic monitoring, evaluation, review and improvement of the appropriateness and effectiveness of supporting services available to students
- the available support services in regard to Libraries, Information systems and infrastructure
- the procedure in place for offering individual assistance (counselling and tutoring) to students

Do you wish to make any comment on a point not included above?

The EEC observed, during the visit in the campus in Larisa, that the supporting services available to students are satisfactory. Moreover discussions with the students coincide with EECs observations. The campus in Larisa provides adequate infrastructure that effectively assist the student and enhance the quality of the studies and of the student life. Students in the campus in Larisa have access to a new well-organised and satisfactorily staffed library. Access to journals and e-books is provided also remotely online through vpn.

Other services supporting students’ welfare include the excellent sport facilities, the dormitories and restaurant. Students based in Trikala or Karditsa are offered similar services, although the EEC has not visited these campuses. The institution has a comprehensive intranet and a wireless system through which students, faculty and visitors have reliable access to all online services. Moreover the EEC strongly recommends that the institution creates an office of student advocate (ombudsman) as well as mental health services, without expecting the state to mandate this.

The students are made aware of the services available to them, through the programme of studies and the welcoming ceremony. However a more thorough programme welcoming students (freshmen week) could prove more helpful.

The various meetings with the students as well as the internal evaluation report ascertain that the Institution does not have a formal procedure for mentoring students. However all faculty members provide specific office hours during which they are available for individual advice. Students reported that the administrative staff are approachable and helpful.

The EEC suggest for each student to identify a faculty advisor and mentor that follows a student throughout her/his path of academic advancement.
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*Justify your rating:*
4.7 Information Systems for Recording and Analysing Data and Indicators

Please comment on:

- whether the Institution possesses reliable means for collecting, analysing and utilizing valid information in respect to key performance indicators, the profile of the student population and student progression, success and drop-out rates
- whether the Institution possesses reliable means for collecting, analysing and utilizing valid information regarding its other functions and activities
- whether the Institution collects information about student satisfaction with their programmes of study and the career paths offered to graduates
- whether the Institution seeks comparison with other similar establishments within and beyond the European Higher Education Area, with a view to developing self-awareness and finding ways to improve its operation

Do you wish to make any comment on a point not included above?

Under the framework of the implemented QA policy the institution uses different IT systems for the collection and analysis of student data & their progression, for course evaluation and practicum experiences, as well as for administering research programmes, in accordance with the requirements. The institution collects information about the studies and teaching quality by the end of each class, as well as by the end of the studies. The process of feedback needs however to be adjusted and offer better insight and lead to specific agreed target goals for each faculty member. This process of performance evaluation must have a compulsory character and be based on agreed criteria in teaching, research and administration. The career paths of the graduates are recorded by the departments themselves and do not follow common standards. Comparison with other similar institutions, although foreseen, should be more actively promoted.

Please decide in respect to the specific evaluation area (&4.7):

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Justify your rating:
### 4.8 Dissemination of information to stakeholders

**Please comment on:**

- how the Institution sees to the publicization of information on the programmes offered, the expected learning outcomes, the degrees awarded, the teaching, learning and assessment procedures it uses and the learning opportunities it offers to students
- whether the information regarding the Institution’s offered programmes of study is available in English or in other languages
- whether the teaching staff’s CVs are included in the publicized information, both in Greek and in English

The institution’s information about programmes of study are available in Greek and partially in English. They are reasonably well sectionalised, organised simple analytical well understood, easy to navigate and well presented, including helpful pictures. They include undergraduate and graduate studies, research interests and projects, etc. in all three campuses (Larissa, Karditsa, Trikala). Directions for students are difficult to locate in English.

There are also e-classes available to interested students. The teaching staff CVs are included in the online information in Greek only. Some of the faculty publications are in their original English versions.

Some of the information about faculty CVS is out of date and lacks a chronologically updated participation in seminars, conference and other events. Also this applies to advertisement of job openings at the national and international levels. The EEC suggest to update the information frequently.

Do you wish to make any comment on a point not included above?

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*Justify your rating:*
4.9 Continuous monitoring and periodic review of the study programmes

Please comment on:

- the procedure followed with regard to assessment and periodic review of the contents of study programmes
- whether this procedure takes into account the changing needs of society
- whether this procedure takes into consideration the findings emanating from monitoring the graduates’ career paths
- the procedure with which the reviews take into account the students’ work load, the progress rate and completion of studies
- whether this procedure takes into account the cutting edge research activities in that particular discipline
- whether the involvement of students and other stakeholders is secured in the revision of the programmes

The EEC appreciates the existence of a plan to assess the contents of programmes of the institution with an expected yearly occurrence with regards to the needs of the current students, recent graduates and businessmen in their respective fields. This process needs to take into consideration the ever changing needs of the consuming society, economic necessities and moving population patterns over time.

The graduate career paths are dependent on the needs of the surrounding business environment and overall on the needs of the country and the European and the International community. Adaptation of the current curriculum to the above needs is essential and has to be very sensitive and needs to adapt to the shifts of current trends. The Institution takes into consideration all of the above with good rates of success, regarding the yearly frequency of assessment.

According to reports from stakeholders the level of satisfaction from recent and past graduates is very satisfactory since they have accomplished the required needs of the respective industry requirements. Student necessary preparation is also satisfactory for European market needs and competitive placement in the EU environment.

Research activities are very impressive with certain areas of accomplishment but both faculty and students have to ascertain themselves with more freedom of thought without restrictive actions by outside sources, government included.

Do you wish to make any comment on a point not included above?

Please decide in respect to the specific evaluation area (&4.9):

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Justify your rating:
### 4.10 Periodic external evaluation

**Please comment on:**

- the procedure already planned by the Institution in order to deal with the observations of the Institutional External evaluation
- how the anticipated implementation of plans by Departments / Faculties is monitored in response to any comments included in their external evaluation and in the accreditation of their programmes

Until now the institution has not undergone a total external evaluation.

In the last five years the majority of the departments received external evaluations but a good proportion was not evaluated presumably due to unknown impediments faced by ADIP. Out of all recommendations only a few were implemented due to restrictions, policies and laws of the central governmental agencies (i.e., a small number of academic faculty to student ratio, permanent faculty restriction number and lack of replacements due to transfers or retirement, small number of student dorms, very small number of student attending lecturers).

The anticipated implementation of recommendations by the external committees, over the last years in the departments that were evaluated can be monitored but again due to monetary shortfalls and governmental policy restrictions cannot be implemented in totality. Institutions need serious monetary influx from any sources, local and beyond in terms of attracting donations of any sort and national and international monetary investments and cooperation of the institution and national and international business and government agencies.

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**Justify your rating:**
### 4.11 Internal System of Quality Assurance – Conclusions and recommendations

Please complete the following sections regarding the **internal system of quality assurance**:

- **Underline specific positive points**:
  - University Internal Quality Assurance Programme (MODIP)
  - Quality Assurance Teams for each and every department (OMEA)

- **Underline specific negative points**:

  Reduced numbers of academic and administrative personnel to apply quality assurance. Some departments have not gone through external evaluations due to decision outside the TEI of Thessalia.

- **Make your suggestions for further development of the positive points**:

- **Make your suggestions on needed steps for improvement**:
  1. Continuous improvement, maintenance and development of existing systems with attendance in seminars, symposiums and conferences of related personnel and topics.
  2. Dedicated department personnel in areas of quality control and periodical evaluation of applied systems of quality assurance.
  3. Security policies should be clearly defined and updated according to current needs and policies including national, European and international standards.
  4. Adaptation of existing policies to declared emergence procedures in terms of immediate implementation of on campus security.
  5. Establishment and organisation of a new office for attracting funds, grants from outside sources in the form of donations in funds, trusts, real estate for formation of units within a department or new departments with focus on specific latest needs in research.
  6. TEI of Thessaly should establish policy for timeline implementing external recommendations and course of action with suggested modifications from internal scope of approval and application.
### 5. OPERATION OF THE CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION OF THE INSTITUTION

#### 5.1 Central Administration Services of the Institution

Please comment on:

- The operation of the central administration services of the Institution in regard to the:
  - Special Account for Research Funds (SARF)
  - Financial services
  - Supplies department
  - Technical services
  - IT services
  - Student support services
  - Employment and Career Centre (ECC)
  - Public/International relations department
  - Foreign language services
  - Social and cultural activities
  - Halls of residence and refectory services
  - Institution’s library

The EEC met with the general secretary (immediately past and current), directors and staff of the administrative groups of the Institution who presented the functions and services of each group. During the interview became evident that that the administrative team offers excellent support to the teaching and research programmes of the various departments and laboratories.

The EEC also had the opportunity to tour most parts of the Larissa campus and its facilities and ask questions to and receive information from several support services personnel and faculty. The IT of the Institute appears to effectively support all the traditional services (internet, wireless, proxy servers, PC labs, and services) and related physical facilities in the Larissa campus.

The EEC also identified a lack of some critical functions of student services that are addressed in Section 3. Particularly important is the internationalization of the TEI of Thessaly and the need to support it with additional resources.

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Justify your rating:
5.2 Operation of the Central Administration of the Institution – Conclusions and recommendations

Please complete the following sections regarding the operation of the Institution’s central administration:

- **Underline specific positive points:**

The administrative services in the different departments of the Institution, despite the shortage of staff, provide satisfactory support to the academic community, staff and students. Some consolidation of service provision was reported to the EEC and additional efforts are planned. The finance office performs its duties by assisting in budget preparation and management of funds from research and other programmes. The IT services effectively serve and support the Institution departments providing all the required IT services. The active presence of a legal advisor is particularly useful as the TEI of Thessaly navigates through rapidly changing central administration regulations.

- **Underline specific negative points:**

- **Make your suggestions for further development of the positive points:**

Team leaders and high performers should be given the flexibility to make changes through a systematic approach and collaborative planning.

- **Make your suggestions on needed steps for improvement:**

A yearly appraisal system for administrative staff should be developed in consultation with them. This will provide them with an annual opportunity to talk about their achievements and workloads and to set agreed targets for the following year. Those performing well should be celebrated whilst those who are underperforming should be given support and training to improve their performance. Also, within the QA system that it is to be further developed, the operational processes of the administration should be revisited and possibly upgraded based on staff feedback. The EEC also suggests creating a student support service function as mentioned in other sections and create an endowed fellowship programme. Moreover, creating an Outreach Development office for fundraising.
6. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In connection with the
- general operation of the Institution
- development of the Institution to this date and its present situation
- Institution’s readiness and capability to change/improve
- Internal system of Quality Assurance of the Institution

please complete the following sections:

- Underline specific positive points:
The EEC ascertained strong intentions for quality assurance at TEI of Thessaly.

The academic community shows a strong commitment and determination to serve their students and local community in teaching, training, technology transfer, and applied research. The academic faculty has shown specific interest and pride in their respected fields despite the fact that present economic national conditions restrict their horizons.

Student extracurricular activities are very innovative, impressive, infused with a substantial dose of national pride carrying the traditions of every part of Greece with good taste combined together in many aspects of art, culture and sport activities.

Research departments deliver well thought projects that apply and help the local and national economy. Especially the department of Design Technology of Wood Furniture is the only one in Greece with state of the art facilities, equipment and research. The research Department of Agricultural Technology Food and Nutrition has an impressive list of research projects in many areas of food innovation with results from all aspects of goods supported from local industries. Interesting lists of research include areas that are very current and important, i.e. aromatic therapeutic herbs and spices with impressive product development and applications, freeze dried donkey milk that has an impressive array of nutrients and extremely helpful applications. Notable are also the achievements of the Department of Computer Science and Engineering with its international reach in world renowned industries.

In conclusion, many research units (laboratories) are state of the art, productive, and deliver student training and research that is directly used by private and public entities in the region.
• **Underline specific negative points:**

TEI Departments are restricted in innovation and applications due to the fact that there is no monetary improvement over specific achievements.

The EEC found an uncertain environment created by excessive bureaucracy and regulatory interference. In addition there is not enough freedom of thinking and action because the laws of the land restrict part of the above in a very peculiar way of interpretation by the faculty. This inhibits the ability of the Institution to operate.

The vision, mission, and strategic goals as formulated in the Internal Evaluation Report and discussed with the leadership somewhat broad. The EEC sees lack of a priority-setting mechanism, targets, and associate timeline that reflects the priorities.

EEC did not find a widespread acceptance of quality principles and developed QA processes at all levels of the TEI of Thessaly community.

The EEC did not find close integration between MODIP and OMEA, thus inhibiting QA.

The EEC also detected an absence of an extension office dedicated to the most important function of this Institution which is farming.

• **Make your suggestions for further development:**

1. Create a pragmatic strategic planning process to set priorities for the Institution.
2. Create a continuous process and the appropriate metrics to support QA.
3. Create a coordinating structure that functions as a Post-graduate School.
4. Showcase best practices within the Institution to help less well performing departments and laboratories.
5. The Institution should establish a financial aid office that aids students in securing low interest loans, vouchers and other sources of support for attending the Institution.
6. Establish an office of development (alumni association) that should include student retention, placement, career development and networking.
7. Establishment of an outreach development office for fundraising and attracting donors in order to generate opportunities for the Institution.
8. Establishment of extension office that will function as a liaison between the Institution and the agricultural / farming community.
9. Promote campus wide health safety programme. For example, install a water filtration system (carbon-ceramic-reverse osmosis) for usage by the cafeteria with plans to extend to dorms and all buildings, for health safety (i.e. removal of chlorine or presence of water born bacteria not affected by chlorine). In addition installation of screens in all open windows, such as food processing facilities, labs, dorms.
10. The EEC sees a need to create an international board of advisors that will support the Institution in strategic and tactical development, outreach, business development, networking, diversity in funding of research programmes and other activities.
• Make your suggestions on needed steps for improvement:
• The council, administrative and academic personnel need to rethink and reposition their approach to strategic development without being hampered by laws or possible external and internal impediments.
• We encourage the Institution to develop its international branding strategy.

6.1 Final decision of the EEC

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Justify your rating:
TEI of Thessaly has a uniquely advantageous position in the educational and regional economy system that is tremendously supported by its well-developed infrastructure and well-grounded social capital.
The Members of the Committee

TECHNOLOGICAL EDUCATIONAL
INSTITUTION OF THESSALY

Name and Surname

Signature

Prof. Panayiotis Angelides
University of Nicosia, Cyprus

Prof. Konstadinos Goulias
University of California Santa Barbara, U.S.A.

Dr. Demetrios Kazantzis
Del's Lemonade & Refreshments Inc., U.S.A.

Dr. Thanos Papaioannou
Hafencity University Hamburg, Germany