



ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ  
HELLENIC REPUBLIC



Εθνική Αρχή  
Ανώτατης Εκπαίδευσης  
Hellenic Authority  
for Higher Education

Αριστείδου 1 & Ευριπίδου 2 • 10559 Αθήνα | 1 Aristidou str. & 2 Evripidou str. • 10559 Athens, Greece  
T. +30 210 9220 944 • F. +30 210 9220 143 • E. secretariat@ethaae.gr • [www.ethaae.gr](http://www.ethaae.gr)

# Accreditation Report

## for the Undergraduate Study Programme of:

**Russian Language and Literature and Slavic Studies**

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

**Date: 24 March 2023**

Report of the Panel appointed by the HAHE to undertake the review of the Undergraduate Study Programme of **Russian Language and Literature and Slavic Studies** of the **National and Kapodistrian University of Athens** for the purposes of granting accreditation.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Part A: Background and Context of the Review</b> .....	<b>4</b>
I. The External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel	4
II. Review Procedure and Documentation	5
III. Study Programme Profile	8
<b>Part B: Compliance with the Principles</b> .....	<b>10</b>
Principle 1: Academic Unit Policy for Quality Assurance	10
Principle 2: Design and Approval of Programmes	14
Principle 3: Student- centred Learning, Teaching and Assessment	19
Principle 4: Student Admission, Progression, Recognition and Certification	22
Principle 5: Teaching Staff	26
Principle 6: Learning Resources and Student Support	30
Principle 7: Information Management	33
<b>Principle 8: Public Information</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>Principle 9: On-going Monitoring and Periodic Internal Review of Programmes</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>Principle 10: Regular External Evaluation of Undergraduate Programmes</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>Part C: Conclusions</b> .....	<b>41</b>
I. Features of Good Practice	41
II. Areas of Weakness	41
III. Recommendations for Follow-up Actions	41
IV. Summary & Overall Assessment	43

## **PART A: BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT OF THE REVIEW**

### **I. The External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel**

The Panel responsible for the Accreditation Review of the Undergraduate Study Programme of **Russian Language and Literature and Slavic Studies** 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 Vlada Stanković (Chair)**

University of Belgrade, Serbia

**2. Professor Enrique Federico Quero Gervilla**

University of Granada, Spain

**3. Professor Fatima Eloeva**

University of Vilnius, Lithuania

**4. Ms Maria Rachil Mpiutu (Student)**

Department of Balkan, Slavic & Oriental Studies, University of Macedonia, Greece

## II. Review Procedure and Documentation

Prior to the visit, the members of the External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel (EEAP) studied the documents provided in advance by HAHE. Among the documents included were: Department for Russian Language and Literature and Slavic Studies (DRLSS) detailed Proposal for Accreditation of the Undergraduate Study Program (USP), including the DRLSS's Quality Assurance and Internal Evaluation Policies, according to the HAHE Guidelines and standards; the Department's Study Guide – Handbook of Studies with all the necessary information for students and prospective students, the description of courses and other information about the USP under evaluation (statistical data, quality indicators, student questionnaires, the results of the students' evaluation etc.). The EEAP member also took part in the orientation meeting with HAHE's Director General, Dr Christina Besta, which was held on 28/02/2023, via Zoom platform. Two members of the EEAP, Prof. Fatima Eloeva and Ms. Maria Rachil Bioutou, were participating in all the meetings remotely, via Zoom (for internal EEAP meetings), and via Webex, for the meetings at the NKUA.

The EEAP visit to the DRLSS and the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens (NKUA) took place on March 20 and 21 2023. It started on Monday 20 March 2023 at 12:30 pm with a Welcome meeting with Professor Evanthis Hatzivassiliou from the Department of History and Archaeology of the NKUA, a member of the QA Committee of MODIP (in place of Professor Dimitrios Karadimas, the Vice-Rector for Academic and Student Affairs and the President of MODIP), and Associate Professor Tatiana Borisova, Head of the DRLSS. After introductory remarks, Prof. Hatzivasilliou stressed the importance of the DRLSS for the NKUA. Assoc. Prof. Borisova presented in great detail the history of the Department, the current status of the programs and its development over the years, as well as changes that had already taken place after the Accreditation Proposal was submitted.

At 13.15 the EEAP had the meeting with representatives of MODIP and of the Department's OMEA. Mr. Bourletidis, Secretary of MODIP, presented the general principles of the Institution's Quality Assurances Policy, together with other members of the MODIP. The second part of the meeting was devoted by presentation from the principles, practices and experiences of internal evaluation process at the DRLSS by the OMEA members. Mr. Athanasios Natsis, an OMEA member, gave a detailed presentation of the OMEA activities, which was complemented by the comments and additional information of various aspects concerning the Department's strategic goals, academic profile, Quality Assurance Policies, USP structure, teaching staff and similar, provided by Assoc. Prof. Panos Sophoulis, the Head of the OMEA committee and Assist. Prof. Polydoros Gkoranis, a member of the OMEA. A fruitful discussion took place on all these aspects and the all the necessary information was provided, together with the clarification of some of the issues raised by the members of EEAP. This was the longest and most complex of all the meetings the EEAP had at the NKUA, and it lasted more than two scheduled hours.

After that, at 16.15, the EEAP met with the members of Teaching staff of the DRLSS. In this meeting the EEAP discussed topics related to teaching methodologies, the link between

teaching and research, financial issues, mobility, workload (for both Teaching Staff and students), research activities, etc.

Finally, the EEAP had a private debriefing meeting to exchange opinions, share impressions from the first day of meeting sessions, and to prepare for the second day's work.

On Tuesday, 21 March 2023 the EEAP had the following meetings:

9.30-10.15: Meeting with undergraduate students, from the 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> year. The EEAP members considered this meeting with the graduate students as probably the most important, and at the same time one of the most interesting and informative meetings, and would like to stress to the HAHE the necessity for meetings with students to have allocated time more than 45 minutes. All the students showed an enviable level of understanding of the functioning of the USP. The EEAP members asked the students about their experience with the USP and their degree of satisfaction with the DRLSS. Seven students took part at the meeting, and they also provided their personal background, reasons for choosing the DRLSS, and their assessment that their expectations are met in high degree during the course of their studies. Towards the end of the meeting, Professor Meletios - Athanasios C. Dimopoulos, the Rector of the NKUA has joined the EEAP meeting, and briefly presented the activities of the NKUA, emphasizing the importance of the DRLSS for the NKUA.

10.30-11.30: The EEAP visited classrooms and were present for a section of a randomly chosen lecture from the DRLSS, offices, and the School of Philosophy's new Central Library building and the Library's Amphitheatre, accompanied by the Head of the Department, Teaching Staff members and Administration staff members. During this visit the EEAP members had the opportunity to pose questions and discuss the available learning resources, the DRLSS's facilities and other services provided by the NKUA.

12.00-12.45: The EEAP had a meeting with USP graduates, who referred to their experience of studying at the DRLSS and their career path. The variety of their motivation for the enrolment at the USP at the DRLSS, as well as their experience after graduation shed a very positive light on the USP in general, and the continuous assistance provided by the Teaching and Administrative Staff of the DRLSS. They also testified for the continuing contact with the members of the DRLSS after graduation. Particularly important was the fact that for majority of the current and graduate students—with the exemption of a single present student from those two categories—the DRLSS was first choice. Given the complexity of the USP, it was impressive to hear that one of the graduates (Ms. E. Papadopoulou) finished her studies in just 2 and a half years (2019-2021)

13.00-13.45: Online Meeting via Webex with employers and social partners. The EEAP met with Mr. Panos Tzellos, from *SoftBiz Smart Solutions*, Dr. Maria Litina, President of the *Greek Association of South-East European Studies/Centre of South-East European Studies*, Mrs. Maya Loungolova, President of the *Greek-Bulgarian Cultural Association/Sunday School "Vasil Levski"*, and Mrs. Irina Kakafika, *Publishing House/Bookstore "Arbat"*.

15.30-16.00: After a Debriefing meeting of the EEAP members (15.00–15.30), the EEAP met with OMEA and MODIP representatives, where several points which needed further clarification were discussed. Prof. Hatzivasilliou emphasized the important point that the DRLSS is a relatively new department, founded in 2007, and that despite the economic crisis that brought serious problems to the functioning of the NKUA and substantial reduction in its budget and the number of the Teaching staff after 2009, the DRLSS managed not only to survive but to develop further and to have a full amount of number of students each year.

Finally, from 16.00 to 16.15, the EEAP held a closing meeting with the Head of the Department and the members of OMEA and MODIP, where the EEAP provided general points of the assessment of the USP after the two days of meetings and its preliminary conclusions.

All meetings were conducted in a very constructive atmosphere. The EEAP would like to thank the HAHE, the NKUA and all the members of the DRLSS, as well as of MODIP and OMEA for their preparedness and their readiness to provide all the information required by the members of EEAP

### III. Study Programme Profile

The DRLLSS was founded in 2007 as the Department for Slavic Studies with the Presidential Decision 136/31-7-2007, and had welcomed the first generation of students in the academic year 2008-2009. In 2012 the DRLLSS had moved to the building of the School of Philosophy at the University campus in Zografou, Athens.

In 2016, then Department of Slavic Studies was renamed the DRLLSS by the Presidential Decision 78/04-08-2016, with two introductory concentration: Russian Language and Literature; and Slavic Studies, of which only the former is in function, while the latter remains non-active, on the account of the lack of Teaching Staff and the questions related to the recognition of the title of study.

The DRLLSS has as its stated goals:

- development of knowledge of the language, literature, history, culture and cultural institution of Russia and Slavic lands through teaching and research;
- enabling of students with necessary skills that will guarantee their preparedness for scholarly and professional career;
- organization of postgraduate studies that will create specialist in these areas of studies;
- to offer advice to the public administration, which could lead to better cooperation with Russia and other Slavic lands, based on the verified information and scholarly research and observations.

After completion of the USG at the DRLLSS, students should:

- obtain a deep knowledge and understanding of Russian language and its structure;
- have a complete grasp and use of Russian language for teaching purposes, and for scholarly and professional reasons;
- obtain an in-depth knowledge of the literature, history and culture of Russia and the Slavic world, in general;
- be able to conduct autonomous research in the scholarly fields of Language, Literature, History and Culture, with the application of correct methodological principles.
- obtain a high level of knowledge and pedagogical skills related to teaching Russian language, with the goal of immediate application of their skills through the inclusion in the labour market, thus enabling their successful career.

The number of the students enrolled every year at the DRLLSS, as well as the percentage of the students who graduate successfully, the EEAP found impressive:

- undergraduate students: 573;
- Ph.D. candidates: 6;
- graduated from the DRLLSS: 372.



Those results are particularly impressive in the light of a small number of Teaching Staff:

- 7 members of Teaching Staff (DEP) (in place of 21 provisioned by the founding act of the DRLLSS);
- 1 member of the Specialists' Teaching Staff (EDIP), and three (3) administration employees.

## **PART B: COMPLIANCE WITH THE PRINCIPLES**

### **Principle 1: Academic Unit Policy for Quality Assurance**

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

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

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

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

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

## **Study Programme Compliance**

### Findings

The Quality Assurance Policy of the Department is implemented through the Internal Evaluation Team (OMEA), in close collaboration with the Quality Assurance Unit (MODIP). In accordance with this Policy, the DRLSS has set strategic and specific goals regarding the USP in all areas of activity. These goals are paired with the relative KPIs and are duly and constantly monitored.

The OMEA of the DRLSS, in collaboration with MODIP, analyses on annual basis the collected data (about student satisfaction, learning outcomes, mobility, publications and research production of teaching staff, etc.). This information is discussed in the

Provisional (on the account of small number of Teaching Staff members) Department Council, which decides on any improvement actions. The results of the annual evaluations are transparent, and available to public. The results have a strong positive tendency, with more than 2/3 of responses belonging to highest categories (very and fully satisfied).

### Analysis of judgement

The USP of the DRLSS is in accordance with the European and the National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education in terms of structure and organization of the curriculum, learning outcomes and qualifications of the Teaching Staff.

The quality of administrative services and facilities is constantly improving, and the Head, and members of the DRLSS are aware of the existing areas of weaknesses, which they presented in great detail at the meetings with EEAP. Concerning weaknesses, the DRLSS had already addressed some of the most pressing issues: a) the DRLSS had reduced the number of mandatory courses from 64 to 49; b) DRLSS has finished the administrative procedure for employment of two additional members of the Teaching Staff, one of whom at the level of full professor, which will secure the autonomy of the DRLSS and functioning of Department Council, once they are confirmed; c) the autonomy will enable the DRLSS to organize Postgraduate studies (currently organized in cooperation with other Depts. as Interdepartmental Postgraduate Studies); d) the new central Library of the Faculty of Philosophy has been created and works since 2019, providing additional amenities in the central building of the School of Philosophy; e) the DRLSS is awaiting renovation of additional space, which is already assigned to the Department and that will address the lack of rooms for Language Laboratory and teaching.

Each semester students have the opportunity to evaluate teaching staff and courses through electronic satisfaction questionnaires. The EEAP had access to both the questionnaires and the percentage-points results for every category, which show high level of students' satisfaction. For example: a) on the scale from 1 to 5, 5 being the highest, the students evaluated in more than 70% teaching with marks 4 and 5, with average grade 4.04; b) when evaluating six different categories of teaching, work, preparedness and general attitudes of Teaching Staff, the students

in more than 60% answered with the marks 4 and 5, while the main objections concerned the complexity of the topics, and the material, as well as the workload, which the DRLSS addressed by reducing the number of mandatory courses from 64 to 49.

Regarding the implementation and monitoring of Quality processes, discussion of data and subsequent decisions are made in the Provisional Department Council. Since there are currently no student representatives on this body, regular student participation is limited to satisfaction questionnaires. Despite this, the members of the Department interviewed during the site visit assured that in the revisions of the USP the opinion of the students is taken into account in informal meetings and in other ways. In this regard it would be perhaps advisable to include a student representative in the Department's OMEA, if the legal framework allows it.

### Conclusions

The DRLSS, in collaboration with MODIP, has implemented an appropriate Quality Assurance Policy with clear objectives and in accordance with the European and the National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education. The DRLSS is well aware of the importance of such a policy and promotes continuous improvement, and has been constantly addressing all the issues that were recognized as areas of weakness through implementation of QA policy and the processes of students' and internal evaluation.

### Panel Judgement

<b>Principle 1: Academic Unit Policy for Quality Assurance</b>	
Fully compliant	<b>X</b>
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

### **Panel Recommendations**

The DRLSS, the Department's OMEA and MODIP have shown a high level of QA policies and have demonstrated the capability to address all the issues that may rise from the internal and students' evaluation. One aspect that the DRLSS could address is student participation in deliberative and decision-making bodies. However, given that the student's participation in the Department Councils does not depend on the Department, the DRLSS could possibly include student representatives in the OMEA or in other Department Committees. The DRLSS had already made plans and preparation for creation of the alumni net, and should proceed with their realization.

## Principle 2: Design and Approval of Programmes

**INSTITUTIONS SHOULD DEVELOP THEIR UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMMES FOLLOWING A DEFINED WRITTEN PROCESS WHICH WILL INVOLVE THE PARTICIPANTS, INFORMATION SOURCES AND THE APPROVAL COMMITTEES FOR THE PROGRAMME. THE OBJECTIVES, THE EXPECTED LEARNING OUTCOMES, THE INTENDED PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS AND THE WAYS TO ACHIEVE THEM ARE SET OUT IN THE PROGRAMME DESIGN. THE ABOVE DETAILS AS WELL AS INFORMATION ON THE PROGRAMME'S STRUCTURE ARE PUBLISHED IN THE STUDENT GUIDE.**

*Academic units develop their programmes following a well-defined procedure. The academic profile and orientation of the programme, the objectives, the subject areas, the structure and organisation, the expected learning outcomes and the intended professional qualifications according to the National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education are described at this stage. The approval or revision process for programmes includes a check of compliance with the basic requirements described in the Standards, on behalf of the Institution's Quality Assurance Unit (QAU).*

*Furthermore, the programme design should take into consideration the following:*

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

### Study Programme Compliance

#### Findings

The DRLSS at the School of Philosophy of the NKUA has been created in 2007 basing on the international standards for this field of studies. In 2016 the Department was renamed to the DRLSS (P.D. 78/04-08-2016) with the introduction of two introductory concentrations. The information regarding to the Department is published on the website of the Department, which seems to be complete and appropriate, giving an adequate idea about the structure and functioning of the Department.

The website in general features seems to be up to date and comprehensive, however it could be organised in more user-friendly way. Quite often the information is centralized with links leading to the main university website. In addition, the English version of the website is not always updated as it lacks information such as e.g. Teaching Staff's CVs.

The DRLLSS comprises two areas of specialization: a) Russian Language and Literature which at the moment is the main one; and b) Slavic Studies, which in present offers the students the opportunity to acquire additional knowledge in the field of Slavic cultures, enrich their knowledge of the studying Slavic languages as well as the literature, history and anthropological issues.

The importance of existence of Department of Russian Language and Philology and Slavic Studies at the Athens University cannot be overestimated. Both Greece and Russia share a common heritage of Eastern Orthodox Christianity. Greece and Russia have a long history of political and cultural exchanges. During the Byzantine Empire, Greek scholars and intellectuals played a key role in shaping Russian culture. Later, in the 19th and 20th centuries, Russian intellectuals and artists were drawn to Greece as a source of inspiration and cultural renewal.

Overall, the cultural and linguistic connections between Greek and Russian cultures are complex and multifaceted. They reflect centuries of historical interactions and exchanges, and continue to shape the way that these two cultures perceive and engage with one another.

The factors named above are extremely important for understanding of the popularity of the Department. Every year about 80 students enter the Department of Russian Language and Philology and Slavic Studies.

The members of the EEAP were impressed by the high level of self-assessment of the students and graduates who stressed (being in reality very convincing) the fact that they had really changed during their course at the university and made a huge progress, having accomplished their initial dream, entering the world of the Slavic literatures, of the classical Russian literature and being able to read these magnificent texts in original. It is significant that the same opinion was expressed by potential employers and external stakeholders with whom the DRLLSS cooperates. They pointed out a variety of skills, a broad outlook, the ability to adapt to different circumstances and the general humanistic orientation of the graduates of the Department.

The orientation of the DRLLSS is educational, research and professional. Russian language courses are offered to students in all study semesters and present a basic condition for their educational development. The Department's linguistic courses aim to familiarize students with the basic theoretical and methodological principles of linguistic science. They cover a wide range of areas of both theoretical and applied linguistics and offer up-to-date knowledge on the latest developments in theoretical linguistic analysis, language teaching and translation. Its aim is to provide students with general and specialized knowledge, as well as the methodological – research tools for deepening the Department's offered fields of study. Its students are meant to acquire both general and specialized knowledge, as well as the necessary methodological and research tools for deepening the two individual fields of study.

Russian literature courses are primarily aimed at teaching the main genres, currents and authors in synchrony and diachrony, from its beginnings to the present day.

- The Department aims as well at highlighting the possibility of multiple scientific approaches in the field of philological research as well as at the deeper study of literary currents and teaching of literature.
- Students are invited to familiarize themselves with the basic principles of textual analysis, to practice it, as well as with the use bibliography and the handling, in general, of scientific discourse.

The complexity and multifaceted nature mentioned above of the subject taught requires an especially balanced and thoughtful approach to program organization. In the new improved program, the exam load on students is reduced (from 64 to 49), while their level of knowledge remains unchanged.

The DRLSS is interdisciplinary in scope, its four-year USP offers students solid language training with fundamental knowledge and research skills in the areas of linguistics, literature, historical and cultural studies. Currently more than 570 students are enrolled in the Department, which additionally offers postgraduate (as Interdepartmental) and Ph.D. programs. Starting from this academic year, it will also provide young scholars with the opportunity to conduct postdoctoral research in related fields. The Department has numerous bilateral agreements, and a large number of students applies every year for a term abroad (in Russia, Bulgaria, Poland, Germany etc) under the auspices of the [Erasmus +](#), Erasmus Mundus, or [CIVIS](#) programs.

Finally, in order to provide work experience to students, the DRLSS offers the possibility to undertake practical training and internships in external public and private institutions

#### Analysis of judgement

The USP presents a clear and well-articulated structure, attentive to a smooth progression of the students. There is an adequate balance between introductory and general courses, which students must take in the first years, and courses more specialized in the area of study. Along with the more traditional content courses, the DRLSS offers a large number of elective courses that cover a wide range of topics, according to the latest trends in the area of Russian Language and Philology, Slavic Languages, Linguistics and Translation Studies.

In cooperation with the Department of English Philology there is an Interdepartmental MA program on translation (Greek, English, Russian). This flexibility allows students, according to their interests, to gain certain specialization in the areas of a) Russian Literature and Culture of various periods; b) Slavic Languages and Literature c) The History of Russian Language, d) Translation in the field of Russian, English and Greek c) Russian Language, Linguistics and Translation.

USP revisions take place in a specific commission and its proposals are discussed and approved by the currently Provisional Departmental Council. External stakeholders and experts are not formally involved in the process. However, informal consultations with students, graduates and



scientific societies take place. External stake holders highly evaluated the effectiveness of the Department and the professional skills of the graduates.

### Conclusions

The design of the USP is rational and clearly articulated and more than meets the international standards for this area de study.

It is noteworthy that the Program in Russian Language and Philology of the University of Athens is unique while its implementation covers a wide range of subjects forming specialists of a really high level and combining harmoniously knowledge and skills. In this respect, the EEAP wishes to underline that the DRLLSS strives to open new avenues of collaboration with international institutions, to expand its network of contacts with social partners and external stakeholders and to organize scientific congresses and other activities.

The presence of some difficulties should be recognized, apparently inevitable, given the specifics of the department - a large number of students (573) and only 7 representatives of the Teaching Staff. As a result, obligatory theses for students were abolished. Nevertheless, students who wish to carry out research write such papers under the guidance of teachers, which subsequently facilitates their further development in the academic space. So, one of possible recommendations should be to increase the Teaching Staff.

### **Panel Judgement**

<b>Principle 2: Design and Approval of Programmes</b>	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	<b>X</b>
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

## **Panel Recommendations**

- Increase the Teaching Staff.
- Related to this recommendation is also the need to increase the number of opportunities for students to improve their knowledge in the field of Slavic philology, the development of this concentration requires the presence of specialists in the relevant disciplines. It would be desirable to expand the range of Slavic languages in which students can specialize.
- It would be important to lighten the load of the Teaching Staff.
- The creation of additional classes in English needs to be encouraged. These will help both the DRLSS's students with improving their foreign language and research skills as well as enhance the international profile of the DRLSS.
- One can stress the importance of the formation of the joint MA program of translation (Greek, English, Russian) in the cooperation with the Department of English Philology. The DRLSS could continue its development in this direction which seems to be very promising.
- It would be reasonable that the program becomes more flexible by increasing the percentage of mandatory elective courses, so that they correspond to approximately 25% of the total courses required to obtain a degree.
- Additional premises should be provided to the department, considering the large number of students.
- It is possible to further improve the website so that it becomes more informative and user-friendly.

### **Principle 3: Student- centred Learning, Teaching and Assessment**

**INSTITUTIONS SHOULD ENSURE THAT THE UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMMES ARE DELIVERED IN A WAY THAT ENCOURAGES STUDENTS TO TAKE AN ACTIVE ROLE IN CREATING THE LEARNING PROCESS. THE ASSESSMENT METHODS SHOULD REFLECT THIS APPROACH.**

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

*The student-centred learning and teaching process*

- *respects and attends to the diversity of students and their needs, enabling flexible learning paths;*
- *considers and uses different modes of delivery, where appropriate;*
- *flexibly uses a variety of pedagogical methods;*
  
- *regularly evaluates and adjusts the modes of delivery and pedagogical methods aiming at improvement;*
- *regularly evaluates the quality and effectiveness of teaching, as documented especially through student surveys;*
- *reinforces the student's sense of autonomy, while ensuring adequate guidance and support from the teaching staff;*
- *promotes mutual respect in the student - teacher relationship;*
- *applies appropriate procedures for dealing with students' complaints.*

*In addition:*

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

#### **Study Programme Compliance**

The USP aims to offer interdisciplinary knowledge. It offers different courses comparing various pedagogical approaches and plurality in methods, such as traditional methods and the use of multimedia.

The professors use images, maps, charts, etc. to help the students follow the lectures/presentations and better understand the content. Students are offered regular lectures

and talks by renowned scientists, as well as, in some courses, film screenings, and practical exercises to complement the theory component of teaching, while regular visits to monuments are also applied.

Students are encouraged to be engaged by making small presentations in their classes. Interviews with students have shown that they are seen as active partners in the learning process.

One obstacle to research is the lack of scientific laboratories, as there is currently only one laboratory in operation. However, there are plans to set up two academic laboratories in the future.

Regarding the Russian language courses, although much valued by the students due to the excellent teaching methods implemented, the low percentage of attendance makes the learning environment challenging. Although professors are supportive many students argued that their largely personal efforts have led them to the level of language competence they hold.

The second introductory concentration 'Slavic' studies is not currently active, which according to some students pose a problem given the fact the DRLSS is not just a department of Russian literature but also a department that is supposed to diffuse knowledge about Slavic studies.

A dissertation thesis is no longer compulsory for students. This could be a problem for students who wish to be involved in research later in their careers. One explanation is that there are not enough Teaching Staff to meet this need.

Regarding the student advisors, the Departmental Assembly has determined the rotating assignment of the duties of a Study Advisor to faculty members.

Most faculty members inform in advance the students about the evaluation criteria, the methods, and the procedures during the lectures or through open e-class platforms. The exams take place according to the law. This process includes written examinations, oral examinations, and the preparation of an assignment (individually or collectively). Special care for students nearing the completion of their studies is taken by participating in extra examination periods.

Even though student assessment is rarely carried out by more than one examiner, the transparency of the evaluation process is ensured in different ways, depending on the mode of examination. Firstly, students, if they so wish, can meet with the teachers, discuss their writing, and find out how it will be marked. Secondly, for the transparency of the examination procedure, oral examinations are conducted with the compulsory presence of more than one student. Thirdly, in courses in which the students are required to present papers, the commentary is provided by the instructor, and their fellow students actively participate in commenting on the content of the papers. When objections are submitted by students regarding their grades, the DRLSS applies the legislation as there is a formal common procedure applicable to all Greek Universities. Usually, this is rarely implemented as it is usually primarily done informally between students and lecturers. In general, students described their experience in favourable terms with reference to mutual respect, a friendly and family environment with open dialogue between students and staff members without superfluous formalities. Students

very often communicate with lecturers via e-mail, either directly or through the Open e-Class platform.

The DRLLSS follows the system of course evaluation by the students through electronic digital questionnaires. The process is carried out anonymously through the special platform of the IQAS on the University's website. The questionnaire is almost entirely based on the standard questionnaire of the HAHE, with some adaptations. The alumni have also been surveyed to acquire useful information for ameliorating the DRLLSS and its services.

The rigid course curriculum with its 64 courses required in order to obtain the degree was identified by students as a major difficulty and a contributing factor in the delay of the graduation. The large volume of courses combined with learning a fairly demanding language such as Russian is a challenge for students. In this regard there is provision for a reduction in courses although this is not currently in place.

In general, students described their experience in favourable terms with reference to mutual respect, a friendly and family environment with open dialogue between students and staff members without superfluous formalities. Students very often communicate with lecturers via e-mail, either directly or through the open e-class platform.

### Panel Judgement

<b>Principle 3: Student- centred Learning, Teaching and Assessment</b>	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	<b>X</b>
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

### Panel Recommendations

- The curriculum needs to be revamped with more courses to be merged rather than eliminated as they offer useful knowledge.
- The introductory concentration of Slavic studies needs to be activated and restored to its proper role in order to be able to disseminate important knowledge.

**Principle 4: Student Admission, Progression, Recognition and Certification**  
**INSTITUTIONS SHOULD DEVELOP AND APPLY PUBLISHED REGULATIONS COVERING ALL ASPECTS AND PHASES OF STUDIES (ADMISSION, PROGRESSION, RECOGNITION AND CERTIFICATION).**

*Institutions and academic units need to put in place both processes and tools to collect, manage and act on information regarding student progression.*

*Procedures concerning the award and recognition of higher education degrees, the duration of studies, rules ensuring students progression, terms and conditions for student mobility should be based on the institutional study regulations. Appropriate recognition procedures rely on institutional practice for recognition of credits among various European academic departments and Institutions, in line with the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention.*

*Graduation represents the culmination of the students' study period. Students need to receive documentation explaining the qualification gained, including achieved learning outcomes and the context, level, content and status of the studies that were pursued and successfully completed (Diploma Supplement).*

### **Study Programme Compliance**

#### Findings

The DRLSS has a set of published regulations covering all aspects of the students' progression towards their degree. All the necessary information about courses, teaching and administrative staff, student mobility and student life in general is available on the website and in the Study Guide – Handbook of Studies which is updated every year.

The DRLSS organizes at the beginning of each academic year a Welcome Day upon the arrival of the new students to facilitate a smooth transmission from high school to higher education. During this meeting new students are informed about the services offered by the NKUA and about the organization of the USP. The members of the Teaching Staff led by the Head of the DRLSS present them with detailed information about the program and the university with a view to facilitating their orientation.

The ECTS system is applied across the USP. At the end of their studies, the students have the option to receive the Diploma Supplement in Greek and English by submitting a request to the Department's Secretariat.

The Department has Erasmus agreements with 6 European Universities (Friedrich Schiller University of Jena, University of Silesia in Katowice, Sofia University "Saint Kliment Ohridski", University of Plovdiv "Paisii Hilendarski", St. Cyril and St. Methodius, University of Veliko Tarnovo and University of Warsaw) and promotes student and teaching staff mobility. At the moment, 10-12 students per year go through mobility, which we consider insufficient in regard to the number of students who are currently doing their studies (573). Regarding the moment when the mobility should be carried out, it is recommended that they should do it at the

beginning of the third year or during the first semester of the fourth year, which seems to us to be very appropriate.

Students also have the opportunity to participate in the Erasmus CIVIS activity "A European CIVIC University", an alliance of eight European universities of which the University of Athens is a member. We consider that CIVIS is a good opportunity to establish relationships with other degrees. The fact that through CIVIS there are 4 exchange students seems very positive to us. All the information is accessible on the DRLSS's website.

The DRLSS organizes a system of ESPA-funded practical training. In this regard, the DRLSS has established a wide network of collaboration with more than 10 external institutions and social partners such as: Association of South-east European Studies/Centre of South-east European Studies, publishing houses (Publishing House/Bookstore "Arbat"), educational centres (Greek-Bulgarian Cultural Association/Sunday School "Vasil Levski"), technological companies (SoftBiz Smart Solutions) and others. Stakeholders have a really positive opinion of the Department's work and are very satisfied with their collaboration, as the AP could verify in the interviews held. They appreciate the high level of language skills achieved by the students and their capacity for work. In general, they believe that the current war situation between Russia and Ukraine has not influenced the demand for specialists with knowledge of the Russian language. In fact, it is important to note that the demand from students has not decreased either. Year after year, all vacancies are filled and the GPA (Grade Point Average) last year was good 11,095 especially if we consider that all the places were covered and that the number of places offered is high for a country like Greece (80 places). Moreover, for most students it is their first choice.

Students are highly satisfied with their training process: 72,74 % were very satisfied according to the surveys carried out.

The interest in these studies in Greece is unquestionable. In fact, the number of students has been increasing since its creation in 2008.

### Analysis of judgement

The DRLSS is very concerned about facilitating an adequate progression of students, especially with regard to the level of knowledge of the Russian language and also of the second Slavic language. Although all new students are supposed to have a C1 level of Russian and B1 level of the second Slavic Language.

There are two clearly differentiated types of students: students who start their studies from zero and those who have Russian as their mother tongue (a very large number in Greece). The first group reaches level C1 within the European reference language framework in 4 years thanks to a coherent design of the training process and a good coordination among the teaching staff. The fact that an important part of the teaching staff works on a contractual basis is not an obstacle to achieve such a high level of language competence. In this sense, the lack of a permanent Teaching Staff at the initial levels is being well overcome by the department and its management. Otherwise, and this is a very positive strong point, part of the subjects about Russian Language and Literature offered by the department are taught in Russian during the second year (Phonology, Morphology and Literature), during the third year (Didactics and Methodology of Russian Language Teaching) and during the fourth year (Russian Language

Stylistics). In the case of the second Slavic language, the level is lower due to the lack of academic hours. That's the reason why, in this case the theoretical courses are taught in Greek and the subjects of each language are taught in Greek at the beginning and the corresponding language is introduced progressively.

In general, teachers, students and graduates agree that it is a good system that ensures adequate level of the Russian language.

The same thing can be said of the second Slavic language (Serbian, Bulgarian, Polish). The teachers interviewed do an excellent job with great coherence and dedication. Despite the fact that the number of hours dedicated to them is lower (3 hours a week during 6 semesters) the result is excellent, considering the number of hours provided.

The USP does not include the possibility to produce a BA Dissertation at the end of the studies. The high number of students and the proportionally low number of teachers makes this option difficult. If the Department manages to expand its teaching staff in the future, it would be advisable to include this BA Dissertation on an optional basis. We consider, that this is an aspect that would improve the training of the students, although, obviously, in the current conditions it is impossible.

In relation to practical training, the number of students who complete their practical internship is not very high (about 10-15 students every year), according to the data provided by MODIP. The Department should make a greater effort to reinforce the participation of students in this activity.

### Conclusions

All procedures concerning student's admission, progression, recognition and certification are based on the institutional study regulations.

This panel wishes to underline that the DRLSS takes great interest in properly monitoring the progress of its students. It has also managed to generate a very positive work atmosphere and an excellent relationship with students.

### **Panel Judgement**

<b>Principle 4: Student Admission, Progression, Recognition and Certification</b>	
Fully compliant	<b>X</b>
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	



### **Panel Recommendations**

- If in the future the DRLSS manages to expand its Teaching staff, it would be advisable to include a BA Dissertation on an optional basis.
- It would be interesting to increase the number of Erasmus agreements with other universities.
- The Department should make a greater effort to reinforce the participation of students in practical training and internship.

## Principle 5: Teaching Staff

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

*The Institutions and their academic units have a major responsibility as to the standard of their teaching staff providing them with a supportive environment that promotes the advancement of their scientific work. In particular, the academic unit should:*

- *set up and follow clear, transparent and fair processes for the recruitment of properly qualified staff and offer them conditions of employment that 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 members (with respect to attendance requirements, performance, self-assessment, training etc.);*
- *develop policies to attract highly qualified academic staff.*

### Study Programme Compliance

#### Findings and analysis of judgement

At the time of the review, The Department consists of the following faculty members recruited through a clear, transparent, and fair process: seven (07) members of the Teaching Staff (DEP) (+2 recently elected, but still not active).

one (1) Specialists' Teaching Staff member (EDIP); two (2) foreign lectures; and eight (8) contracted university teachers (for the Fall 2022/2023 semester); one (1) member of the Teaching Staff detached from the Secondary education.

The DRLLSS's administrative and technical staff number three (3) persons.

They have been selected according to the needs of the track of Russian Language and Literature of the department.

It should be noted that the names of the professors of the DRLLSS are well known in the European academic community, primarily due to their significant academic and scientific activities. We are dealing not only with very effective teachers who are creative in the teaching process, but also with outstanding researchers who beginning from the earlier stages involve students in the process of scientific creativity.

It should be emphasized that the inspiring role of teachers and their constant help and support in mastering such a complex subject as Russian Philology and understanding the importance of

scientific research has become an invariably recurring theme during conversations with students and alumni.

The criteria and processes of recruitment and promotion are clearly stated and are transparent in accordance with the legal framework. Teaching workload is heavy as each member of staff teaches at least 6 hours per week on the undergraduate program and they also count 10 hours of class preparation and 10 hours devoted to working with students, conducting oral and/or written examinations and revising papers. Workload is further increased by the fact that members of staff also teach on the postgraduate program and supervise Ph.D. students. In reality, most members of Teaching Staff teach many more hours.

Members of Teaching Staff also take part in diverse research activities. Research is facilitated mainly by short study leave periods as well as leaves to attend scientific conferences and scientific events as defined by the legal framework. At the same time, however, the DRLSS care to ensure a rational distribution of leaves to guarantee the smooth running of the program. The result of this situation is the negligible use of the opportunity for a sabbatical, necessary for a long-term research work.

The members of DRLSS participate in an important number of international scientific networks, and national and international projects. It also closely collaborates with a range of international and national institutions and organizations.

Research publications include articles in peer and non-peer reviewed journals, conference proceedings, chapters in edited volumes, monographs and books. Also, a high proportion of articles in peer-reviewed journals compared to non-peer-reviewed should be stressed, as it is an evidence of their good scientific quality. The degree of recognition of the DRLSS Teaching Staff is also confirmed by their role of invited speakers and members of organizing committees of international scientific conferences and workshops in Greece and abroad, as well as on the editorial boards of international scientific journals and publications.

9 international congresses have been organized by Department since 2014.

It seems to be evident that the teachers of the DRLSS play a very important role in the intensification of the academic life of the University, it is enough to mention some of the courses proposed for other Dept. of the School of Philosophy: History of the learned languages of the Southern and Western Slavs, State and Power in the Medieval Balkans, History of Greek-Russian Relations (18th-19th centuries)

Popular oral tradition of the Slavs,

- Paleo-Slavic Language
- Byzantine and Paleo-Slavic writing Tradition
- The Culture of the Book in the Medieval Balkans

More measures could have been in place for the encouragement of high-quality research, so that it could be better supported, especially by the lower teaching workload and better use of sabbatical or other long leaves.

The link between research and teaching is generally supported, especially through research activities that focus on specific areas of Literature and Culture of Russia and Slavic Countries, Linguistics and Translation, further highlighting the close link between teaching and research.

The DRLSS systematically conducts student survey of their courses and uses the evaluation results to improve the learning process. QA is also achieved by making sure members of staff comply with their obligations (e.g. by respecting working hours, being present on campus, etc.). Leaves of any kind are approved following the established by law processes.

As for the research infrastructure, one of the most important problems of research work is the lack of teaching and office space. As expressed during the interview with teachers and the visit of the premises, the available infrastructure does not wholly support the needs of the research process. Nevertheless, the recent opening of the new library can be considered as a good signal of the improvement.

### Conclusions

The Teaching Staff of the DRLSS is fully compliant with Principle 5. Overall, it is impressive that the DRLSS has managed to perform so well in terms of both teaching and research, in spite their heavy workload. The quantity as well as the quality of the scholarly production of the teaching staff of the DRLSS is remarkable. However, research conditions can be improved, and members of staff need to be supported in that direction.

### **Panel Judgement**

<b>Principle 5: Teaching Staff</b>	
Fully compliant	<b>X</b>
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

### **Panel Recommendations**

- Increase the number of permanent Teaching Staff to relieve the heavy workload and, thereby, foster high quality research.
- Explore and use possibilities of a temporary employment of visiting professors.
- Help the Teaching Staff to take their sabbatical leaves in the scheduled periods.
- Promote collaborative research projects.
- Encourage and support the Teaching Staff in submitting more research funding applications.
- Further develop the infrastructure supplying the Teaching Staff with offices.

## **Principle 6: Learning Resources and Student Support**

**INSTITUTIONS SHOULD HAVE ADEQUATE FUNDING TO COVER TEACHING AND LEARNING NEEDS. THEY SHOULD –ON THE ONE HAND– PROVIDE SATISFACTORY INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES FOR LEARNING AND STUDENT SUPPORT AND –ON THE OTHER HAND– FACILITATE DIRECT ACCESS TO THEM BY ESTABLISHING INTERNAL RULES TO THIS END (E.G. LECTURE ROOMS, LABORATORIES, LIBRARIES, NETWORKS, BOARDING, CAREER AND SOCIAL POLICY SERVICES ETC.).**

*Institutions and their academic units must have sufficient funding and means to support learning and academic activity in general, so that they can offer to students the best possible level of studies. The above means could include facilities such as libraries, study rooms, educational and scientific equipment, information and communications services, support or counselling services.*

*When allocating the available resources, the needs of all students must be taken into consideration (e.g. whether they are full-time or part-time students, employed or international students, students with disabilities) and the shift towards student-centred learning and the adoption of flexible modes of learning and teaching. Support activities and facilities may be organised in various ways, depending on the institutional context. However, the internal quality assurance ensures that all resources are appropriate, adequate, and accessible, and that students are informed about the services available to them.*

*In delivering support services the role of support and administrative staff is crucial and therefore they need to be qualified and have opportunities to develop their competences.*

### **Study Programme Compliance**

#### Findings

The DRLSS consists of the following faculty members recruited through a clear, transparent, and fair process: seven (07) Teaching staff (+2 recently elected).

As far as infrastructure is concerned, the DRLSS has three small classrooms, which are equipped with interactive whiteboard. It would be good to have Language laboratories.

Also recent is the creation of the centralized Library (since 2019), which has replaced the former Departmental Libraries.

The DRLSS's secretariat, located on the sixth floor of the School of Philosophy, is currently run by three people. In addition, the implementation of the e-Secretariat (My Studies) has facilitated the administrative processes for both students and staff.

Moreover, the DRLSS has incorporated the use of e-Class into its daily academic and teaching activities. This tool has proven to be particularly useful in daily work with students as it facilitates communication between student and teacher and the sharing and control of training activities. Finally, the NKUA offers students a wide range of student services: canteen, restaurant, sports facilities, cultural associations, student ombudsman, support for students with special needs.

### Analysis

Regarding Teaching Staff, it should be noted that the number of permanent teachers is completely insufficient. That's the reason why they have a significant number of contract teachers (3 of Russian language, and 1 of Polish language), two lectorates (1 of Serbian language and 1 of Bulgarian language) and 4 scholarship holders of the ESPA, whose presence has to be negotiated every year. Objectively, the Department needs more permanent Teaching Staff. The increase of the Department members would allow to improve the organization of teaching process in the department, particularly in the first courses, where the largest number of contract teachers teach. Another consequence is that the student/teacher ratio, which is now acceptable, could be better, especially in Russian language courses. At the moment there are 3 groups of 25 students of Russian language in the first year, two in the second year and one in the third year. In the rest of the Slavic languages the number is acceptable, about 15 students per group (one group of each language). It would also be possible to include in the USP the elaboration of a BA Dissertation.

Offices and workspaces are still shortcomings and deficiencies that the AP could verify during the site visit (e.g. only three offices for the entire Teaching Staff).

The new Library is superb and offers a multitude of resources to both students and teachers. The faculty has made a considerable effort for the acquisition of new books, but it is still insufficient. In this respect, the biggest problems remain obtaining funds for the purchase of bibliographic resources and the difficulties to buy foreign books.

### Conclusion

There is room for improvement, in particular with regard to the lack of teaching staff and the funding for research and teaching resources, and all aspects of student support, learning resources, facilities and infrastructures.

### **Panel Judgement**

<b>Principle 6: Learning Resources and Student Support</b>	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	<b>X</b>
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

### **Panel Recommendations**

- Increase the number of the Teaching Staff.
- Improvement of funding for research and teaching resources and workspaces.
- Improvement the number of foreign bibliographical resources.



## **Principle 7: Information Management**

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

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

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

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

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

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

### **Study Programme Compliance**

The DRLSS relies on the University's data collection services, and these are relatively well operational. Both MODIP and OMEA have the ability to mine data and for the most part that is happening. The DRLSS has a relative grasp on the number of students enrolled per year, and the number of active students. The same applies to data related to student satisfaction with the program. The statistical data for obtaining information on the number and performance of students come from the Computerization Service of the NKUA, with which the DRLSS has a systematic cooperation.

For the students' academic progress and records, the DRLSS relies on the University's electronic platform, which is a university-wide service.

For the electronic teaching platform, the DRLSS relies on e-Class and that also works as well as can be.

Information on evaluation procedures is gathered from a variety of sources (students, lecturers, traineeship providers, etc.) using a combination of methods (anonymous written/electronic

questionnaires, interviews, databases) appropriate to the objectives of each procedure. The information obtained from the satisfaction surveys seems to be systematically analysed and used towards improvement, but it is not always appropriately presented.

The DRLSS does not have data on the further academic/professional development of its graduates. There is an ongoing effort to create an Alumni Network that could fill this gap and contribute to the reformulation of the targeting and further upgrading of the DRLSS.

In general terms, the data on academic and administrative functions are compiled but not available to the public from the department's website.

### Panel Judgement

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

### Panel Recommendations

- Better presentation of information.
- Public access to the statistical data.
- Gathering information on graduate careers path.

## **Principle 8: Public Information**

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

*Information on Institution's activities is useful for prospective and current students, graduates, other stakeholders and the public.*

*Therefore, institutions and their academic units provide information about their activities, including the programmes they offer, the intended learning outcomes, the qualifications awarded, the teaching, learning and assessment procedures used, the pass rates and the learning opportunities available to their students, as well as graduate employment information.*

### **Study Programme Compliance**

The DRLSS provides through its website useful information about the structure of the USP, the degree awarded, the teaching staff's CVs, lecturers' office hours, course descriptions, etc. Also, information about the additional higher education or vocational training programs (Erasmus+, CIVIS, Internship) in which students of the Department can participate can be found. The scientific and research projects carried out under the responsibility of the faculty members of the DRLSS are presented. All scientific events organized by the DRLSS and its members, sometimes in collaboration with other institutions, are announced on the DRLSS's website.

Students have the opportunity to be informed mainly through the open e-Class platform and most of the students suggest that most lecturers post on the platform updated information such as documents, scoreboards, assignments, course calendars, user groups, questionnaires, and multimedia.

Data and results from the Quality Assurance Policy process, for example, internal evaluation reports are not available online for recent years and only older data has been uploaded. Questionnaires for undergraduate students as well as for alumni with preliminary statistical processing of responses are available.

The website is usually up to date and comprehensive but not much sufficiently user-friendly. Most information is centralized with links leading to the main university website. In addition, the English version of the website is not always updated as it lacks information such as teaching staff's CVs, basic information about the department, news feed, etc.

## Panel Judgement

<b>Principle 8: Public Information</b>	
Fully compliant	<b>X</b>
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

## Panel Recommendations

- The website needs to be updated and revamped.
- More detailed information needs to be provided on the website.

**Principle 9: On-going Monitoring and Periodic Internal Review of Programmes**  
**INSTITUTIONS SHOULD HAVE IN PLACE AN INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM FOR THE AUDIT AND ANNUAL INTERNAL REVIEW OF THEIR PROGRAMMES, SO AS TO ACHIEVE THE OBJECTIVES SET FOR THEM, THROUGH MONITORING AND AMENDMENTS, WITH A VIEW TO CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT. ANY ACTIONS TAKEN IN THE ABOVE CONTEXT SHOULD BE COMMUNICATED TO ALL PARTIES CONCERNED.**

*Regular monitoring, review and revision of study programmes aim to maintain the level of educational provision and to create a supportive and effective learning environment for students.*

*The above comprise the evaluation of:*

- *the content of the programme in the light of the latest research in the given discipline, thus ensuring that the programme is up to date;*
- *the changing needs of society;*
- *the students' workload, progression and completion;*
- *the effectiveness of the procedures for the assessment of students;*
- *the students' expectations, needs and satisfaction in relation to the programme;*
- *the learning environment, support services and their fitness for purpose for the programme*

*Programmes are reviewed and revised regularly involving students and other stakeholders. The information collected is analysed and the programme is adapted to ensure that it is up-to-date. Revised programme specifications are published.*

## **Study Programme Compliance**

### Findings

The Department's OMEA, in collaboration with the MODIP, monitors and reviews the USP of the DRLLSS on an annual basis. This Committee is also responsible for coordinating the process of assessing student satisfaction by means of electronic questionnaires. All data collected are discussed in the currently Provisional Departmental Council. This allows the DRLLSS to make amendments in the USP when necessary – as it has already done, since the time of submitting Accreditation Proposal and accompanying documentation – with the aim of updating it according to recent developments and new trends in the discipline, and in order to meet the changing needs of society. The DRLLSS should also take into account the changing global cultural environment in order to emphasize the importance of the USP and the knowledge and skills it provides for the labour market in the light of those changed circumstances.

### Analysis

It has already been stressed that the DRLLSS, through the OMEA and in collaboration with the MODIP, conducts regular evaluations and constant monitoring of the students' satisfaction with all the elements of the USP, with high percentage of students' participations in the evaluation process.

Some weak points include the lack of direct and formal involvement of the students in the procedures of monitoring and reviewing the USP, and the lack of clarity on the question of the currently inactive second introductory concentration of Department's USP, Slavic Studies.

One of the problems the DRLSS is facing from its very beginning is the small number of members of the Teaching Staff, which limits the possibilities for creating new courses, mandatory and elective. Even with the pending addition of two members of the Teaching Staff, raising the number to 9 from current 7, the DRLSS will still be seriously understaffed and far from the original projection of having 21 members of Teaching Staff.

### Conclusions

In conclusion, the DRLSS is aware of areas of weaknesses in the USP and is timely addressing them, while trying to improve the USP. Research activity of the members of the Teaching Staff, high quality of their scholarly publications, their organization of, and participation in international scholarly conferences, and their cooperation with foreign universities contribute to the quality and development of the USP.

### Panel Judgement

<b>Principle 9: On-going Monitoring and Periodic Internal Review of Programmes</b>	
Fully compliant	<b>X</b>
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

### Panel Recommendations

- The members of EEAP noted a determination of the DRLSS's Teaching Staff to adapt and/or change the USP in order to meet the demands of the changing cultural environment and developing labour market. In that sense, the EEAP suggests to the DRLSS to reconsider of the name of the Department, given the inactivity of the concentration Slavic Studies, and its general philological character.
- Increase of number of the Teaching Staff is one of the prerequisites for further development of the USP.

## **Principle 10: Regular External Evaluation of Undergraduate Programmes**

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

*HAHE is responsible for administrating the programme accreditation process which is realised as an external evaluation procedure, and implemented by a committee of independent experts. HAHE grants accreditation of programmes, with a specific term of validity, following to which revision is required. The accreditation of the quality of the programmes acts as a means of verification of the compliance of the programme with the template's requirements, and as a catalyst for improvement, while opening new perspectives towards the international standing of the awarded degrees.*

*Both academic units and institutions participate in the regular external quality assurance process, while respecting the requirements of the legislative framework in which they operate.*

*The quality assurance, in this case the accreditation, is an on-going process that does not end with the external feedback, or report or its follow-up process within the Institution. Therefore, Institutions and their academic units ensure that the progress made since the last external quality assurance activity is taken into consideration when preparing for the next one.*

### **Study Programme Compliance**

This is the first External evaluation of the USP of the DRLLSS. Given that the DRLLSS is relatively new, and has started the current USP only after the change of the name of the Department from the academic year 2017/2018 the fact that the current External evaluation is the first one conducted is to be expected. Nevertheless, members of the Teaching Staff of the DRLLSS, as well as members of the Department's OMEA and the NKUA's MODIP have shown their full awareness of the importance of the regular conduct of the External review process, and the contribution its result can have on improving the USP (Principle 10.4).

The EEAP has confirmed the high level of preparedness of the members of the Teaching Staff of the DRLLSS for the process of External evaluation, their full compliance with all the criteria for External evaluation, as well as full transparency regarding all the issues that the members of the EEAP had raised and their ability to answer in great detailed all pertaining questions. The members of the EEAP had also noted the high level of active engagement of all stakeholders of the USP and the DRLLSS in the External evaluation process and their readiness to follow-up on any and every suggestion the EEAP will make in its Accreditation Report (Principle 10.5).

## Panel Judgement

<b>Principle 10: Regular External Evaluation of Undergraduate Programmes</b>	
Fully compliant	<b>X</b>
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

## Panel Recommendations

The EEAP recommends the conduction of External Evaluation on regular basis, as defined by law, and adequate follow-up action of the DRLLSS and the NKUA, based on the recommendations from the EEAP's Accreditation Report.



## **PART C: CONCLUSIONS**

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

- Very good quality of Teaching Staff's research and consequently strong linking between research and teaching content.
- The Teaching Staff is very engaging with the students, during their undergraduate studies at the USP at the DROLLSS, and after graduation.
- The USP is clearly articulated, and the DROLLSS updates the program, responds to the comments and opinions expressed by students in the evaluation questionnaires (e.g. cutting the number of mandatory courses from 64 to 49). The DROLLSS offers a wide range of elective courses and students can choose them according to their interest.
- All the information about the USP and the DROLLSS, including the Study Guide – Handbook of Studies – and the Description of the courses, is available on the website of the DROLLSS.
- The students have the possibility to assess the USP and the Department through satisfaction questionnaires.
- Good offer students' mobility through Erasmus+ program, Erasmus Mundus, CIVIS program and other bilateral cooperation.
- Cooperation of Teaching Staff with similar departments and programs, good international cooperation, evidenced in the international scholarly symposia organized, as well as in organization of students' conferences.
- Strong sense of community between the members of the DROLLSS.
- Good interaction with social partners, stakeholders, and external institutions.

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

- Lack of satisfactory number of members of Teaching Staff, heavy workload (of both Teaching Staff and students). The shortage in personnel impacts negatively research activities of the members of Teaching Staff, even though it is at present at very high level.
- Low student participation in deliberative and decision-making bodies.
- Deficiency of funding for learning and research resources.
- Lack of workspaces for Teaching Staff and researchers.

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

- Increase the number of members of permanent Teaching Staff to relieve the heavy workload and, thereby, foster high quality research (although this is an area where the DROLLSS has limited influence, and the decisions in this regard are taken at a higher level).
- Explore and use possibilities of a temporary employment of visiting professors for some specific courses and/or areas of teaching, which could offer electoral or even mandatory

semesterly courses. This policy could improve both the currently only active introductory concentration 'Russian Language and Literature', and the currently inactive introductory concentration 'Slavic Studies'.

- Reorganize, restructure, or rename the DROLLSS, in order to encompass the now defunct introductory concentration 'Slavic Studies' in some manner in the USP and in students' degree: perhaps in the form of Slavic Philology and Culture, not Studies.
- Help the Teaching Staff to take their sabbatical leaves in the scheduled periods.
- Address the importance of the skills and knowledge offered at the USP at the DROLLSS, and its applicability in the changing global cultural environment and the needs of modern labour market.
- The DROLLSS should make a greater effort to reinforce the participation of students in practical training and internships, which in parts depends on the available resources, especially physical space at the School of Philosophy of the NKUA (the case of the assigned, and still not functional office and teaching space, especially for Language Lab of the DROLLSS).
- Promote collaborative research projects.
- Encourage and support academic staff in submitting more research funding applications.
- Improvement of funding for research and teaching resources and workspaces.
- Improvement of accessibility to foreign bibliographical resources.
- The DROLLSS could consider introducing other means of communication, such as social media, where the DROLLSS activities, the Teaching Staff's research, and publications, as well as students' activities could be promoted and thus become more visible to the academic and broader community.
- The EEAP recommends the conduction of External Evaluation on regular basis, as defined by law.

#### IV. Summary & Overall Assessment

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

The Principles where substantial compliance has been achieved are: **2, 3, and 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	<b>X</b>
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

## The members of the External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel

**Name and Surname**

**Signature**

**1. Professor Vlada Stanković (Chair)**

University of Belgrade, Serbia

**2. Professor Enrique Federico Quero Gervilla**

University of Granada, Spain

**3. Professor Fatima Eloeva**

University of Vilnius, Lithuania

**4. Ms Maria Rachil Mpiutu (Student)**

Department of Balkan, Slavic & Oriental Studies, University of Macedonia, Greece