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ΑΝΩΤΑΤΗΣ ΕΚΠΑΙΔΕΥΣΗΣ

HELLENIC REPUBLIC  
**H.Q.A.A.**  
HELLENIC QUALITY ASSURANCE AGENCY  
FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

## **EXTERNAL EVALUATION REPORT**

DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION  
TECHNOLOGICAL EDUCATION INSTITUTE (TEI) OF PEIRAEUS

March 2011

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### External Evaluation Committee

The Committee responsible for the External Evaluation of the **Department of Business Administration of the TEI of Peireaus** consisted of the following four (4) expert evaluators drawn from the Registry constituted by the HQAA in accordance with Law 3374/2005 :

1. Professor Thanassoulis Emmanuel (Coordinator)  
Aston University, Birmingham, UK
2. Professor Vakratsas Demetrios  
McGill University, Canada
3. Professor Theodossiou Ioannis  
University of Aberdeen, UK
4. Dr. Moustakas Evangelos  
Middlesex University, UK

***N.B.** The structure of the “Template” proposed for the External Evaluation Report mirrors the requirements of Law 3374/2005 and corresponds overall to the structure of the Internal Evaluation Report submitted by the Department.*

*The length of text in each box is free. Questions included in each box are not exclusive nor should they always be answered separately; they are meant to provide a general outline of matters that should be addressed by the Committee when formulating its comments.*

## **Introduction**

### **I. The External Evaluation Procedure**

- The Committee visited the department over a two-day period, Monday 21<sup>st</sup> and Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> March, and met with Faculty members, the President and two Vice-Presidents of the TEI of Peireaus (henceforth ‘the **Institute**’), the Dean of the School of Management and Economics and the Chairman of the Department of Business Administration (henceforth the **Department** ), as well as students from all degree programs; undergraduate, Master’s (full and part-time).
- During the first day the External Evaluation Committee (henceforth **the Committee**) met in separate one-hour sessions with the full time, and later the part-time, members of staff. It should be noted that the former (14 in number) are on continuing, while the latter (34 in number according to the internal evaluation report, but now 25 according to information received during the site visit) are on fixed-term contracts. The vast majority of staff of each category attended their respective session. The questions revolved round their teaching and research, funding and work experience. An effort was also made to explore the prevailing culture in inter-staff relationships given the different nature of the contracts, terms and conditions of employment of each category of staff.
- Later the same day the evaluators met with the Department’s Undergraduate (**UG**) curriculum committee. The discussion revolved round the procedures followed for

setting up and updating the curriculum, the setting of aims and objectives and other issues pertaining to the UG programme. The key aim of the meeting was to establish how the Department keeps its UG curriculum relevant and the courses within it up to date.

- The next meeting during the first day was with the Committee that compiled the Internal Evaluation Report (**OMEA**). A member of the OMEA made a presentation of the main points of the Internal Evaluation Report. The presentation covered the UG Curriculum, Teaching, Research, Services and Outreach. The presentation was interactive and the members of OMEA answered the questions the Committee posed.
- The final meeting of the first day was with UG students. There were no faculty members at the meeting so that students could speak freely. The discussion centred on their experiences at the Department, the nature and relevance of their courses, the feedback and access to instructors and so on.
- On the second day the Committee agreed to split. Three evaluators met several faculty each, on a one-to-one basis to gain additional feedback on their personal experiences on research and teaching and on the design and delivery of the curriculum. The fourth member of the Committee toured the facilities of the Department and sat in two lectures. A third lecture he attempted to attend had been cancelled.
- In the final meeting of the day, the Committee met with graduate students. The sessions were focused on curriculum and teaching issues as well as student learning needs.
- The following documents were provided to and examined by the Committee:
  - The Department's Internal Evaluation Report updated and dated January 31, 2011. The Report included tables with statistics on research productivity, average grades of graduating students, list of courses offered at various degree programs, student evaluations of courses etc.
  - Some of the Department's Power Point presentations.
  - A sample of practical exercise (Internship) reports, a sample of exam questions and student scripts, sample of project theses, data for each course and for a number of years on students registered on the course, students actually taking the exam, and of those who passed the exam, the number of attempts at the examination before they passed.
  - The Department's study guides and regulations.

## **II. The Internal Evaluation Procedure**

- The internal evaluation report was brief in terms of text but included extensive supporting tables and figures the vast majority of which concerned the distributions of student grades and results of student course evaluations.
- The text in many places did not answer the questions posed in the intended spirit. For example there is insufficient reflection within the internal report on the questions about the UG curriculum posed on p18. E.g. in answer to question 4.2 on how the quality and impact of the curriculum is seen, it is simply stated that three styles of delivery are used: Lectures, e-learning material and tele-teaching. This is hardly a statement on quality and impact of the curriculum. Similar criticisms apply to the answers to questions 4.3 and 4.4 and elsewhere in

the report.

- However, the Department did provide all supplementary material requested on the first day of the site visit in a timely manner (e.g. data on pass rates by students, CVs of staff, sample assessments, project theses etc) and supplemented the information in interviews with members of the Committee. This greatly facilitated the Committee's work but it would have been preferable for such material to have been part of the report submitted.
- It was brought to the Committee's attention during the site visit that besides the Internal Evaluation Report dated 31/1/2011 additional internal evaluation documents had been submitted in previous years by the Department to the HQAA. Three earlier documents were sent by the HQAA to the External Evaluation Committee on request in Day 3 of the external evaluation week. However, due to time limitations this evaluation has drawn only limited information from the Day 3 documents and has used primarily the updated Internal Evaluation Report, dated 31/1/2011.

## **A. Curriculum**

### *Undergraduate program.*

#### APPROACH

- The curriculum seeks to combine two elements: one of more practical knowledge that would equip students with the necessary professional skills that would enable them to occupy relevant vocational positions, and another of broader theoretical knowledge in the field of business administration. This is an ambitious and challenging task that requires a clear strategic direction and balance in the distribution of the courses covering the various topics.
- The Department's declared approach is to offer an assortment of courses that follow a 50:30:20 distribution, with 50% offered by the Business Administration group, 30% offered by the Quantitative Methods and Economics group and 20% offered by the Law and Humanities group. While this is a realistic approach, as it leverages the skills and expertise of the current faculty members, at the same time it is an inhibiting factor for delivering the objectives of the curriculum and addressing market needs. For example, there are a large number of law courses offered (5 required), Philosophy is a required course whereas Business Strategy is an elective. By account of any acceptable international standards, business administration curricula should include at least one required strategy course, particularly when the required number of courses is high as is the case for the Department's curriculum (35). Strategy-related courses are particularly important for the Greek market as it is often noted that management in Greece in both the private and public sectors would benefit from more rigorous planning with long-term objectives. Thus, in the view of this Committee, the undergraduate curriculum lacks clear strategic direction and the balance that would effectively deliver its objectives. Specific recommendations are provided under the "improvement" section below.
- The Department has established an undergraduate curriculum committee which considers feedback of faculty members in order to propose curriculum revisions which are then forwarded to the general assembly for approval. Based on its discussions with the curriculum committee as well as individual full-time faculty members, the Committee is aware that the department is in the process of a curriculum re-design. This is a significant initiative as the curriculum has not effectively changed in the last ten years despite the changes in the socio-economic environment (e.g. growth of electronic commerce, economy globalization, local and global financial crises etc). Although there have been some discussions regarding such changes in the Department, a new curriculum had not been approved at the time of this evaluation. The Committee urges the Department to radically change the curriculum in order to properly align it with its stated goals as well as market needs. Although the Department has conducted an industry survey to better identify market needs and reflect them in the new curriculum, it should be noted that the survey was conducted in 2007. Since then the socio-economic environment has changed significantly, to a large extent due to the financial crises both locally and abroad, rendering any feedback from the survey likely outdated.

#### IMPLEMENTATION

- A critical observation regarding the implementation of the curriculum is that a large number of courses are offered by part-time Faculty members due to the disproportionate number of the latter in the body of the faculty (current declared ratio of 25:14). While part-time Faculty member teaching can bring a different perspective and set of experiences, it may lack the academic rigor and research-driven approach which is one of the major objectives of the Department as stated in the internal report.
- Classrooms and labs appear to be adequate in number, size and condition, hence they should not hinder the implementation of the curriculum
- The internship program appears to be carried successfully with some students being employed permanently after the end of their internship. The list of the participating firms is extensive and satisfactory as it includes many reputable organizations. However, full internship data such as distribution of students by sector or type of organization, duties and responsibilities and those remaining within the placement organisation were not made available to the Committee.
- The curriculum needs to be further rationalized in order to align with the Department's goals, international standards and the needs of the local and global market. It is currently largely driven by the expertise, internal dynamics and interests of the faculty members.

#### RESULTS

- More data on the employment of graduates would have provided a clearer picture of the effectiveness of the current curriculum. Some data provided to the Committee suggested a 93% employment rate of graduates but it was not clear how many years since graduation the rate reflected. The Committee encourages the Department to systematically collect data on graduate employment by type of organisation and duration of job search and use these as feedback to re-design and rationalize the curriculum and indeed to advertise its programs.
- The Department's initiative to re-design the curriculum is welcome. It suggests that there is a clear understanding on the part of the Department that the course offerings need to be updated to better promote new knowledge of business administration and serve current market needs.

#### IMPROVEMENT

- The Department needs to radically re-design the curriculum following international standards. Specifically:
  - Law courses should be reduced to one or at most two. The new courses should distil and combine the elements of law that are more pertinent to business administration.
  - At least one strategy-related course, such as Business Strategy, should be included in the set of the required courses. Other Strategy-related courses to be considered are: Industry Analysis and International Business Policy. The latter would also bring a much-needed international dimension to the program, since providing an international perspective to students is one of the Department's main objectives.
  - More finance courses should be offered. There are currently two finance courses in the curriculum out of a total of 35 required courses. Finance is an integral part of the management of any properly functioning organization, public or private.

- Courses in Operations Management should be enhanced and rationalized. They should include advances in Supply Chain Management, servitisation, Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) etc. and interfaces with other business disciplines (e.g. marketing, MIS etc).
  - More Quantitative Methods courses such as the use of statistical and Operational Research methods in extracting information from data (e.g. customer relationship management, data mining) and using it to manage performance and improve productivity (e.g. Data Envelopment Analysis) should also be included.
  - Communication-related courses such as Public Relations and Corporate Communications should be rationalized in order to include not only corporate and internal communication issues but also topics related to media and integrated marketing communications. The latter is particularly important, given that the advertising course is no longer offered.
  - The Department should also consider offering cross-disciplinary courses or live case competition courses that would foster application of different concepts across the various business disciplines in a practical setting.
  - Given the limited number of elective courses that the Department can offer, these have to be chosen carefully. Choice of elective courses should be based on past student evaluations, student enrollment and market needs as they are manifested from the employment of recent graduates of the Department and of other Institutions.
- The Department would benefit from expanding its exchange program with universities in other countries in order to provide its students and staff with more opportunities for international exposure, further enabling the achievement of its main objectives.
  - The Department should establish a curriculum quality monitoring process by systematically coding, relating and analyzing student enrollment, attendance, grade averages and student evaluations. Such a process should highlight course “pain points” as well as “star courses” and would also help in future evaluations of the Department both at the internal and the external level. The process should also guide curriculum re-design as well as smaller scale changes such as replacement of elective courses.

## **A. Curriculum**

### *Graduate programs.*

#### APPROACH

- Two Master's (M. Sc.) programs are offered by the Department:
  - MSc in Health Care Management, offered jointly with the University of Peireaus. The degree is granted by the latter institution but courses are taught by Faculty members and part-time instructors of both institutions in the premises of the Department.
  - MSc in International Business Administration offered exclusively by the Department.
- The stated goal of the MSc in Health Care Management is to train students in health care administration, thus addressing current market needs in the health sector while also promoting a research culture among students.
- The stated goal of the MSc in International Business Administration is to provide state-of-the-art knowledge on current management issues and prepare students to manage in an uncertain global environment while promoting a research culture.
- The MSc in International Business Administration program has two concentrations/streams; one in International Marketing and another in Human Resource Management (HRM).
- The curricula of both programs are fairly well structured but they could benefit from further rationalization. For example:
  - In the MSc in Health Care Management program there are a large number of health-related courses such as Epidemiology and Human Diseases. Although it is understandable that students with no health-related background should be introduced to the fundamental issues and nomenclature of health care, the emphasis should be on management. Thus, the four required health-related courses can be reduced or condensed to fewer in order to make room for more management courses. For example, there is no business strategy or leadership course and financial management-related courses are only offered as electives.
  - In the MSc in International Business Administration there is no Accounting or Organizational Behaviour course. The need for the latter is paramount given that one of the concentrations offered is Human Resource Management. In addition, similarly to the MSc in Health Care Management curriculum, there is no leadership or International Strategy course. On the other hand, both an International Marketing and International Industrial Marketing course are offered, yet the content of both could be combined into one. Furthermore, there is no Operations Management or global logistics course which could be particularly useful for delivering the objectives of the program. Similarly to the Marketing case, the Human Resource Management and International Human Resource Management course contents can be combined to make room for more offerings.
  - The course on Fundamental Principles of Management should not be an elective but rather a decision should be made whether it is needed at all or should be required.

#### IMPLEMENTATION

- The courses are taught by full-time and part-time faculty members. The Committee recommends that a system should be established in selecting instructors for these programs who are well qualified to deliver the courses as demonstrated through their work and research records.

- The building infrastructure for the delivery of graduate courses is satisfactory and students have electronic access to the e-learning system where instructors post support material, and to an adequate number of databases for the completion of their course projects.
- The MSc in International Business Administration follows the blind examination system with an external examiner that ensures the integrity of the examination process. It is not clear whether this also applies to the MSc in Health Care Management.
- Student admission is based on a weighted average of scores on specific criteria such as reference letters and average degree grade. However, it is unclear how such scores are derived and standardized.
- The Committee recommends that standardized aptitude tests such as GMAT should also be included in the selection criteria.

#### RESULTS

- The MSc in Health Care Management has completed four cycles with the following graduation figures: 37 in 2007, 51 in 2008, 45 in 2009, and 51 in 2010. The MSc in International Business Administration has recently (January 2011) granted degrees to some of the students of its first cohort. Specifically, 15 out of the 50 students that successfully completed the taught part of the program have graduated. The other 35 were granted an extension for the completion of their master's thesis, a number that is notably high. The program should examine the reasons for this (e.g. lack of supervising instructors, lack of topics, etc) and whether sufficient time is given to the students, given their employment status, to complete their thesis.
- Most students of the Master's programs are full-time employees, thus it may be thought that following up on job placement is not necessary. However, even if students continue with the same employment after their graduation, it is advisable that the programs track the career progress of their graduates, including salary change.

#### IMPROVEMENT

- As per points of the Approach section above, the Committee has the following recommendations:
  - Both MSc programs should include Business Strategy and Leadership courses in their curricula.
  - The MSc in Health Care Management Program would benefit from a downsizing of the more technically-oriented health-related courses in favour of more management-related courses. This would make room for the above-mentioned courses as part of the required course set.
  - Related to the previous point, some students found that there was too much reference to the historical set up of health and other governance structures in Greece. They preferred the balance to be more in favour of references to the current state of affairs in Greece.
  - The MSc in International Business Administration could add more Global Operations Management courses, an Organizational Behaviour course, as well as rationalize some marketing courses such as considering the merging of the International Marketing and International Industrial Marketing contents. The Human Resource Management and International Human Resource Management courses can also be combined.
  - Both programs should consider adding standardized aptitude test scores as part of their admission criteria.

## ***B. Teaching***

### APPROACH:

- During the site visit a member of the Committee observed two classes scheduled at that time. The Committee was told that this was the second week of the second semester of the academic year.
- The instructor in the first class (Operational Research) had a very good rapport with the students. The lecture was well structured and the instructor encouraged student interaction. The Instructor used several in-class exercises to illustrate the theoretical concepts covered in the lecture.
- The second class (e-Commerce) was attended by a very small group of students (only 4 in total). The instructor appeared enthusiastic, likely to inspire the students. He used practical examples related to e-Commerce in order to illustrate the concepts. Students were encouraged to interact and share their views on particular topics. It would have been beneficial for the lecture to have contained more examples drawn from international e-Commerce projects rather than focus on the Greek market. The Instructor did provide clear guidance on assessment criteria for an assignment that had previously been handed out. He has also developed an informative module / course handbook where students could read important information about assignments, deadlines and reading lists related to the topic.
- Attendance is poor on some theoretical subjects and in some cases the students do not turn up and the lecture does not happen the whole semester but the course is still assessed at the end of the semester. This state of affairs should be eliminated.

### IMPLEMENTATION

- Students felt that the e-learning system was functioning well. Material was posted in a timely fashion and there was good access to databases.
- Many students claimed that in the majority of courses instructors do not provide feedback even where the assignment is due during the semester. However, some instructors provide feedback either during the oral presentation or upon request.
- Some students claimed that for some courses no clear assessment criteria for assignments were specified. The Committee was not able to verify this as course outlines with assessment details were not part of the submission or the materials subsequently requested.
- There are internship logs given to students. However, based on the sample we received there was no evidence in the internship report about the monthly monitoring process as the student only submitted a one-page brief summary. Similarly, the employer submitted a brief reflection outlining the overall performance of the student.
- In some courses guest speakers are invited, site visits are organised and in some

graduate courses day events of executive speakers are staged. These practices are commendable and should be maintained and further expanded. However, students felt that despite the links between the Institution and business and other organisations, the business community did not hold in high esteem the students when applying for jobs. This type of outreach should be continued in order to counter this situation in the longer term.

- Graduate students are generally happy with the delivery of courses claiming there is sufficient interaction. Undergraduate students were also generally happy but there were some courses for which they felt less enthusiastic and questioned the relevance to the overall curriculum aims. They claimed that this contributed to poor attendance of some courses.
- Part-time graduate students have to hand in assessed assignments at the same time as their full-time counterparts. The part-time students have then two months of idle time before they start the next course. This they feel to an extent defeats the purpose of taking a degree part-time as it makes for an uneven spread of their workload which does not suit some of them who claim to have demanding work schedules.
- Many undergraduate students transfer from other universities. It is claimed that the academic level of the transferees is substantially below that of those admitted directly to the Department through the Panhellenic examinations and this makes for a segmented cohort in terms of academic ability. This makes it difficult for the instructor to deliver the material at the right level. If the instructor adjusts the level to suit one segment, other segments of the cohort could find the level unsuitable and discourage them from further attending the class.

## RESULTS

- Although detailed student course evaluation data were provided in the internal report for the academic year 2007-08, no summary statistics across courses was provided thus rendering an interpretation of overall student satisfaction difficult. However, the Committee noted in a number of courses that student satisfaction was generally low. Means of about 3.5 out of maximum 5 appear frequently and this reflects fair if not very good satisfaction. Averages below 3 suggest that a substantial number of students are very dissatisfied with the course content and/or its delivery.

## IMPROVEMENT

- In the case of undergraduate courses, of those that do take the exam for some courses a large proportion never pass it, especially so in the first two semesters. For example, in the first and second semesters of 2010 43% and 34% never passed the examination respectively. This ought to be investigated as to causes and steps taken to reduce it.
- For some of the courses, of those students that do pass an exam a very large proportion do so in a repeat rather than the first attempt. For example, in the spring semester of 2010 only one course had a pass rate of just over 50% on first attempt. The causes for this high failure rate on first attempt should be investigated and steps taken to reduce it.
- There should be attempts to substantially improve student satisfaction with teaching

and curriculum content. A first target could be to have an overall Department mean of student course evaluations of about 4. The sample size responding and the active class size should also be given on the tables reporting student evaluations, to ascertain how representative of student views the reported evaluations are. It should be noted that there are some mistakes in the Internal Evaluation Report in this area. As an example, the Committee notes an error on p. 88 of the report- last line where a mean of 7.56 out of 5 is given!

- Students should submit a detailed internship report where the placement process is clearly outlined. This should include student achievements during the internship such as references to outcomes and how academic knowledge acquired during the taught part of the course of study has been applied.
- The Department should explore whether it can spread more evenly the workload for Part-time graduate students over time.
- Students should be given quality feedback on assignments in a timely manner. This is especially required for any assignments which are not used merely as instruments for assessing students but are also intended as vehicles for student learning.
- In graduate lectures where the background of students is varied, instructors should ensure that the material is delivered at a level that all students can follow.
- The Committee recommends a mentorship program for new faculty (entry-level) members who are new to teaching which will be informal for a mentor to help the mentee improve teaching and research and which will not feed directly to the promotion and career progression of the mentee. A Teaching Excellence award can be established to provide incentives for better teaching.
- Attendance of courses can be improved through the use of multiple means of evaluation (homework, group projects, midterm examinations etc.) as well as more interactive lectures involving student discussions. In fact, students argued that attendance is higher in courses that require such evaluations.

## **C. Research**

### APPROACH

- The Committee understands that the Department aims to primarily conduct applied research. This does not preclude such research being of high quality destined to be published in highly ranked peer reviewed journals.
- The research in the Department is related to the teaching expertise of the academic staff such as Statistical Analysis, Operational Research, Human Relations and Marketing. However, it should be noted that the majority of the published research has appeared in conference proceedings and in journals which are not highly rated, though there are some exceptions where research has appeared in recognised international journals. Overall, however, the published research has had limited impact as indicated by the low ratio on non-self citations (112 in the last 8 years across all academic staff). This potentially includes multiple citations of joint papers by Department faculty members.
- The Department does not appear to have set any mechanism for monitoring the quality of research performed or criteria for assessing the quality of research outcomes. Explicit criteria are not cited in any detail in the department's internal assessment report. Research does not appear to be a significant factor for making promotion or hiring decisions given the modest publications record of many staff, including those who have been through more than one assessment for hire or re-hire.
- The research culture is inhibited by the very high ratio of part-time to full time staff (declared 25:14) which was much higher in recent years.

### IMPLEMENTATION

- The research effort seems to be organised around 5 research laboratories. However, it appears that there is no strong research culture and commitment to high quality. No strategic objectives for promoting research are mentioned in any of the documentation. The prevailing perception is that research can only be done through the research labs, usually requiring the involvement of students, perhaps collecting primary data through questionnaires or analysing such data. This is a very limited view of research. Research in social sciences can be, and is even in internationally acclaimed universities, often carried out by individuals through studying the relevant literature in their field and contributing to that literature without necessarily working within research labs as is the prevailing perception in the Department. For example, much innovative research published in high quality journals has used published or existing data.
- The research conducted is typically not focused on viable research plans, on scientific discourse or intellectual curiosity, but it rather appears to be initiated in an *ad hoc* and opportunistic manner, mainly driven by calls for conferences or projects.

- Academic staff reported that there are no longer departmental funds provided for participation in internationally recognized conferences for faculty members to present their work. The Committee finds the lack of this support unsatisfactory and not conducive to research.
- Academic staff reported that there is no departmental research seminar series where staff can present their research papers and where discussion and discourse in a collegiate environment can contribute towards improving research quality. In such seminar series invited scholars can convey much needed experience and expertise in conducting research through the presentation of their own work.
- Library resources are satisfactory according to members of staff. The availability of fully operating online access can act as a springboard to facilitate the improvement of quality and increase the research productivity of staff.
- Based on discussions with members of academic staff associated with the 5 labs operating in the department and the relevant documentation, it appears that some research conducted within the labs is carried out by students aiming at completing their course theses under supervision by academic staff. This research is then incorporated in part or as a whole in the supervisor's research output in the form of joint papers. However, quality research is seldom an outcome of an undergraduate or even graduate student work.
- Although much of the research offers itself for sponsorship by local public or private organisations (SCP), there is no attempt to encourage staff to seek such sponsorship. Such sponsorships can help staff to conduct practice-relevant research while still addressing methodological issues, thus facilitating theoretical contributions as well.
- Some members of staff have embarked on a variety of funded research projects such as ARCHIMIDES I and II. However, it is unfortunate that funds obtained through these projects do not appear to have led to as high quality research publications as one might have expected.

## RESULTS

- There are a limited number of papers published in high-quality peer reviewed journals. In the view of the Committee this is a direct outcome of the lack of proper research culture that fosters quality monitoring, and does not necessarily reflect the staff research potential.
- Research is very uneven in terms of quality with only a minority of staff publishing in recognised international journals. There should be much stronger push and incentives for staff to publish in high quality international journals and not concentrate so much on published conference proceedings.
- The research output of Faculty members has received just under 112 non-self citations from 2003 to 2010. Since there are different databases measuring citations based on varying sets of criteria (e.g. Web of Science, Google Scholar, Scopus etc), the Department should collect data and monitor citations separately from each source to further establish the quality of the publications.

- There is a claim that the labs established are not recognised in law as research labs and this hinders research productivity. While it may be true that a different legal status for the labs would help research, it is by no means a serious handicap as research based on ideas and on funding administered through the Institution should also form a suitable basis.

#### IMPROVEMENT

- The shortcomings in research identified above should be seen in the context of the Institution having had its current status as a higher education institution only since 2001. Research culture takes some time to establish even where there is more flexibility in staff hiring and firing than there has been at the Department since 2001. Nevertheless, going forward and in order to raise research outcomes the Committee makes the following recommendations:
- The department has not implemented any systematic approach to the monitoring and assessment of research output using any specific criteria. This should not be so. The Committee suggests that a major emphasis should be given to quality rather than quantity of research with the objective of publishing in reputable and influential peer reviewed international journals. This will further boost the Institution's and the Department's reputation at national and international level.
- The Department should use lists that rank journals such as the one published by the Association of Business Schools (ABS) and impact factors (e.g. ISI) as a guide for producing high quality research. Emphasis should be placed on the higher quality journals of those lists, to encourage all academic staff members across all ranks to publish their best research in the best possible academic outlets.
- Some of the research by the academic staff is a joint effort with academics within and outside the Department and this is commendable. Joint research can lead to real gains through exploiting complementary skills, experience and knowledge of the team members. The academic staff should develop a policy of collaborating with experienced and well published academics from outside the Department in order to exploit synergies.
- Staff should be free to set their own research agendas while also collaborating with other colleagues within the research lab. Research freedom should be nurtured, fostered and supported.
- Although there appears to be much collaborative research in the labs there should be a stronger culture of mentoring for those staff who are newer to research. This will help steer them to best exploit their undoubted talent and energy. There are some promising relatively new researchers in the Department who given the right mentoring and support can develop into very successful researchers.

- The Department should establish incentives that promote good research performance. The Department could establish a three-member external committee of distinguished academics to evaluate every two years the research work of the full time and part time academic staff of all levels, including professorial, and provide guidance for future research priorities. The external committee should be renewed with new members every four years. The research output should be disseminated in a newsletter published every two years to dovetail with the external committee review of the departmental research.
- Academic staff should be encouraged to link in research much better with the international research community, for example through joint papers, projects and grants.
- The widespread current practice of using students' dissertations as research outcomes should be phased out in favour of more formal academic research. Quality research can rarely be an outcome of an undergraduate or even post graduate student dissertation research.
- The internal evaluation report gives a list of research projects undertaken or projects that are in progress. The Committee would encourage the Department to maintain involvement but also seek collaboration and participation in projects such as European Commission's Framework 7 projects and, where there is scope, improve the role of academic staff in such projects. In such occasions the focus should be publishable outcomes in high quality journals.
- There is no tradition of inviting speakers to deliver research seminars nor evidence that many staff are invited to deliver seminars elsewhere. Likewise it does not appear that the Department organises internal informal seminars. All these activities would help to foster a strong research culture. The Department should organise research seminars series where distinguished international scholars should be invited to present their most recent work to the members of academic staff and postgraduate students. More informal meetings to discuss internal or recent published research should also be organised.
- The legal barriers to the Department recruiting PhD students is a serious handicap to developing a quality research culture. However, in the current legal framework, members of academic staff should pursue any arising opportunity to act as joint supervisors of PhD students or supervisory committee members in other institutions. This would gear up the research capacity in the Department.

## **D. All Other Services**

*For each particular matter, please distinguish between under- and post-graduate level, if necessary.*

### **APPROACH**

- The Campus of the Institution is located in a central area of Attica and is easily accessible from the cities of Athens or Peireaus. The facilities are relatively new. The Committee believes that classrooms in the main building are adequate in terms of basic standards such as appropriate desks, chairs and projectors.
- The Institution has a brand new Conference / Exhibition Centre which is also available to the Department and it is ready to host events and international conferences. The Conference Centre is luxurious, comprising a large auditorium in amphitheatre format, flanked by a number of break out rooms each one with large capacity for presentations or other functions.
- The teaching labs are equipped with computers and software, related to the syllabus of the Department's Programmes.
- The Library provides silent reading areas as well as internet access points. The variety of books related to several disciplines (e.g.. Marketing) is rather poor. For example, in the area of e-Marketing / e-Commerce there were only 5 text books from which only 2 were in English. Electronically, there are 13 titles available, dated 2000 – 2002 which may no longer be up-to-date for a dynamically evolving topic such as e-commerce. A similar case was with books related to entrepreneurship.
- The Career Office provides guidance to students about career prospects and further post-graduate studies. The Office is also responsible for assisting students in finding placements during the last semester of their studies. Students could register their interest by filling in a printed form. The process could be simplified by making the application process on-line.
- The Erasmus office provides the possibility to students to travel abroad and attend classes in partner Institutions for one semester. Similarly, international students from other institutions could visit the Peireaus Institution for the same amount of time. Students receive full credit based on the ECTS system for the subjects they study in the collaborating Institution. This credit is transferred to their own Institution. The Erasmus office also supports lecturer mobility to European Institutions for a short period of time. After having informal conversations with Erasmus students from Slovakia and France who are currently studying at the Institution, as well as with Greek students who travelled to other Institutions abroad, there is evidence that the learning outcomes of these programmes are significant and that international students do enjoy their staying at the Greek Institution. However, as the data below shows these exchanges are currently very limited:

Erasmus mobility	Students (incoming and outgoing)	Staff
2010 – 2011	Institution: 24 / Department: 12	2
2009 – 2010	Institution: 19 / Department: 4	5
2008 – 2009	Institution: 18 / Department: 7	1

#### IMPLEMENTATION

- The administrative services seem to be well organised. There are 7 staff organised into three sections. They maintain student records, double check paper and computer records for marks and to ensure students have fulfilled all obligations before they can get their degree.
- There were no signs of facilities for cultural or athletic activities on campus.
- Computer labs appeared to be adequate. There was academic support for using the computers and software.

#### RESULTS

- The Committee during its tour of the facilities and meetings with students did not identify any inadequacies. The facilities were clean and modern, save for too many posters of a party political nature which are not compatible with international standards.
- Administrative staff offered support to students and faculty.
- The administrative staff appeared satisfied with the respect academic staff showed them and they worked well together.
- The administrative staff are the first port of call for students for various certificates, vouchers for books etc. There were no complaints about administrative support by students during our meetings with them.
- The academic staff claimed there is good use of the computer labs by students and the computer rooms are rarely idle.

#### IMPROVEMENT

- The Department should consider engaging administrator(s) who would be capable of offering higher level support to senior faculty on strategic planning and management issues. This could become more urgent if the Department's research grant generation and post graduate offerings increase.
- Administrative personnel should devote more time in handling alumni relations and tracking the career paths of alumni. This would help expand the host organisations for internships as well as offer useful statistics of graduate destinations which can be used to promote the undergraduate and postgraduate programs.
- Notwithstanding the extensive use of labs claimed by academics at our meetings, the Department should explore whether computing facilities can be shared across teaching groups in order to obtain economies of scale both in terms of equipment and staff levels, especially where technical (non-academic) staff is concerned.

### **Collaboration with Social, Cultural and Production organizations (SCP)**

- Page 21 of the Internal Report mentions that there is far greater scope for the Department to develop links of collaborative research and teaching with local public and private sector organisations than there are at present. The Committee agrees with this and urges the Department to develop a strategy towards this end as detailed in the points to follow.
- The subject matter of the Department requires the close collaboration with the SCP organizations, so that students may gain valuable practical experience. Faculty members have collaborated with some SCP organizations in a number of activities, including invited guest speakers and analysis of data pertaining to organizations. In contrast, student site visits to firms and organizations are limited. At the undergraduate level, students are asked to broaden their learning experience through the use of case studies, labs, library resources, and surveys to SCP organizations, rather than visits to their sites.
- The Department should establish a more formal approach to linking with SCP's rather than leaving it up to initiatives of individual faculty members. In particular, the Committee suggests the formation of a coordinating committee that forges a closer and more formal relationship with SCP's.
- The Department should improve the internship experience of students by ensuring they take up roles that require them to use judgment and to draw from their studies at the Department and elsewhere.
- The Department should encourage the establishment of an alumni association, as well as increase firm and student participation in career days, and better student networking, in general.
- The Department should organize more frequent student site visits in firms and organizations.
- The Department should encourage a more active student participation in cultural activities and social causes (e.g. volunteering), given the Department's curriculum objectives.

### ***E. Strategic Planning, Perspectives for Improvement and Dealing with Potential Inhibiting Factors***

*For each particular matter, please distinguish between under- and post-graduate level, if necessary.*

- The Department should set clear strategic goals on how to differentiate its curriculum and profile vis-à-vis other Departments in both TEIs and Universities. Given that there are 14 TEI Business Administration Departments in Greece, seven of which are in the greater Attica area, this is imperative.
- Currently, the major advantage of the Department derives from its location, which enables it to attract higher quality students due to the unusually high proportion of population residing in the Attica peninsula. However, this is also an inhibiting factor as the Department attracts a lot of lower-quality transfer students, thus cancelling out the location advantage. Thus, strategic planning for delivering differentiated programs of studies should not rely on the location factor, especially given the high concentration of similar departments in the Attica area. The ability of the Department to convince all relevant stakeholders (students, state, candidates, parents etc) would be of utmost importance for its proper functioning.
- The need to seek State approval to change names of Graduate Degree Programs courses hampers academic initiative and imposes a bureaucratic level which is unnecessary. The Department through its market research should be able to identify the degree content that best fits the market and the name that would best convey the content and be allowed to change names as the market requires. The Department should be able to launch degrees or variants thereof without state approval, but only subject to internal university approval procedures. This will help create a dynamism in degree offerings and content update.
- The notion of an expiry date for postgraduate programs is odd and out of step with international practice. It suggests the subject matter is of limited use and has an expiry date. This can hardly make the course attractive in an open competitive context.
- At the time of our visit due to the on going debt crisis of Greece and spending cuts there was evidence of dissatisfaction by the temporary staff due to delays in their payment. This if prolonged can adversely impact both the student experience on teaching and the research activities.
- The proportion of students who graduate within the expected 4 years of study has been decreasing. For example, of those admitted in 2000/1, 39% graduated within 5 years, an extremely low percentage in itself. To make matters worse, of those admitted in 2005/6 only 7% had graduated within 5 years. This is an extremely low percentage and should be investigated for its causes as soon as possible. There was a suggestion that this was due to larger proportions of transferees coming in with lower qualifications. Nevertheless, it is doubtful this is the only explanation, if at all. If the percentage of the non-transfer admissions graduating within 5 years had stayed at 39% in 2005/6, as in 2000/1, then the percentage of transfer admissions would need to have been in 2005/6 82% of all students admitted and all 82% would have needed to fail to graduate within 5 years. This could explain the observed 7% graduating within 5 years out of those admitted in 2005/6 but this is a rather unlikely scenario. Therefore, there must be other reasons why there is a progressively lower percentage graduating in good time.

- A functioning sabbatical leave system should be established to help researchers devote time to research away from teaching and administration. While some staff claimed that the option to apply for sabbatical exists in principle, in practice this is difficult with current staffing levels.
- Although instructors are evaluated by students on the delivery and content of their course, it is not clear how the results are used. It should be the case that staff are encouraged to explain how they aim to respond constructively to any criticisms raised by students (e.g. by modifying course content or delivery style).
- The Department should set up a formal process of establishing medium-term (e.g. five year) plans along with a strategy for achieving them. This would cover all main aspects, such as curriculum, undergraduate and postgraduate programs, research activities and outreach to the local and broader community.
- Research, partly because of the relatively recent transition of the Institution to its current higher education status and the other inhibiting factors noted earlier, is the area where most progress is needed. The Department has hitherto relied too heavily on in-house hiring which has led to little new blood coming in from outside to stimulate research activity. In the future it should set high standards for recruiting staff based on research performance as evidenced by publications in high ranking peer reviewed journals and recruit the best from wherever they come. High quality research by staff and collaborative international activities in the form of joint research with other researchers and project collaborations such as European Commissions' Framework funding will facilitate the transition of the Institution to one with international standing.
- The infrastructure situation is very encouraging. There are sufficient and well equipped labs for students and staff. All buildings are in a good order and very good standards. However, the Committee was informed that permanent members of staff share offices. This is to be avoided as academic research requires concentration without distraction by colleagues or students or other staff who may need to visit or call a colleague sharing an office. The Institution should provide each member of academic staff with a private office, albeit smaller than perhaps the shared offices. This will facilitate productive private study and research and, of course productive consultation with students when necessary.
- There are two members of Special Technical Personnel (ETP) whose duties fall between support for the proper functioning of lab sessions and on occasion covering for teaching staff. However, the current job description (and corresponding required qualifications) does not include responsibilities for solving technical problems in the labs. It is recommended that the job responsibilities should be re-defined and include resolving technical issues in the labs. Future hirings should be made based on the re-designed job description.
- New academic staff recruited should align with the curriculum re-design, in addition to their research profile. For example, if more finance, strategy and international courses are introduced as per the Committee's recommendations, then new full-time Faculty recruiting should focus on candidates with corresponding qualifications both in terms of teaching and research.

## ***F. Final Conclusions and recommendations of the EEC***

*For each particular matter, please distinguish between under- and post-graduate level, if necessary.*

- The Committee believes that the Department has made fair progress since 2001 in the direction of a Higher Education Institution despite its legacy as an institution where research was not necessarily a deliverable in the way it has always been from traditional universities. However, it still has scope to improve in curriculum design, teaching and outreach and especially research. Some of the scope can only be achieved if legal and financial restraints currently impacting the Department are removed. However, most of the needed improvement can be achieved through the Department's own efforts and policies by following the recommendations made in this Evaluation. Our key recommendations are:
- The ratio of temporary academic staff to permanent staff is very high 25:14 as the Committee was informed during the site visit. This is on the face of it is not to the best advantage of the students and the research culture of the department. The research culture is adversely affected if a large number of the temporary staff do not see their post as one in which they will build their CV and publications, but rather they see it simply as one where they earn some income but have no ambition to progress. It may be that this is economically more efficient way to get staff in post than one where there is a vision by the employee to become permanent through improving their qualifications but this is at the expense of the research output of the Department.
- The use of a very large number of temporary staff who then ultimately end up being part of the permanent staff of the Department is not conducive to a strong research culture in another way. Such staff may initially be chosen very early in their careers before they have a PhD or they have a PhD but only a minor research track record. They are then either confirmed as permanent staff through promotion if they meet minimum requirements or could be favoured as internal candidates in an open permanent position. In neither case is this necessarily to the Department's advantage since a genuinely open competition at the point of the staff member becoming permanent could have brought in a stronger candidate with a better proven research and/or teaching record.
- The Department is encouraged to create momentum by benchmarking itself against leading international institutions both in terms of teaching and research excellence.
- The Department needs to focus in updating the curriculum, improve teaching performance in undergraduate and postgraduate level and importantly improve research record and publications in high quality peer reviewed journals. The curriculum of both undergraduate and graduate level needs substantial improvement to be up-to-date and comparable to institutions of international standing. Delivery of teaching material is done through multiple methods that cover both theoretical and practical aspects (lectures, case studies, practitioner guest lectures) with multiple methods of evaluation (projects and results). Innovation in teaching methods is encouraged.
- The development of multidisciplinary research agendas should be encouraged. It is expected that partnerships and teams across disciplines and sectors may provide a vehicle for the development of new knowledge resulting in a significant push for both innovative applied science teaching and research.

- To summarise the Department should focus on quality of both teaching and research and take particular care in the next four years to monitor its progress and systematically track its performance. Course attendance, student evaluations, grade distributions and exam pass rates should be tracked and stored in databases in order to identify trouble spots and strong points and used to make curriculum decisions. Likewise, in research, the Department should use widely accepted lists such as ABS and JQL as well as metrics such as ISI's impact factors to monitor the quality of research and set objectives and criteria for research performance. Support for compiling, storing and updating such data should be easy to obtain, as the size of the existing administrative staff is satisfactory. Hence no additional funds are required for such an initiative.



### The Members of the Committee

Name and Surname	Signature
1.	_____
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