



**ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ**  
HELLENIC REPUBLIC



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# Accreditation Report for the Postgraduate Study Programme of:

**The Byzantine World: History and Archaeology**

**Department: History and Archaeology**

**Institution: National and Kapodistrian University of Athens**

**Date: 1 December 2023**



Επιχειρησιακό Πρόγραμμα  
Ανάπτυξη Ανθρώπινου Δυναμικού,  
Εκπαίδευση και Διά Βίου Μάθηση  
Με τη συγχρηματοδότηση της Ελλάδας και της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης



Report of the Panel appointed by the HAHE to undertake the review of the Postgraduate Study Programme of **The Byzantine World: History and Archaeology** of the **National and Kapodistrian University of Athens** 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 **The Byzantine World: History and Archaeology** of the **National and Kapodistrian University of Athens** comprised the following four (4) members, drawn from the HAHE Register, in accordance with Laws 4009/2011 & 4653/2020:

- 1. Professor Maria Antoniou (Chair)**  
Pace University, New York
  
- 2. Professor Anna Tahinci**  
The Glassell School of Art, Houston, USA
  
- 3. Professor Stephanos Efthymiadis**  
Open University of Cyprus, Cyprus
  
- 4. PhD Candidate, Sofia Thatharopoulou**  
Aristotle University of Thessaloniki

## II. Review Procedure and Documentation

The accreditation procedure took place in digital form from November 20th to November 25th, 2023. Prior to the sessions, the members of the External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel (AP) had the opportunity to study all accreditation support materials supplied to them by HAHE in advance, including:

- HAHE Materials such as the Guidelines for the AP, the M12\_PSP MAPPING GRID, and the European Qualifications Framework.
- The Department's Proposal for Accreditation along with several annexes.

In the afternoon of November 20th, 2023, the AP met to discuss the process and to divide tasks among its members. The sessions with the Department took place on November 20th, between 16:00 and 17:30 EET, on November 21st 2023 and November 22nd, between 15:00 and 20:30 EET.

The AP members were welcomed by the Head of the Department of History and Archaeology, Professor Aikaterini Nikolaou, the Director of the Postgraduate Studies Programme (PSP) "The Byzantine World: History and Archaeology", Professor Antonia Kiousopoulou, and the OMEA members Professor Yiannis Papadatos, and Associate Professor Maria Papatnasiou. There were also present the MODIP staff Mr. Konstantinos Bourletidis, Head of the Quality Assurance Unit (MODIP), of the National & Kapodistrian University of Athens and MODIP member, Mr. Theodoros Chajitheodorou.

Professor Antonia Kiousopoulou gave a short presentation of the study program, explaining the aims, the structure of the curricula and the methods involved. The AP members asked their first questions of clarification, before engaging in a more consistent discussion about the ECTS attribution system, the working charge of the students, the graduation and dropout rates, as well as the academic profile of the incoming students. The following persons joined the AP in the last session of the day: Ms. Christina Koukou, secretary of the PSP, Assoc. Prof. Vaggelis Karamanolakis, Director of the History Laboratory, and Professor Platon Petridis, Director of the Museum of Archaeology and History of Art of the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, member of the teaching staff.

The on-line tour of classrooms, lecture halls, libraries, laboratories, and other facilities related to the PSP, was followed by a discussion about the facilities and learning resources to ascertain that the learning materials, equipment, and facilities are adequate for a successful provision of the PSP.

In a debrief private closing meeting the AP reflected on impressions of the first day and

prepared for the second day of the on-line review.

The sessions involving in the PSP took place on Tuesday, November 21st, 2023, and included subsequent meetings of the AP with:

(a) The teaching staff of the PSP Prof. Platon Petridis, Associate Prof. Anastasia Drandaki, Associate Prof. Sophia Mergiali-Saha, Associate Prof. Georgios Pallis, and Senior Researcher of the National Research Foundation Gerasimos Merianos. The discussions concerned professional development opportunities, mobility, competence, and adequacy of the teaching staff to ensure learning outcomes, workload, evaluation by students, the link between teaching and research, the teaching staff's involvement in applied research, projects and research activities directly related to the programme, and possible areas of weakness.

(b) Ten (10) Students of the PSP, where students' satisfaction from their study experience and from the Department/Institution facilities were discussed. The AP enquired about the student input in quality assurance and the priority issues concerning student life and welfare.

(c) Five (5) PSP graduates, Mr. Evaggelos Kostoulas, Military Pharmacist, Mr. Errikos Papadopoulos- Geronikolos, Guardian of antiquities at the Ephorate of antiquities of East Attica, Sounion archeological area, Ministry of Culture, Mr. Sotirios Seklos, employed at the Ephorate of Antiquities of Chios, Ms. Aikaterini Varalexi, and Ms. Olga Vlachou, PhD Student, Department of Medieval Studies, Central European University. In the interview the AP asked the graduates to relate their overall experience of their postgraduate studies and their career paths. The discussion, conducted in a very agreeable way, showed a big degree of satisfaction of the programme and enthusiastically stated that it was also very promising in the matter of professional opportunities and career development.

(d) Employers and social partners of the PSP, Dr. Juliana Boycheva, Assistant Researcher, P.I. ERC RICONTRANS, Institute for Mediterranean Studies – Forth, Dr. Véronique Chankowski, Director of the EFA (École Française d'Athènes), Dr. Maria Leontsini, Senior Researcher at the Institute of Historical Research / National Hellenic Research Foundation, Dr. Olga Vassi, Director of the Ephorate of Antiquities of Chios, Hellenic Ministry of Culture and Sports, and Ms. Mara Verykokou, Curator of the Byzantine and Post-Byzantine Collection at the Benaki Museum.

Then, the AP held a private meeting to discuss the outcomes of the virtual visit and prepare their oral report. In the last session, the AP met with the Director of the PSP, Head of the Department, MODIP members, PSP Steering Committee/OMEA members, and MODIP staff: Head of the Dept. Professor Aikaterini Nikolaou, Director of the PSP Professor Antonia Kiousopoulou, the OMEA members Professor Yiannis Papadatos, and Associate Professor Maria Papathanassiou, and the MODIP staff, Mr. Konstantinos Bourletidis, Head of the Quality Assurance Unit (MODIP), National & Kapodistrian University of Athens, and MODIP

member Mr. Theodoros Chajitheodorou. A discussion was engaged on several points and findings which needed further clarification, following what the chair of the AP presented informally as the AP key findings. It also requested and received supplemental material from the Quality Assurance Unit (MODIP).

### III. Postgraduate Study Programme Profile

The Postgraduate Studies Programme "The Byzantine World: History and Archaeology " of the Department of History and Archaeology of the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens was established in the academic year 2018-2019 and operates tuition free, based on the Law on Postgraduate Studies 4485/2017.

The purpose of the programme is to provide a high-level postgraduate education and to promote advanced scholarship in the scientific fields of Byzantine history and Byzantine and post-Byzantine archaeology and art.

The PSP leads to the award of a "Postgraduate Diploma" in the specialisations of Byzantine History or Byzantine Archaeology and Art. Titles are awarded by the Department of History and Archaeology of the NKUA. The Department issues a "Diploma Supplement" for the graduates of the PSP, upon their request, which gives a more specialised picture of the studies of each student within the PSP of the Department, in Greek and/or in English language.

Applicants get admitted through a demanding oral and written exam and need to obtain a grade of at least 7 out of 10. Each academic year there are 18 available spots and on average 15 are filled, but there are many more applications than the positions announced. The programme requires four semesters of graduate coursework and includes research and writing of an M.A. Thesis. The programme can be completed in 4 (full- time) or 6 (part-time) academic semesters (2 or 3 academic years). Part-time completion can depend on various factors like health problems, or professional, family, and military commitments.

Students must attend six seminars (each corresponding to 15 ECTS) in total (90 ECTS). All courses are 3-hour courses taught weekly during each 13-week semester. The M.A. thesis (20,000-30,000 words) is written during the fourth semester of studies, counts for 30 ECTS, and is defended in front of a committee of three members, one of which is the advisor. The catalogue of all M.A. theses of the PSP is available online, in the unified Institutional Repository/Digital Library of the NKUA <https://pergamos.lib.uoa.gr/>.

Courses are taught in physical presence and educational materials are uploaded on the "E-class" learning management system. The subject matter and the international bibliography of the courses are contained in the Study Guide, which is published annually on the website of the Department of History and Archaeology. Seminars have a duration of thirteen weeks each. The courses are conducted in Greek, but lecturers invited from foreign universities to give individual lectures in the course use English.

Postgraduate students are required to participate and attend seminars, discussions on the methodology and advancements in their area of specialisation, visits to archaeological sites and museums, conferences/meetings with a subject related to the PSP, lectures, or other scientific events of the PSP, etc.



The PSP utilises the institution of the Academic Advisor, who guides and supports students in the PSP by providing a variety of advice regarding the PSP and the possible further development of the student's studies. This service is part of an educational process that creates conditions for effective knowledge transfer without neglecting the need for communication and support on other issues that may be of concern to students.

Students of the “Byzantine Archaeology” specialisation can replace one (1) seminar with an internship in the field, in a museum or a research centre, under the supervision of the academic advisor and in collaboration with social partners (e.g. the Ephorates of the Ministry of Culture). Upon completion of their internship students must submit their written report. Although there is no institutionalised internship for the students of the “Byzantine History” specialisation, students are able to get practical training during the preparation of the seminar papers and especially during the preparation of their M.A thesis in aspects like the bibliographical research, the study of primary sources, and in various locations like in research centres, museums, local archives and repositories.

All degree holders of the Department of History and Archaeology qualify to work in Secondary Education, where they may teach History, Literature and other related subjects. Graduates with a specialisation in history are additionally able to work at specialised centres of historical research and knowledge production (archives, research institutes, libraries, museums etc.). Archaeologists and art historians often work for the Archaeological Service of the Ministry of Culture and Sports, and at research centres, private museums, and collections.

## **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**

In assessing compliance with this principle, the accreditation panel (AP) examined:

- the Programme's Academic Accreditation Proposal (A1)
- the Quality Policy (A2)
- the Quality Goal Setting (A3)
- the Student Guide (A5)
- the Module Outlines (A6)
- the Student Evaluations (A9)
- the discussions with various stakeholders during the review period

Overall, the AP found that the academic unit has established a Quality Assurance Policy which is appropriate for the PSP and includes a commitment of the academic unit for its implementation and continuous improvement.

### **II. Analysis**

The academic unit has established a Quality Assurance Policy which is appropriate for the PSP and includes a commitment of the academic unit for its implementation and continuous improvement. The Quality Assurance Policy for the PSP is in line with the institutional Policy on Quality. The responsible institution for applying the Quality Assurance process is the Internal Evaluation Committee (OMEA) in effective collaboration with MODIP.

Continuous improvement is promoted through regular fine-tuning of strategic goals and taking into account student evaluations. During the academic semesters of Spring 2021-2022 and Winter 2022-2023 29 out of 82 anonymous student evaluations were received (with a participation rate of 35%). The students evaluated two academic semesters, 4 out of 7 courses and the evaluation questions included the evaluation of the faculty, the self-evaluation of the students, as well as available resources (accessibility to bibliography). This points to a high satisfaction of students with the PSP and the student-faculty interactions. Student satisfaction was also evident during the meetings the panel had with current students and alumni. Quality Assurance Policy is communicated to all parties involved.

The academic unit has set specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and timely goals regarding the PSP in respect of teaching methods, student satisfaction, learning outcomes and research output. The PSP has clear strategic goals and has planned the means for

attaining them. However, the achievement of some of these goals does not depend exclusively on the PSP: for instance, there is a need for more administrative support and for an increase of funding for bibliographical resources and research. The quality goals are paired with the suitable KPIs. These goals are duly monitored, updated, and communicated. The learning outcomes of the PSP are appropriate for level 7 (Master), according to the European and National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education.

The AP has identified a need for more administrative support and an increase of funding for bibliographical resources and research.

### III. Conclusions

Based on the above analysis, the AP finds that the PSP fully complies with Principle 1 and all sub-principles.

#### Panel Judgement

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

#### Panel Recommendations

None.

## **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 PROGRAMME 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**

In assessing compliance with this principle, the AP examined:

- the Programme's Academic Accreditation Proposal (A1)
- the Quality Policy (A2)
- the Student Guide (A5)
- the Module Outlines (A6)

Additionally, the AP considered the information obtained through meetings with various stakeholders. Overall, the AP found that the PSP was developed following a defined written process which involves all participants, information sources and approval committees.

### **II. Analysis**

Having examined the documentation made available to the AP, other resources available on the departmental website, and through our discussions with various stakeholders, we find that:

The PSP has been designed based on appropriate standards and has a mission to provide high level graduate education in the scientific fields of Byzantine History and Byzantine Archaeology and Art. Factors taken into account include the academic specificity of the Department (its history, scientific field, mission, teaching staff, perspectives) as well as the educational, scientific and professional orientation of the PSP.

The curriculum is designed to provide high level graduate education in the scientific fields of Byzantine History and Archaeology in two specialisations: 1) Byzantine History, and 2) Byzantine Archaeology and Art.

The structure of the PSP is rational and clearly articulated. The programme of studies is organised into credit-bearing modules (seminars). Credit bearings comply with the ECTS system. The programme (120 ECTS) requires graduate coursework in six seminars (for a total of 90 ECTS) and includes research and writing and presenting papers for each seminar and writing and defending the M.A. Thesis (20,000-30,000 words) during the fourth semester (for 30 ECTS). Out of the six seminars four must come from the list of courses of the specialisation in which the student is enrolled, or from courses of the same specialisation in a similar recognised foreign institution within the framework of the educational programs of the European Union. The remaining two seminars may be chosen from the other specialisations of the MSc, the other MSc courses of the Department or of another University department or recognised Research Centre, approved by the student's advisor. In the area of Byzantine

Archaeology there is the possibility, instead of a seminar, to carry out an internship in the field, in a museum or in a Research Centre, in order to acquire the required practical experience, under the supervision/cooperation of the supervising faculty member. This training can take place in a University excavation, in consultation with the supervising faculty member, or in institutions of the Archaeological Service or in institutions supervised by the Archaeological Service. It might be a good idea to extend this internship to students specialised in Byzantine History. In the two specialisations of the Program, there is the possibility that one of the seminars may be in the form of a "free seminar paper" on a specialised topic which is not offered in the program of the Department's seminars, but which concerns the student's specific research interests and is deemed necessary for his/her training.

The interdisciplinary seminar "Nikos Oikonomides" covers a wide range of topics and follows contemporary trends in Byzantine studies, sometimes interweaving with current historical conditions. Coursework is done in-person at the NKUA and in the Greek language, with the possibility for visiting Professors from abroad to teach in English. Courses and seminars are organised by semester and are offered weekly during the 13-week semester. Students explore topics in Byzantine history and archaeology and become familiar with current research tools and methods, as well as with the principles of academic writing. Students enrol in two seminars every semester. Each seminar corresponds to 15 ECTS and requires writing a 5,000-7,000-word paper. The M. A. thesis is defended orally in front of a three-member committee that includes the student's advisor. The learning outcomes of the programme are in full accordance with the European and National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education and remain subject to continuous review and improvement through the programme reviews.

A procedure is in place for periodic revisions of the PSP curriculum. The curriculum revision procedure involves consultation from stakeholders, external experts, students, and graduates. The Study Guide is complete, concise, and appropriate. It provides complete information to students, including summary descriptions of the seminars in Greek and English and a selected bibliography. It might be a good idea to add contact information and web pages of faculty in the Study Guide.

### **III. Conclusions**

Based on the above, the Panel's conclusion is that the PSP demonstrates full compliance with this principle.

## Panel Judgement

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

## Panel Recommendations

None.



### **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**

In the PSP teaching methods are applied in a manner that encourages students' active involvement in the learning process. Students are prompted to follow their own research interests while faculty offers guidance constantly. This approach is also evident in assessment methods which are not exam-oriented but promote reflection and critical analysis. Students' feedback is desirable but participation in course assessment questionnaires is not satisfactory. The PSP is open to reviewing, accepting, and discussing student complaints.

## **II. Analysis**

The PSP creates all necessary conditions to offer a positive study experience to enrolled students. Current students and alumni expressed that their post-graduate studies were mostly a great experience. In their view, faculty members and students were in close cooperation and faculty members offered guidance e.g. on thesis drafting and internship options, throughout the period of their studies.

The PSP offers flexible learning paths to its students. Students are seen as active partners in the teaching/ learning process, witnessed by the fact that courses are organised as seminars, requiring their active involvement e.g., through individual or group presentations on course topics, based on study of bibliography and audio-visual sources. Moreover, 3 to 5 of the 13 seminar lectures that make up each course are devoted exclusively to oral presentations of written assignments of the students. Often, seminar assignments are presented in one to two-day scientific meetings, offering students the opportunity to practise their public speaking skills, needed for future participation in workshops and conferences. In the interdisciplinary seminar "Nikos Oikonomides" questions and discussion led mainly by PSP's students, attest further to the flexible teaching-learning methods pursued by the PSP.

Students are encouraged to undertake research initiatives and develop their individual skills. During interviews, currently enrolled students as well as alumni highlighted the fact that they were free to pursue their own research interests when choosing a topic for their thesis. Thesis topic selection entails classroom discussion with peers and faculty. This discussion assists students to shape their specific research questions. Faculty members explicitly

pointed out that the quality and successful completion of PSP thesis depends greatly on students choosing a topic they are passionate about. Independent Study is also supported through “E-class”, where students can find main and supporting course bibliography, study and reflect on it independently, according to their own time, needs and interests.

Assessment criteria are adequately published in advance in the Study Guide of the PSP, where course obligations and requirements that lead to diploma are described. Course and teaching assessment questionnaires are employed to measure the effectiveness of teaching each semester. Although satisfaction rates were high, participation was limited to 35% in the Spring Semester of the last academic year.

The PSP offers a formal procedure for student appeals. Students can submit their requests and complaints in the secretariat of the Department of History and Archaeology, to be discussed by PSP’s steering committee, attesting to PSP’s receptiveness to review for further improvement. Students interviewed mentioned that they were aware of this option but usually any issue was discussed and resolved without official intervention. The function of academic advisor is also applied already from the first semester of studies. Academic advisors are appointed based on the specific research interests of each student.

### **III. Conclusions**

Overall, the PSP complies with the principle of student-centred learning, teaching, and assessment by offering inclusive teaching methods where students are given space to articulate their own ideas and to develop their special research interests. Students’ participation in assessment of teaching methods needs to be increased. Positive student-faculty interaction based on support and mutual respect is evident while students’ obligations and assessment criteria are clearly articulated.

### **Panel Judgement**

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

### **Panel Recommendations**

- Consider finding ways to boost student participation in assessment procedures.
- Make available a thesis handbook specifically for the PSP to include examples of past theses to facilitate the drafting of an M.A. thesis.

## **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**

The PSP provides a series of documents (Study Guide, regulation of studies, internship, mobility and student assignments, internship regulation, code of ethics) formulating in detail all useful information, to navigate students throughout their postgraduate studies. Information includes admission criteria and evaluation process of applications, duration of studies, thesis writing guidelines, mobility opportunities, course descriptions and merits, students' obligations, scholarship opportunities and awards, and potential job market openings. These documents assist students with all steps they need to take for the completion of their postgraduate studies while informing them on their rights too. A network of social partners facilitates the creation of internship positions for archaeology students but not for history ones. Though not always feasible, mobility is generally encouraged.

## II. Analysis

The PSP's Study Guide, internal regulation and regulation of studies, internship, mobility and student assignments set a safe study framework, by defining students' rights and obligations in much detail.

Information on admission is published on the website of the department each May, allowing enough time for students' preparation. Apart from specific entry qualifications, admission requires success in PSP'S entry exams. Exams are written and oral. In the first case students are examined on topics related to their chosen specialisation i.e. in Byzantine archaeology or Byzantine history. Oral exams include examination on topics of both disciplines. Students mentioned that a list of exam bibliography is given in advance and that a two- month period is approximately required for preparation. Exception from exams is granted on certain student categories.

The PSP'S duration is two academic years. According to documents provided, six courses are allocated in three semesters and a thesis is expected to be written in the fourth semester. There is provision of part-time studies for working students and for those who, for certain reasons, cannot complete their studies within the expected period.

The ECTS is applied across the curriculum. The PSP grants 120 ECTS in total, allocated as follows: 90 ECTS are granted via the six courses of the PSP while the remaining 30 are granted via the Master's thesis. Diploma supplement is issued in both Greek and English.

Students' progression is monitored through data registered by the administrative staff in students' e- catalogue. Faculty members can also be informed on the progress of students through the e-platform "Pyxida".

As far as the PSP thesis is concerned, the procedure of its drafting is explained step-by-step along with a defined set of quality requirements and criteria for its implementation. Thesis progression is monitored by the thesis supervisor. There is not a specific PSP thesis handbook available, but the general assignment regulation of the department includes all information for the implementation of master's theses too (process of approval, extent, bibliography, language to be written, font etc.). An extensive Code of Research ethics is in place and students are advised to seriously consider its regulations when conducting research.

Practical training is in place but only for students specialising in Byzantine archaeology. It is not mandatory, but students are highly encouraged to pursue it. According to the regulation of studies, internship, mobility, and student assignments, one of the seminar courses can be replaced by an internship. PSP's faculty have developed an impressive network of social and cultural bodies contributing to the creation of internship positions. Students can work as interns at the Museum of Archaeology and History of Art of the National and Kapodistrian University, at the Benaki Museum and other cultural institutions depending on their interests and available positions. Training in the field, e.g. in University excavations, is also an option.

Students of the Byzantine history specialisation expressed their wish to have equally the opportunity to do an internship. This issue was shared with faculty members. Apparently, part of the problem is the lack of research institutes specialising in Byzantine history that could accommodate history students of the PSP. However, the PSP has recently established a collaboration with the Academy of Athens that could possibly provide future internship positions for Byzantine history students. Practical training is deemed valuable in terms of developing job-specific and broader skills.

Mobility is generally encouraged but mobility abroad is not students' first choice. ERASMUS programmes are in place but economic factors as well as the conditions created by the Covid-19 pandemic hindered students from participating. Yet, few students still had the opportunity to get training abroad in the framework of the ARCHLab Archaeological Heritage of Late Antique and Byzantine Sicily. Additionally, mobility within Greece is evident. PSP students participate in the excavations of the French School of Athens as well as in excavations of the various Ephorates of Antiquities in Greece.

Mobility in terms of participation in conferences is also limited, but the PSP's faculty hopes to secure future funding for such activities. Mobility could also be made possible through the Janet Zakos scholarship awarded to PSP students of merit.

### **III. Conclusion**

Overall, the PSP is committed to developing and publishing regulations covering all aspects and phases of post-graduate studies. Providing detailed guidelines, support, and resources,

it creates a defined framework for teaching and learning to both students and faculty. Archaeology students have more opportunities of mobility for practical training while the mobility of history students rests mainly on Erasmus programmes.

### Panel Judgement

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

### Panel Recommendations

- Reach out to cultural institutions that could offer internship positions for Byzantine history students.
- Consider ways of boosting mobility in Greece and abroad (Erasmus+, participation in conferences etc.)



## **PRINCIPLE 5: TEACHING STAFF OF POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES**

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

*The Institution should attend to the adequacy 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**

The teaching at the PSP is supported by six permanent staff members (DEP) of the Department of History and Archaeology of the University of Athens. Half of them specialise in Byzantine History and the other half in Byzantine Archaeology and History of Art. All staff members hold tenured positions (full and associate professors), the procedures of their selection and promotion having been conducted according to the standard legal framework for Greek state universities (laws 4009/2011, 4386/2016, 4405/2016, 4452/2017, 4485/2017, 4521/2018, 4957/2022). Their obligations include teaching at the undergraduate Programme of Studies, a fact that makes it possible for each one of them to offer to the PSP just one seminar course per academic year. Those external academics at times invited to lecture and members of the Laboratory Teaching Staff do not contribute to the PSP in terms

of a regular and independently scheduled kind of teaching. Their role is rather secondary.

Of all members of the teaching staff the publishing record is extensive and substantial. Some titles in this record are in languages other than Greek. It is also significant that most academics of the PSP have associations with external institutions (foreign archaeological Schools, Ephorates, museums, etc) and are keen in involving the students of the PSP in the various activities of these research fora. The long-standing collaboration with the Greek National Centre of Scientific Research (EIE) is showcased by the Byzantine seminar that runs every spring semester and is titled 'Nikos Oikonomides'. In the interviews that AP held with enrolled students and the PSP's graduates, all of them spoke highly about the learning outcomes of this seminar and expressed their positive feelings about their professors. They underscored in particular their promptness to do anything that would assist with their learning progress and sort out technical issues.

## **II. Analysis**

It cannot be said that the number of professors teaching at the PSP is large. This has an effect on the number of courses offered (no more than three per semester) as well as on the broadness of subjects taught. By and large, the latter identify with the areas in which the members of the teaching staff have so far focused their research. However consistent with the practices generally followed in Greek Universities, this remains an issue that must be seriously reconsidered by the teaching staff. Browsing the Study Guides of past academic years, one can infer that several important research areas of Byzantine History and Archaeology are left uncovered and missing from the list of courses offered (e.g., epigraphy, sigillography, numismatics, prosopography).

Admittedly, since there is no provision for tuition fees, the PSP cannot hire external academic staff (for instance, adjunct tutors) relying on its own resources. To increase the number of the teaching staff and the courses offered funding must be sought from the Department, the School, or the University. These bodies must be mindful of financially supporting the research work of the teaching staff in terms of subsidising at least small-scale projects and the participation in scientific conferences held in Greece and abroad.

### III. Conclusions

The AP finds that all staff members offering teaching in the PSP and supervising Master theses do their best to fulfil the mission of the PSP. They are enthusiastic about its function and the quality of students they get. No doubt the heavy workload involved, and the broadening of courses offered, and the integration of more teaching staff are issues to be seriously addressed in the years to come.

#### Panel Judgement

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

#### Panel Recommendations

- Increase the number of academics teaching in the PSP
- Broaden the scope of the syllabus and offer more courses within each semester
- Financially support research conducted by and connected to the scholarly work of teaching staff

## **PRINCIPLE 6: LEARNING RESOURCES AND STUDENT SUPPORT**

**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 LEARNING AND STUDENT SUPPORT, AND – ON THE OTHER HAND- FACILITATE DIRECT ACCESS TO THEM BY ESTABLISHING INTERNAL RULES TO THIS END (E.G. LECTURE ROOMS, LABORATORIES, LIBRARIES, NETWORKS, 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 PSP's lectures take place on the premises of the School of Philosophy of the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens. An impressive effort is put in by the Department of History and Archaeology as well as by the teaching staff of the PSP to ensure that all needs related to the teaching process of the PSP are met. Classrooms and amphitheatres, IT- hall, labs, library, and digital libraries are in place for the operation of the programme. Nevertheless, lecture rooms' shortage and update of technical equipment seem to be a general issue in the School of Philosophy where the PSP is accommodated. Support services

such as career counselling, boarding, counselling and psychological support, sports and cultural clubs and associations, are offered, contributing to the general well-being of students during their academic training.

## **II. Analysis**

The National and Kapodistrian University of Athens and the School of Philosophy make available all necessary infrastructure to facilitate the teaching and learning process of the PSP. Infrastructure encompasses classrooms, labs, an archaeological park, a museum of archaeology and art, physical libraries as well as digital libraries and databases.

Nevertheless, during the interviews with students and alumni, issues related to classrooms' shortage arose. Such issues have not to do with the PSP itself but with the School of Philosophy's infrastructure in general, as several departments and programmes are accommodated within the same building. Students mentioned the effort that faculty members put to ensure available classrooms for PSP's courses, organising at times lecture rooms in cooperation with the students (e.g. classroom 612). The problem of lecture rooms' shortage gets resolved by classes taking place also in other building facilities of the University e.g. in the Historical Archive of the University or the Amphitheatre of Benaki Museum when available. This was also mentioned in the internal evaluation document of the PSP. Thus, faculty members are aware of the issue.

One more issue proved to be IT-infrastructure, as students commented on the outdated technological equipment available at the premises of the School of Philosophy. This was also highlighted by the fact that the second IT-Lab of Digital Teaching of the School of Philosophy is not used due to outdated technical infrastructure, as mentioned in PSP's proposal for Academic Accreditation. Again, this does not have to do with the PSP itself but with the university's building infrastructure.

On the other hand, two of the Department's labs, namely the laboratory of digital documentation of the public and private life of the Byzantines and Laboratory of archaeology are being renovated, improving the infrastructure used by the PSP.

Regarding access to physical libraries, digital libraries and databases, the School of

Philosophy has a recently renovated library holding 500,000 book titles along with Byzantine manuscripts. Students of the PSP said that they were offered seminars on how to browse and use physical and digital sources, which proved quite helpful during their studies. It has to be mentioned though that acquisition of recent publications has been slow during the last years, which again is not the PSP's fault.

A network of support services is available to assist students during their academic life: a career office provides insights into the job market after graduation, various counselling offices provide students and faculty psychological counselling, and support and boarding is available depending on certain requirements and income criteria. Cultural clubs and associations on theatre, dance, cinema, photography in addition with sports facilities offer students opportunities to develop new skills and to socially interact with their peers.

At the level of the PSP Secretariat, besides the heavy workload due to limited staff, the smooth operation of the PSP is ensured. Considering services for student support, graduates of the PSP expressed their wish for an advisory service on academic writing of scientific proposals, project proposals, CV, and academic statements as for the moment such advice depends on the will and available time of faculty members to assist them.

### **III. Conclusions**

Overall, the hosting institution offers the required resources for the smooth operation of the PSP. Infrastructure, resources, and services are accessible for the teaching and learning processes as well as for the well-being of students. Nevertheless, issues related to space shortage arose at times.

## Panel Judgement

<b>Principle 6: Learning resources and student support</b>	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	X
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

## Panel Recommendations

- Update the technical equipment to facilitate the teaching process.
- Establish an advisory service for research and project proposals writing to help enrolled students and alumni apply for grants, fellowships and even PhD positions.

## **PRINCIPLE 7: INFORMATION MANAGEMENT**

**INSTITUTIONS BEAR FULL RESPONSIBILITY FOR COLLECTING, ANALYSING AND USING INFORMATION, AIMED AT THE EFFICIENT MANAGEMENT OF POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES AND RELATED ACTIVITIES, IN AN INTEGRATED, EFFECTIVE AND EASILY ACCESSIBLE WAY.**

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

*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**

Judging from the data collected and the presentation of the PSP during the accreditation process, mechanisms for the collection of data and indicators regarding student population profile have been established. Students are categorised according to gender, academic provenance, grading in the admission exam, student progression, and drop-out rates, if any. Satisfaction questionnaires are regularly conducted, and MODIP and OMEA play a key role in analysing and communicating the information to the PSP. The collection of all data is carried out in full respect of laws and regulations that protect personal and academic rights.



## II. Analysis

As has been stated elsewhere in this Report, the PSP has been collecting evaluation reports from students affirming their satisfaction regarding the quality of seminars and courses offered. Evaluation questionnaires are filled out to the rate of 35%. Conversely no processes of recording the employability of the PSP's graduates have been established and no network of Alumni has been set up to at least provide information about their career paths.

## III. Conclusions

The AP considers that, as an academic unit, the PSP fulfils nearly all criteria that make up this Principle and encourages its members to expand mechanisms of collecting student data in the future chiefly by also creating an Alumni Network. This may also contribute to increasing the visibility of the PSP in Academia.

### Panel Judgement

<b>Principle 7: Information management</b>	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

### Panel Recommendations

Establish a Network of Alumni

**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**

Information about the process of student admissions and the teaching and academic activities of the PSP can be accessed on its user-friendly Departmental webpage. This information is available in both Greek and English. All descriptions of the courses offered each academic year are detailed and followed by a rich bibliography. They are also available in Greek and English. Parallel to that, information is provided about the opportunities of Erasmus exchange programmes and events of scholarly interest. The webpage includes an informative video which gives a representative idea about the PSP's function, scholarly orientation, and profile.

**II. Analysis**

The PSP has made considerable efforts to collect data concerning the student body pursuing this M.A. Along with the function of an announcement board, its webpage constitutes a tool to browse and consult. As a result, its academic profile and activities get publicised and can be known widely.

**III. Conclusions**

Thanks to the bilingual version and the steadily performed updating of its webpage, the PSP boosts its visibility both nationally and internationally.

### Panel Judgement

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

### Panel Recommendations

None.

## **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:*

- a) 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*
- b) the changing needs of society*
- c) the students' workload, progression and completion of the postgraduate studies*
- d) the effectiveness of the procedures for the assessment of students*
- e) the students' expectations, needs and satisfaction in relation to the programme*
- f) 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 PSP is engaged in internal review processes from the beginning of its operations to ensure the high quality of research and teaching. This way the PSP is continuously adapting and improving their quality and impact on the advancement of the programme. The PSP strives to teach interdisciplinary courses that reflect the current state of practices and research fields. The internal review takes into account best practices and the latest advances in research while maintaining ties to the broader society impact and employment opportunity. Information about the internal review is regularly collected and analysed.

The internal review committee (OMEA) is formally responsible for the review process and is tasked with writing yearly accreditation reports to the Hellenic Quality Assurance Agency according to the Greek laws and regulations. They review the content of the graduate Study Guide, evaluate the learning outcomes and goals for each course that is offered, and update it to reflect the current trends in the relevant topics internationally. It also takes into account the employment opportunities for the graduate students, the completion rates, the student support provided, and other topics related to the smooth and continuously evolving mission of the PSP. They are also responsible for the collection of the course experience surveys conducted by the students and analysing the associated results to inform the continuous process of evaluation. This information is collected and provided to all faculty after the student grading is complete.

The OMEA team is also responsible for yearly collecting information about the research and teaching outputs of each department member, their participation in conferences, and any awards they have received.

The yearly internal evaluation report is first approved by the Department and then forwarded to the quality assurance unit of the National Kapodistrian University of Athens, and then the Hellenic Quality Assurance agency. The report also contains recommendations for improvements that the department is then tasked to implement. This information is then aggregated at the University level.

## **II. Analysis**

Overall, the AP was very satisfied by the PSP's performance and efforts in this principle. It is evident that the mechanisms in place work well and that all stakeholders are committed to continue collaborations. The system is dynamic and is reviewed regularly and methodically.

## **III. Conclusions**

The PSP is fully compliant with this Principle. The self-assessment procedure of the programme takes place annually with provisions for the outcomes of the self-assessment to be properly recorded and submitted to the Quality Assurance Unit (MODIP) of the University. The Department clearly values the process and is planning to take concrete actions to address any of the issues raised by the internal evaluation process.

### Panel Judgement

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

### Panel Recommendations

Continue on this trajectory of self-reflection and development.

## **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**

There has been no previous external evaluation report specifically for the PSP “The Byzantine World: History and Archaeology”. Therefore, the panel’s judgement is based on its interviews with members of the teaching staff, students, graduates, alumni and stakeholders and on the results of the last IQAS Accreditation report. The PSP follows all the procedures for the regular external accreditation of academic programmes established by the Hellenic Accreditation Agency (HAHE). The PSP will take into account any recommendations provided by the external panel of experts through the accreditation process to improve and further develop the program in the future. This process takes place in coordination of the academic unit within the institution (the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens).

#### **II. Analysis**

The first external evaluation procedure of the PSP is the current one. The recommendations given in the last IQAS Accreditation report have been taken into account.

#### **III. Conclusions**

The PSP is fully compliant with the requirements of Principle 10.

### Panel Judgement

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

### Panel Recommendations

None.



## **PART C: CONCLUSIONS**

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

- The PSP offers unique interdisciplinary specialised academic instruction and encourages scientific research in the fields of Byzantine History and Byzantine Archaeology.
- The supportive and close-knit relationships of faculty, staff and students were assessed.
- Students' satisfaction with the quality of instruction and their acquired skills.
- Courses taught to small groups of students, a fact that enhances the quality of learning and teaching.
- The M.A. Thesis is well defined and supported.
- The PSP's established partnerships with local, national, and international organisations.
- The curriculum of the programme shows a balance between its theoretical and practical components.
- There seems to be good practices of communication between students and the faculty.
- The webpage of the PSP is very informative and available in both Greek and English.

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

- The number of academics teaching in the PSP could be more extensive.
- The Library can be further enriched to cover students' and faculty's needs.
- There is a need for more administrative support for faculty and students.
- Participation of students to evaluation questionnaires can be further enhanced.
- The number of courses offered per semester could be higher.
- Resources that would support research and the scholarly activity of the teaching staff could be enhanced.

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

- Increase the number of academics teaching in the PSP.
- Offer more courses within each semester.
- Financially support research conducted by and connected to the scholarly work of teaching staff.
- Establish a network of Alumni.
- Establish the institution of internship/replacement of one seminar for the students of the "Byzantine History" specialisation.

#### IV. Summary & Overall Assessment

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

The Principles where substantial compliance has been achieved are: **6.**

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

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

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

## The members of the External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel

**Name and Surname**

**Signature**

1. **Professor Maria Antoniou (Chair)**  
Pace University, New York
  
2. **Professor Anna Tahinci**  
The Glassell School of Art, Houston, USA
  
3. **Professor Stephanos Efthymiadis**  
Open University of Cyprus, Cyprus
  
4. **PhD Candidate, Sofia Thatharopoulou**  
Aristotle University of Thessaloniki