



ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ

HELLENIC REPUBLIC

Α.ΔΙ.Π.

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ΑΡΧΗ ΔΙΑΣΦΑΛΙΣΗΣ ΠΟΙΟΤΗΤΑΣ

HELLENIC QUALITY ASSURANCE AGENCY

ΑΝΩΤΑΤΗΣ ΕΚΠΑΙΔΕΥΣΗΣ

FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

EXTERNAL EVALUATION REPORT

DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION OF ANTIQUITIES AND WORKS OF
ART.

TEI OF ATHENS

September 2011

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External Evaluation Committee

The Committee responsible for the External Evaluation of the Department of Conservation of Antiquities and Works of Art of the Technical Institution of Athens consisted of the following four (4) expert evaluators drawn from the Registry constituted by the HQAA in accordance with Law 3374/2005 :

1. Professor Belinda COLSTON (President)

University of Lincoln, UK

2. Dr Athanasios VELIOS

Camberwell College of Arts, London, UK

3. Dr Anna BENNETT

Conservation and Technical Services LTD, London UK

4. Dr. Michail DOULGERIDIS

Head of the Department of Conservation, National Gallery of Greece, Athens

A. Introduction

A.1 The External Evaluation Procedure

- The Committee carried out the external evaluation of the Department from 5–10 September 2011.
- During 5–7 September 2011, the Committee met with the Head of Department and a range of academic staff at the HQAA offices. It was noted that not all of the key academics were present. The Committee were also given the opportunity to talk with collaborating staff at the University of Athens, regarding the postgraduate programme to which some staff within the Department contribute (Committee member Dr Doulgeridis did not participate in discussions concerning the postgraduate programme, due to his involvement with the course).
- The Committee were given access to the *Internal Evaluation Report*, a range of Departmental publications, and the syllabus for the new conservation course. The Committee did not get the opportunity to see any teaching material, nor student work (with the exception of a number of postgraduate research dissertations at the University of Athens).
- Discussions were held with three students (only two were current). It was generally felt that this was too few to get an accurate overview of the students' perceptions of the Department, the course and the facilities and services provided.
- Unfortunately, the External Evaluation Committee was not able to fully appreciate the teaching facilities within the Department. The students' occupation of the TEI premises meant that only restricted access was possible – the Committee were given access to laboratories for 1 hour. This was deemed insufficient time to fully evaluate the teaching and research facilities available.

A.2 The Internal Evaluation Procedure

- The *Internal Evaluation Report* is a comprehensive and frank document, and wholly appropriate for the evaluation procedure. Unfortunately, the programme syllabus provided was disorganised and difficult to follow, and other documentation available was limited.

- Staff approached the discussions held with complete openness and enthusiasm – happy to discuss both the challenges faced and the achievements made.
- The Committee were pleased to note that a number of the recommendations made by the previous external evaluation (1999) have been implemented. Some, but not all, of the objectives identified during the internal evaluation process have been met by the Department, but their future aspirations are clearly outlined within the *Internal Evaluation Report*, providing a good framework for further development and improvement.

B. Undergraduate Curriculum

B.1 Curriculum current state and development

The curriculum was designed following consultation with a number of key stakeholders across Greece and Europe, with particular emphasis on the 'end-user' (i.e. potential employers). In Greece, 10-12 professionals were approached in pivotal conservation posts, including the Director of the Conservation Directorate of the Ministry of Culture, the Director of Conservation at the National Gallery (Dr. Doulgeridis from the evaluation committee), and the Benaki Museum. Although the extent of their input was inaccessible to the Committee, Dr. Doulgeridis clarified that only generic feedback was possible, and no specific recommendations regarding the curriculum were possible. It is clear, therefore, that external stakeholders were not fully involved in the formulation of the curriculum, as indicated.

The Department has been a major contributor to the ENCORE (European Network for Conservation - Restoration Education). As such, the curriculum is intended to adhere to the ENCORE recommendations. However, the ENCORE website was under construction during the evaluation and therefore the Committee could not assess the conformance of the Department's curriculum with ENCORE.

The current curriculum, maintaining the original division of the course into archaeological conservation and the conservation of works of art, was adopted by the General Assembly of the Department, which has student representation, following a voting procedure.

The aims and objectives of the curriculum are outlined in section 3-1.2 of the *Internal Evaluation Report*. These are based upon the student obtaining three key skill/knowledge bases:

- (i) The ability to estimate the values embedded in objects to be conserved;
- (ii) Knowledge of the behaviour and pathology of materials from which objects are made; and
- (iii) The ability to design and implement the interventions needed on both the objects and the environment within which objects are conserved.

These three broad aims are in line with other conservation courses within Europe.

The procedure for revising the curriculum is on a three-yearly basis, with the current version being the third revision of the curriculum. Further development of the curriculum is, however, seriously restricted by constraints imposed by both the TEI central administration and the Ministry of Education. The 'blanket' regulations applying to the tertiary education system and/or the TEIs do not allow the

implementation of many of the important recommendations from the Committee, to ensure the alignment of the course to similar courses across Europe. This is a major obstacle in the development of the curriculum and the Department, which clearly has a great potential to excel in the field.

B.2 Curriculum communication

Following the external evaluation of 1999, extensive efforts have been made to produce a detailed document of the curriculum in Greek and English, and to make this accessible to the students via the website. At the time of the current evaluation, however, the curriculum was not yet available online and neither were individual semester syllabuses. It is clear from the interviews with the academic staff that syllabuses are not consistently available to the students for every subject. The programme syllabus is, however, being prepared, and provided this is carefully edited to afford a well-structured, coherent and consistent document, this will be a positive step in the right direction.

The draft programme syllabus observed by the Committee shows many inconsistencies across the different subject areas. For example, the given bibliographies for some subjects are too short and generally unhelpful, while others are very extensive, haphazard and overwhelming, and many of them need to be brought up to date. It would be helpful to the student if the bibliographies were organised according to subject, and some indication given as to their importance (i.e. identify a small number of key references – the essential reading) and accessibility (reference material should be available to the students, either online or through the TEI library). The names of the relevant teaching staff should also be included in the syllabus.

B.3 Implementation

The Committee has identified a number of issues with the current curriculum that it would recommend the Department consider within a developmental context. It is appreciated that a number of the issues may arise through the regulations and restrictions imposed upon the Department:

- (i) In comparison to other courses across Europe, the students are overloaded – over-taught and over-assessed. The exhaustive course schedule of 37 hours/week allows little time to reflect on what they have learnt, and does not allow for the educational development expected in higher education. The large number of written exams the students are expected to sit each year

cannot lead to an effective assessment of a student's ability or knowledge. The curriculum is delivered as a cycle of class attendance and exhaustive exams which inevitably leads to reduced student performance. This is reflected in the poor pass rates seen in many of the subject areas. The students have to be given quality learning time. Such exhaustive programmes are rarely seen in Europe, if at all.

(ii) It seems that the extensive curriculum has evolved from a model that is staff-driven (i.e. it has been developed around the skills and expertise of the staff, and driven by what each member of staff would like to teach), rather than driven by the needs of the students and the profession (i.e. objective-driven). This approach has led to a number of educational short-falls:

- The students are required to 'specialise' in too many materials. The requirement to attend conservation laboratory courses for such a large number of materials prevents in-depth study of any one material, and ultimately prevents the student in 'specialising' at all.
- Supporting subjects such as art history, art classes and science are important in conservation and are included in the curriculum. However, these seem to be somewhat separate from the overall objective of training a conservator and they focus too much on their individual fields without emphasising aspects specific to conservation.
- The division between archaeological conservation and conservation of works of art has not been objectively developed. The students are limited in their choices and the curriculum is not flexible enough for students to take logical subject combinations. For example: stone and wall-painting conservation classes are mutually exclusive, even though it would be reasonable for a student to want to attend both of these classes; history and archaeology have been severely compromised in the current curriculum, with their hours reduced. If these classes were optional modules, then they could be taught in full to students who require them. The one-structure-fits-all is very difficult to address the interests and needs of all students, and the Committee considers this constraint as a major disadvantage of the curriculum.

B.4 Resources and staff

Although the Department has done a commendable job in utilising the space it has been given, the Committee felt that the general lack of teaching and office space placed an unacceptable constraint on the quality of training that is available to the students. It also felt that the quality of training was further compromised by the lack of student access to 'real objects'.

The Committee notes that a high proportion of staff within the Department are excellent in their teaching and have made a substantial contribution to the conservation profession. It is, however, disappointing to observe that there are no practicing conservators among the senior academic staff, even though the primary aim of the curriculum is to produce fully-trained conservators – out of the 11 professors and 5 assistance professors, only one has come from a conservation training programme. The composition of the senior staff may well be responsible for the curriculum losing some conservation focus.

Although the Committee did not meet any administrative staff, it is apparent that teaching staff spend a lot of time addressing administrative issues. Efficiency of administration, possibly at an institutional level, needs to be considered.

Additional technical members of staff are required to assist teaching staff with maintaining the labs (see also related comments on the definition of the technician's role in Section F.1.

B.5 Results for curriculum

The Department is keen to go through the evaluation procedure and to understand how it can improve. It is clear from the *Internal Evaluation Report* that the Department is fully aware of the areas of the curriculum that need bringing up to date, and has plans to implement the changes. However, it is essential that these changes are brought about alongside a total review of the programme – it cannot sustain constant expansion and is rapidly becoming unworkable. The students are already struggling to follow the programme – the high rate of failed exams is a result of this expansion.

The students that were interviewed by the Committee were enjoying (or had enjoyed) the programme and their experiences at TEI. However, they made a number of specific comments regarding their studies:

- (i) They felt that they were overloaded with information and had no time to reflect on, or apply, what they had learnt to specific objects.
- (ii) They felt they had not been given the opportunity to truly specialise on a material or subject, and were not confident and/or able to evaluate and analyse an object and suggest a treatment.

C. Postgraduate Curriculum

The Department participates in a post-graduate programme in Museum Studies which is run through the Faculty of Geology and Geoenvironment and the Faculty of History and Archaeology of the National University of Athens.

The Committee were impressed with the curriculum and management of this programme, which involves a number of staff from the Department.

Discussions with current students showed the course to be well-liked, and it clearly provides the level of training commensurate with expectations.

From the variety of research dissertations studied by the Committee, it is clear that the students are producing high quality Masters level work.

The Department is to be congratulated for the role it plays in this programme and encouraged to develop its own post-graduate portfolio.

D. Teaching

D.1 Approach

Although the Department does not have a separate pedagogic policy document, the internal regulation document of the TEI of Athens includes various relevant articles. This document does not seem to be consulted on a regular basis by either the students or the staff.

Theoretical teaching appears to be mostly a passive transfer of information and the variety of teaching methods is limited with the exception of some site visits – about 10% of teaching time for more than 70% of the subjects. One example of good practice observed by the Committee was the wall-painting classes undertaken in Ragavas Church. The use of the on-site teaching classes is a great teaching innovation, and should be commended. The Committee felt that this initiative could be further improved by introducing the in-advance development of an overall conservation study and treatment proposal.

D.2 Laboratory teaching

Although there are a number of laboratory-based classes offering the students the opportunity to develop important practical skills, the Committee felt that the lack of practical experience the students obtain on original objects (which was identified in the 1999 assessment) is problematic. Staff should be encouraged to find ways of exposing their students to more direct experience with real objects.

The Department has developed an *internal laboratory regulations* document which has occasionally been extended by individual academic staff. However, there was little evidence of any standardised laboratory practice being in place. Some laboratories were well-managed (for example, the wall-painting laboratory was tidy, despite storing a large number of objects, and featuring the students' work), whilst others were clearly not. The Committee could not imagine these untidy laboratories being used as conservation working spaces. Good space management is important in conservation, particularly since regional museums, and the like, often have limited space. Good house-keeping is something that students need to learn from early on in their studies.

D.3 Student/staff ratio

The student/staff ratio is normal for the level of study: from 7 to 12 students per academic staff member. The Department benefits from one of the largest faculties of similar departments in Europe.

D.4 Student – staff collaboration

There is clear evidence of collaboration between students and academics, especially in the European-funded projects, although there does not seem to be a formal structure for this collaboration, nor the choice of participating students.

D.5 Resources

One of the key challenges affecting the teaching within the Department is the lack of space. Laboratories are overcrowded and students are not able to work properly. Different laboratory courses should not be accommodated in the same space, both for good practice and hygiene. The problem becomes even more intense when laboratory spaces are poorly managed, and good housekeeping practices are not observed (for example, beverage containers in the labs, untidiness and bad laboratory practice was observed). While examples such as the wall-paintings laboratory are commendable, others seem to pay little attention to expensive equipment and good housekeeping. The Committee believe this to be linked to the lack of space, since when students do not have their own bench space, a sense of 'ownership' is not achieved, and they feel less responsible for general cleanliness and housekeeping.

In addition to the general lack of space, the location of laboratories and workshops is also a concern – these are distributed across a number of buildings. The disparate nature of the teaching spaces does not contribute to the development of a community within the Conservation Department. This is a problem and does not compare well with other departments across Europe, where dedicated buildings are the norm.

Furthermore, the current buildings utilised were not designed with conservation standards in mind, and laboratory spaces have been adapted to address conservation needs. This has led to ad-hoc solutions which are not always optimal, and often raise health and safety concerns. For example, the stone conservation laboratory is situated in the basement and lacks facilities for the safe moving of heavy stone objects.

In addition, it should be noted that the current facilities do not offer sufficient options for students and staff with reduced mobility.

Office space is clearly an issue. When four or five members of staff share an office it is difficult for them to meet students in a suitable environment. The TEI's internal regulations require teaching staff to advertise at least two separate time periods during which they are accessible to students. However, in order to do this, facilities have to be made available to the staff – from the students interviewed, it seems that staff are considered to be inaccessible.

Although it was not possible to observe the resources available for teaching (other than a few of the laboratories), from discussions with the Head of Department, it is clear that teaching resources are limited and in need of improvement/modernisation (for example, a networked computer system for delivery of electronic lecture presentations).

The Department appears to be well-equipped with major equipment, including gas chromatography, HPLC, FTIR, XRF, SEM-EDX to which students have access. It was noted, however, that much of the smaller equipment items were apparently not maintained or mended (where broken). It was felt that there was clearly an issue with efficient technical support. There seems to be a need for extra members of technical staff to assist with maintenance of the laboratory equipment. There are cases where expensive equipment has not been taken care of appropriately. Bad maintenance is also due to lack of discipline on behalf of staff and students.

It was not possible for the Committee to visit the library, or make a judgement on the library resources. It was noted that students have access to 'Science Direct', which is commendable, and a great resource for the students.

It is unclear whether the students have easy access to computers, although the majority of students seem to have their own computers, and Wifi seemed to be readily available.

The Committee feels that the lack of original objects for the students to work on is a very serious problem. Security and insurance issues should be resolved to allow transfer of original objects to the Department. On-site work by the students, such as that being undertaken at Ragavas Church, should be extended. External sites could function as large laboratories for many materials and courses. Similar comments were made in the 1999 evaluation document (Section 4.5). At present, only 6 or 7 courses take place regularly outside the Department's premises, whilst most of the training is done on dummy objects or 'fake' originals.

D.6 Information technology

The TEI offers a central online administration system which does not seem to be used at the moment by the Department. There is no online system for the delivery of course material.

D.7 Examinations

The committee has identified a number of concerns with the assessment and examination procedure which urgently needs to be addressed to bring the Department in-line with practices across Europe:

- (i) It is standard policy across Europe that all programmes / courses in higher education are evaluated by external examiners. These examiners are experts in the field and play a key role in quality assurance, and maintaining equality in standards within programmes / courses. One of the key roles of the external examiner is the evaluation of examinations and assessments taking place; both the evaluation of the exam paper itself (to ensure that the students are being examined at an appropriate standard), and the evaluation of student performance. An external examiner is not appointed within the Department.
- (ii) Examination rooms are overcrowded (in one example, 105 students were sitting an exam in a single room). Standards of invigilation cannot be maintained under these conditions, and plagiarism cannot be controlled. The students interviewed flagged this up as a big problem, and felt quite strongly that the assessment system was unfair. It was also noted that there were cases of students being passed on laboratory assessments simply because if failed there would be insufficient space to accommodate them in the following semester. Assessment is an integral part of higher education and should be a rigorous procedure that is quality controlled. It should certainly be a process that students can have confidence in and be assured that their skills and knowledge are being fairly assessed among their peers.
- (iii) There seems to be consistently high failure rates in exams (in the aforementioned example, only 19 students from the 105 passed). It seems that the failed students are allowed to keep resitting the exam until they pass. This is a huge waste of staff resources. A system for evaluating the high percentage of failure is sorely needed, and assessment procedures, for both examination and laboratory work, need to be developed. For example, limit the number of reassessments allowed, and cap the mark obtainable in a resit. It is common practice in the UK to allow only one resit of any exam,

with the highest obtainable mark at resit being set at the pass mark (i.e. a student cannot be awarded >40% in most cases, regardless of how well they have done).

D.8 Quality of teaching

While it is understood that attendance of theoretical courses is not legally obligatory, the proportion of students not attending theoretical courses is too high. One reason for this is because some students need to work, but the overloaded curriculum is a contributing factor.

The Committee did not have the opportunity to look at any teaching material (e.g. lecture notes; computer presentations). From discussions with staff it appears that teaching practices are varied – some staff distribute lecture notes in advance of a class, and others do not; some recommend a course text, whilst others do not. From the course syllabus, it appears that the quality of the courses taught is also highly variable, with some being kept up to date and relevant, and others that are not. It is clear that the focus of some courses does not always follow current conservation requirements and these courses have seen little development, even after the new curriculum.

Many of the classes are being evaluated by students through the use of questionnaires. The Department has pioneered in the TEI in establishing an evaluation process, and should be commended for this. The results of the evaluation are positive and have been evaluated within the *Internal Evaluation Report*.

The Department has the second largest number of bilateral agreements with other European institutions through various European programmes including ERASMUS. The Department is clearly doing an excellent job in the field and the Committee was impressed by the information provided. Many students and staff benefit from exchanges and the activity widens their perspective in conservation.

The Department has provided data about examination results, but did not indicate whether the data are processed or discussed to extract any useful conclusions. The large rate of failure appears to be the status quo and largely accepted. Such failure rates should alarm the Department and trigger extensive discussions on the quality of teaching and the assessment requirements of the programme.

There is no data about the variance of the final degree, but the average of 7+ is good.

D.9 Improvement

From the *Internal Evaluation Report* it is clear that staff within the Department have spent considerable time discussing the various challenges they face and developing an extensive action plan to achieve their aims and objectives. This evaluation has given them a good opportunity to focus on where they see themselves now, and how they can, and should, develop in the future. The Committee thinks that this initiative should be developed with perhaps a further visit of the Committee and direct communication with staff members.

The Committee has considered the Department's action plan for improvement in detail, and reports its views in Section G.2.

E. Research

E.1 Approach

As the Department is unable by law to conduct postgraduate research, most of the research is undertaken at an undergraduate level. The undergraduate students carry out research for their final year dissertation, allowing staff some opportunity to progress with their research interests. However, it should be noted that the Department has both the capacity and the interest to perform research at a higher level. The majority of the teaching staff hold PhD degrees, and are clearly very keen to develop their research careers – many act as PhD advisors for a number of PhD students in other institutions, and PhD research is taking place on departmental premises. The Department ought to be in a position to take full credit for this research activity, and be allowed to develop their own research. This will, however, only be achieved through the development of PhD programmes.

E.2 Implementation

The limited research activities consist mostly of final year dissertations, often combined with research projects at a European level. The Department can showcase a wonderful portfolio of research projects from EU and Greek national funds. Nine professors (out of 12) have received significant research grants from 2004-2007. Such research activity for a Department which is focused on teaching / training is impressive, although it would have been beneficial to receive a list of the publications (or other outputs) that has arisen from each funded project.

The Department has access to a range of scientific instruments and, although space is an issue, research projects can be undertaken. Staff, however, are heavily occupied with their teaching and administration activities, and are only able to undertake a minimum of research work.

Students are involved in research projects regularly, although their involvement partly depends on their dedication to extra work, rather than a requirement for a regular curriculum activity. However achieved, student involvement in research is an excellent practice, giving them the opportunity to experience research activity.

The Committee feels that more can be done to promote the research work in the Department. Although some posters were visible in the laboratories their number did not do justice to the research being carried out. Moreover, there is no programme of

regular research seminars which would bring the students and staff up to date with current research activity.

The overall research output of the Department is good and is improving, although highly reliant on a small number of research active staff. Most of the publications are peer-reviewed and many staff have presented at conferences, which helps the Department to develop a network of connections in Greece and abroad.

The collaborative research being carried out, with partners from Greece and abroad, raises the profile of the Department, and will lead to further research development.

The consultancy activities of the Department, offering analytical services to external organisations, is highly commendable and should be continued. Income generation is key to the success of any department, providing additional funds for maintenance and research support.

F. All Other Services

F.1 Approach

The Department does not consider that students have adequate access to the administration services. The Committee agrees that this is a problem and that access for students should be a priority. In comparison to other departments across Europe, the ratio of teaching staff / administration staff is appropriate and it is unclear why the administration services are unable to offer more hours of access to both staff and students. It is apparent that a new online system for certain administrative tasks is in place, which simplifies the required interaction between students and the administrative staff. The adoption of this system will perhaps allow greater access for staff and students to administrative services.

The Department believes that there is not sufficient technical support within the laboratories. However, the Committee feels that the three full-time technicians ought to be utilised more efficiently, and that their job descriptions may need to be reviewed. It is apparent that some of the tasks carried out by the technicians should ideally be carried out by others. For example, students ought to be made responsible for leaving the laboratories clean and tidy after a class, and student supervision during laboratory sessions ought to be the responsibility of the teaching staff.

The Department does not have a policy to increase student presence on campus. However, this is pursued by several central services of the TEI.

F.2 Implementation

The Committee was neither able to visit the Department's administration office nor assess any administrative structures.

Both the Department and the Committee agree that the library is adequate for the students. Access to relevant resources through the e-library is very good, with wi-fi readily available within the departmental buildings.

The TEI of Athens is a large institution with a variety of cultural and sport activities.

Although there are generic services for the welfare of students, there does not seem to be specific support for working students who typically struggle to attend the extensive curriculum. However, the understanding of the Committee is that the

teachers are informally helping working students by offering priority in weekly schedules.

The Department is given very little flexibility in how it is run. The Head of Department does not have the autonomy that is needed to efficiently manage a university department.

The Committee feels that the individual roles and responsibilities of the members of staff within the Department are not well-defined and that clarification is necessary. With the relatively large number of staff, it should not be necessary to mix the roles and responsibilities.

G. Strategic Planning, Perspectives for Improvement and Dealing with Potential Inhibiting Factors

G.1 Inhibiting factors

The inhibiting factors at undergraduate level which the Committee has identified are listed below. The relevant level for each factor is indicated: S (State); I (Institutional) and D (Departmental).

(i) *Space (S, I)*

- It is essential that more laboratory space is made available.
- Each subject area (material type) must be taught in a dedicated laboratory. The current over-crowded situation with shared spaces for incompatible materials promotes bad laboratory practice and reduces the quality of the graduates.
- Teaching staff require extra office space. This will facilitate better staff/student contact and allow staff to better organise research and teaching resources (books, research papers).
- The Committee feels that the current building is not fit for purpose and that a separate dedicated building for accommodating the laboratories is necessary. This would facilitate intra-departmental dialogue and promote collaboration, bringing the whole department together in the same space.

(ii) *Requirements for student entry (S)*

- Tighter control over student entry is required. Chemistry must be a prerequisite at Panhellenic Entry Examinations for the Department. A lack of chemical knowledge is a hindrance to progress through the course.
- As discussed in the external assessment of 1999, colour blindness, manual dexterity and spatial ability are also key requirements for the successful completion of the course.

(iii) Administration (S, I)

- The Head of Department should be allowed to make decisions and implement changes without expensive and time-consuming administrative procedures.
- The Administration Office should be open for longer to assist students and staff.

(iv) Current curriculum (D, I, S)

- Students are overstretched and over-taught. The 37 hours attendance a week does not allow the students to reflect on what they have been taught, nor give sufficient time for independent learning. It is likely that this is one of the reasons for the low pass rate at the exams.
- The broadness of the curriculum promotes superficial learning and prevents students from specialising. The curriculum should be re-organised into a modular structure, whereby basic courses are mandatory to all students, but specialisation courses can be selected based on a pre-requisite structure. In this way students can build their own curriculum, based on their interests. For example, basic archaeology could be taught to all students for an hour per week as a mandatory subject, but students wishing to study ceramic conservation should be given the option to attend more extensive archaeology classes.
- The length of laboratory courses should be made longer allowing for greater specialisation, but the number of mandatory specialisation courses should be reduced from five to two.
- A detailed syllabus should be provided to students at the beginning of the semester, and staff should be responsible for avoiding any duplication of curriculum activities.

(v) Overstretched staff (D, I)

- The roles between administration, technical and teaching staff need to be clarified. Teaching staff should not consume significant time in administration.
- The course is over-assessed, with far too many examinations. This is not educationally efficient, as is perhaps evident in the poor pass rates, and is

extremely time-consuming to the teaching staff. There needs to be less assessment *per se* and other forms of assessment need to be considered.

(vi) Postgraduate research programmes (PhD studentships) (S)

- Postgraduate research programmes (PhD studentships) should form an integral part of the Department's activities. Not only are they essential for achieving the research potential of the academic staff (which clearly exists), but they provide a research environment which enhances the education and training offered to the undergraduate students.
- Feeding research into an undergraduate curriculum is an important principle of many universities across Europe. PhD studentships are essential to achieving this goal.
- Many universities use PhD students as demonstrators in laboratories, increasing interaction among students of different levels, and alleviating demand on academic and technical staff time.

(vii) Opportunities for students to work on original material (D)

- It is an essential part of their training that students are exposed to, and work with, original objects.
- The practice of undertaking classes outside the laboratory, 'on-site' at specific monuments, should be further developed.

G.2 Plan and actions for improvement by the Department

The Department has made considerable improvements since the last external evaluation in 1999 by implementing many of its recommendations. It is encouraging to see that the Department has a plan for improvement for the future which was included in the *Internal Evaluation Report*. The Committee has commented on the short-, mid-, and long-term goals of the Department below:

	Departmental Goal	
	Committee Comment	
Short-term goals		
1	<i>Make a collective effort towards the smooth implementation of the new Curriculum, especially of the new courses. Take care to effectively reduce any overlapping classes which constitute a waste of teaching hours.</i>	Agree
2	<i>Revise the course content to serve the objectives of the new Curriculum. Introduce an ongoing review of the adaptation of the content of structure courses to the educational needs of conservators of antiquities.</i>	Agree
3	<i>Systematically monitor implementation and the effectiveness of the Curriculum using quantitative observations and indicators.</i> The Committee is not clear how this will be done.	Agree
4	<i>Strictly adhere to a fixed weekly timetable for courses. Provide timely information about the necessary changes.</i>	Agree
5	<i>Greater use of modern teaching aids and attractive, imaginative presentations by professorial teaching staff, which, in the case of specific subjects not so self-evident in the field of conservation, should make a significant contribution and be useful in completing the well-rounded profile of conservators.</i>	Agree
6	<i>In subjects of an extremely wide range, it is recommended that "small" flexible modules are created.</i> The Committee's recommendation is that the whole curriculum should be modular.	Do not agree
7	<i>Use interactive teaching methods to encourage student participation. Establish mid-term examinations, particularly for theoretical courses.</i> The course is already overassessed in terms of exams. Other forms of evaluation should be adopted (such as continual assessment on a day to day basis and marking of coursework).	Do not agree
8	<i>Increase the use of an Asynchronous Tele-education e-learning e-Platform with the objective of broadening access to bibliographical sources, relieving the dependence on specific limited syllabus material and single textbooks.</i> To include teaching material as well.	Agree
9	<i>Professors, permanent and temporary, who are involved in teaching on the same course, need to cooperate better so that there can be a uniform teaching approach.</i>	Agree
10	<i>The cooperation and coordination of professors is necessary with regard to determine the specifications of laboratory exercises and the demands they make on students.</i>	Agree
11	<i>Introduce new methods of examination (subjects for critical analysis, multiple choice, analysis of specific subjects using "open books" examination, etc.)</i> Only for replacing existing exams.	Agree
12	<i>Provide occasional lectures on specific subjects by external associates prominent in their field.</i> Regular seminars on a monthly basis organised by a staff member on an annual basis.	Agree

13	<p><i>Immediate establishment of institutionalized and accredited laboratory facilities in cooperation with a Taskforce Committee appointed by the Institute. Organize and provide services to third parties.</i></p> <p>This needs to be achieved within a strategic framework, ensuring transparency of income and expenditure both in terms of materials and staff time.</p>	Agree
14	<p><i>Perform ongoing monitoring, in cooperation with the Institute's relevant departments, of the safety conditions in the Department's laboratory facilities to ensure their problem-free operation.</i></p> <p>A specific member of staff should be appointed as health and safety advisor with responsibility across the department.</p>	Agree
15	<p><i>Record, classify and evaluate research work produced by the Department.</i></p> <p>Utilise the ARIADNE project and enforce its use. Staff webpages should be kept up to date and include research profile and publications list.</p>	Agree
16	<p><i>Record and publicize available research facilities and scientific equipment available in the Department.</i></p> <p>Link with a strategic framework for income generation.</p>	Agree
17	<p><i>Develop a plan for research with simultaneous establishment of research groups in specific, targeted areas.</i></p> <p>A 5-year research policy/plan is required.</p>	Agree
18	<p><i>Request, with a documented proposal, the necessary and appropriate supporting technical staff for the safe and efficient operation of laboratories.</i></p> <p>The job descriptions should clearly be defined and their time should not be consumed for general housekeeping tasks.</p>	Agree
19	<p><i>Immediately find proper office space to meet the needs of the Department's Secretariat.</i></p> <p>This should be addressed alongside the rest of the space requirements.</p>	Agree
20	<p><i>Organization of Secretariat functions with priority being given to the scheduling of consultation between students and professorial teaching staff. The program must be strictly enforced so that its members may improve the quality of services provided.</i></p> <p>Availability of staff on a daily basis, as at the moment staff/student interaction is inadequate.</p>	Agree
Mid-term goals		
21	<p><i>Monitoring of the implementation of the new Curriculum and assessment of its effectiveness.</i></p> <p>A plan is required on how this will be done.</p>	Agree
22	<p><i>Perform a valuation process and redefine the learning outcomes related to society and the job market.</i></p> <p>The focus should be truly based on the market requirements and not on the staff wishes.</p>	Agree
23	<p><i>Explore issues arising from the multidisciplinary nature of studies, in order to establish an interdisciplinary approach.</i></p> <p>Strictly speaking, this is already in place, and the risk is that the focus on conservation might be lost.</p>	Agree

24	<p><i>Explore the possibility of enriching the undergraduate curriculum with "introduction" of courses from programs of related departments, such as the Historical Archaeological (UoA), Fine Arts, Department of Science of Materials, etc.</i></p> <p>Teaching should be specific to conservation requirements. All preparatory courses should be tailor made for the conservators.</p>	Do not agree
25	<p><i>Schedule action for the next revision of the Curriculum.</i></p> <p>The Committee's recommendation is that radical changes are required.</p>	Agree
26	<p><i>Prepare a feasibility study to seriously examine the viability of the proposal to operate two separate curricula within one Faculty. This perspective should be considered once the changes in progress in higher education are implemented, which are currently under public consultation.</i></p> <p>A modular curriculum is needed.</p>	Do not agree
27	<p><i>Coverage of any deficiencies in teaching aids.</i></p>	Agree
28	<p><i>Form an updated proposal regarding space requirements and modern teaching methods to ensure the smooth flow of teaching, as appropriate to the latest program.</i></p>	Agree
29	<p><i>Form a taskforce which will examine the proposal for the creation of autonomous post-graduate curricula. Organize a workshop for expression of concerns and dialogue.</i></p> <p>Independence is a requirement for a worthy post-graduate course.</p>	Agree
30	<p><i>Develop and plan a communications strategy of the Department in relation to the public and private sector (conferences, discussion fora, structured dialogue with alumni, the general public, local organizations, etc.).</i></p> <p>Emphasis on research would be necessary.</p>	Agree
31	<p><i>Further refine and upgrade the Department's relationship with the Ministry of Culture, aiming to enhance cooperation in the field of in-situ teaching of laboratory courses and improve the institution of vocational training.</i></p> <p>The example of Ragavas should be extended.</p>	Agree
32	<p><i>Develop a proposal in relation to the modern organization and staffing of the Department Secretariat.</i></p>	Agree
33	<p><i>Analyze and prioritize the needs of the Department in terms of human resources (educational and technical), so that priorities are set which will lead to development and submission of a feasible proposal to the Institute and the State.</i></p> <p>Emphasis is needed on the clarification of roles of each member of staff.</p>	Agree
34	<p><i>Organize regular events, such as an interdisciplinary series of speeches/lectures which will "run" on an annual basis, with participants from Greece and abroad.</i></p> <p><i>At the end of each academic year, organize a workshop which will present topics from the activities of the Department laboratories, as well as the outcomes of research programs conducted in the Department.</i></p> <p>This should be a 'short term' goal for the Department.</p>	Agree

35	<p><i>Design special educational aids to facilitate the integration of knowledge from various other sources of knowledge into an organic functional and balanced whole.</i></p> <p>Attention should be paid to simplicity and practicality.</p>	Agree
36	<p><i>Documentation and on-going assessment of contacts and collaboration between Academic Staff members and outside the Department as arising from published work, research projects and scientific papers.</i></p>	Agree
37	<p><i>Determine internationally accepted, specific and measurable competitive research criteria.</i></p> <p>To be determined within the research strategy/plan document.</p>	Agree
38	<p><i>Implement competitive incentives to enhance the functional groups of targeted research with financial resources, manpower and facilities.</i></p> <p>This point is unclear.</p>	?
39	<p><i>Systematic development of a policy to establish links with socio-cultural and productive organizations (e.g. NGOs) by the Department.</i></p>	Agree
40	<p><i>Prepare a list of contact details of journalists involved in issues related to antiquities and works of art, and establish communication with them.</i></p> <p>Not appropriate. The committee does not think resources should be invested in this.</p>	Do not agree
41	<p><i>Organize the Department Alumni Association and the respective internet database.</i></p>	Agree
42	<p><i>Cooperate with the alumni association, with professional associations and the Ministry of Culture for the establishment of a chamber which is, amongst other things, necessary for the overseeing of professional issues.</i></p> <p>This issue is important, but not the Department's responsibility.</p>	?
43	<p><i>Cooperate with the alumni association, professional associations and the Ministry of Culture to design activities within the framework of a "lifelong learning" institution.</i></p> <p>Again this is an important issue and the Department should be a contributor, but at the moment it does not have the resources to coordinate such activity.</p>	?
44	<p><i>In conjunction with the other Departments of the Faculty of Fine Arts and Design of the Athens Technological Educational Institute, prepare a proposal to establish a museum at the Athens Technological Educational Institute.</i></p> <p>The Committee felt very strongly against this proposition. From the experience of other universities in Europe, these are never successful and typically a burden to the relevant departments. This has resulted in all of them being closed.</p>	Do not agree
45	<p><i>Upgrade the Department's webpage.</i></p> <p>This is an urgent task and should be a short-term goal.</p>	Agree
46	<p><i>Encourage Academic Staff members to publicize their research to a wider public.</i></p> <p>This is an issue which should be dealt with as soon as possible and should be a short-term goal.</p>	Agree

Long-term goals		
Institute's Management: <i>The CAWA Department, however, like any other department, is not an autonomous entity, and therefore no action or effort will produce the expected results without the assistance of the Directorates and the Central Administration of the Athens Technological Educational Institute. Tackling the issues which follow depends largely on the willingness of the Institute's Administration; accordingly these proposals are directed to it:</i>		Agree
47	<i>Find new space, improve the existing space. Deficiencies in space of all types (laboratories, offices, classrooms for theoretical teaching) are perhaps exacerbated by the problems faced by the Athens Technological Educational Institute, the solution of which, of course, depends on the will to resolve these issues at a national state level. Inadequate space and permanent facilities in the Department has in some cases become the critical factor determining the quality of the educational work provided.</i>	Agree
48	<i>Form, in cooperation with the Departments, a modern studies regulation which will be adhered to without deviation or "exceptions" on a case by case basis and which will address the issue of failure to attend theoretical courses, which has reached epidemic proportions.</i>	Agree
49	<i>Upgrade the Institute's administrative functions, securing the proper support for Department Secretariats. The Secretariats have a heavy workload and need appropriate staffing.</i> The Committee is unable to comment on the number of administrative staff as there is little information on their tasks and duties.	Agree
50	<i>Expansion of electronic protocol applications and document distribution.</i>	Agree
51	<i>Treat each Department, including ours, as an individual unit with its own unique characteristics, which are different with respect to all types of needs it may have. This approach is essential, particularly whilst planning of education in Greece remains centralized, top-heavy, and thus tends to reduce everything to the lowest common denominator.</i> The Committee feels this is an important issue.	Agree
52	<i>Create a museum at the Athens Technological Educational Institute. Every major higher educational institute has a museum, and it is clearly even more important that the Athens Technological Educational Institute with a Faculty of Fine Arts and Design should have one. For our Department in particular, the establishment of a museum is important because it could solve the burning issue of safe storage of works of art (cultural exhibits) which the Department has acquired for educational or research purposes.</i> The Committee strongly discourages this. Experience has shown that such museums are a burden on departments. They do not function properly, fail to undertake their responsibilities, and are a drain of resources. Storage is a different issue which needs to be addressed.	Do not agree
53	<i>Establish a Technological Research Centre in the Athens Technological Educational Institute, which would include the study and conservation of cultural heritage within its scope. The establishment of such an institute would be an action of strategic significance, since despite its wealth of cultural exhibits, there is no such corresponding organization.</i> The Committee thinks that the PhD studentships would help this new centre. Although staff are capable, the space and facilities are currently inadequate.	Agree

54	<p><i>Enrich the library. In cooperation with the departments, further stocking of the library with more books and extensions to database access rights is necessary.</i></p> <p>Priority should be given to e-books which are suitable for multiple access.</p>	Agree
55	<i>Support and enhancement of the institution of vocational training.</i>	Agree
State:		
56	<i>Immediately promote a bold reform in higher education which would enhance, through specific measures, autonomy and self-government with the Institutes and contribute to the consolidation of meritocracy, healthy rivalry and excellence. It is also necessary to introduce incentives to stimulate mobility and a more outward-looking approach to a global, open field of higher education. Lastly, it is obvious that we must effectively, and without equivocation, deal with the chronic pathologies of Greek higher education, many of which, in current times, are merely quaint anachronisms.</i>	Agree
57	<i>Prepare a new plan for the redrawing of the map of Higher Education in Greece to reflect contemporary developments.</i>	Agree
58	<i>As far as Technological Educational Institutes, the “technological pillars of Higher Education”, are concerned, goals need to be clarified and it is necessary to directly implement a plan to substantially upgrade those Departments which, following completion of the evaluation process, are considered viable and have the requisite academic characteristics. The much advertized “upgrading” of Technological Educational Institutes is another issue that has “dragged on” for decades and is evidence of the lack of will and sluggish response of the State.</i>	Agree
59	<i>Eliminate blatant inequalities in the financing of the various sectors of education. Implement a National plan to establish research priorities and fund research proposals based on purely academic criteria.</i>	Agree
60	<i>Review proposals submitted by Departments of Technological Educational Institutes regarding the establishment and operation of independent post-graduate curricula.</i>	Agree
61	<i>Encourage and support Departments which successfully carry out procedures of internal and external evaluation. Provide the option to assign and conduct doctoral dissertations.</i>	Agree

H. Final Conclusions and Recommendations of the EEC

The Committee has made a number of recommendations throughout the body of this report. The main recommendations are summarised below:

Assessment

1. The extent and level of assessment within the programme needs to be reviewed. It is usual in universities across Europe for an External Examiner to be appointed to programmes to ensure that assessment is appropriate and that the required educational aims and objectives are being met.

Curriculum

2. The basic structure of the course needs to be reconsidered to eliminate the problem of curriculum expansion, and over-burdening of students. Ideally, a modular model should be adopted. This will allow students to choose their course of study, taking relevant combinations of subjects, and will encourage learning at a greater depth. For example, a student who wants to work on archaeological sites would require extensive archaeology and excavation classes, as well as stone and wall-painting laboratory classes.
3. The curriculum needs to be restructured based on student and professional needs and without taking the skills of the current academic staff as a starting point – the curriculum should address the needs of the students rather than the needs of the staff.
4. Students should be allowed to specialize in areas of interest. This will allow the development of an analytical approach to conservation, and encourage a greater depth of knowledge.
5. Consideration should be given to merging certain associated subjects. For example, colour restoration with copy of painting; and copy making of sculpture with sculpture.
6. Consideration should be given to increasing the time allocated to certain key areas (e.g. museum environment and preventive conservation).
7. Support subjects, and especially the art-related subjects, should be integrated with the conservation subjects. Ideally, a student should work on an object and use the integrated art lessons as part of their practical work. For example, a student should be taught sculpture and mould making in parallel to the stone conservation course.

8. Each subject should have a detailed list of laboratory activities and methodologies taught for the period of a semester.

Teaching

9. Students should be encouraged to participate in classes, rather than being continually subjected to passive learning. This will develop skills in analytical thinking.
10. More variety in teaching should be adopted to encourage interaction. Already 10% of teaching time is spent outside the TEI premises at case-study sites. This should be further extended. One example of good practice is the wall-painting classes undertaken in Ragavas church.
11. Examination results, particularly in view of the high failure rates, need to be discussed at Department level, on a regular basis. The reasons for high percentages of failure should be examined after consultation with students, and action points raised to address the specific problems highlighted.
12. The introduction of a Personal Tutor system should be considered. Each tutor would be assigned a small number of students for the duration of their studies. The personal tutor will be responsible for the academic progress of the student, and for motivating the students to attend classes.
13. Teaching staff should regularly update the material taught by keeping in touch with research and developments within their profession and feed this back into their teaching.

Space

14. The Committee recommends that the Department move to a new building. A dedicated building is required to augment the development of the academic community.

Research

15. The Department needs to develop a 5-year research strategy with clearly defined objectives.
16. The Committee feels that more should be done to promote the research work in the Department. A programme of regular research seminars should be adopted, and the Department's website should be maintained.

Administration

17. The Department has outlined their ambition for the development of conservation education in Greece, with the establishment of a more independent school of conservation. The committee agrees that the current limitations imposed on the Department do not allow it to excel in a field which is critical for Greece.
18. The opening hours of the Department's Administration Office need to be increased. Ideally the office should be open on a daily basis and for longer hours than at present.
19. The role and responsibilities of all staff members (including the technical staff) should be better defined.
20. The Department would benefit from appointing a Safety Officer who would be responsible for health and safety across the Department ensuring that procedures are in place and regulations are respected.
21. Staff and students would benefit from a cross-institutional list of equipment and facilities available for use.
22. The Department might consider organising a series of summer schools in Greece, both as an income generation exercise and as a way to develop further links with professionals world-wide. The Committee feels that such activities would be particularly popular.

The Members of the Committee

Name and Surname	Signature
1.	_____
2.	_____
3.	_____
4.	_____
5.	_____