Accreditation Report
for the Postgraduate Study Programme of:

Digital and Soft Skills in Educational Sciences

Department: Early Childhood Education & Care
Institution: International Hellenic University
Date: 11 June 2024

Report of the Panel appointed by the HAHE to undertake the review of the Postgraduate Study Programme of **Digital and Soft Skills in Educational Sciences** of the **International Hellenic University** for the purposes of granting accreditation

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PART A: BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT OF THE REVIEW

I. The External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel

The Panel responsible for the Accreditation Review of the postgraduate study programme of **Digital and Soft Skills in Educational Sciences** of the **International Hellenic University**, comprised the following five (5) members, drawn from the HAHE Register, in accordance with Laws 4009/2011 & 4653/2020:

1. **Dr Elias Pimenidis (Chair)**
   University of the West of England, Bristol, United Kingdom

2. **Professor Leonidas Kyriakides**
   University of Cyprus, Nicosia, Cyprus

3. **Dr Xanthi Almpanaki**
   Directorate of Secondary Education Veria, Greek Ministry of Education, Greece

4. **Professor Christina Siina (Chinas)**
   Durham University, Durham, United Kingdom

5. **Mr. Konstantinos Boumpourekas**
   PhD Candidate, University of Western Macedonia, Florina, Greece

II.   Review Procedure and Documentation

The accreditation review was conducted remotely over two days, 12 and 13 June 2024. During this period, the panel members engaged in videoconference meetings with various stakeholders involved with the Postgraduate program "Digital and Soft Skills in Educational Sciences".

Initially, the panel met with administrative and teaching stakeholders from the PSP, the Department of Early Childhood Education and Care, and the governing academic bodies of the International Hellenic University. This included the Department Head, the PSP Director, members of the International Hellenic University MODIP, the Department's Steering Committee, and faculty members. After a brief presentation on the department's history, goals, and composition, the discussion shifted to the strategic aims, operational matters, and status of the PSP. Following this, the panel held meetings with current students, alumni, and other stakeholders, including employers and social partners. These sessions allowed the panel to ask questions and engage in discussions regarding the department's operations, students' learning experiences and academic life, and the challenges and opportunities faced by the academic unit. Additionally, the panel was given a virtual tour of the facilities available to the students of the PSP "Cultural Informatics and Communication."

The panel thoroughly reviewed all relevant documents and online resources available on the International Hellenic University's website, particularly those related to the Department of Early Childhood Education and Care.

The decisions concerning compliance with the 10 Principles and the drafting of the accreditation report were reached with equal involvement from each panel member and were unanimously endorsed through a consensus-building process. The EEAP members wish to highlight that the academic bodies of the International Hellenic University and the Department of Early Childhood Education and Care fully cooperated with the panel during the accreditation process, furnishing the requested additional information and clarifications promptly and professionally.

III.   Postgraduate Study Programme Profile

The PSP "Digital and Soft Skills in Educational Sciences" is an interdepartmental programme, offered by the Department of Early Childhood Education & Care in collaboration with the Department of Information and Electronic Engineering at the International Hellenic University. Established in 2020, the program started running in March 2021, and it is currently running for the fifth academic year having seen hundreds of students successfully complete the programme.

Although the programme was initially approved for in person delivery, the timing of the launch and the first delivery meant that it had to adjust to initially Hybrid and subsequently distance (online) delivery mode, due to restriction imposed by the Covid-19 pandemic. This mode of delivery has helped the programme to increase its attractiveness to candidates across the country and the number of applications has soared to thousands. The programme is currently offered in Distance Learning mode only.

Students can complete the programme over three semesters (studying for 30 ECTS credits each). The award of the diploma is based on a student successfully completing 90 ECTS credits. There are two admission cycles during the academic year, each offering admission to 120 students.

The programme offers two specializations, namely "Utilization of Digital and Soft Skills in Early Childhood" and "Utilization of Digital and Soft Skills in Lifelong Learning".

The PSP is self-financed, with its operational costs entirely reliant on revenue from student tuition and fees. The fees for the full programme are set at 2100€ per student.

PART B: COMPLIANCE WITH THE PRINCIPLES

PRINCIPLE 1: QUALITY ASSURANCE POLICY AND QUALITY GOAL SETTING FOR THE POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES OF THE INSTITUTION AND THE ACADEMIC UNIT

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 THE POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES OF THE INSTITUTION AND THE ACADEMIC UNIT. THIS POLICY SHOULD BE PUBLISHED AND IMPLEMENTED BY ALL STAKEHOLDERS.

The quality assurance policy of the academic unit should be in line with the quality assurance policy of the Institution and must be formulated in the form of a public statement, which is implemented by all stakeholders. It focuses on the achievement of special goals related to the quality assurance of the study programmes offered by the academic unit.

Indicatively, the quality policy statement of the academic unit includes its commitment to implement a quality policy that will promote the academic profile and orientation of the postgraduate study programme (PSP), its purpose and field of study; it will realise the programme's goals and it will determine the means and ways for attaining them; it will implement appropriate quality procedures, aiming at the programme's improvement.

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

a) *the suitability of the structure and organisation of postgraduate study programmes*
b) *the pursuit of learning outcomes and qualifications in accordance with the European and National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education - level 7*
c) *the promotion of the quality and effectiveness of teaching at the PSP*
d) *the appropriateness of the qualifications of the teaching staff for the PSP*
e) *the drafting, implementation, and review of specific annual quality goals for the improvement of the PSP*
f) *the level of demand for the graduates' qualifications in the labour market*
g) *the quality of support services, such as the administrative services, the libraries and the student welfare office for the PSP*
h) *the efficient utilisation of the financial resources of the PSP that may be drawn from tuition fees*
i) *the conduct of an annual review and audit of the quality assurance system of the PSP through the cooperation of the Internal Evaluation Group (IEG) with the Institution's Quality Assurance Unit (QAU)*

Documentation

▪ *Quality Assurance Policy of the PSP*

▪ *Quality goal setting of the PSP*

Study Programme Compliance

    I.   Findings

        This is a relatively new PSP (first run of the programme in March 2021), and this is the first report of an external accreditation of the programme.

The panel found that this interdepartmental PSP adheres to the quality principles of the institution and the management team of the programme has established robust processes that allow for appropriate quality controls and facilitate the smooth operation of the programme across two departments.

The programme undergoes appropriate quality audits by the University's quality bodies and has adhered to most recommendations.

Student participation in the evaluation of the programme and the evaluation of teaching methods, resources, and staff shows very high participation rates.

The programme team appear to be very responsive to most recommendations and requests from students and effectively review and adjust the programme accordingly.

The level of achievement is appropriate with all modules satisfying the requirements of Level 7 of the National Competences Framework.

The programme meets the professional skills requirements of the workplace, and this is confirmed by the extremely high numbers of applications (almost 5000 in the past two application cycles) and the very high quality of applicants.

II.   Analysis

Overall, the programme appears to meet its quality objectives at the highest levels.

The quality of student achievement, along with very high student engagement in all processes shows the strength of the programme.

Its very high popularity among applicants demonstrates the high value of the qualification in the marketplace, and the currency of the skills the graduates obtain.

The programme team appears to be well aligned with all quality procedures and processes and this contributes to the attainment of a very high-quality outcome.

The very high-quality applicants are a great testament to the attractiveness of the programme but could hide a risk of making the programme too elitist for the level of studies.

The fees are considered affordable, and the income appears to be managed very well and effectively to support the programme to its successful running.

III.   Conclusions

The programme meets the criteria of the principle in a very effective and emphatic manner and the panel agrees that it is fully compliant with the requirements of this principle.

Panel Judgement

Principle 1: Quality assurance policy and quality goal setting for the postgraduate study programmes of the institution and the academic unit	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

Given the high quality of applicants and the large number of applications received, could the programme management consider a quota of places for applicants with no other postgraduate qualifications? This will make the programme more inclusive and will allow for a wider skills development across the workforce.

PRINCIPLE 2: DESIGN AND APPROVAL OF POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES

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

The academic units develop their postgraduate study programmes following a well-defined procedure. The academic profile and orientation of the programme, the research character, the scientific objectives, the specific subject areas, and specialisations are described at this stage.

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

The expected learning outcomes must be determined based on the European and National Qualifications Framework (EQF, NQF), and the Dublin Descriptors for level 7. During the implementation of the programme, the degree of achievement of the expected learning outcomes and the feedback of the learning process must be assessed with the appropriate tools. For each learning outcome that is designed and made public, it is necessary that its evaluation criteria are also designed and made public.

In addition, the design of PSP must consider:

- *the Institutional strategy*

- *the active involvement of students*
- *the experience of external stakeholders from the labour market*
- *the anticipated student workload according to the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) for level 7*
- *the option of providing work experience to students*
- *the linking of teaching and research*
- *the relevant regulatory framework and the official procedure for the approval of the PSP by the Institution*
- *The procedure of approval or revision of the programmes provides for the verification of compliance with the basic requirements of the Standards by the Institution's Quality Assurance Unit (QAU).*

Documentation

- *Senate decision for the establishment of the PSP*

- *PSP curriculum structure: courses, course categories, ECTS awarded, expected learning outcomes according to the EQF, internship, mobility opportunities*

- *Labour market data regarding the employment of graduates, international experience in a relevant scientific field*

- *PSP Student Guide*

- *Course and thesis outlines*

- *Teaching staff (name list including of areas of specialisation, its relation to the courses taught, employment relationship, and teaching assignment in hours as well as other teaching commitments in hours)*

Study Programme Compliance

I.   Findings

The PSP "Digital and Soft Skills in Educational Sciences" is an interdepartmental programme offered by the Department of Early Childhood Education & Care in collaboration with the Department of Information and Electronic Engineering at the International Hellenic University. It was established in 2020 based on the University's Governing Body decision number ΔΦ 15/17339 and Law number 4485/2017 (Α' 114).

The aim of the programme is to develop specialist professionals who will resource the country's educational units at all levels, promote and enhance research and teaching in the field of education using modern and groundbreaking approaches and actions, supported by a programme that offers a wide range of topics at a high level of studies.

The curriculum, as can be seen by the structure of the programme, the optional modules available to students for customizing their focus of knowledge, and the module descriptors, demonstrate a very good adherence to the above aim. The level of knowledge achieved is compatible with the European and National Qualifications Framework (EQF, NQF), and the Dublin Descriptors for level 7.

The student guide provides very good clarity as to the aim and objectives of the programme, the module descriptors provide adequate guidance as to scope of each module and the field of learning embraced. They identify appropriate learning outcomes that align with the programme's overall learning objectives.

The teaching staff of the programme are all highly and suitably qualified for the modules they teach. Most of them are highly active in research in fields relevant to their teaching on this programme. They appear to link their research experience and outcomes with their teaching, and this enhances their input into the learning experiences of their students.

In the short period of time that this PSP has been running it appears that it has captured the attention of the professionals in the field. The demand for the skills offered is very high and the response of professionals for further developing and being equipped with such important skills is very high. Applications have soared in numbers, and this allows the programme's management to select very high-quality applicants.

The high-quality applicants and students offer the opportunity for teaching staff to engage their classes in more thorough aspects of learning blended with research topics that could further inspire research objectives that often leads students to continue with research aspirations at doctorate level of studies.

II.   Analysis

The programme is well established with the aim, objectives and individual module learning outcomes well aligned to the European and National Qualifications Framework

(EQF, NQF), and the Dublin Descriptors for level 7.

Skills acquired by the students reflect the objectives set out at the point of establishing the programme and its high popularity among professionals in the field demonstrates the success level of the PSP.

The teaching staff is suitably qualified at the appropriate level and focus areas of the programme, and their research focus supports enhanced delivery of the individual modules and successful learning outcomes of the programme overall.

Students engage well with the programme. Levels of participation to the programme's evaluation surveys show a very high level of interaction and keen interest in supporting the continuous development of the programme.

Student numbers are at the highest expected levels, the rates of completion of the programme are very satisfactory and the numbers of students not completing the programme are very low and the reasons for doing so are mostly not related to the programme itself.

The programme appears to be refreshed and developed regularly to keep it at the cutting edge of the skills and technologies utilized and this contributes to the continuous success and increasing popularity.

Where the programme could see further development is the aspect of internationalization, with possibly opening this up to international students. This will be compatible with the nature of the institution and the opportunity to expose a very successful programme to beyond the borders of the country. The panel recognizes the challenges involved here and appreciates that in the short life of the programme so far there were other priorities to address.

III.   **Conclusions**

This is a very successful programme well aligned with the aim and objectives of its establishment.

It has developed very fast and very well since its establishment and has captured the attention of the marketplace.

It appears that it has a bright future in the shaping of the skillset required by the professionals in the fields of the educational environments that it serves.

The management team appears to be handling the resources available to support the further development of the offering to students.

The quality of the applicants and that of the graduates is impressive.

There is a future for further development and further engagement with the professional bodies at national and international level. The programme team will need to continue their efforts in keeping the high standards they have set and share their experiences and knowledge in delivering such a successful programme.

Panel Judgement

Principle 2: Design and approval of postgraduate study programmes	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

Continue supporting the development of the programme engaging with the professional bodies at national and international level. The value of the programme is high and the opportunities for establishing this in the international scene are great.

PRINCIPLE 3: STUDENT-CENTRED LEARNING, TEACHING, AND ASSESSMENT

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD ENSURE THAT POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES PROVIDE THE NECESSARY CONDITIONS TO ENCOURAGE STUDENTS TO TAKE AN ACTIVE ROLE IN THE LEARNING PROCESS. THE ASSESSMENT METHODS SHOULD REFLECT THIS APPROACH.

Student-centred learning and teaching plays an important role in enhancing students' motivation, their self-evaluation, and their active participation 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 by adopting 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*

- *strengthens 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 the students' complaints*

- *provides counselling and guidance for the preparation of the thesis*

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.*

- *Assessment is consistent, fairly applied to all students and conducted in accordance with the stated procedures.*

- *A formal procedure for student appeals is in place.*

- *The function of the academic advisor runs smoothly.*

Documentation

- *Sample of a fully completed questionnaire for the evaluation of the PSP by the students*

- *Regulations for dealing with students' complaints and appeals*

- *Regulation for the function of academic advisor*

- *Reference to the teaching modes and assessment methods*

Study Programme Compliance

    I.   Findings

The concept of student-centred teaching and learning is multidimensional, involving several processes to ensure students' successful academic growth and active participation in the processes concerning their education. This involves the program's structure and implementation, the faculty's pedagogical approaches and teaching methods, the available resources, and support systems for student well-being. It also includes facilitating a balance between family and student responsibilities, evaluation methods, the learning setting, and chances for professional academic growth.

The International Hellenic University (IHU) adopts a student-centred approach in its overall educational philosophy and ensures that the Postgraduate Study Programme (PSP) "Digital and Soft Skills in Educational Sciences" is accessible to all, without any additional entry requirements or exams beyond legal terms. In this context, the PSP respects the diversity of the students and accommodates their varied needs by adopting flexible learning directions. After all, this is also the expected result according to the composition of the students of this program since it consists of a wide range of scientific fields with students from all levels of education and different disciplines.

The multidimensional character of the PSP is also visible in the course outline/description, as it includes a variety of thematic units (see https://digital-skills.the.ihu.gr/en/domh-programmatos-spoudwn/). The EEAP reviewed all submitted documents and conducted interviews with faculty, students, and alumni, revealing a well-structured programme, thorough educational materials, effective pedagogical strategies, and vigorous assessment methods. These elements jointly ensure an effective academic environment that fosters students' academic growth strengthens the student's sense of autonomy.

The assessment criteria and evaluation methods for each course are announced and are available in public separately for each course at the beginning of each semester. As part of their assessment, students are provided with personalized information and feedback. At the end of the course cycle, group meetings of the teaching staff are scheduled, and actions taken after these meetings are evaluated.

The effectiveness of the teaching approaches is also reflected in the evaluation data from students where the successful guiding and supporting role of the teaching staff, the interdisciplinary approach used, as well as the accessibility to communication and interaction in general and the well-structured courses, are acknowledged. It should be noted that the monitoring system is entirely carried out remotely, that is, all the lessons are done through modern distance teaching (via zoom), without the need for physical presence.

II.   Analysis

It was visible to the EEAP through the virtual meetings with faculty, students, and alumni that there is a shared respect and understanding between students and faculty. Alumni also acknowledged that the course had a great impact on their professional development and that they gained a great array of skills.

At the beginning of each teaching semester, the teaching staff proceed to preparatory co-arrangement procedures with its participating students within the "course's contract". They both agree and establish two intermediate reflective discussions regarding their progress. With this practice, the mutual respect in the student-academic relationship is built and a frame of reference for solving upcoming problems is formed. It is also noted that in determining the content of each course, a "margin" is provided so that beyond the predetermined theme of each course, interests and experiences of students are explored and learning approaches are readjusted accordingly. Therefore, teaching is framed by examples, highlighting experiences and reviewing different approaches. This is done both during the modern educational process and asynchronously (forum discussion topics on the Moodle platform). In addition, the teaching staff of the study program uses research resources, such as the outputs of the Erasmus+ program "Toolkit for integrating eLearning in Higher Education" (Project Number: 2020-1-RO01-KA226-HE-095434), in which the IHU participates as a collaborator.

In many cases students propose, choose and organize thematic assignments on their own. The possibility of flexible learning paths is also made possible by the large number of elective courses offered in this program (students may choose 2-4 out of 12 total electives courses offered for each direction), a feature that enables students to shape (to some extent) their own learning path corresponding to their personal interests and needs.

In terms of student assessment, it was identified that faculty members are dedicated to helping students develop and refine their coursework. Specifically, for those students who will choose to prepare a thesis, and in order to ensure advanced level quality guidance, a limitation is placed on the number of theses each faculty member could supervise (i.e. up to 5 theses per semester). In this way, adequate encouragement, counselling, support and guidance are provided to the students for the preparation of their thesis. Towards this direction a special guide for the preparation of the thesis was created. It is also noted that all educational work and learning interaction are extended with asynchronous distance learning methods (such as, discussion forums, chats, use of collaborative tools google docs, kahoot, jamboard, padlet, debates-Kialo etc.).

The evaluation of courses is also applied online during the 8th-9th week of the semester, through a specially configured digital form. It is emphasized that while participation in this evaluation is optional, this has exceeded 90% during the last two years. This high response rate during the last two years shows a generally positive reaction towards the programme, the presence of a friendly and open climate and the willingness of students to participate in the process for improvement.

III.   Conclusions

The EEAP concludes that the PSP "Digital and Soft Skills in Educational Sciences" of the IHU fully adheres to the relevant principle. We commend the faculty for their ongoing commitment to a student-focused approach and for continuously exploring options to enhance flexibility and broaden opportunities for students.

Panel Judgement

Principle 3: Student-centred learning, teaching, and assessment	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

None.

PRINCIPLE 4: STUDENT ADMISSION, PROGRESSION, RECOGNITION OF POSTGRADUATE STUDIES, AND CERTIFICATION.

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

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

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

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

Documentation

▪ *Internal regulation for the operation of the Postgraduate Study Programme*

▪ *Research Ethics Regulation*

▪ *Regulation of studies, internship, mobility, and student assignments*

▪ *Degree certificate template*

Study Programme Compliance

I.   Findings

In our evaluation of the institution's adherence to Principle 4, which emphasizes the importance of developing and applying published regulations covering all aspects and phases of postgraduate studies, including admission, progression, thesis drafting, recognition, and certification, the following findings were made:

Student Admission Procedures and Supporting Documents: The institution has well-defined and published student admission procedures, outlining the required supporting documents for application, in English and Greek language as the program is delivered in the Greek language. The admission criteria are explicitly detailed and uniformly enforced, ensuring that every applicant is evaluated fairly and equitably throughout the selection process. This transparency and consistency help maintain integrity and trust in the admissions system, providing equal opportunities for all candidates. The submission of a thesis is optional for students, allowing them to choose whether to complete this significant research project as part of their academic program.

Student Guide: All relevant information pertaining to the aforementioned aspects is publicly accessible through the Student Guide. This thorough resource guarantees that all stakeholders, such as students, faculty, and staff, can readily access and comprehend the regulations, procedures, and requirements related to postgraduate studies.

Documentation: The institution maintains documentation, such as internal regulations for the operation of the Postgraduate Study Program, a Research Ethics Regulation, a Regulation of studies, student assignments, and a Degree certificate template.

Diploma: Graduates are issued award certificates in both Greek and English language, along with the Diploma Supplement that meticulously details their achievements and ensures that students' qualifications are recognized internationally. It also provides certification of "Pedagogical and Teaching Proficiency", as well as proficiency in "Computer Use" based on ASEP regulations.

Student Rights and Obligations: The institution has established clear guidelines regarding the rights and obligations of students. The monitoring system **is entirely remote,** that is, all the lessons are done through the method of modern distance teaching, via zoom, without the need for physical presence, with the possibility of monitoring from anywhere. Monitoring of student progression is regularly conducted, with mechanisms in place to address academic or behavioural concerns.

Support of Students:
In the institution is active the Counsellor, the Secretariat and an Alumni Association. All the above support the students to take full advantage of the available services and also inform them of their future opportunities.

Student Mobility: Terms and conditions for enhancing student mobility, such exchange programs, educational trips abroad, are communicated.

Internship and Scholarships: The institution provides information on scholarships opportunities where applicable. The Master is expected to provide a number of scholarships or excellence awards, to postgraduate students, and provide a number of scholarships or excellence awards to postgraduates Students. It may provide a number of scholarships or excellence awards to postgraduate students if combined with the students who will be exempted from payment of tuition fees in accordance with the provisions of Law 4485/2017, they do not exceed in number 30% of the total of students admitted per year. Annual scholarships will be awarded based on academic merit objective criteria.

II.   **Analysis**
The findings indicate that the institution is generally in compliance with Principle 4. It has well-defined and documented regulations covering various aspects of postgraduate studies, ensuring transparency and fairness in its processes. The institution's commitment to student rights, monitoring, and support is evident. It has established clear procedures for thesis drafting, assignment submission, and degree recognition.

III.   Conclusions

The institution demonstrates a strong commitment to the principles outlined in Principle 4. The program is the result of an interesting collaboration of two different Departments and the successful scientific approach of two different subject areas and covers issues that apply to all levels of education.

The program adheres to the principles of transparency, fairness, and consistency in its postgraduate offerings. Comprehensive documentation is readily accessible, including detailed regulations and the Student Guide. This guide offers in-depth information on courses, learning outcomes, syllabi, and assessment strategies.

Panel Judgement

Principle 4: Student admission, progression, recognition of postgraduate studies and certification	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

While the institution is generally in compliance with Principle 4, there are a few areas that could benefit from further attention:

R4.1 The Department is encouraged to continue to pursue ways of improving the number of Erasmus+ opportunities for its students. Terms and conditions for enhancing student mobility, such as credit transfer and exchange programs, educational trips abroad, be more clearly communicated.

R4.2 Creation of supporting network after graduation the students (an active alumni association etc) and build cooperation with stakeholders more actively such as Erasmus programs, teachers academies etc.

PRINCIPLE 5: TEACHING **S**TAFF **O**F **P**OSTGRADUATE **S**TUDY **P**ROGRAMMES

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

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

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

Documentation

- *Procedures and criteria for teaching staff recruitment*

- *Employment regulations or contracts, and obligations of the teaching staff*

- *Policy for staff support and development*

- *Individual performance of the teaching staff in scientific-research and teaching work, based on internationally recognised systems of scientific evaluation (e.g. Google Scholar, Scopus, etc.)*

- *List of teaching staff including subject areas, employment relationship, Institution of origin, Department of origin*

Study Programme Compliance

I.   **Findings**

During the virtual meeting, the EEAP discussed with members of the teaching staff professional development opportunities, mobility, competence, and adequacy of the teaching staff to ensure learning outcomes as well as workload issues and teaching staff's involvement in research projects and areas of further improvement.

The teaching staff recruitment procedures are aligned with the current national law and regulations of IHU. The selection of staff is conducted considering the subject areas of expertise, previous academic work, teaching experience, publications, and participation in conferences and research projects. Professional development opportunities are also mentioned by the PSP. More specifically, the study programme has foreseen the strengthening of its staff members through financial support of research actions, such as participation in conferences and publications in scientific journals etc. However,

there is no statutory teaching award process.

The documentation includes a list of the teaching staff (Annex 7) outlining their names, position, subject areas and courses to teach, as well as a citation report for each faculty member (Annex 16). The teaching and research staff who participate in the PSP are nineteen (19), which comprises fourteen (14) faculty members, two (2) EDIP, and three (3) external collaborators. The EEAP found that the average weekly teaching load allocated for each teaching member of the PSP is adequate (39 hours per semester).

Based on the material presented to EAAP, it is evident that the faculty members of the PSP can establish strong collaborations amongst themselves, and they already have multidimensional teaching and research activity (see Annexes 7 and 16). Based on the number of their recent publications, h-index, and citations (in SCOPUS and Google Scholar), they all have an active and notable performance and contribution to their research fields. This could also be translated into a strength linking teaching and research, as also evidenced by the compulsory research courses (e.g., Advanced Research Methodology in the Educational Sciences). Other subjects offered in the program aim at this interconnection as well.

II.   Analysis

The recruitment process for teaching staff adheres to national laws and regulations and transparent procedures and criteria for the recruitment of properly qualified staff. Professional development opportunities are promoted, and initiatives are supported to encourage scholarly activity to strengthen the link between education and research.

Detailed documentation (see Annexes 7 and 16) includes a list of teaching staff, including DEP, EDIP, and external collaborators. It is noted that short bios, contact information and CVs are publicly available in the PSP's website (see https://digital-skills.the.ihu.gr/en/staff/ / https://digital-skills.the.ihu.gr/en/dieen/). Faculty members exhibit strong research activities, as evidenced by recent publications, h-index, and citations. This activity underscores the integration of teaching and research and the selection of highly qualified academic staff within the program.

Although the research performance of the teaching staff is considered adequate, the staff could start exploring ways to further increase the faculty's international scientific collaborations and presence in the research fields such as through participation in research projects and inviting visitors from abroad.

III.   Conclusions

The EEAP considers that appropriate actions have been taken to ensure quality in teaching and research of the PSP. The programme adheres to transparent recruitment procedures and criteria to employ high qualified teaching staff. The program actively promotes professional development opportunities, program's international scientific collaborations, and supports scholarly activities to strengthen the bonds between education and research. With detailed documentation outlining staff composition and workload, coupled with robust research activities exhibited by faculty members, the program underscores its commitment to improvement and contributing to the research fields. Moving forward, the PSP research profile and international collaborations could be enhanced by alternative ways such as encouraging participation in research projects or hosting visiting scholars.

Panel Judgement

Principle 5: Teaching staff of postgraduate study programmes	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

The EEAP suggests the PSP and the Departments to consider alternative ways to further increase the faculty's international scientific collaborations (e.g., by hosting visiting scholars) and mobility such participation of research projects.

PRINICPLE 6: LEARNING **R**ESOURCES **A**ND **S**TUDENT **S**UPPORT

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD HAVE ADEQUATE FUNDING TO COVER THE TEACHING AND LEARNING NEEDS OF THE POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMME. THEY SHOULD –ON THE ONE HAND- PROVIDE SATISFACTORY INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES FOR LEARING 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, NETWORKS, CAREER AND SOCIAL POLICY SERVICES ETC.).

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

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

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

Documentation

▪ *Detailed description of the infrastructure and services made available by the Institution to the academic unit for the PSP, to support learning and academic activity (human resources, infrastructure, services, etc.) and the corresponding firm commitment of the Institution to financially cover these infrastructure-services from state or other resources*

▪ *Administrative support staff of the PSP (job descriptions, qualifications and responsibilities)*

▪ *Informative / promotional material given to students with reference to the available services*

▪ *Tuition utilisation plan (if applicable)*

Study Programme Compliance

I.   **Findings**

The Interdepartmental Postgraduate Programme (IPP) "Digital and Soft Skills in Educational Sciences" provides comprehensive support to students through a well-structured system of learning resources and student support services. This is essential for ensuring a high level of postgraduate education. The programme benefits from the collaboration between the Departments of "Early Childhood Education and Care" & "Information and Electronic Systems Engineering" under the International Hellenic University (IHU).

The programme offers access to both general and specialised libraries, including electronic databases, supporting extensive academic research and study. Students have access to digital learning platforms such as Moodle and Zoom, enhancing their learning experience through online resources, video conferencing, and digital communication

tools. The programme includes well-equipped lecture rooms and laboratories that support both face-to-face and remote teaching methods. Career services and student counselling are available, assisting students in their academic and professional development.

The programme is supported by qualified teaching and administrative staff. Detailed job descriptions and qualifications ensure that staff members are well-equipped to provide necessary support and services. The programme utilizes various channels, including educational websites and social media, to disseminate information about available services and support structures, ensuring students are well-informed about the resources at their disposal. The institution is committed to financially supporting the infrastructure and services from state or other resources, ensuring the sustainability and quality of the learning environment.

II.   **Analysis**

The provided documentation indicates that the Interdepartmental Postgraduate Programme is well-resourced and supported by robust infrastructure and services. The libraries at the International Hellenic University (IHU) are well-stocked with both general and specialized collections. These include physical resources available at the campus libraries and a wide range of electronic databases that are crucial for academic research. The use of advanced IT and communication tools, such as Moodle and Zoom, facilitates a modern and flexible learning environment, accommodating both full-time and part-time students, as well as those with varying needs. These platforms enable seamless online interactions, providing students with the flexibility to access lectures, resources, and communication tools from any location, which is particularly beneficial for those balancing studies with professional commitments.

The emphasis on student-centred learning and the integration of digital tools and resources reflect a progressive approach to postgraduate education. This approach is designed to enhance student engagement and foster an interactive learning experience. The availability of career and counselling services further enhances the support framework, addressing both academic and personal development needs of the students. These services are crucial for helping students navigate their career paths and manage personal challenges, thereby contributing to their overall well-being and academic success.

The detailed and structured approach to staff qualifications and responsibilities ensures that the teaching and administrative personnel are well-prepared to support the programme's objectives. The qualifications and roles of the staff are clearly defined, which helps in maintaining high educational standards and effective programme delivery. Comprehensive information dissemination through educational websites and social media ensures that students are continuously informed about the resources and services available to them, enhancing their ability to utilise these effectively.

The institution's commitment to financially supporting the programme from state or other resources underscores the sustainability and quality of the learning environment. This financial backing ensures that the necessary infrastructure and services are

maintained and improved, providing a stable and supportive environment for postgraduate education.

III. Conclusions

The Interdepartmental Postgraduate Programme complies with Principle 6 regarding learning resources and student support. The programme's infrastructure, services, and support mechanisms are well-developed and adequately funded, ensuring a conducive learning environment for postgraduate students. The commitment to continuous improvement and alignment with modern educational needs highlight the programme's dedication to excellence in higher education. This compliance is evident through the detailed descriptions of available resources, the qualifications and roles of the administrative staff, and the proactive approach to informing and supporting students. The financial commitment from the institution further strengthens the sustainability and quality of the programme's offerings.

Panel Judgement

Principle 6: Learning resources and student Support	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

- Strengthening alumni networks and mentorship programmes can provide ongoing career support for graduates.

- Opening the programme to international students would enrich the cultural diversity of the student body, fostering a more global perspective within the learning environment. By attracting international students, the programme can build a global alumni network, providing valuable networking opportunities. The inclusion of international students could potentially bring an additional stream of

income through tuition fees. This financial boost can help enhance the overall resources available to all students, thereby strengthening the programme's capacity to provide high-quality education.

PRINCIPLE 7: INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

INSTITUTIONS BEAR FULL RESPONISBILITY FOR COLLECTING, ANALYSING AND USING INFORMATION, AIMED AT THE EFFICIENT MANAGEMENT OF POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES AND RELATED ACTIVITIES, IN AN INTEGRATED, EFFECTIVE AND EASLILY 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.

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

The information collected 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 programmes*
> *availability of learning resources and student support*

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

Documentation

▪ *Report from the National Information System for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (NISQA) at the level of the Institution, the department, and the PSP*

▪ *Operation of an information management system for the collection of administrative data for the implementation of the PSP (Students' Record)*

▪ *Other tools and procedures designed to collect data on the academic and administrative functions of the academic unit and the PSP*

Study Programme Compliance

I. **Findings**

The Programme has laid the foundations of solidly built procedures for the systematic collection of data regarding various aspects of its academic unit. These procedures incorporate information about the teaching methods and skills, the content, the difficulty and the usefulness of the available courses, academic staff's research projects, the students' satisfaction with their Programme, on whether and how new technologies were used, the availability of electronic and printed resources, the facilities, and equipment. The collection of data occurs at different and multiple levels within the Programme to ensure a more extensive coverage. This whole procedure is conducted entirely by the administrative staff and the results of the collected data are sent to MODIP for further processing in relation to indicators of quality in terms of teaching staff, facilities, and research in this Programme.

Information Systems and Collection Methods

The Programme employs a combination of an information system, which is used for the collection, process and data management, and one single method to collect data through evaluation questionnaires and collaboration with relevant departments like MODIP and OPESP. The Programme employs a data-driven approach to gather accurate and up-to date information.

Student Satisfaction Surveys

Regular student satisfaction surveys through evaluation questionnaires are an essential element of the Programme's data collection efforts. These questionnaires provide valuable aspects of students' experiences, concerns, and suggestions for improvement. These surveys are conducted anonymously, before the end of the semester to capture the valid feelings and expectations of the students' academic experience. Furthermore, the data are presented and are easily accessible to the academic staff.

II.   **Analysis**

The Programme displays a solid commitment to employ the data that are collected from personal and anonymous questionnaires efficiently. The collected data are regularly analysed to identify the main tendencies, the fields of improvement and areas of evolution and growth. The findings are communicated to relevant departments and stakeholders to ensure pellucidity and accountability. Moreover, data are mainly used for the improvement of the teaching methods and skills, support services, IT facilities, efficiency and accessibility of electronic and printed resources, highlighting a wide range of aspects of the academic unit. The analysis of these data assists in the identification of insufficiencies or areas where improvements are required. The Programme utilizes graphs and charts to make the collected data accessible only to the academic staff.

III.   **Conclusions**

In conclusion, the Programme has laid the foundations of solid procedures for the systematic collection of data, including a variety of fields and aspects of the academic unit like teaching methods and skills, the content, the difficulty and the usefulness of the available courses, employability, and career development of graduates. The Programme employs a combination of information systems for the collection, process and data management through evaluation questionnaires and collaboration with relevant departments to protect the efficiency of data collection. Additionally, the data are presented in a comprehensive and informative way. Moreover, personal questionnaires of students provide significant feedback to obtain crucial outcomes regarding the experience and expectations of students about the Programme.

In closing, the Programme displays a robust commitment to a data-driven model and with constant improvement in data collection procedures, the Programme's goal to provide a great educational experience to its students is achieved.

Panel Judgement

Principle 7: Information management	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

None.

PRINCIPLE 8: PUBLIC INFORMATION CONCERNING THE POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD PUBLISH INFORMATION ABOUT THEIR TEACHING AND ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES RELATED TO THE POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES IN A DIRECT AND READILY ACCESSIBLE WAY. THE RELEVANT INFORMATION SHOULD BE UP-TO-DATE, OBJECTIVE AND CLEAR.

> *Information on the Institutions' activities is useful for prospective and current students, graduates, other stakeholders, and the public.*
>
> *Therefore, Institutions and their academic units must provide information about their activities, including the PSP they offer, the intended learning outcomes, the degrees awarded, the teaching, learning and assessment procedures applied, the pass rates, and the learning opportunities available to their students. Information is also provided on the employment perspectives of PSP graduates.*

Documentation

- *Dedicated segment on the website of the department for the promotion of the PSP*

- *Bilingual version of the PSP website with complete, clear and objective information*

- *Provision for website maintenance and updating*

Study Programme Compliance

I.   Findings

Availability of Key Information

The key information about the academic unit and the Postgraduate Programme (PSP) is indeed available online (https://digital-skills.the.ihu.gr/). This includes details about the Programme's structure, mode of attendance, assessment criteria, the degree awarded, information about the exams, the curriculum and the CVs of the academic staff. Information is provided in both Greek and English but is required an update to the English version of the website.

Dedicated Website Segment

There is a dedicated section on the Programme's website (https://digital-skills.the.ihu.gr/) that serves the purpose of promoting the Postgraduate Programme (PSP). This segment is designed to provide comprehensive information to prospective students and other interested parties.

Availability of Course Outlines

All course outlines for the PSP are accessible online. These outlines offer a detailed overview of the Programme's curriculum, including course descriptions, learning objectives, and assessment methods. They are a valuable resource for both current and prospective students.

Policy for Quality Assurance

The Programme's Policy for Quality Assurance is accessible online via the PSP website. This policy outlines the strategies and measures in place to ensure the Programme's

quality and effectiveness. MODIP is the quality assurance unit within the Programme. It was founded as part of the continuous evaluation of the educational and research activities, as well as the functioning and performance of the institution. Its purpose is to guarantee and enhance the quality of these aspects, in alignment with global standards and the principles outlined by the Authority for Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Higher Education. The role of MODIP extends to providing advice to the university's administration and coordinating efforts to establish policies and procedures that promote quality assurance and efficient evaluation, all in accordance with the existing institutional framework.

Clarity and Accessibility of Information

The information published on the PSP website is generally up-to-date, clear, and easily accessible. This accessibility is crucial for prospective students who rely on accurate and current information to make informed decisions about their academic pursuits.

II.   **Analysis**

While key information is available online, there might be room for improvement regarding the provision of this information in multiple languages and especially English. Offering content in additional languages can enhance accessibility and attract a more diverse pool of international students.

The presence of a dedicated website segment for promoting the PSP demonstrates a commitment to transparency and communication. This is essential for attracting potential students and providing them with a comprehensive understanding of the Programme's offerings.

The availability of course outlines online is a positive aspect, as it assists students in understanding the Programme's structure and content. These outlines serve as a valuable resource for both students and educators, ensuring transparency in the learning process.

The accessibility of the academic unit's Policy for Quality Assurance on the PSP website underscores a commitment to maintaining high educational standards. This transparency helps build trust among students and stakeholders, demonstrating a dedication to Programme's quality.

III.   **Conclusions**

In conclusion, the Department, which is responsible for the Postgraduate Programme (PSP) has made commendable efforts to make key information readily available online. The presence of a dedicated website segment for Programme promotion, complete course outlines, and accessible policies for quality assurance is indicative of a commitment to transparency and accountability.

To further enhance the Programme's accessibility, the Programme may consider

expanding the availability of information in multiple languages and updating its current website in English, particularly for the benefit of international students. Additionally, maintaining the up-to-date nature of all online content is crucial to ensure that the information remains accurate and relevant.

Overall, the Programme's efforts in providing clear, comprehensive, and accessible online information contribute positively to the Programme's reputation and appeal to prospective students.

Panel Judgement

Principle 8: Public information concerning the postgraduate study programmes	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations
- The EEAP suggests to further expand the availability of information in multiple languages and to update its current website in English particularly for the benefit of international students.
- The EEAP suggests continuing its efforts to maintain the Programme's up-to-date nature of all online content, which is crucial to ensure that the information remains accurate and relevant.

PRINCIPLE 9: ON-GOING MONITORING AND PERIODIC INTERNAL EVALUATION OF POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES

INSTITUTIONS AND ACADEMIC UNITS SHOULD HAVE IN PLACE AN INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM FOR THE AUDIT AND ANNUAL INTERNAL REVIEW OF THEIR POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES, SO AS TO ACHIEVE THE OBJECTIVES SET FOR THEM, THROUGH MONITORING AND POSSIBLE AMENDMENTS, WITH A VIEW TO CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT. ANY ACTIONS TAKEN IN THE ABOVE CONTEXT SHOULD BE COMMUNICATED TO ALL PARTIES CONCERNED.

The regular monitoring, review, and revision of postgraduate study programmes aim at maintaining the level of educational provision and creating a supportive and effective learning environment for students.

The above comprise the evaluation of:

the content of the programme in the light of the latest research in the given discipline, thus ensuring that the PSP is up to date
the changing needs of society
the students' workload, progression and completion of the postgraduate studies
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 PSP in question
Postgraduate study 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.

Documentation

▪ *Procedure for the re-evaluation, redefinition and updating of the PSP curriculum*

▪ *Procedure for mitigating weaknesses and upgrading the structure of the PSP and the learning process*

▪ *Feedback processes concerning the strategy and quality goal setting of the PSP and relevant decision-making processes (students, external stakeholders)*

▪ *Results of the annual internal evaluation of the PSP by the Quality Assurance Unit (QAU), and the relevant minutes*

Study Programme Compliance

I.   Findings

The International Hellenic University (IHU) maintains a robust internal quality assurance system for the audit and annual internal review of its postgraduate study programmes. This system ensures the continuous improvement of the programmes through regular monitoring and necessary amendments.

The programme involves periodic re-evaluation and updating of the curriculum to reflect the latest research and developments in the field. This ensures that the Postgraduate Study Programme (PSP) remains current and relevant. Designed to meet the changing needs of society, the programme integrates feedback from various stakeholders, including students, faculty, and external partners, ensuring it adapts to societal trends and demands. Regular assessments of student workload, progression, and completion rates are conducted to ensure that students are not overburdened and

can successfully complete their studies within the designated timeframes.

The effectiveness of student assessment procedures is regularly reviewed to maintain high academic standards, ensuring fairness and consistency in evaluations, and aligning assessments with learning outcomes. The programme collects and analyses feedback from students to gauge their expectations, needs, and satisfaction levels, using this information to make informed decisions about programme improvements and enhance the overall student experience.

The quality of the learning environment and support services is continually assessed to ensure they meet the needs of the PSP. This includes infrastructure, academic resources, counselling, and IT services.

II.   Analysis

The ongoing monitoring and periodic internal evaluation of the postgraduate study programmes at IHU demonstrate a commitment to maintaining and enhancing educational quality. The internal quality assurance system incorporates several key processes that together ensure continuous improvement.

The periodic re-evaluation of the curriculum is a critical component, ensuring that the PSP remains aligned with the latest academic research and industry standards. This process involves active participation from faculty members who bring in advancements in their fields, thus keeping the programme both relevant and competitive. This proactive approach helps the programme stay updated with current trends and technologies, providing students with an education that is both cutting-edge and practical.

Stakeholder feedback is another essential element of the internal quality assurance system. By actively involving students, faculty, and external stakeholders in the feedback process, the programme can make necessary adjustments to meet evolving needs (as described in A03 and A18). This collaborative approach ensures that the programme remains responsive to both academic and societal demands. The engagement of external stakeholders, such as industry professionals and alumni, adds valuable perspectives that can help align the programme with market needs and employment trends.

Regular reviews of student assessments are conducted to help maintain academic integrity and fairness. These reviews ensure that the assessments are aligned with learning outcomes, thereby evaluating students on relevant competencies and skills. This alignment is crucial for maintaining the credibility of the programme and ensuring that graduates possess the skills and knowledge expected in their fields.

Continuous monitoring of the learning environment and support services ensures that students have access to the necessary resources for their academic success. This includes both physical infrastructure, such as well-equipped lecture rooms and laboratories, and support systems like counselling and IT services. Regular assessments of these facilities and services help identify areas for improvement, ensuring that the support provided is effective and meets the students' needs.

Moreover, the programme's commitment to financial support from state or other resources underscores the sustainability and quality of the learning environment. This

financial backing ensures that the necessary infrastructure and services are maintained and improved, providing a stable and supportive environment for postgraduate education.

III. Conclusions

The International Hellenic University's Postgraduate Study Programme in "Digital and Soft Skills in Educational Sciences" complies with Principle 9 concerning ongoing monitoring and periodic internal evaluation. The programme's internal quality assurance system is comprehensive and effectively supports continuous improvement. Through regular curriculum updates, stakeholder feedback, and thorough assessment procedures, the programme maintains high educational standards and a supportive learning environment. This systematic approach ensures that the programme remains current, relevant, and responsive to the needs of students and society. The detailed descriptions of available resources, the qualifications and roles of the administrative staff, and the proactive approach to informing and supporting students further strengthen the programme's offerings. The financial commitment from the institution enhances the sustainability and quality of the programme, ensuring its long-term success and alignment with modern educational needs.

Panel Judgement

Principle 9: On-going monitoring and periodic internal evaluation of postgraduate study programmes	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

- Increase the involvement of external stakeholders, including partners, alumni, and employers, in the periodic review process. This can provide diverse perspectives and ensure the programme aligns with current professional standards and market needs.

- Establish a formal process for the continuous and timely update of the curriculum based on the latest research findings and technological advancements. This should include regular workshops and training sessions for faculty to stay abreast of new developments in their fields.

- Enhance the transparency and communication of evaluation results and subsequent actions taken. Regularly update all stakeholders on the findings from internal reviews and the steps being taken to address identified issues. This can be done through announcements, meetings, etc.

PRINCIPLE 10: Regular External Evaluation Of Postgraduate Study Programmes

THE POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES SHOULD REGULARLY UNDERGO EVALUATION BY PANELS 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 PSP accreditation process which is realised as an external evaluation procedure, and implemented by panels of independent experts. HAHE grants accreditation of programmes, based on the Reports delivered by the panels of external experts, with a specific term of validity, following to which, revision is required. The quality accreditation of the PSP acts as a means for the determination of the degree of compliance of the programme to the Standards, and as a catalyst for improvement, while opening new perspectives towards the international standing of the awarded degrees. Both academic units and Institutions must consistently consider the conclusions and the recommendations submitted by the panels of experts for the continuous improvement of the programme.

Documentation

▪ *Progress report of the PSP in question, on the results from the utilisation of possible recommendations included in the External Evaluation Report of the Institution, and in the IQAS Accreditation Report, with relation to the postgraduate study programmes*

Study Programme Compliance

I.   **Findings**

The program has been operational since the spring semester of 2020-21 and has yet to undergo external assessment. However, the program has foreseen how it will make use of future recommendations. Initially, the external evaluation report will be processed by faculty members-teachers who are involved in master program of their counterparts, the Postgraduate Studies Committee of the master program, after identifying the main observations of the report in order to record the necessary actions to address them.

The following sources of information like those of Principle 9 were examined by the EEAP to assess compliance of Principle 10 with the requirements of the ETHAAE Accreditation:

- The presentation of the Program Director Professor Grammatikopoulos

-The presentation of the Teaching staff

- Document A01_new_Πρόταση ΠιστοποίησηςA1

-        An   account   of   tasks   and   actions https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1PnX2U39Z7F6mkDvQUa6JIMaFVUdXZBDv

- A02_Πολιτική Ποιότητας

- A08_Εσωτερική αξιολόγηση ΜΟΔΙΠ 2023

-A17_new_Αναφορές ΟΠΕΣΠ

- A18_new_Έκθεση προόδου 2023

A09_Αξιολόγηση φοιτητών

A 5-member committee was set up for the purpose, and its recommendations were mainly focused on:

This is the first external evaluation of the postgraduate programme. Established procedures are in place, which was evident to the Accreditation Panel members during

the meetings. Since its inception, the program has undergone numerous adaptations to respond to changes in the external environment and to address student needs.

II.   **Analysis**

A formal External Evaluation of the Postgraduate program has not been conducted yet. The EEAP acknowledges that the material in file A18 Progress Report indicates a thorough effort to review the Institutional Internal Evaluation Report. This review involved identifying recommendations from the report that are relevant to the Postgraduate program, adopting them, and discussing them within the framework of the Internal Evaluation Process.

The program demonstrates a significant upward trend in student evaluations, with these metrics substantiating the continuous improvements achieved over the years.

III.   **Conclusions**

The program has not yet undergone an External Evaluation. However, efforts have been made to identify relevant recommendations from the Institutional Internal Evaluation Report that could be applicable to the program. These recommendations have been adopted for consideration to enhance the program's quality and effectiveness.

The enormous demand from prospective students to study at the above-mentioned master program proves the substantial response of the program to the needs of society and the labour market. The programme is of high quality and well-positioned in Greece, making it an exceptional Master programme that offers great opportunities for its graduates.

Panel Judgement

Principle 10: Regular external evaluation of postgraduate study programmes	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

None.

PART C: CONCLUSIONS

I.   Features of Good Practice

- Students admitted are of very high standards with a high percentage of those having already completed other postgraduate programmes, while quite a few have completed a doctorate.

- There is a very high percentage of student participation in the programme and teaching staff evaluation surveys. This is very impressive when considering that such surveys are not compulsory to complete, but purely voluntary. This shows the commitment of students to the development of the programme.

- Further to the above there appears to be very good transparency as to how such feedback is used by the management of the programme to improve on the development and delivery. Students have commented as to how well changes to the programme (based on previous student feedback) are communicated by teaching staff at the start of each semester. It is beneficial to maintain this level of transparency across all modules to ensure consistent stakeholder engagement and trust.

- The programme offers extensive access to both general and specialised libraries, including electronic databases, which support thorough academic research and study.

- The availability of career services and student counselling supports students in their academic and professional development. These services address both academic guidance and personal well-being, contributing to a holistic support system for students.

- The programme has a comprehensive internal quality assurance system in place that ensures continuous improvement through regular monitoring and necessary amendments.

- The quality of the learning environment and support services is continually assessed. This includes physical infrastructure, academic resources, counselling, and IT services, ensuring that they meet the needs of the PSP and support student success.

II.   Areas of Weakness

Absence of a formal network for current students and alumni (graduates) that could offer strong support to current students, further promotion for the programme and contribution for the continuous development. The panel acknowledges that it appears that there is an informal network of graduates in place, but its function and role is not always consistent and transparent.

III.   Recommendations for Follow-up Actions

- The PSP and the Departments involved consider alternative ways to further increase the faculty's international scientific collaborations (e.g., by hosting visiting scholars), mobility, and student participation in research projects.

- Strengthening alumni networks and mentorship programmes can provide ongoing career support for graduates.

- Opening the programme to international students would enrich the cultural diversity of the student body, fostering a more global perspective within the learning environment.

- To further expand the availability of information in multiple languages and to update its current website in English particularly for the benefit of international students. This could initially support collaboration at various levels through mobility and other opportunities.

- Increase the involvement of external stakeholders, including partners, alumni, and employers, in the periodic review process. This can provide diverse perspectives and ensure the programme aligns with current professional standards and market needs.

- Explore ways of offering holders of postgraduate and doctorate qualifications alternative modules that will allow them to develop new competences that might be limited due to the requirement of studying research methods related modules that they would have had experience of from previous studies.

- Explore the option of offering a minimum number of places to candidates that have no prior postgraduate qualifications. This will enhance the opportunities of exploring the effectiveness of the programme by following the career development of such students.

IV. Summary & Overall Assessment

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

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

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

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

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

The members of the External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel

Name and Surname   **Signature**

1. **Dr Elias Pimenidis (Chair)**

   University of the West of England, Bristol, United Kingdom

2. **Professor Leonidas Kyriakides**

   University of Cyprus, Nicosia, Cyprus

3. **Dr Xanthi Almpanaki**

   Directorate of Secondary Education Veria, Greek Ministry of Education, Greece

4. **Professor Christina Siina (Chinas)**

   Durham University, Durham, United Kingdom

5. **Mr. Konstantinos Boumpourekas**

   PhD Candidate, University of Western Macedonia, Florina, Greece