EXTERNAL EVALUATION REPORT

UNIVERSITY OF MACEDONIA

June 2016
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1. EXTERNAL EVALUATION COMMITTEE

The Committee responsible for the External Evaluation of the University of Macedonia (UoM) comprised the following five (5) expert evaluators drawn from the Registry kept by the HQA in accordance with Law 3374/2005 and the Law 4009/2011:

1. Professor emer. George Yadigaroglu (Chairman)
   ETH-Zurich, Switzerland

2. Professor Nikolaos Georgantzis
   University of Reading, UK

3. Professor Spiro Kiousis
   University of Florida, USA

4. Professor emer. Michael Romanos
   University of Cincinnati, USA

5. Associate Professor Victor Roudometof
   University of Cyprus, Cyprus
N.B. The length of text in each box is free. Questions included in each box are not exclusive nor should they always be answered separately; the Committee’s reply to those questions is meant to provide a general outline of issues that need to be addressed.

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 The External Evaluation Procedure

- Dates and brief account of the site visit
- Whom did the Committee meet?
- List of Reports, documents, other data examined by the EEC
- Groups of teaching and administrative staff and students interviewed
- Facilities visited by the EEC

The External Evaluation Committee (EEC) conducted the site visit for the University of Macedonia (UoM) during the week of March 28-April 1, 2016. On the first day, the committee was briefed about the site visit and external evaluation process by a member of the Hellenic Quality Assurance and Accreditation Agency (HQA). They were also welcomed and provided a short introduction to the Institution by the Rector, Professor Achilleas Zaprinis. Subsequently, they met with the Rector and Deputy Rectors, the Institution’s self-evaluation team, received a tour of the campus, met with the Institution’s Administration Council, and with the deans of the various schools in the Institution. The EEC concluded the day by meeting with the Internal Evaluation Groups’ (IEGs/OMEA) representatives and held a short debriefing meeting to summarize key points observed during the first day. They requested additional information from UoM concerning questions that were raised throughout the day.

On the second day of the site visit, the EEC met with faculty from various schools throughout the Institution. They also met with the Institution’s chief administrative officers, undergraduate students, graduate students (master’s and doctoral), alumni, and external stakeholders. The EEC again concluded the day with a short debriefing meeting to summarize key points observed. The additional information requested on the first day was provided but additional information was requested for the third day.

On the third day, the EEC wrote draft sections of the report at the hotel, discussed their impressions, and made preliminary judgments on the various areas in the report. On the fourth day, an initial presentation of the key findings was made to the Institution’s Rector, the Evaluation Team, and other key constituencies. The remainder of the day was dedicated to revising the report.

On the fifth day, the EEC continued to review, refine and finalize the entire report. The final draft of the report was submitted to HQA on the sixth day of the site visit.

In addition to the face-to-face meetings with different groups, a variety of sources were used to compile the evaluation report, including the Institution’s self-evaluation report, the UoM website, and the supplemental documentation provided when requested by the EEC during the visit. This documentation included:

- A USB stick with an update of the information that was included in the IER covering the period from 2014-2016
- Material forwarded to the members of the EEC by emails that included numerous internal documents, charts, tables, etc.

One concern did emerge during the evaluation process. Specifically, there was some inconsistency between the presentation of the information provided and what was needed by the committee to complete the report. The EEC wishes to bring to the attention of the HQA that there should be better correspondence between the templates of the IER and those of the EER. The lack of consistent numbering of the sections made it difficult to find...
and interpret what was needed in the short time period allotted. The EEC is grateful to the UoM for their efforts to provide the additional information requested and for the hospitality extended to them. They also thank the HQA for the good organization of the evaluation.

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Justify your rating:

Overall, the experience of the EEC during the visit was positive. The Institution’s representatives were gracious hosts, the accommodations were excellent, and the EEC members were treated with collegiality throughout the process. The delivery of some additional information was successfully provided during the visit.

2.2 The Self-Evaluation Procedure

Please comment on:

- Appropriateness of sources and documentation used
- Quality and completeness of evidence provided and reviewed
- The extent to which the objectives of the internal evaluation procedure have been met by the Institution
- Description and Analysis of the Self-Evaluation Procedure in the Institution
- Analysis of the positive elements and difficulties which arose during the self-evaluation procedure
- Whether the self-evaluation procedure was comprehensive and interactive

The EEC comprehensively reviewed the Institution’s self-evaluation report prior to the visit and referred to key sections throughout the visit. The sources and documentation provided were appropriate and comprehensive. The Institution followed the guidelines offered by HQA for the self-evaluation procedure and the process seemed to involve all major constituencies at the university, including senior administration, school leadership, faculty, administrative units, undergraduate students, graduate students, staff, alumni, and external stakeholders.

The description and analysis of the self-evaluation process was thorough, credible, and transparent. There was particular strength in terms of data collection, detail, and documentation. It is clear that the Institution has benefited from going through the process. It is unclear how the EEC report and response from HQA will be used, but the EEC believes guidance from HQA may be required to facilitate this.
Because of the volume and detail of information in the IER, it would be useful to have an executive summary or summaries of various sections so that EEC members and other groups can access information efficiently and so that broader conclusions and strategies can be made evident.

One area that was missing was an overview of the study programmes. This especially made analysis of teaching and curriculum challenging so alternative sources of information were consulted to make judgments.

| Please decide in respect to the specific evaluation area (§2.2): |  
|------------------|------------------|
| Worthy of merit  |  
| Positive evaluation | X  
| Partially positive evaluation |  
| Negative evaluation |  

Justify your rating:

As noted above, the general impressions of the EEC in this area were positive. The process was comprehensive, thorough, and informative. The lack of presentation regarding the study programmes was a notable omission.
### 3. PROFILE OF THE INSTITUTION UNDER EVALUATION

#### 3.1 Institutional Governance, Leadership & Strategy

##### 3.1.1 Vision, mission and goals of the Institution

- What are the Institution’s mission and goals
- Priorities set by goals
- How are the goals achieved
- Procedures established by the Institution to monitor the achievement of goals
- What is your assessment of the Institution’s ability to improve
- What are the Institution’s mission and goals

The *mission* statement and goals of the UoM, as described in the Internal Evaluation Report (page 16) are:

*Persistence and determination to continuously search and apply educational methods and conditions, research, and knowledge generation that can make the difference in a volatile economic environment and provide an opportunity for individuals and collective entities to improve living conditions for all.*

*The University of Macedonia intends to continue its development as a medium-sized institution with a particular focus on subjects on which it has an advantage and concentrating on the quality of research and teaching, on openness, on its further positioning as a university that pursues excellence, growing not only in size and volume but also in focus areas, in international recognition, and in targeted research activity. Its main advantage in this direction was and remains its flexibility regarding both, administrative structure and curricula/academic composition.*

*The University of Macedonia seeks constant interaction among society, faculty members and students, and [...] this vision is being implemented with dedication by our academic, special teaching, and administrative staff and is being transferred to society by our graduates, who are employed in companies and organizations around the world in the fields of economics, management, education, technology and art.*

While this is a reasonable academic statement reflecting the desire of any institution of higher learning to remain relevant to the society and responsive to the needs of its students, it is too general and nebulous, does not sufficiently project the particular character and strengths of the Institution, and addresses in a limited way elements, priorities and initiatives that were repeatedly recited to the EEC during our interviews and meetings with all relevant stakeholders. In summary, the components/goals of the university’s vision, as extracted from both the Internal Evaluation Report and the interviews, are considered to be, in order of importance/priority:


b. Excellence in the quality of instruction.

c. Enhancement of the presence and role of the university in the city of Thessaloniki and the region of Northern Greece.

d. Intensification of the Institution’s internationalization initiatives and international presence, especially in the Balkan region.

e. Support and enhancement of the cooperative and consultative culture of the Institution.
f. Emphasis on post-graduate education.

g. Excellence in the quality of research activities, and especially their Balkan focus.

h. Recruitment and retention of excellent faculty.

*Based on these findings, the EEC recommends that the University revise and clarify in a pragmatic way its vision and mission statement and goals, so as to more accurately reflect the aspirations and priorities of both its faculties and its leadership and administration.*

The process through which the current vision statement was produced is not clear. It appears that the statement was developed by the current administration. Comments by the faculty gave us the impression that the statement of vision is subject to change, depending on who is leading the Institution at the moment. *It is recommended, therefore, that, when revised, the statement should be prepared as a result of deliberations involving all stakeholders, and should hence become subject to revisions only as major circumstances of the University change.*

*Once the revision process is completed, the Schools and Departments of the University should be encouraged to more closely align their own individual mission statements and goals with those of the University as a whole, so that the educational, research, and public service missions of the units would be consistent with, and would support and promote the overall University mission and goals.*

While no formal statement of goal *priorities* is spelled out in the IER, the EEC believes that the above list of goals, based on its interviews with the stakeholders and review of materials, accurately reflects the Institution’s current priorities. However, the hierarchy of objectives is clearly defined.

Seven mid-term and long-term objectives (targets) are defined in the IER (page 17), and they accurately reflect the University mission goals and priorities as they have been restated at the beginning of this section. These goals and priorities are then further elaborated on pages 18-19 of the IER, specifically addressing Theoretical knowledge, Technical knowledge, Research excellence, Educational excellence, Graduate studies, External contacts and internationalization, and Contribution to Regional development. The information provided is comprehensive and clearly stated. There is an intention for these priorities to be transferred to, and provide a basis for the reassessment of the mission and objective of the Departments. However, this is only in the planning stage.

A number of target/priority implementation actions are presented in section B.3.4, page 20 of the IER. These, however, are followed by a statement in section B.3.5 to the effect that there is no system for monitoring and evaluating of the progress in the implementation of the objectives. This will be part of the overall QA system of the University, currently under development. (A detailed system of monitoring exists, as the EEC was told by the Rector, under which all projects are being monitored and evaluated on a regular basis regarding timetables, priority tasks, and budgets/expenditures).

The UoM is a dynamic institution that has the potential to evolve into a major educational and cultural pole for northern Greece and the Balkan Peninsula. It has a strong core of well-educated and productive academic personnel; a very competent and dedicated (though understaffed), technical support personnel; well-articulated academic programmes, especially at the undergraduate level; good technical infrastructure; excellent connections with, and support from its city and region; and a unique and healthy orientation towards international commitments and activities, especially directed towards the peoples and the cultures of the Balkan Peninsula. Given adequate resources, these features position the Institution well to expand and improve, and play an increasingly leading and important role in the region, to the benefit of both, Greece and the rest of the countries with which it connects.

In summary, the EEC strongly urges the Institution to proceed in setting and implementing realistic goals promptly, regardless of delays or lack of support caused by the central government. *This action, in addition to resulting in a clear guide towards excellence in the future of the Institution, will also provide an opportunity to mobilize all*
its stakeholders to participate and contribute, and in the process develop stronger relationships with its constituencies and its alumni.

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*Justify your rating:*

Even though its goals are not clearly spelled out, the UoM has them clearly in its collective mind, and they are consistent, from the students all the way up to the top echelons of the administration.

Even though the UoM does not have an approved formal and complete organizational chart and strategic plan yet (partly as a result of central government indecision regarding its format and content) the Institution has made a diligent effort to break down its vision into goals, those into objectives, and those into achievable priorities. All these can be improved, and the EEC recommends a systematic procedure for their review and revision, but they are in place, and reflect an honest determination by the University to address key issues of its present and future, in all areas of concern. Evaluation and monitoring of progress towards achieving goals and objectives are missing. However, there is an intention to develop them as part of an overall strategic plan.

### 3.1.2 Organizational Development Strategy

- Effectiveness of administrative officials
- Existence of effective operation regulations
- Specific goals and timetables
- Measures taken to reach goals
- Effectiveness of administrative officials

The EEC had several meetings with the UoM leadership and its administrative team. Both provided the EEC with information on the current condition of the Institution. Their presentations were informative but relatively short and informal. Solid data were provided later after specific requests were made by the EEC. It should be noted that the IER covered the period up to the end of the 2013-2014 academic year, therefore its information was two years old, and thus did not necessarily reflect the current conditions. This was apparently mandated by the HQA, thus the updates did not come to the EEC until requested. It should also be noted that the EEC was told that the template for this report had not been communicated to the University administration by the HQA (although available on the HQA web site), and thus a number of questions included therein could not be addressed immediately by the participants in the meetings with the EEC.

The university administration is clearly committed to solving the problems facing the Institution, and is working creatively to address these problems under tremendous limitations and lack of resources. It is also evident that it has good working relationships with the administrative staff and the academic units (Schools, Departments, and postgraduate programmes).

The current organizational structure of the UoM was established by the Senate of the Institution in 2002 and was approved by the Ministry of Education in 2003. In 2011, Law 4009 required the preparation of new statutes and rules of operation by all Greek
universities, but that law was later rescinded. The UoM has completed and submitted its proposed Statutes and Rules structure, and has twice updated parts of it in the past two years. However, the document is still awaiting the Ministry’s review and approval. In the interim, the university operates under the old rules and has been reluctant to take on initiatives for which there may be legal ramifications once the new rules were approved and implemented.

As a result, the University is still operating under the previous regulations, following procedures prescribed by the 1997 and 2003 laws. However, some of the provisions of Laws 4009/2011 and 4076/2012 have already been implemented, and the corresponding responsibilities have already been transferred to the University’s Schools and Departments.

The EEC learned that the Office of the Rector is currently working on updating an earlier version of the organizational structure as part of a broader strategic plan for the Institution. Priorities of this initiative are: preparation of the Institution for eventual accreditation in the next round of the Institution’s review; the establishment of transparent procedures for financial and personnel management; the enhancement and integration of the information infrastructure and superstructure; and the gradual transfer into a paperless campus. Under these circumstances, the administrative team appears to be carrying out the task of managing the Institution effectively.

Specific goals have been thoroughly addressed in Section 3.1.1. There are no specific timetables with target dates for the achievement of these goals and targets, beyond identifying them as mid-term and long-term.

As far as overall institutional goals are concerned, the implementation situation has been outlined in section 3.1.1 above. The implementation of the more specific educational and research goals and objectives is discussed in the following sections 3.1.3: Academic Development Strategy, and 3.1.4: Research Strategy.

Please decide in respect to the specific evaluation area (&3.1.2):

| Worthy of merit | Tick |
| Positive evaluation | X |
| Partially positive evaluation | |
| Negative evaluation | |

Justify your rating:

The Rector and his administrative team are doing everything within their means to effectively govern the Institution. Action and inaction by the national government seriously inhibits this effort. The Rector’s team could be much more effective if the legal framework under which it operates was clarified and kept stable for a period of several years by the national government.

However, the lack of an updated organizational structure and guidelines is a serious impediment of the University leadership and administration, regardless of the action or inaction of the central government. Therefore, the EEC strongly recommends that it be addressed within the constraints imposed by the Greek laws.
3.1.3 Academic Development Strategy

- Response of the Institution to Faculties and Departments
- Goals and timetables
- Measures taken to reach goals
- Response of the Institution to Faculties and Departments

The University is organised into 4 Schools, containing a total of 8 Departments, as follows: School of Economics and Regional Studies (Department of Economics, Department of Balkan, Slavic and Eastern Studies), School of Business Management (Department of Business Organization and Management, Department of Accounting and Finance), School of Information Science (Department of Applied Informatics), and the School of Social Sciences and Humanities and Art (Department of International and European Studies, Department of Educational and Social Policy, Department of Musical Science and Art).

This is a new organizational structure; its intent was to shift a number of academic and administrative responsibilities to the Schools and free the Departments to focus mainly on their teaching, research and public service missions. However, more recent developments have not allowed the Schools to assume a leadership role yet and, for all practical purposes, all the old responsibilities remain with the Departments at this time.

The Departments offer 8 undergraduate degrees and a total of 29 postgraduate degree programmes.

There are currently upwards of 400 doctoral students conducting research for their dissertations under the supervision of three-member advisory committees. The EEC finds that this is a very large number of doctoral candidates, considering the small number of current faculty as compared to the large and increasing numbers of undergraduate students, the inability of the University to hire new faculty, and the limited and dwindling financial and other resources available to the Institution. The EEC therefore recommends that the University reconsider its admissions to the doctoral programs in light of available resources and needs. In addition, the EEC recommends that UoM puts special emphasis on supervision of its doctoral students.

One of the primary goals of all Departments in the past year or so has been the implementation of the recommendations of their external review committees. This has been a long and elaborate process, but it appears that it has been conducted in a democratic and collegial manner, with careful deliberations and attention paid to the specific suggestions and recommendations of the external reviews. This process has by now been completed, and the Departments have been updating their programmes based on the reviews. As a result, syllabi have been improved and updated, and new methods of teaching are being introduced.

Other goals articulated at this time, as presented in the brochure “University of Macedonia, 2014-2018, 10 Basic Points” (page 6), include (a) the continuous upgrading of the programmes of studies, (b) the improvement of the system of exams, (c) the employment of doctoral students in teaching, (d) the introduction of new technologies in teaching, (e) the improvement in the distribution of students among Departments, and (f) the continuous skills-improvement of the teaching faculty.”

A major problem faced by most Departments is the increasingly large numbers of freshman students admitted into them by the Ministry of Education without consultation and without taking into consideration the declared capacity and resources of the Departments. With the admission of special-case students (e.g., special needs, family situation, etc.) and the transfer of students from other academic institutions, on top of admitting many more students than the University’s academic units have determined to be able to educate, the final numbers of students admitted are more than triple the number of students the Institution can normally accommodate. This situation, while not unique to the
UoM, places particular constraints for this institution because of the small size of the University and the limited physical space and resources available. It appears that this is a problem faced by most academic institutions in the country at this time, and that the situation is beyond the control of individual institutions.

The IER indicates that there is an intention to initiate a dialogue and open deliberations among all stakeholders in order to capitalize on the knowledge and experience of diverse participants. It is not clear if this dialogue and deliberations have already begun. No other information is available regarding this question. The EEC recommends that these academic goals should be considered as a part of the overall monitoring system the university intends to develop by retaining an expert consulting firm specializing in models and systems of assessment and monitoring of programmes and projects.

Please decide in respect to the specific evaluation area (&3.1.3):

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Justify your rating:

It is not clear that there is currently a plan with priorities for the further development of the programmes and curricula in this section. There is no mechanism for the monitoring of academic goals at the Departmental or School level.

### 3.1.4 Research Strategy

- Key points in research strategy
- Research strategy objectives and timetables for achieving them
- Laboratory research support network
- Research excellence network
- Existence of research assistance mechanisms (for preparing proposals, capitalising on patents and innovations, finding partners for research programmes, etc.)
- Key points in research strategy

The University’s research strategy focuses on the following priorities:

(a) Support of faculty research activity from the programs Erasmus+ and the University Research Committee. (b) Assessment of research productivity based on established databases (Scopus, WoS). (c) Support of small research programmes (seed grants) via institutional resources. (d) Recognition of research productivity and excellence of the members of the University community (Research Awards). This consists of significant financial awards based on the rank of the journal in which the individual(s) have published. (e) Funding for conference participation.

These are commendable initiatives, providing a number of incentives for faculty members to increase the intensity and productivity of their research.

The EEC recommends that these efforts be combined with Departmental and School level plans for research area priorities and focus, so that the research activities of the university community would become commensurate with the university’s other goals regarding academic priorities and the social role of the University within its region.
Indeed, there is no focus in terms of topical areas of research that the Institution for which the Institution could be known. Thus, the EEC suggests that the University in consultation with the faculty determine strategic research areas for the university and for the schools and departments. The EEC realizes that institutional procedures and rules may make the implementation of selected strategic research orientations difficult, but is confident that ways to overcome or minimize these can be found.

To implement its research strategies mentioned above, the University has articulated a number of objectives, including:

(a) An increase in the number of publications in peer-reviewed journals (WoS - Scopus).
(b) An increase in participation of faculty at prestigious international conferences.
(c) An increase in the number of proposals submitted to international research funding agencies.
(d) An increase in the number of programmes/projects where the UoM is the leader/coordinator.
(e) Expansion of the external network of partners for participation in programmes.
(f) An increase in the funds for basic research from the University's own sources.

The target for all these objectives is the growth of all their indicators by 10% -15% per year for the next four years. These are clear and well-articulated objectives, and they are associated with well-defined indicators of performance and clearly delineated timetables.

By 2014, the Institution had six research labs in operation, established via the government Gazette. The current objectives of the university have been to double that number in the next four years, and to strengthen interdepartmental cooperation and interdisciplinary research among its labs. A third, lower priority objective is to connect the research activity of the university with research and production organizations outside the university. The EEC finds that the University is making a good effort to build up its lab resources in support of research excellence.

The University has a considerable number of external research partners. However, this activity is delegated to individual faculty members, many of whom are involved as partners or as coordinators in a number of European Research Programmes. Examples include the projects of the Seventh Framework Programme for Research in Europe, and cross-border/transnational cooperation projects such as INTERREG, Greece-Bulgaria 2007-2013, NA Europe. Particular mention should be made of the fact that many of these research activities actively engage doctoral candidates and postgraduate students, whose participation provides them with invaluable academic experience and helps them become part of an extended research network of contacts. Both the research collaboration and the systematic effort to actively involve postgraduate and doctoral students in them are commendable and the EEC considers them especially meritorious.

The University Research Committee has access to approximately 15 specialized scientific and technical staff available to assist faculty members in the preparation of research proposals. In addition, the Committee has developed special software for searches regarding research collaborations and/or research partners, within the framework of the ERASMUS + research program. These are excellent resources and are some of the reasons for the increasing research productivity of the faculty. The EEC recommends that this support should be expanded to assistance in identifying other research opportunities beyond the European public ERASMUS framework.
### 3.1.4 Justify your rating:

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Justify your rating:
The University has given major priority emphasis on the research activities of its faculty, and has been providing significant resources and infrastructure in support of their research efforts. In addition, it has made it a priority to recognize and encourage excellence in research productivity, by establishing journal rankings for all its disciplines and by rewarding the scholarship of its academic members. These are incentives that have had a considerable impact on both the quality and the quantity of the University faculty’s research and publication performance. Some of the initiatives of the University in this area are especially worthy of Merit recognition. However, the University has not identified systematically strategic focal areas of research.

### 3.1.5 Financial Strategy

- General financial strategy and management of national and international funds
- Regular budget management strategy
- Public investment management strategy
- Organisation and strategy of the Special Account for Research Funds (SARF)
- Organisation and strategy of the University Property Development and Management Company
- Existence of a Quality System for Financial Management (e.g. ISO), computerisation management and Budget monitoring (Regular Budget, Public Investments Programme, SARF Budget, etc.)

According to a commonly adopted view by all the levels of internal governance, finance is seen as the major problem of the University and a limiting factor for the development of a more proactive strategic view regarding the future of the UoM. However, significant effort is made continuously to maintain a healthy financial situation and cover all its third-party financial obligations. All administrative and academic staff members interviewed seem aware of the financial limitations and are grateful for the modest financial support provided. Despite the lack of a genuinely strategic approach, it is recognised that a more proactive approach will be necessary in the near future in order to reach a sustainable financial situation. Significant efforts are made to complement the limited resources with the establishment of postgraduate courses whose fees are recognised as the main revenue solution to the current budgetary crisis. Regular budget management is undertaken centrally by specialized services which seem competent but have a fragmented scope, incompatible with a strategic approach to fund management and fund seeking strategies. Most actions regarding the management of financial resources are dictated by either the law or the limitations due to the recent budget cuts. Therefore, some financial assets available from reserves generated in the past are shrinking as they are used to cover short-term obligations.

The Special Account for Research Funds (SARF/ELKE) is flexibly managed, creating some capacity for the development of a more strategic financial management profile.
expressing the institutional priorities. However, the information available on the breakdown of the distribution of overhead revenues by activity supported by the resulting funds is not available at the moment. The EEC recommends that the funds generated by the overhead costs are broken down in detail as to which activities are funded with them and to what percentage, in order to enhance the transparency and accountability and broaden the use for the strategic management of funds.

The EEC commends that there is a University Property Development and Management Company. The income generated from activities like rent from buildings, merchandising, university publications, organization of conferences etc. seems to follow a declining trend due to the ongoing crisis in the country. The EEC recommends that every effort should be made to maintain active these sources of funding and look for new expansion possibilities.

There is an ongoing effort aimed at a better financial management system. In fact, the main financial services are in the process of certification, having obtained already a level of sufficiency, heading towards a higher level of accreditation, like ISO. The EEC recommends further promoting a paperless administration. Also, a more strategic and proactive approach in funding and fundraising activities is recommended as the principal response to a largely negative financial situation in the country as a whole.

Justify your rating:

The financial situation in the country creates a negative and even threatening environment. This is fully understood at all levels of administration in the UoM and several measures are taken to rationalize spending. Furthermore, the financial strategy leads to fund allocation which reflects and promotes the priorities of the Institution (e.g. promoting excellence in research and the presence of the faculty in international forums).

3.1.6 Building and Grounds Infrastructure Strategy

- Strategy key points
- Objectives and timetables
- Measures taken to reach goals
- Deviations from model 1 campus/HEI

After the absorption of two new departments which were previously located in Edessa and Nausa, all activities of the University of Macedonia are centralised in a single building. Under these circumstances, the building infrastructure is insufficient and not in conformity with the existing regulation as far as the number of students per m² is concerned. A number of steps have been made towards a solution to this problem, but the efforts to expand building infrastructure over a number of other buildings have failed because all alternatives considered did not meet some of the required standards. In the meantime, a new application for a building has been made to the state for funding.

While building problems were classified as the second most important of the Institution,
the steps and actions made so far and those planned to be done in the near future seem to be adequate.

Special mention should be made to the fact that the existing technical services office is certified at a high level and is prepared to obtain a high level of technical standards. Building maintenance is mostly undertaken by the Technical Services unit. A non-autarchic, small technical team exists but even regular maintenance needs continuously externalised services. Maintenance work is regular and programmed on a yearly basis to allow for adequate time for all the actions necessary for the corresponding public auctions in order to meet the legal standards and user-driven requirements. The management of building infrastructure reveals a strategic vision, recognizing clearly the possible benefits from a more self-sufficient maintenance team but also from the cost reductions achieved thanks to the recent pressing competitive forces in the market, which have lowered the price of jobs, often sufficiently to offset the cost of externalization in favour of a partial externalization of the services through public bids.

Special mention needs to be made to the ongoing effort to guarantee accessibility for people with different types of special needs (blind, limited mobility) and compliance with the “one university-one building” requirement in a well delineated building.

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Justify your rating:

While the current building situation is certainly suboptimal, the management of building infrastructure is of high quality, exhibiting clear elements of good planning and strategy in both the medium and the long run.

### 3.1.7 Environmental Strategy

- Recycling strategy and measures taken to reach goals
- Hazardous waste management and measures taken to reach goals
- Urban waste management and measures taken to reach goals
- Green energy strategy and measures taken to reach goals

The UoM must be praised for its environmental strategy. It is among the earliest EMAS-certified public institutions in the country (EMAS EK 1221/2009: Eco – Management and Audit Scheme), obtaining also European recognition for its overall effort in this domain. The environmental strategy covers the full spectrum of pro-environmental policies, from recycling and data collection regarding waste to environmental control and planning for the future. Full records are maintained regarding the environmental performance of the Institution and this was reflected in a very detailed account of goals and strategies in the internal evaluation report. Several commendable actions along the admirable path of the University as a socially responsible and environmental friendly agent is the creation of small open-space green patio courts. It is also worth mentioning that environmental awareness spills over into other activities and strategies, such as the enhancement and improvement of the building infrastructure, which is made including specific considerations towards enhancing energy efficiency.
Despite this admirable record of the Institution regarding the promotion of an environment-friendly culture, the existing antismoking legislation is not observed on the premises of the University. As a **green and socially responsible institution**, the UoM needs to make sure that the antismoking legislation is first respected by the highest levels of administration and the faculty members before making all efforts possible to successfully enforce the current antismoking law to students and other stakeholders.

**Justify your rating:**

The University of Macedonia is environmentally aware, proudly engaging in a number of strategies promoting a respectful attitude towards the environment, ranging from recycling to the establishment of green semi-open patio spaces. It needs to complement its environmentally aware image with a more strict compliance with the anti-smoking law.

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**3.1.8 Social Strategy**

- Exploitation and dissemination of the Institution’s Research Activities for the benefit of society and economy
- Promotion of interaction between the Institution and the Labour Market
- Sustained relationships with key local and regional bodies
- Contribution to the cultural development of society, the city and the region
- Reciprocal and long-lasting relationship with the alumni community

The UoM maintains deep and strong links to the surrounding community. External stakeholders enthusiastically perceive it as a major input to their everyday life and especially as a major source providing a high-quality and innovative labour force into the local, regional and national labour markets.

During the meeting between the EEC and the external stakeholders, it was realized that the University is considered positively as an academic institution, seeking excellence in the domains of its specialization, which are perceived to be economic and social sciences.

The faculty and graduate representatives but also several external stakeholders enthusiastically refer to the Institution’s thought leadership in the community, with frequent appearances in the press and the media, participating on numerous occasions in all the stages of public dialogue. They also strongly perceive the environmental strategy, being aware of several pro-environmental actions whose scope goes beyond the campus. Both the name and the image of the University were mentioned on several occasions by independent stakeholders, graduates and faculty as assets playing a major role in the region, beyond the national borders.

Human resource managers from several national and international firms located in the area enthusiastically referred to the excellent assistance they receive by the Liaison office (γραφείο διασύνδεσης) of the University when seeking for candidates to fill their
vacancies and to match students to open positions which are appropriate for placements. This seems to be one of the strongest points confirming a proactive role of the University in promoting the links between its graduates and the local labour market. Furthermore, the University systematically interacts with the National Orchestra of Thessaloniki. Finally, a postgraduate course has been established, offering specialization at an advanced level for military officials.

Graduates of the UoM consider their experience during their studies as highly positive, confirming its role as an excellent institution focused on the social sciences and recognizing its ability for dynamic adaptation to the new challenges of the socio-political environment. Some of the graduates benefit from the fact that they still have their email accounts enabling them to receive information regarding activities and employment openings, but also on seminars organized in the UoM. In addition, they mentioned their own network possibilities and the relationship with the Liaison office in order to look for employment or employable people.

Following a common view expressed by both the graduates and organizational representatives, the EEC feels that more effort should be made to link the graduates in a more systematic way among them and follow their progress in the labour market. Furthermore, business representatives emphasized the need for the University to make every effort possible to assist the students to understand the importance of entrepreneurship, encouraging and guiding them on the process for creating new firms. In discussions with the administration of the Institution, it was noted that a great effort is being made at the moment for all of these gaps to be filled in the near future. They mentioned an ongoing effort to keep systematic data and use them in order to build the necessary links with the alumni and the labour market.

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Justify your rating:

Excellent links between the University and society exist, especially regarding the insertion of graduates in the local labour market. More effort is needed to benefit from a large alumni community which is not yet systematically linked with the UoM.

### 3.1.9 Internationalization Strategy

- Integration of the international dimension in the curricula
- Integration of the international dimension in research
- Integration of the intercultural dimension within the campus
- Participation in international HEI networks
- Collaboration with HEIs in other countries (with a specific collaboration agreement) - measures taken to reach goals

An important element in the vision of the UoM is its endeavour to play a central role as an academic institution in the Balkans. This view is shared and supported by the governance, the students and the external stakeholders. It constitutes major evidence of the Institution’s international scope, while it serves at the same time as a clear example of what should be
followed in other domains as a key aspect of the university’s vision to form a full strategic plan for the future.

However, while UoM has made an effort to position itself as a regional educational hub toward the Balkans, it is important to note that integration of the international dimension in the curricula has thus far failed to take note the emergence of the field of Global, Transnational and Cosmopolitan Studies. This field is particularly relevant for several fields of study covered by UoM departments. There is therefore plenty of room to articulate and integrate cosmopolitan imperatives into the curricula, and the Institution can decide by itself the best strategy for pursuing this objective in the future. Moreover, the presence of foreign students on campus is not by itself tantamount to an intercultural dimension because such a dimension involves third-culture building among students. While there is a large number of students from neighbouring countries on campus, there is no evidence that flows of cultural interaction operate in both directions. In other words, the assumption is basically that flows of cultural influence come from the Greek side, while a more balanced perspective should recognize that such flows should also come from the non-Greek side too. More even flows would create a more meaningful space for cross-cultural and inter-cultural relations.

The UoM participates in the Erasmus exchange program. A number of incoming and outgoing students and faculty members all exhibit increasing trends over the last several years. Furthermore, there is a relatively large number of international students. Many of them reach high levels of competence in Greek, indicating a successful integration into the local culture. There is one postgraduate programme that is organized fully in English, as are several modules offered to Erasmus students.

While the research and the curricula integrate the international dimension, participation in international collaboration agreements and relations with international higher institution networks largely depend on individual faculty strategies. The EEC recommends a more systematic effort to be made aimed at promoting the university’s participation in international networks, consortia and collaborations.

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Justify your rating:

While more effort should be made to promote participation in international networks, the UoM integrates the international dimension in many of its activities. The worthy of merit element of the internationalization strategy is the university’s aim to play a central role as a higher education institution in the Balkans.
**3.1.10 Student Welfare Strategy**

- Student hostel operation and development strategy
- Student refectory development strategy
- Scholarships and prizes strategy
- Sports facilities operation and development strategy
- Cultural activities strategy
- Strategy for people with special needs

A total of 200 students are offered free accommodations. Students are satisfied with the quality of hostels and the frequent bus connections to the city. Management is efficient, but some domains for improvement were identified by the student welfare officer, like the capacity to accommodate more students and the revision of the eligibility criteria. A rather unusual arrangement seems to exist requiring the university student welfare office to also manage the paperwork submitted by students eligible for a housing subsidy, increasing the already large workload of this service unit.

Free food is also available for a large number of students in the University refectory, which also offers meals at a very low price (14€ per week for three meals a day) to students who are not eligible for free meals. A total of 2,000 meals per day are served. Students are satisfied with both the quantity and the quality of food prepared in an ISO-certified kitchen supervised by a committee including student representatives.

Finally, free health care is provided to all those students (including foreign) who are not covered through alternative means.

The UoM must be praised for its care for students with special needs. Electronic maps for blind students are available. Accessibility for students with limited mobility is guaranteed, but further work has begun to improve access through the main entrance.

Students are supported through grants to participate in the Erasmus exchange program. Introduction to research is promoted by integrating interested students in paid survey activities of the research groups. The Liaison office helps people in their job seeking strategies, supporting them with resume writing and even with seeking possibilities for paid internships.

A gym is available on campus, also serving external users. Several sports (basketball, volleyball, fencing, etc.) can be practiced on campus by students. Internal tournaments are organized. Programmes for dancing and theatre are open to all students. There is also an environmental team collaborating with the Green office.

However, a formal counselling service for students and a systematic process for the review of student complaints are missing. An informal counselling service exists, but few students are aware of it. The EEC recommends that these important issues are taken into account in order to complement the caring and socially responsible image of the UoM.
Please decide in respect to the specific evaluation area (&3.1.10):

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Justify your rating:
The student welfare strategy of the UoM is efficient, covering a broad spectrum of needs, delivering high quality services. Establishing a formal student counselling service and promoting it should be included soon among them.
3.2 Strategy for Study Programmes

3.2.1 Programmes of Undergraduate Studies (first cycle)

Please comment on:

- the main strengths and weaknesses of the Programmes
- the basic obligations of students, e.g. attendance of lectures, course requirements, etc.
- the way the Central Administration of the Institution deals with any remarks and recommendations that the external experts pointed out in the External Evaluation of Academic Units

Do you wish to make any comment on a point not included above?

The following assessment is based on the information provided by the IER, as well as some informal statements offered by faculty members during their meetings with the EEC. There was no systematic overview and presentation of individual programmes per department made to the EEC during the visit to the UoM. Given the time constraints of the process that is not entirely unreasonable, but it also means that the information conveyed is general and lacks specifics. Given the information conveyed to the EEC, in the following, there is no breakdown according to departments and individual programmes of study.

Main strengths of the Programmes

1. The curricula of several programmes have already been evaluated and specific recommendations were made. According to the IER, the departments have revised curricula according to the recommendations made in the prior departmental external reviews and made additional suitable changes to accommodate the feedback provided. No coherent or organized systematic presentation of the changes made since 2014 was made to the EEC.

2. The IER and the meetings with the departments highlighted the issue of understaffing. The EEC was told that many of the departments undertake periodic evaluation and revision of their programmes but again this was conveyed in an ad hoc manner, verbally and without a written summary or presentation of the actions thus far undertaken.

3. Student evaluations are collected from all courses.

4. Laboratories and/or other similar facilities (when part of teaching requirements) appear well equipped. The students in the Department of Music Science and Education have a recording studio at their disposal; this is built within the university’s building and is also available to outside users. Moreover, the Institution’s amphitheatre is used by the students (the EEC members witnessed a rehearsal taking place). The students also use the facilities of the State Orchestra for their training.

5. Practical training is undertaken when appropriate and several additional programmes (such as Erasmus placement) assist the students.

Main weaknesses of the Programmes

1. Large number of students. The EEC was told that the faculty to student ratio is 1 to 42, based on the number of active students. The UoM lacks adequate space to accommodate enrolled students and has been looking around for additional building facilities for several years, but the search has thus far been unsuccessful. Staffing is clearly an issue as a result of the high number of students. That affects the instructors’ ability to offer suitable means of assessment. The EEC fully understands that the number of students in the entering class is dictated by the...
State that largely bears the responsibility for this weakness, common to many Greek universities.

2. The extent of job placement varies widely among departments. The graduates of the Department of Educational and Social Policy appear to have excellent career prospects thanks to increased market needs. The graduates of the Department of Music Science and Education obviously follow distinct career paths specific to their specialty. The UoM does not track systematically all its graduates in order to assess their success in the labour market; given the high unemployment rate in Greece at the time of the report such information could become useful in terms of developing further an employment strategy.

3. Based on the IER, with the exception of the Departments of Accounting and Music Education, the other departments do not appear to rank highly as incoming students’ 1st choices. That, in turn, could mean low student motivation to relate to course content. According to Table IV. 3 (p. 149) of the IER, completion of undergraduate studies within the prescribed time period (N years of study + 2) is lacking for a considerable percentage of students, with individual figures fluctuating from one department to the next. This is an area where improvement should be sought.

4. Alumni outreach programmes or an alumni association is lacking in general although some departments are creating such structures. Whatever information exists is collected on an ad hoc basis.

- Basic obligations of students
  
  (i) The high percentage of undergraduate students failing to complete all requirements within the allocated time period of study is an important issue of concern. This concern is endemic in many Greek universities.

  (ii) The EEC was told that in approximately 70% of the courses offered, the final examination is the sole method of assessment, while in 30% of the courses, the students are also offered the possibility of doing a term paper or other assignment. *It is clear that multiple methods of evaluation should be implemented in order to improve teaching and these should also improve the low completion rate.* Instructors, quite reasonably, have pointed out the impossibility of doing so with classes of 300+ students. The UoM has to come up with imaginative solutions to this issue. A notable exception to the above are the methods used in the Department of Music Science and Education, but that in large part is a reflection of the object of study in that department.

- Central and External Evaluation of Academic Units

  Individual departments have reviewed their External Evaluations and the EEC was told that they have addressed and implemented appropriate recommendations that were included in the reports. Staffing problems further compound the issue, as does the degree of often stifling control of the State over the number of incoming students. *The UoM (and all Greek universities) should be consulted and their input used in defining the number of students they can realistically train with the staff and the facilities available. There is an excessive role of formal State input; extreme and sudden budgetary cuts and lack of flexibility in resolving resource limitations needlessly complicate virtually all issues.*

  *The University and the State should address the issue of student progress and take appropriate measures. The State and the University must come to an agreement on the number of incoming students over a number of years (e.g. a four-year cycle), based on the funding the university receives from the State. The number of incoming students should remain stable for reasonably long periods of time, so as to allow the University to optimally plan its academic activities; and enable faculty to meet academic standards. The State should revise radically existing procedures, indeed the whole*
framework of Higher Education, with a view to handing back this space to the universities and stakeholder community. The limitations imposed by the publication in the FEK (Φύλλο Εφημερίδας Κυβερνήσεως) that is required for legal operation in most activities should end.

A final critical issue of concern:

The local representative of Greece’s Economic Chamber informed the EEC that the Economic Chamber conducts strict evaluations of the course content of the UoM’s degrees and on the basis of this evaluation the graduates from six out of eight departments (the two departments being Music Science Education and Educational and Social Policy) are granted professional recognition (by the Economic Chamber) as economists. To obtain this status 50% + 1 of the coursework within a degree programme should be considered courses in economics. However, given that there are several distinct degrees that in theory should have a different focus, it is evident that there is a major underlying issue concerning the extent to which the degrees in disciplines other than economics are sufficiently independent of economics. The UoM might have opted for strengthening training in economics because that has offered its graduates a niche in Greece’s labor market; but that might have been done at the expense of academic coverage of the other individual disciplines. The various recommendations given to individual programmes of study to revise their curricula could be a way to revise this trend, but it might endanger the credential’s recognition. It is necessary for UoM to address this issue head-on in order to move forward and find its own niche and position as a higher education institution.

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Justify your rating:

Undergraduate teaching at the UoM also suffers seriously from the overall effects of the numerous and well-known chronic problems in Greece’s higher education system. These range from cuts in funding and staffing levels, to lack of organizational autonomy to high student numbers. These are nation-wide constraints in need of nation-wide answers. The State should consider changing the framework of higher education and move towards a framework appropriate for the 21st century.

### 3.2.2 Programmes of Postgraduate Studies (second cycle)

Please comment on:

- the main strengths and weaknesses of the Programmes
- the basic obligations of students, e.g. attendance of lectures, course requirements, etc.
- the way the Central Administration of the Institution deals with any remarks and recommendations that the external experts pointed out in the External Evaluation of Academic Units

Do you wish to make any comment on a point not included above?

There was no presentation made to the EEC during their meetings with the Rector, QAU/MODIP or the Departments, nor was there an overview of these programmes’ strengths and weaknesses. The precise number of postgraduate programmes varies according to different sources; according to the IER, there are 13 postgraduate programmes while according to documents e-mailed to the EEC on 30/3/2016, there are...
26 postgraduate programmes plus three postgraduate programmes conducted jointly between UoM and other universities. According to the latest information, a total of 1,588 students were enrolled in these programmes for 2014-2015 and 2015-2016.

The operating assumption in all conversations regarding financing of the graduate programmes seems to be that all are self-financed. According to the IER, only two postgraduate programmes are not self-financed and the UoM confirmed this. The postgraduate offerings cover a wide spectrum of subject areas; some of these could be considered as over-specialized but there was no presentation or discussion during the visit of these programmes’ features, their intention, rationale or outcomes. The UoM indicated in its comments that the institutional web site provides information; however, these programme descriptions do not necessarily include the programmes rationale and outcomes. It is a wonder how an institution so heavily understaffed can operate all these programmes. The answer to this question has been that these programmes are staffed with non-affiliated faculty, in addition to UoM faculty members. The UoM indicated in its comments that “most postgraduate programmes (especially the professionally oriented ones and obviously all inter-university collaborations) use faculty from other Universities and high quality professionals with academic credentials in order to deliver their courses. These collaborations, apart from improving the quality of the programs, enhance the University’s exposure and brand name and improve possibilities of research collaborations.” For the self-funded programmes, instructors receive additional payment for the services they provide to these programmes. Money from these programmes is directed to the ELKE budget which, in turn, provides financial resources that help ease the considerably fiscal constraints faced by UoM. It therefore appears that these programmes are being used as an alternative revenue source to enable the UoM’s continued operation, as a source of additional income for UoM faculty members, and for various other activities.

The overall demand for post-graduate degrees in Greece is such, that all such initiatives are presently oversubscribed. The EEC observes that while this MA model is based on customer availability, it detracts from research time.

This variety of programmes ought to be coordinated by a university-wide committee to secure, monitor and enforce common standards, develop an overall strategic and operational plan, and even develop a stable revenue stream. Moreover, the creation of a formal graduate administrative structure to coordinate activities undertaken by departments will lead to further rationalization of postgraduate education. Such a committee could be a precursor to a School/Faculty of Graduate Studies, which should come into existence in order to manage the array of programmes.

The EEC had an opportunity to speak to several postgraduate students during the site visit; those interviewed seem satisfied with their experience. Quality assurance in the postgraduate level is weak and the UoM should develop the necessary infrastructure to improve it.

The postgraduate programmes require enrolled students to take courses and to some extent conduct research-oriented projects and final theses. The requirements differ by programme. The extent to which postgraduate programme lectures are attended, the specifics of their requirements, and the degree of adherence or compliance to guidelines are all issues that only a university-wide graduate studies committee can examine in depth.

Given the recent increase in the number of post-graduate programmes, it is clear that the UoM central administration favours their expansion. However, the EEC cannot formally evaluate them given their recent creation.
Justify your rating:
The large number of newly constructed post-graduate programmes reflect a dual necessity: both an increase in demand (mostly a reflection of the high unemployment rate), as well as, a solution that secures both additional income to the faculty members, whose salaries were slashed, and to the UoM central administration, which can make extensive use of the additional funding in order to meet the Institution’s ongoing needs. The post-graduate programmes appear to have grown in a haphazard and uncoordinated fashion. The EEC recommends that the academic quality of these programmes be formally reviewed, and UoM should prioritize them according to its vision and strategy.

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3.2.3 Programmes of Doctoral Studies (third cycle)

Please comment on:
- the main strengths and weaknesses of the Programmes
- the basic obligations of students, e.g. attendance of lectures, course requirements, etc.
- the way the Central Administration of the Institution deals with any remarks and recommendations that the external experts pointed out in the External Evaluation of Academic Units

Do you wish to make any comment on a point not included above?

There are currently upwards of 400 doctoral students conducting research for their dissertations under the supervision of three-member advisory committees. The EEC finds that this is a challenging number of doctoral candidates, considering the small number of current faculty as compared to the large and increasing numbers of undergraduate students, the inability of the University to hire new faculty, and the limited and dwindling financial and other resources available to the Institution. The EEC recommends that the University monitors its admissions to the doctoral programmes in light of available resources and research programme needs.

The number of new doctoral degrees granted has gone up in recent years (106 between 2010 and 2014 and 48 between 2014 and 2016) and this may suggest that doctoral completion has been sought also as a means of dealing with a deteriorating labour market. However, doctoral students seem enthusiastic with their research and supervision. There is a clear intention to follow their supervisors, and their own individual background varies widely. Some of them are UoM students with little or no exposure to academic institutions outside of Greece, while others might have completed post-graduate work in prestigious European universities.

As with nearly all European doctoral programmes, the UoM-based programmes lack a course-based curriculum and therefore may fail to deliver in-depth knowledge of the subject matter.
The EEC suggests a more structured formation of doctoral programmes that requires coursework. This should help students and offer them a solid foundation for basic and specialization elements in their pre-dissertation period. However, the EEC recognises staff limitations and practical obstacles in operation vis-a-vis such an objective.

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Justify your rating:

The EEC suggests a more structured formation of doctoral programmes that requires coursework. This should help students and offer them a solid foundation for basic and specialization elements in their pre-dissertation period. However, the EEC recognises staff limitations and practical obstacles in operation vis-a-vis such an objective.
### 3.3 Profile of the Institution under evaluation - Conclusions and recommendations

Please complete the following sections regarding the overall profile of the Institution under evaluation:

**Underline specific positive points:**

1. The list of goals, based on the EEC interviews with the stakeholders, accurately reflects the Institution’s current priorities.
2. Mid-term and long-term objectives/targets accurately reflect the university mission goals and priorities.
3. Priorities are being transferred to, and provide a basis for the reassessment of the mission and objective of the Departments.
4. The UoM has the potential to evolve into a major educational and cultural pole for northern Greece and the Balkan Peninsula.
5. The university administration is clearly committed to solving the problems facing the Institution.
6. The Office of the Rector is currently working on updating an earlier version of the organizational structure.
7. A primary goal of all Departments in the past year or so has been the implementation of the recommendations of the external review committees.
8. There is a supportive environment for supporting high quality research and productivity.
9. The University boasts of a considerable number of external research partners.
10. Research activities actively engage doctoral candidates and postgraduate students.
11. The University Research Committee has excellent resources which help increase research productivity of the faculty.
12. Significant effort is made to maintain a healthy financial situation.
13. The Special Account for Research Funds (SARF/ELKE) is flexibly managed.
14. Excellent and cost effective technical service and Building maintenance.
15. Accessibility services for people with special needs (blind, limited mobility).
16. Compliance with the “one university-one building” requirement.
17. There is an effective environmental strategy.
18. The name and image of the University is recognized as an asset by stakeholders and students.
19. Proactive role of the University in promoting the links between its graduates and the local labour market.
20. Endeavour to play a central role as an academic institution in the Balkans.

**Underline specific negative points:**

1. The statement of vision is too general.
2. The process through which the current vision statement was produced is not clear.
3. There is currently no monitoring or evaluating of the progress in the
implementation of goals.
4. The UoM does not have an approved formal and complete organizational chart and strategic plan yet.
5. The UoM has been reluctant to take initiatives for which there may be legal ramifications once the new rules were approved and implemented.
6. There are no specific timetables with target dates for the achievement of goals and targets.
7. High number of entering undergraduate students.
8. There is no formal system for the monitoring of academic goals at the Departmental or School level.
9. The extent of job placement assistance varies widely among departments.
10. Several departments are not among the incoming students’ top choices.
11. High percentage of undergraduate students who fail to graduate within allocated time period of study.
12. Existing antismoking legislation is not observed within the premises.
13. A counselling service and a systematic review process for student complaints are missing.
14. Institutional participation in international collaboration agreements and higher institution networks mainly rests on individual faculty strategies.
15. No systematic overview and presentation of individual programmes per department was made to the EEC.
16. The post-graduate programmes have grown in an uncoordinated fashion.

Make your suggestions for further development of the positive points:
Despite the lack of a genuinely strategic approach, it is recognised that a more proactive approach will be necessary in the near future in order to reach a sustainable financial situation.

Make your suggestions on needed steps for improvement:
1. The EEC recommends that the university revise and clarify its vision and mission statement and goals.
2. The Schools and Departments of the university should be encouraged to more closely align their own individual mission statements and goals with those of the university as a whole.
3. The EEC strongly recommends that an organizational chart be followed within the constraints imposed by the Greek laws.
4. The EEC recommends that academic goals should be considered as part of the overall monitoring system the university intends to develop.
5. The EEC recommends that the research strategy in terms of areas of emphasis of the university be coordinated at all levels of the Institution.
6. The antismoking legislation should be respected by high administration and faculty members who should then enforce it campus-wide.
7. A more systematic effort should be made aimed at increasing the university’s participation in international networks, consortia and collaborations.
8. A counselling service should be instituted.
9. Post-graduate programmes should be coordinated by a university-wide committee and these should be developed in accordance to UoM’s overall strategic plan.
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<td>10.</td>
<td>No effort should be spared to maintain non-State sources of funding active.</td>
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<td>A more strategic and proactive approach in funding and fundraising activities is recommended.</td>
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<td>More effort to link with alumni and follow their progress in the labour market is recommended.</td>
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<td>13.</td>
<td>Multiple methods of student assessment should be implemented in order to improve teaching.</td>
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4. INTERNAL SYSTEM OF QUALITY ASSURANCE

There is not sufficient information in this section in the 2014 IER that states that its 5th section was not completed by the QAU/MODIP as the internal QA system of the Institution has not been completed yet.

4.1 Quality Assurance (QA) Policy and Strategy

Please comment on:

- the Institution’s policy and goals regarding QA and Improvement
- whether the Institution has developed a specific system of QA
- how the Institution’s internal QA system has been organized
- how the students and staff of the Institution are protected from biased interventions and discriminations
- whether a detailed implementation guide has been put together, containing an analysis of the QA system’s operating procedures
- the involvement of students in QA
- how the Institution evaluates the effectiveness of its QA system regarding the achievement of its goals

Do you wish to make any comment on a point not included above?

QA should be a major priority. However, the Institution has not formally implemented the QA system as it is obliged to do by law. The UoM has commented that the process has been initiated.

The MODIP conducts no individual faculty evaluation of performance but only departmental evaluation as such. The MODIP further restricts its operation to teaching alone and only collects data on research.

The UoM has developed a rather unique system of research promotion using the funds from ELKE account. That is, UoM has invested considerable resources in constructing discipline-based lists of journals and offering financial rewards for faculty publishing in these journals. This is a praiseworthy approach (though one member of the EEC had reservations about the extent to which this process is entirely objective). The practice has also increased the international visibility and rankings of the UoM faculty members.

Another mechanism for promoting research is the internal small grants programme offered by the UoM. This programme offers the opportunity of a small amount of money to individual faculty members and is offered on a bi-annual basis. It should be plain from the above that there is a great deal of things to do in terms of integrating teaching assessment with research assessment.

With regard to protecting the staff and the students from biased intervention or discrimination, the UoM still lacks the development of a due process specific to disciplinary issues and related institutional oversight and regulations.

As far as the EEC can discern, the UoM has conducted no benchmarking vis-a-vis other similar institutions outside of Greece.

Suggestions:

- The implementation of QA should cover research, teaching, programmes, and services as identified in the Self-Evaluation process.
• QA processes should be defined in a way that includes a detailed description of the data selection method, data analysis and evaluation method, and pertinent actions and reactions/feedback.

• The QA processes should explain and justify matters pertaining to collecting and handling of personal data such as appropriateness of data size, respect of privacy, constitutional rights and be sufficiently robust to assure future academic quality review and actions for improvement in a rapidly changing and financially deteriorating environment. QA processes should be developed in such a way that contingencies are dealt with as rapidly as possible.

• The academic units should proactively increase their interaction and collaboration with the OMEAs and MODIP so that they are better prepared for the future role of MODIP. It is noted that according to State planning, MODIP is expected to be assigned a substantial role and expected to be well aware of the available programmes, contribute to their development and eventually be their QA and accreditation body within the Institution.

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Justify your rating:
The EEC understands that QA policy (and strategy) is still in its infancy in Greek Higher Education. The UoM has a long road ahead toward meeting this challenge. Both top-down as well bottom-up policies have to be developed and combined in order to produce effective outcomes.
4.2 Design, approval, monitoring and evaluation of the study programmes and degrees awarded

Please comment on:

- whether the learning outcomes have been clearly formulated and whether they have been published
- whether the programmes are designed in such a way as to involve students and other stakeholders in the work
- how the achievement of learning outcomes is monitored
- whether there is a published Guide regarding the organization of programmes of study
- whether the ECTS system is taken into consideration and implemented
- whether there is a periodic evaluation of the programmes according to set procedures and criteria aimed at safeguarding their consistency and regular updating
- the student participation in the QA procedure of the study programmes
- whether the programmes include well-structured international mobility and -where appropriate- placement opportunities

Do you wish to make any comment on a point not included above?

Syllabi and related material are regularly published through the UoM’s online system and made available to students. Outside stakeholders are mostly informally consulted, but a relationship between them and UoM does exist. There is a Guide of programmes of study published periodically. The academic programmes of individual departments are designed, reviewed, and modified by its faculty on a regular basis. Assessment of programmes is supervised by pertinent committees in each department. Course sequencing has not been addressed but it should be. Students are generally allowed a degree of flexibility within their own programmes of study through concentration areas of their choice or through electives in their programme of study. These options enable students to partially design their own individual study programme. The UoM has adopted the ECTS credit system. Students participate in QA of programmes through their course evaluations. The students are offered ample opportunities for international mobility and placement, such as the EU ERASMUS+ programme, etc. The EEC encourages the continuation and possible expansion of actions to strengthen not only the critical and academically reflective part of the learning outcomes, but also the practical/hands-on component in the academic programmes, such as practical training, internships, etc.

Suggestions:

- The programmes should use qualitative or quantitative metrics to measure levels of achievement. The learning outcomes should be compatible with the national framework describing the quality level of graduates at any level.
- The programme assessment process should be defined in terms of data selection, data analysis and evaluation methods, and pertinent action and feedback, with leadership involvement, for assessing and rewarding quality enhancement both bottom-up (OMEA to Head of the Department to Faculty) and top-down (Vice-Rector to MODIP to OMEAs).
OMEA needs to be linked more effectively with Departments; and processes should be strengthened to help the faculty improve their courses and satisfy the needs of students and linked stakeholders.

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*Justify your rating:*

OMEA needs to be linked more effectively with Departments; and processes should be strengthened to help the faculty improve their courses and satisfy the needs of students and linked stakeholders.
4.3 Teaching and learning - Assessment by students

Please comment on:

- whether multiple and coherent learning paths are provided according to the needs of students in the Institution’s Departments / Faculties
- how proper guidance and support is offered to students by the Departments / Faculties’ teaching staff
- whether students are informed clearly and in detail regarding the strategy of evaluation that is implemented for their programme of study, the exams or other methods of assessment they will be subjected to, what is expected of them and which criteria will be applied for the evaluation of their performance
- whether there is a formal procedure for addressing complaints and objections by students in the Departments / Faculties of the Institution

Do you wish to make any comment on a point not included above?

By and large, the Institution provides multiple learning paths: Different programmes offer the ability for individual students to select areas of concentration within their degree. Electives can also offer additional flexibility.

Given the high student-to-faculty ratio, the issue of proper guidance is important. The UoM has instituted a faculty advisor position in order to better serve student needs.

In general, students seem to be informed adequately about assessment criteria and other aspects of their course performance.

The UoM lacks a formal procedure for addressing complaints and/or objections by students. Theoretically, students could take their complaints to the Department Chair. The UoM has not formally developed the necessary guidelines for addressing disciplinary matters and that set of issues seems currently to be handled in a post hoc or unstructured manner by the Rector, using a needs-based strategy.

Suggestions:

- The high student-to-faculty ratio should be urgently addressed by all parties involved within and outside of the Institution (at the State level).
- The UoM should develop disciplinary guidelines and should move away from a need-based strategy of addressing such matters.

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Justify your rating:

The teaching and learning assessment of students has been properly addressed with the exception of a formal disciplinary policy.
4.4 Admission of students, progression and recognition of studies

Please comment on:

- whether the procedures and criteria for admission to the second and third cycle of studies are implemented with consistency and transparency
- whether there are clear and distinct procedures within the Departments/Faculties, as regards recognition of higher education degrees, periods of study and knowledge acquired at an earlier stage
- whether there are clear and distinct procedures of recognition of study periods and prior learning (including the recognition of non-formal and informal learning)
- whether there are clear procedures in place regarding the cooperation of other institutions with national ENIC/NARIC centres for ensuring coherent recognition and mobility among programmes within / among institution(s)
- whether students are provided with detailed information (e.g. Diploma Supplement) regarding the degrees conferred to them, the achieved learning outcomes as well as the framework, the level and the content of studies they successfully completed
- whether the Institution has in place processes and tools to collect, monitor and use information regarding student progression

Do you wish to make any comment on a point not included above?

Procedures and criteria for admission to the second and third cycles of studies are implemented with transparency: the guidelines have to be voted on by the Senate and are published in the FEK for individual programmes to start. But since there is no Graduate School, these are not necessarily consistent.

The UoM is a participant in the ENIC/NARIC network of centres that ensure coherent recognition and mobility among programmes for participating institutions. More specifically, exchange students (e.g. Erasmus) are recognized according to fairly standardized procedures. The University has implemented the ECTS system and as a result there are clear procedures of recognition of study periods and prior learning received in other Greek universities or in non-Greek universities that use the ECTS system. The University also offers the Diploma Supplement, whereby students are provided with detailed information regarding the degrees conferred to them, the achieved learning outcomes, as well as the framework, the level and the content of studies they have successfully completed.

Recognition of non-formal and informal learning is not foreseen. The UoM has implemented an efficient electronic system to collect, monitor and use information regarding student progress and recognition of studies.

Comments:

The number of post-graduate students is quite high. The same is true for the number of post-graduate programmes. It is necessary to have uniform Guidelines for Graduate Studies to address issues of consistency (although these may already be generally similar). There are no requirements concerning coursework in the doctoral programmes. Informal statements by doctoral students tend to be positive regarding their supervisors.
Undergraduate admission procedures are adequate, but a more formal and uniform system for post-graduate admissions would be optimal.
4.5 Quality Assurance as regards the teaching staff

Please comment on:

- how it is guaranteed that the vacancy notices and recruitment of teaching staff include procedures which provide assurance that all new teaching staff members have at least the basic teaching skills
- opportunities offered to the teaching staff for their professional/scientific advancement
- how potential weaknesses of the teaching staff are identified as regards the delivery of their teaching courses
- the Institution’s procedures for the support of new teaching staff as regards the teaching and evaluation methods
- how scientific activity is assessed and encouraged among the teaching staff in order to strengthen the connection between education and research
- the procedures in place so that the teaching staff members receive the necessary feedback on their personal performance as well as on the opinion of students
- whether a regulatory framework is in place for the investigation of disciplinary and academic misconduct of the teaching staff

Do you wish to make any comment on a point not included above?

The procedures for the election of a member of academic staff are conducted according to Greek legislation. The EEC was given the minutes of the 3.4.2015 Senate meeting where the details of a procedure to be applied for the appointment of new faculty, including their detailed timing and publication deadlines. The IER mentions that in certain cases, a trial lecture to the students or to the faculty may be required. The only information that could be obtained during the meeting with faculty members that in the case of persons with prior academic experience, their teaching record was considered. The EEC recommends that a trial lecture be systematically included in the hiring procedure.

The IER states that the opportunities offered to the teaching staff for their professional and scientific advancement are mainly internal grants and various types of leaves. Due to budget limitations over the last several years, these opportunities have been modest. There are no concrete actions by the Institution for improving teaching such as innovative teaching and assessment methods, and for raising their teaching and pedagogic skills.

The student evaluations of teaching are conducted in a systematic way every semester for all courses and also serve as the means of identifying weaknesses of the teaching staff. The questionnaire used follows international practice. The results are forwarded to the individual faculty members and to the QAU/MODIP; the head of the Department can discuss individual results with faculty members and provide advice. The quality of Teaching is also a criterion for the promotion of the members of the faculty.

The EEC is of the opinion that (in spite of its higher costs) the conduct of the evaluations in “hard copy” rather than electronic form is indeed preferable, as this provides much better participation and dispels any student fears that e-evaluations may not be fully confidential. The open publication of the evaluation results remains a remote but attainable goal and should be considered at the proper time.

No special procedure for supporting of new teaching staff in regards the teaching and evaluation methods has been identified.

The research activities of the faculty members are an essential part of their personal promotion evaluation and as such they are implicitly encouraged. The faculty members are encouraged by the Institution to participate in research programmes, in special groups or “laboratories” such as the Laboratory of Entrepreneurial Excellence, the Laboratory of...
Information Systems, the Laboratory of International Relations and European Integration and other European as well as national networks of collaboration.

The research activity is carefully collected, categorized and presented by the QAU/MODIP. However, the EEC did not identify any systematic methods used to assess periodically qualitatively and quantitatively the research of individual faculty members (except when they are coming up for promotion). The EEC recommends that systematic procedures for periodically evaluating the quality and extent of the research of individual faculty members as well as that of Departments be implemented.

As an encouragement of the teaching staff, the EEC notes with pleasure the existence of an annual “Research Award” granted on the basis of a publication in a well-established journal. There is also a “Teaching Award” for the best results in the student evaluation scores. The IER states that similar awards exist in certain post-graduate programmes.

The framework in place for the investigation of disciplinary and academic misconduct of the teaching staff is only that provided by the national legislation. The EEC recommends the implementation of a procedure by which complaints of academic or social misconduct of faculty members can be dealt with at the institutional level by a systematic, carefully established procedure safeguarding the rights of both parts.

Faculty members insisted on the fact that the results of the student performance are not only based on examinations, but on other ways of directly interacting with the students. Regarding the efficiency of teaching, the faculty pointed to the fact that good student evaluations of courses were generally obtained in the Departments.

Please decide in respect to the specific evaluation area (&4.5):

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Justify your rating:

The Student evaluations of teaching are the main mechanism by which the faculty members receive feedback on their performance; these evaluations generally show good teaching performance. There is an excellent and systematic collection of research activities, based on publications categorized according to the medium and research projects. This information can be used to produce performance indexes. However, the collected information is not used as means of true qualitative and quantitative evaluation (in the sense of discussion, critique, proposals for improvement, etc.) of the performance of individual faculty members as well as of entire Departments, and of established feedback mechanisms to improve performance.
4.6 Learning resources and student support

Please comment on:

- whether there are procedures for the systematic monitoring, evaluation, review and improvement of the appropriateness and effectiveness of supporting services available to students
- the available support services in regard to Libraries, Information systems and infrastructure
- the procedure in place for offering individual assistance (counselling and tutoring) to students

Do you wish to make any comment on a point not included above?

In the absence of a fully operational QA system, the IER states that the procedures for the systematic monitoring, evaluation, review and improvement of the appropriateness and effectiveness of supporting services available to students take place at the institutional level via the internal evaluation procedure, which is, however, not the QA procedure intended to also be in place. The IER also states, and the EEC agrees, that the semester-based evaluation of teaching in the various departments covers the educational part of the services available to students. The EEC finds no other measures in place regarding the QA of the supporting services available to students. The EEC recommends that a student evaluation of the various supporting services (library, counselling, residence and food services, etc.) be conducted every semester in parallel with the evaluation of courses.

The available central support services such as libraries, information systems and general infrastructure are addressed in Section 5.1 of the present EER. The EEC states here that these services respond very well to student needs.

The EEC learned that there is an academic advisor position covered by a faculty member in each department; the students interviewed were only partly aware of this. In addition the UoM offers the services of the Liaison office, the Erasmus exchange Office, and the Practical Training Office. These three seem rather to be activities of the same unique office; the EEC learned from students, alumni and stakeholders that this office is operating very well in spite of its limited resources.

The EEC had the opportunity to learn from the students and the alumni their satisfaction with the good quality of the educational infrastructure and support services offered to the students. The UoM has an open culture, facilitating the direct contact between students and teaching staff.

Please decide in respect to the specific evaluation area (&4.6):

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Justify your rating:

Although there are no formal QA measures in place for the supporting services available to students, the EEC realizes that these services are evaluated in other ways. The available Liaison Office is covering many if not all aspects of student needs. The central services of the Institution are functioning very well.
4.7 Information Systems for Recording and Analysing Data and Indicators

Please comment on:

- whether the Institution possesses reliable means for collecting, analysing and utilizing valid information in respect to key performance indicators, the profile of the student population and student progression, success and drop-out rates
- whether the Institution possesses reliable means for collecting, analysing and utilizing valid information regarding its other functions and activities
- whether the Institution collects information about student satisfaction with their programmes of study and the career paths offered to graduates
- whether the Institution seeks comparison with other similar establishments within and beyond the European Higher Education Area, with a view to developing self-awareness and finding ways to improve its operation

The UoM has an Information System in the context of the QAU/MODIP. This information system offers reliable means for collecting data (student evaluations of teaching, faculty publications, etc.). Such data were made available to the EEC in text as well in chart form resulting from statistical and time-analysis of the situation. According to the IER, additional, separate information systems are available in the Secretariats that collect student information, as well as in the Library and for the Special Research Fund (ELKE). QAU/MODIP draws information from these systems too. *The EEC recommends to put the Institution-wide QA system under construction in formal operation as soon as possible and to link or integrate all these available systems into it.*

The UoM collects the student evaluations of the courses, as already mentioned. There is no formal mechanism for collecting student satisfaction information about the programmes of study but the students and alumni that the EEC met were generally satisfied.

There is no Career Office or Placement Office although the Liaison Office performs limited actions in this area. The Practical Training acts as a powerful means of bringing together students and future employers and is very well managed by the Liaison Office. Graduates of UoM participate in institutional activities and indirectly bring their feedback.

Comparisons with other similar national and international establishments are not formally conducted, although the UoM participates in several external international rankings. The UoM has, however, in the past conducted comparisons regarding research in similar departments. Consequently, *the EEC recommends that the UoM utilise their QAU/MODIP data to perform comparisons with other similar institutions within and beyond Europe.* This could lead to strengthening self-awareness and triggering actions in order to find ways to improve its presence at all levels in education as well as research.

There are no processes for tracking systematically the path of graduates to employment or further studies. *The EEC recommends that the Institution develop a formal system to monitor the paths of all graduates* to the extent possible. (The EEC learned that recent graduates are allowed use of their UoM email accounts after graduation, a good way of keeping contact with them).
Justify your rating:
The QA system of the Institution is not formally in operation, although alternate paths for addressing several of its aspects are operational. The QAU/MODIP have an operating information system that apparently works very well. There is no Career Office and no national and international comparisons are conducted, as well as the follow-up of the graduates.

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4.8 Dissemination of information to stakeholders

Please comment on:

- how the Institution sees to the publicization of information on the programmes offered, the expected learning outcomes, the degrees awarded, the teaching, learning and assessment procedures it uses and the learning opportunities it offers to students
- whether the information regarding the Institution’s offered programmes of study is available in English or in other languages
- whether the teaching staff’s CVs are included in the publicized information, both in Greek and in English

Do you wish to make any comment on a point not included above?

The UoM and departmental websites serve as the principal means of disseminating information, such as details of the degree programmes, the expected learning outcomes, the teaching, learning and assessment procedures, and teaching staff curriculum vitae as well as the online Study Guides. The EEC recommends that Greek and English websites be consistent and contain the same information, especially when it could be useful to foreign persons.

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Justify your rating:

The UoM and departmental websites are acting as efficient and modern ways of disseminating information.
4.9 Continuous monitoring and periodic review of the study programmes

Please comment on:

- the procedure followed with regard to assessment and periodic review of the contents of study programmes
- whether this procedure takes into account the changing needs of society.
- whether this procedure takes into consideration the findings emanating from monitoring the graduates’ career paths
- the procedure with which the reviews take into account the students’ work load, the progress rate and completion of studies
- whether this procedure takes into account the cutting edge research activities in that particular discipline
- whether the involvement of students and other stakeholders is secured in the revision of the programmes

Do you wish to make any comment on a point not included above?

The procedure followed with regard to the assessment and periodic review of the contents of study programmes does not follow strict, formal QA procedures: The IER states that the Assembly of each department designates a committee that collects proposals of the faculty for the introduction of new courses and changes in the existing ones, as well as the changing membership of the faculty and proposals for upgrading and modernizing the contents of the programme of studies. The opinion of the professional associations – the local Economic Chamber – may also be considered regarding professional rights. The EEC learned from industrial stakeholders that they were not solicited.

There is no formal procedure for taking into account the changing needs of society and for obtaining feedback by monitoring the graduates’ career paths. The EEC recommends that all the stakeholders (including the professional organizations and industrial actors) be systematically invited to express their opinions regarding the study programmes.

With regard to the students’ work load, the UoM has adopted the rule of 18 hrs of teaching per week on the average. The IER contains rather vague statements regarding the monitoring of the progress rate of the students and the completion of their studies.

The lack of procedure does not allow a systematic consideration of the cutting edge research activities in a particular discipline. This is left to the individual instructors.

The EEC was told that international standards are used in developing the Curricula and programmes of study.

Please decide in respect to the specific evaluation area (&4.9):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Worthy of merit</th>
<th>Tick</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Positive evaluation</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partially positive evaluation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative evaluation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Justify your rating:

Although the procedure followed with regard to the assessment and periodic review of the contents of study programmes does not follow strict, formal QA procedures, alternative means are in place.
### 4.10 Periodic external evaluation

**Please comment on:**

- the procedure already planned by the Institution in order to deal with the observations of the Institutional External evaluation
- how the anticipated implementation of plans by Departments / Faculties is monitored in response to any comments included in their external evaluation and in the accreditation of their programmes

No *external* institutional evaluation has been performed at the UoM so far and the EEC was not made aware of any specific plans for dealing with future evaluations. The EER will be forwarded to the QAU/MODIP for action; there is no direct involvement of the departmental QA units, the OMEA’s at that point.

The IER states that, for the departmental evaluations that have been completed in all departments, the departmental OMEAs were responsible for receiving, assessing and proposing implementation of changes and offering feedback to the institutional QAU/MODIP.

The IER states that the recommendations of the *departmental* EERs have generally been received positively and that they have led to improvements, as measured by the attractiveness of the UoM departments reflected in the grades at the national entrance examination of the entering classes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Please decide in respect to the specific evaluation area (4.10):</th>
<th>Tick</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Worthy of merit</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Positive evaluation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partially positive evaluation</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative evaluation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Justify your rating:*

Nothing specific can be stated as this is the first external evaluation of the Institution. The EEC believes the institutional quality assurance will occur based on the departmental evaluations that have occurred.
### 4.11 Internal System of Quality Assurance – Conclusions and recommendations

**Please complete the following sections regarding the internal system of quality assurance:**

**Underline specific positive points:**

1. The UoM has developed a rather unique system of research promotion using the funds from the ELKE account.
2. UoM has constructed a praiseworthy approach regarding discipline-based lists of journals and offering financial rewards for faculty publishing in these journals.
3. Another mechanism for promoting research is the internal small research grants programme offered by the UoM.
4. Students are generally allowed a degree of flexibility within their own programmes of study through concentration areas of their choice or through electives in their programme of study.
5. The UoM has adopted the ECTS.
6. Students participate in QA of study programmes through their course evaluations that are conducted in a systematic way every semester.
7. The students are offered ample opportunities for international mobility and placement.
8. By and large, the Institution provides multiple learning paths.
9. The UoM has instituted a faculty advisor position to better serve student needs.
10. Procedures and criteria for admission to the second and third cycles of studies are implemented with transparency.
11. The UoM is a participant in the ENIC/NARIC network of centres that ensure coherent recognition and mobility among programmes for participating institutions.
12. The faculty members are encouraged by the Institution to participate in research programmes, in special groups or “laboratories.”
13. The annual “Research Award” is an encouragement of the staff, granted on the basis of a publication in a well-established journal.
14. There is also a “Teaching Award” for the best results in the student evaluation scores.
15. The available central support services such as libraries, information systems and general infrastructure respond very well to student needs.
16. The Liaison office covers a number of student needs and is operating very well in spite of its limited resources.
17. There is general satisfaction with the quality of the educational infrastructure and support services offered to the students.
18. The UoM has an open culture, facilitating the direct contact between students and teaching staff.
19. The UoM has an Information System in the context of the QAU/MODIP.
20. The Practical Training acts as a powerful means of bringing together students and future employers.
21. The UoM and the departmental web sites are acting as efficient and modern ways of disseminating information.
22. International standards are used in developing the Curricula and programmes of study.
23. Departmental evaluations have been completed in all departments.
**Underline specific negative points:**

1. The institution has not formally implemented the QA system.
2. The QAU/MODIP conducts no individual faculty evaluation of performance but only departmental evaluations. The QAU/MODIP further restricts its operation to teaching alone and only collects data on research.
3. The UoM still lacks the development of a due process specific to disciplinary issues and related institutional oversight and regulations.
4. Course sequencing has not been addressed but it should be.
5. The number of post-graduate students and post-graduate programmes is quite high compared to the size of the Institution.
6. There are no requirements concerning coursework in the doctoral programmes.
7. There are no concrete actions by the Institution for improving teaching such as innovative teaching and assessment methods, and for raising their teaching and pedagogic skills.
8. No special procedure for supporting of new teaching staff in regards the teaching and evaluation methods has been identified.
9. There is no systematic method used to assess periodically qualitatively and quantitatively the research of individual faculty members (except when they are coming up for promotion).
10. There are no measures in place regarding the QA of the supporting services available to students.
11. The students interviewed were only partly aware of the existence of an academic advisor position in each department.
12. There are no processes for tracking systematically the path of graduates to employment or further studies.
13. There is no formulated procedure for taking into account the changing needs of society and for obtaining feedback by monitoring the graduates’ career paths.
14. The lack of procedure does not allow a systematic consideration of the cutting edge research activities in a particular discipline.

**Make your suggestions for further development of the positive points:**

1. The open publication of the student evaluation results remains a remote but attainable goal and should be considered at the proper time.
2. The EEC recommends that a trial lecture be systematically included in the hiring procedure.
3. The study programme assessment process should be completed in terms of data selection, data analysis and evaluation methods, and pertinent action and feedback.
Make your suggestions on needed steps for improvement:

1. The EEC recommends to put the institution-wide QA system under construction in formal operation as soon as possible and link or integrate all these available systems into it.

2. The implementation of QA should cover research, teaching, study programmes, and services as identified in the Self-Evaluation process.

3. The academic units should proactively increase their interaction and collaboration with the OMEAs and QAU/MODIP.

4. The study programmes should use qualitative or quantitative metrics to measure levels of achievement.

5. The high student-to-faculty ratio should be urgently addressed by all parties involved within and outside of the Institution.

6. The EEC recommends the implementation of a procedure by which complaints of academic or social misconduct of faculty members can be dealt with at the institutional level by a systematic, carefully established procedure safeguarding the rights of both parts.

7. It is necessary to have uniform Guidelines for Graduate Studies to address issues of consistency.

8. The EEC recommends that systematic procedures for periodically evaluating the quality and extent of the research of individual faculty members as well as that of Departments be implemented.

9. The EEC recommends that a student evaluation of the various supporting services (library, counselling, residence and food services, etc.) be conducted every semester in parallel with the evaluation of courses.

10. The EEC recommends that the UoM utilise their QAU/MODIP data to perform comparisons with other similar institutions within and beyond Europe.

11. The EEC recommends that the Institution develop a formal system to monitor the paths of all graduates.

12. The EEC recommends that Greek and English websites be consistent and contain the same information, especially when it could be useful to foreign persons.

13. The EEC recommends that all the stakeholders (including the professional organizations and industrial actors) be systematically invited to express their opinions regarding the study programmes.
5. OPERATION OF THE CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION OF THE INSTITUTION

5.1 Central Administration Services of the Institution

Please comment on:

- The operation of the central administration services of the Institution in regard to the:
  
  Special Account for Research Funds (SARF)
  Financial services
  Supplies department
  Technical services
  IT services
  Student support services
  Employment and Career Centre (ECC)
  Public/International relations department
  Foreign language services
  Social and cultural activities
  Halls of residence and refectory services
  Institution’s library

The EEC reviewed the UoM’s self-evaluation report and met with leadership from all areas of Central Administration Services in compiling the assessment detailed in this section. Overall, Central Administration Services is one of the major assets of the Institution despite the challenging budget and bureaucratic obstacles impacting this area.

The Special Account for Research Funds (SARF) manages all finances related to funded research across the university. The unit has 20 employees and has three departments for accounting, buying, administration, and other functions. They handle both small and large grant projects that mostly come from the Greek federal government or the European Union. The overhead rate is typically 12 percent. The faculty members typically locate projects individually, although the SARF office is working to help get groups of faculty working collaboratively on getting grants. The EEC sees this as an opportunity that should be encouraged. In addition, the unit may be strengthened by helping identify projects that fit within the expertise of faculty members and urging them to apply. This would be consistent with international standards. Finally, while most projects are government funded, international best practices suggest that private industry may be a promising source for extramural funding. Given the strong relationship UoM has with industry in the region and their goal to better engage alumni, this might be a meaningful area to explore.

The Financial Services office manages general university finances. The unit has 15 employees that cover three areas. Budgeting is centralized and does not appear to be strategic. A strength in the unit is that processes are mainly electronic. The university has adequate reserve monies at this point. It may be beneficial to consider a decentralized budgeting model in the future so that units will have to justify requests and the university can be strategic and targeted about investments.

The Supply Services office orders and maintains basic supplies for the university. They described an annual process by which units on campus request supplies that is partially computerized. They are able to handle special requests that may arise during the year outside of the normal annual request cycle. The system is highly regulated. One potential recommendation here is to strive to make the entire process electronic in the future.

Technical Services is responsible for a variety of functions in the Institution, including building maintenance, mechanical work, electric work, and so forth. The unit has 13 employees. They have limited personnel for small jobs and have outsourced some jobs that they supervise. They noted that sometimes this approach is more economical than...
handling everything internally. The EEC views this as evidence that they are being strategic with their operations. They have an annual process for determining needs and there are several layers of approval needed for projects. They mentioned concerns about their maintenance budget. They also noted that upgrades are needed in terms of energy efficiency, and it seems this should be a priority given the university’s emphasis on being environmentally friendly. They are also trying to be disability compliant. Overall, the EEC’s only recommendation here might be to try to reduce the number of layers of approval for projects initiated by this unit. It is noteworthy that the building is in excellent condition.

The Network and Operative Centre manages the IT services for the university. The technology and computers labs in the university are adequate in light of budget constraints. Students reported that the labs were good but access is sometimes limited. The staff is responsive to problems as they arise and seem to have done a good job in maximizing the impact of limited resources. It is concerning that WIFI capacity has been reduced but it is available in the library and other areas. If feasible, WIFI should be restored and expanded throughout the university. This is critical to responding to the changing landscape of digital and mobile technologies that are impacting all fields of study at a rapid pace. The Network and Operative Centre indicated that some public funds would become available for a technology update which can provide the resources to implement this recommendation.

Student services are handled by a combination of the offices of academic affairs and student welfare offices. Areas covered include admissions, academic matters, food services and residence hall oversight. An orientation is provided to all students. Food services are handled for 2,000 students daily, and two new residence halls have been built for students based on social needs and academic performance. All students receive health insurance if they don’t have access on their own. There is strong evidence of accommodating students with special needs and integrating international student into the university community. These are both laudable accomplishments. Student counselling and psychological support services are only available by volunteers or by academic advisers. The EEC recommends formalizing these services as they represent potential vulnerabilities for the Institution. In general, student support services are strong. Another potential suggestion the EEC would make is shifting some of the advising responsibilities to staff members. This would make the advising responsibilities to staff members. This would make it more consistent with international standards and likely result in faster completion of degree times for students. Finally, many students were uninformed about the various services available. More frequent internal communication about student services is needed to increase awareness and knowledge among students.

Employment and career services were previously supported by a grant but have been reduced due to budget constraints. There is an internship office that is part of the Institution’s Liaison office. The university does hold career days where students can interact with different employers. What is missing is a comprehensive effort that covers career counselling, internships, and job placement. No data were available in terms of internship tracking or job placement. Consequently, we recommend the university formalize its efforts to cover these areas. In addition to being highly beneficial to students, this would further engage industry and alumni. This is the weakest aspect of central services and requires significant attention from the university going forward.

The public relations/international relations office for the university has grown from one to three employees and one staff member is responsible for media relations. The office seems to be strategically disseminating information via a number of appropriate channels including news releases, social media, the university website, and promotional collateral. Plans for engagement of alumni were mentioned, and the EEC strongly concurs with this strategy. What is a bit unclear is what is the university’s identity and what are core aspects of that they want internal and external constituencies to know about. This is not surprising given what was observed regarding the Institution’s vision mentioned earlier. The EEC recommends the public relations office be involved in whatever process is pursued by senior administration to communicate the Institution’s vision internally and
externally.

A variety of social and cultural activities are available to students and other groups affiliated with the university. To promote physical fitness, there are courts as well as a gym with weights, group exercises courses, and so forth. The university’s amphitheatres and other venues are used to hold different social events, such as for dance, music, and theatre available for students. In total, the university performs well in terms of social and cultural activities.

In the area of foreign language services, the university has an English Language Unit that has six faculty members affiliated. There are several courses across different majors available to assist with development of English language skills and a self-access centre for those individuals seeking assistance online. There are also English only courses and degree programmes. At any one time, the university has 400 students from other countries. The ERASMUS office assists students studying abroad in all aspects of university life and helps those planning to study abroad at other institutions outside of Greece.

The library has 21 employees and is open not only during the week but on Saturdays as well to provide access to students, faculty, and other groups in the university. The library collections are good and it subscribes to most of the major databases that would be expected for the fields represented in the university. The one exception is for students and faculty in music. The library’s facilities are impressive with lots of work stations for students and even areas for students with special needs. Overall, the library’s performance is exceptional. The EEC’s only recommendation in this area would be that some of the space be dedicated for group work and study. This would enhance productivity for collaborative projects and work.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Please decide in respect to the specific evaluation area (&amp;5.1):</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Worthy of merit</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive evaluation</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Partially positive evaluation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Negative evaluation</td>
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</table>

Justify your rating:

As mentioned earlier, the scope and productivity of central administrative services at the UoM are impressive. The one area that merits the most attention is Employment and Career Centre Services. Nearly every other area was very good or excellent in the opinion of the EEC.
### 5.2 Operation of the Central Administration of the Institution – Conclusions and recommendations

**Please complete the following sections regarding the operation of the Institution’s central administration:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Underline specific positive points:</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Based on the analysis above, the EEC’s overall impression of central administrative services are very good, but areas that are of particular strength include SARF, technical services, student support services, halls of residence and refectory services, and the Institution’s library.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Underline specific negative points:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The one area meriting immediate attention is employment and career centre services.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Make your suggestions for further development of the positive points:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One general observation is that the Institution could further promote coordination among the units so they can meet the needs of the various stakeholders they serve. Periodic joint meetings and communications among related service units might help in this regard.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Make your suggestions on needed steps for improvement:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The major recommendation of the EEC is that the university should formalize its efforts through a single office or some other combination of units to cover career counselling, internships, job placement, and meticulously track data of those functions.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 6. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

*In connection with the*

- general operation of the Institution
- development of the Institution to this date and its present situation
- Institution’s readiness and capability to change/improve
- Internal system of Quality Assurance of the Institution

#### Underline specific positive points:

1. The UoM endeavours to play a central role as an academic institution in the Balkans. The general operation of the UoM has been very positively evaluated and the EEC feels that the Institution has the potential to evolve into a major educational and cultural pole for northern Greece and the Balkans.
2. The university administration and the staff are committed to solving problems facing the Institution.
3. The UoM has an open culture, facilitating the direct contact between students and teaching staff. The student body is content.
4. The Departments have considered and implemented the recommendations of their external review committees.
5. There is a supportive environment for high quality research and productivity.
6. Significant effort is made to maintain a healthy financial situation, the Special Account for Research Funds (SARF/ELKE) is flexibly managed, and there are very good or excellent and cost effective technical services.
7. The UoM has developed novel and rather unique research and teaching promotion incentives.
8. Students participate in QA of study programmes through their course evaluations that are conducted in a systematic way every semester.
9. The UoM has a unique environmental strategy and offers unique services to special-needs persons.

#### Underline specific negative points:

1. The statement of vision is too general.
2. There is currently no monitoring or evaluating of the progress in the implementation of goals. There are no specific timetables with target dates for the achievement of goals and targets.
3. The post-graduate programmes have grown in an uncoordinated fashion.
4. The Institution has not formally implemented the QA system.
5. The UoM lacks a formal procedure for addressing complaints and/or objections by students or the staff.
6. There is no systematic method used to assess periodically qualitatively and quantitatively the research of individual faculty members (except when they are coming up for promotion).
7. There is no Career or Placement Office. There are no processes for tracking systematically the path of graduates to employment or further studies.
8. The external stakeholders and alumni are not systematically engaged.
**Make your suggestions for further development of the positive points:**

1. A more strategic and proactive approach in funding and fundraising activities is recommended. No effort should be spared to maintain non-State sources of funding active.
2. More effort to link with alumni and follow their progress in the labour market is recommended.

**Make your suggestions on needed steps for improvement:**

1. The EEC recommends that the university revise and clarify its vision and mission statement and goals and make these pragmatic, realizable and measurable.
2. The Schools and Departments of the University should be encouraged to more closely align their own individual mission statements and goals with those of the University as a whole.
3. The EEC recommends to put the Institution-wide QA system under construction in formal operation as soon as possible and link or integrate all the already available systems into it.
4. The study programmes should use qualitative or quantitative metrics to measure levels of achievement.
5. Post-graduate programmes should be coordinated by a university-wide committee and these should be developed in accordance to UoM’s overall strategic plan. It is necessary to have uniform Guidelines for Graduate Studies to address issues of consistency.
6. The EEC recommends that systematic procedures for periodically evaluating the quality and extent of the research of individual faculty members as well as that of Departments be implemented.
7. The EEC recommends that a student evaluation of the various supporting services (library, counselling, residence and food services, etc) be conducted every semester in parallel with the evaluation of courses.
8. The EEC recommends that all the stakeholders (including the professional organizations and industrial actors) be systematically invited to express their opinions regarding the study programmes.

### 6.1 Final decision of the EEC

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Please decide in respect to the overall Institutional evaluation:</th>
<th>Tick</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Worthy of merit</td>
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<tr>
<td>Positive evaluation</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partially positive evaluation</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Negative evaluation</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*Justify your rating:*

The majority of the judgments for the partial evaluation sections were positive.
The Members of the Committee

UNIVERSITY OF MACEDONIA

Name and Surname .................................................. Signature

Prof. George Yadigaroglu
Eidgenoessische Technische Hochschule Zurich, Switzerland

Prof. Nikolaos Georgantzis
University of Reading, United Kingdom

Prof. Spiro Kiousis
University of Florida, U.S.A.

Prof. Michael Romanos
University of Cincinnati, U.S.A.

Prof. Victor Roudometof
University of Cyprus, Cyprus