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AND ACCREDITATION AGENCY

EXTERNAL EVALUATION REPORT
DEPARTMENT OF EUROPEAN INTERNATIONAL
AND AREA STUDIES
PANTEION UNIVERSITY

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Introduction

I. External Evaluation Committee

The External Evaluation Committee (EEC) for the Department of International, European and Area Studies of Panteion University consisted of the following four evaluators, who were drawn from the registry composed by the Hellenic Quality Assurance and Accreditation Agency (HQAA):

1. **Marina Papanastassiou (Coordinator)**, Professor of International Business, Business School, Middlesex University, Hendon Campus, London, United Kingdom.
2. **Nikolaos Georgantzis**, Professor in Behavioural Economics, Agriculture Policy and Development, University of Reading, United Kingdom.
3. **Nicholas Tsagourias**, Professor of International Law, School of Law, University of Sheffield, Sheffield, United Kingdom.
4. **Joseph Joseph**, Professor of Political Science, Department of Social and Political Sciences, University of Cyprus, Nicosia, Cyprus.

II. The External Evaluation Procedure

According to the Guidelines for the Members of the EEC provided by the HQAA, their mandate is to:

- verify the objectivity of information appearing in the Department's Internal Evaluation Report, checking, where necessary, the original data collected for evaluation purposes;
- assess and evaluate the results of the work done by the academic unit and to compare it with current, internationally accepted best practices;
- advise and suggest specific alternative practices and improvements.

The EEC visited the Department of International, European and Area Studies of Panteion University (Department hereinafter) on three consecutive days, from 20-22 January, 2014, and worked on preparing its External Evaluation Report (Report hereinafter) until Saturday, 24 January 2014.

The Internal Evaluation Report (IER) of the Department and other material were made available to the EEC. The IER was submitted electronically well in advance (in December 2013) and consisted of two parts: the first part was dated 21/12/2012 whereas the second, which was an updating (επικαιροποίηση) of the initial IER, was dated July 2013. More material was made available to the EEC during their three-day on-site visit.

The Department did a diligent work in preparing the IER and other material, as well as in organizing the on-site visit and in hosting the EEC. Their efficiency and eagerness to accommodate requests and provide information were remarkable. The EEC wishes to express its thanks and appreciation to the Department and the Authorities of the University for their co-operation and professionalism.

During its on-site visit, the EEC had the opportunity to meet, talk and interact with the Rector, the Deputy Rector, the Vice Rector, the Dean of the School, the Head of Department, the Heads of Academic Divisions, the Directors of the Research Centres and of the Institute, and the vast majority of Faculty Members. The meetings included presentations, discussions, and question and answer sessions. The EEC also had the opportunity to talk with research (Ph.D.), postgraduate and undergraduate students. A meeting with some fifty undergraduate students took place during a lecture without the presence of Faculty. Students were encouraged to talk freely about their overall learning experience. They welcomed the opportunity to talk to the EEC and voice their views. The EEC also had the opportunity to meet and talk with administrative staff, the Head Librarian, the Erasmus Office and the Student Welfare Office.

The Report is based on information collected during the on-site visit, as well as on information contained in the IER and other documents submitted during the on-site visit.

III. The Internal Evaluation Procedure

The EEC had the opportunity to study and reflect on the IER, and some conclusions could be drawn from it.

- The sources of documentation used to prepare the IER were adequate and gave an accurate description of the Department. The documentation included individual reports, departmental statistics on Faculty and students (entering, enrolled, active and graduating), statistics on research output. A more systematic collection of information on all aspects of the Department's activities would however be advisable.
- The IER was a rather long document containing a plethora of information as required by the HQAA. It would be 'good practice', however, to also include an executive summary.
- The Department enjoys national prominence and is trying hard to enhance its international reputation. The achievements of the Department are remarkable in the areas of research, teaching and contribution to society at large.
- One problem identified in the IER is the large number of "eternal" students and the high student-Faculty ratio. It is expected, however, that this issue will be resolved within 2014 following the enactment of legislation allowing for the deregistration of long standing inactive students.
- The research output of the Department is impressive. The IER contained detailed information on the research activities of Faculty and of the Research Centres and the Institute. Although figures for research funding were not made available, the EEC was made aware of the fact that funding from the University or the State is almost non-existing but it notes that the Research Centres and the Institute have

secured external funding to sustain their research activities, an endeavor that should continue unabated.

- It should be pointed out that the existing legislative framework concerning higher education in Greece, the current economic crisis in the country and other difficulties associated with the external environment are creating serious difficulties in designing and implementing academic policies. Nevertheless, the Department in general seems to be pursuing high quality research and teaching.

A. Curriculum

The Department and the curriculum reflect the long tradition of excellence in international studies introduced in the University by some of the greatest experts in International Relations and International Law, including S. Seferiadis and G. Tenekidis. Courses such as Public International Law, International Relations and Diplomatic History have led towards the current program of studies, which aims at providing students with theoretical knowledge and practical experience in international and European relations and law. Practical experience is underpinned by in-service training/internship (Πρακτική άσκηση) introduced in the academic year 2005-06. The structure of the Department and its three divisions (International Relations; International and European Institutions and International Political Economy and Cultural Relations) reflect the constituent disciplines of the curriculum.

The current program of studies, introduced in 2003, aims at reducing the segmentation of the subjects in order to help students focus on two areas of specialization (a primary and secondary area of specialization for each student). Each area has a number of prerequisite courses. In this way, advanced (4th year) courses can be organized in a more efficient way as a continuation of previously acquired knowledge. According to the new program of study, the number of offered courses has been reduced from 64 to 48 and is structured around four specialisations. A distinctive element of the curriculum is its interdisciplinary character which distinguishes it from other similar programs in Greece and abroad.

It is the EEC's opinion that the program of undergraduate studies complies with the Department's mission, reflects the Faculty's profiles and research interests and complies with what is expected from the curriculum of similar programs of study. Furthermore, it seems that the program of study is continuously updated according to evolving international standards.

Regarding reading material, the law allows students to choose one textbook (offered for free by the state) from a list of three, recommended by each tutor. Complementary reference material is also provided in other languages. However, students may not feel as confident in foreign languages as one would expect and for this reason more emphasis should be put on learning and training in foreign

languages for academic purposes. Indeed, the Department offers a good number of foreign language but in view of the regional dimension of its research, the Department may want to consider the inclusion of other languages such as Arabic and Chinese. Regarding the academic quality of textbooks, students were of the opinion that they are good reference books, however, they brought to the attention of the EEC the fact that in some exceptional cases materials are not updated regularly. Students also seem to prefer translations of well-established textbooks.

As far as the taught postgraduate programme (MA) offered by the Department is concerned, the specialisations currently offered reflect the strengths of the Department and teaching is research-led. There is however scope for improvement as for the programme and the offered courses to reflect contemporary issues and challenges. For example, the MA in International Relations and Strategic Studies could adopt a more security dimension due to the contemporary importance of security in international relations and law. The taught postgraduate programme is quite popular with professionals from the Ministry of Defence or other Greek ministries and institutions. This is proof of the reputation that the Department and its postgraduate programme enjoy. Their participation enriches the learning experience of everyone. The Department may want to consider the introduction of professional/executive courses offered to such professionals which will be funded by the sponsoring organization.

B. Teaching

Teaching is usually conducted by means of lectures with or without the application of electronic resources (e.g. ppts, movies, etc). Where appropriate, other teaching methods are used such as case studies or simulation games. Students often participate in the teaching process with the presentation of projects and the Department runs a number of moot courts. Teaching is undertaken by Faculty and PhD students. The wide network of exchanges with foreign Universities and the Erasmus programme contribute to students and Faculty mobility which enhances the quality of teaching experience. As suggested by the students who participated in such programmes and as supported by the EEC, the adoption of teaching schemes such as small group seminars, particularly when PhD students are teaching would be helpful. This would enrich the overall teaching process particularly in elective courses where registration of students is more concentrated, allowing for more seminar type of classes beyond the mainstream lecture process. Regarding teaching facilities, some Faculty members pointed to the need for microphones to be installed in the classrooms, while students complained about the lack of heating and air conditioning. Should funds become available, power points for laptops should be installed.

With regard to assessment, the Department has adopted a rather broad spectrum of assessment methods, including continuous evaluation, final written exams and short oral exams. While this seems to be the natural consequence of the multi and interdisciplinary nature of the Department, the EEC felt there are no standardized assessment methods. In the case that these exist (in the *Οδηγός Σπουδών*) the EEC felt that they should be upgraded in order to meet comparable international practices. This does not mean that all courses should adopt the same assessment method, but rather that all available exam methods are described in advance with clearly specified procedures per examination/re-examination method. The Committee on Programme of Studies should recommend (in collaboration with the Faculty) and validate alternative methods of exams per type of course. For example, passing a compulsory course on the basis of a single oral test alone should be avoided. Along the same lines, the EEC felt that the format and content of course syllabi should be standardized and that they should become available to students before the beginning of teaching. Students mentioned cases where the syllabus became available late in

the semester or, in a small number of cases, not at all. In fact, both the EEC and the members of the Faculty agreed on the need for more standardization of processes, supported among others by new information technologies and online resources.

It was acknowledged that the previous institutional framework is responsible for excessively high numbers of students enrolled compared to those actually taking the exam. The current ratio between Faculty and students at the undergraduate level is a challenge but it is hoped that the application of the new legislative framework will hopefully remedy this problem. This could also lead to better management of teaching and other resources. Likewise, a further reduction in the number of courses offered to undergraduate students could improve efficiency and the synergies between teaching and research, especially if research-led teaching is further promoted. At the Master's level, the ratio is more than satisfactory as the yearly intake of students is 90. There is practically no discrepancy at the Master level where attendance is compulsory and the regulations are completely different from those governing the undergraduate studies which are determined by the existing legislation regarding tertiary education.

Regarding the assessment of teaching, some Faculty members want to see a more systematic procedure. Students also felt that a more effective channel of communication with staff regarding their teaching experience should be put in place. The Evaluation of teaching by students is usually carried out through a questionnaire which is submitted to the Department Administration. The questionnaire covers most issues relating to teaching. However, by rephrasing question 30 (rate of attendance should be asked in a more specific manner), including an open question about teaching and omitting the advice to answer questions selectively, the impartiality and thus effectiveness of the questionnaire as a means of evaluation will be improved.

On page 79 of the Internal Evaluation Report, the Department acknowledges the need to further improve the teaching procedures and means. As it was discussed among the EEC and members of Faculty there is no formal pedagogical policy. It was also understood from formal discussions with Faculty as well as from the Internal Evaluation Report that e-class is at a pilot phase.

A possible way of addressing in a systematic and institutional manner the issues raised above under the Curriculum and Teaching sections would be the establishment of a Learning Lab which, indicatively, would:

- Provide training courses in support of new teaching techniques that Faculty are not familiar with.
- Assist in the development of syllabi, e-learning/e-class.
- Provide training in research proposal writing and development.
- Provide training in how to develop updated course and teaching material.
- Provide training in supervision techniques.
- Develop standardised examination procedures in order to secure the quality and transparency of exams such as the development of model exam answers.

C. Research

According to the Internal Evaluation Report, the research policy of the Department and its aims are: interdisciplinarity; international outlook; and input in policy making at local or national level. However, the Department's overall research policy has not been articulated in any official document neither do criteria exist to assess individual or institutional performance as far as research is concerned.

Research is formulated and monitored by the Post Graduate (PG) Co-ordinating Committee, the Departmental Assembly (*Γενική Συνέλευση*) and the Academic Divisions (*Τομείς*).

The Department's research policy is mainly implemented and disseminated through four Research Centres (the European Centre for Environmental Research and Training; the European Centre for Research and Training in Human Rights and Humanitarian Action; the MEPIELAN Centre; the European Centre of Economic and Financial Law) and the Institute of International Relations. Each Research Centre has a Director, a Board and members including Ph.D. students. It was not clear to the EEC whether all Faculty are actively engaged in the Research Centres or the Institute. All Research Centres have their own publications in the form of paper or electronic bulletins, newsletters, journals or working papers. These publications contain information about the activities of the particular centre, articles and commentaries by members of the centre or external contributors, and other relevant information. Editorial boards consist of members of the centres, external members as well as international members. The Research Centres and the Institute are actively seeking external partnerships in Greece and abroad. They are also actively seeking external funding. They have been variably successful.

Individual members of the Department as well as members of the Research Centres and the Institute are currently running research projects some of which are externally funded.

With regard to academic publications of Faculty, the output is impressive. Members of the Department have published monographs, articles in refereed journals, chapters in edited volumes, case commentaries, notes or working papers in Greek, English, French or German. Their publications have appeared in Greek and foreign academic journals.

Members of the Department have participated in numerous conferences in Greece and abroad as panelists or as chairs.

Members of the Department also sit on the editorial boards of Greek and foreign journals.

Members of the Department are also practicing professionals and participate in policy and decision making as members of Committees, Advisory Boards or through other activities for the Greek government or for international institutions. There is thus a direct link between research and practice.

In sum, there is a vibrant research culture in the Department. Research produced by the Department is interdisciplinary and international in outlook. It also focuses on contemporary issues as well as on issues of particular interest to Greece and to the region. Moreover, through knowledge exchange activities with other academic or non-academic institutions, through advisory work for the Greek government, or other Greek and international institutions as well as through social engagement, the Department's research has significant impact. For this reason the Department enjoys national and international reputation.

The EEC however feels that the existing institutional structures and policies are not adequate to support research in a modern, research-oriented and competitive educational environment. Moreover, the current economic crisis facing the country and the lack of funds has affected Universities and consequently research. Thus, further steps should be taken in order to sustain and increase the research output of the Department. For this reason we recommend the following actions:

- (i) The Department should formulate its **research strategy** in 4-5 years cycles. The research strategy will involve identification of research aims and objectives but also of mechanisms to facilitate their implementation. In this way, the Department will be able to communicate its research expectations to staff, achieve better coordination between the different divisions and Centres, and measure achievements.
- (ii) The Department should establish a **Research Committee** whose members could be the Directors of the Research Centres and of the Institute, the Head of Department as well as other members of the Department. Alternatively, the Department could appoint a Director of Research. The mandate of the Research

Committee or of the Director of Research should be to formulate the Department's overall research strategy, provide strategic direction and monitor the delivery and implementation of the Department's research strategy by members of staff and by the research Centres and the Institute. This can be done through annual Staff reviews or reports.

(iii) The Department - perhaps in conjunction with the School or the University- should establish an **Enterprise Office** whose mandate should be to promote research collaborations with public or private bodies, identify sources of research funding, inform staff about available funds or research opportunities, provide advice and support to staff on funding applications and costing but also manage research grants. In this way, additional streams of funding will be secured, the rate of success of funding applications will be improved whereas the management of research projects will become more efficient and less burdensome on researchers. The EEC believes that the role, mandate and staffing of ELKE as well as of the Department's Administration Office should be revisited accordingly.

(iv) The Department should **reinforce its existing internal research structures** by promoting a more balanced development of existing divisions (*Τομείς*) but at the same time further enhance synergies among all divisions. This would secure and further promote the interdisciplinary and international outlook of its research.

(v) Due to the importance placed internationally on originality and impact, the Department should facilitate original and impact making research through study leave arrangements, workload reduction or through other initiatives.

(vi) In view of the Department's international and interdisciplinary research profile, staff should get published in high impact international journals. The Department should set specific targets.

(vii) The Department's website should be redesigned to include information on the Department's research aims and achievements as well as information about the Research Centres and of the Institute. Moreover, the individual web pages of members of staff should include a special entry on 'research' which will include information about their research interests, projects, publications as well as other

relevant information. The EEC believes that the format and content of webpages should be standardised.

(viii) As far as PhD students are concerned, they are integrated in the research activities of the Research Centres and of the Institute. Selection follows strict academic criteria and each student is allocated a principal supervisor. The supervisory board consists of the principal supervisor and of two other members of staff. Progress is monitored through annual reports by the Supervisory board. The duration of research is 3 years and the Ph.D is awarded following a public defense of the thesis. The EEC had the opportunity to meet postgraduate research students and in its opinion they are knowledgeable, committed, motivated, intellectually competent, and ambitious. They actively participate in the activities of the Research Centres and of the Department as a whole, publish in Greek and foreign journals and collaborate with other research institutions in Greece and abroad.

(ix) The EEC believes that Ph.D students should be offered training in research methods during their first year of studies to ensure that all research postgraduates can foster an interdisciplinary awareness and acquire the research skills and competencies necessary to complete their research theses.

(x) Although annual reports are a useful means of monitoring Ph.D students' progress, the EEC believes that that after 18 months of full study, a Committee consisting of other Faculty should assess students' progress by means of an oral interim defense. Before the interim defense, the candidate should submit to the Committee for their consideration, an outline of the whole thesis and a chapter. The Committee may recommend that the student proceeds; that the student withdraws; or that the student proceeds after implementing a number of actions. The EEC believes that this is a more objective method of assessing progress, enriches the research experience of the student and it is also beneficial to the supervisor.

(xi) Although mentoring and support of research postgraduate students is excellent and provides Ph.D students with the necessary skills to succeed in their studies and professionally, Ph.D mentoring should also prepare students to face the challenges of the international market for example through publications in high impact journals.

D. All Other Services

The EEC visited four administrative units:

1. The Department's Administration Office
2. The Erasmus Office
3. The Library and
4. Student Welfare Office

More analytically:

1. With regard to the **Department's Administration Office** the focus of its operations is to offer support to students and Faculty. From the discussion with its Head of Administration it was stated that under the current circumstances the Office has adequate number of staff to meet the requisite administrative demands. It was nevertheless recommended that an upgrading of electronic resources, e.g. a more efficient electronic platform of communication, would further enable staff to provide better services. It was also evident that the Office has good internal communication processes and cooperates efficiently with the University administration. From our discussions it was obvious the good will of staff to help and support the Faculty. However, the EEC noticed that the majority of tasks the Office is asked to fulfil are rather old fashioned e.g. arranging for the departmental meetings, graduations, etc. which are of course integral functions of a Department but the Office should not exhaust its energy and capacity into these type of activities only. Moreover, some of the activities that were traditionally offered by the Office, e.g. transcripts, are now also offered by the Student Welfare Office on a daily basis. Faculty also felt that the current mandate of the Administration Office does not meet their needs as to allow them to perform their academic duties in a more efficient manner. In light of the above, the Administration Office should provide other enhanced services in support of Faculty and students which are more in line with the requirements of contemporary University Administration. Indicatively we mention services related to external knowledge sharing such as dissemination of information on research programmes, supporting workshops or conferences organised by Faculty, coordination with the Department's Centers, ELKE, Erasmus Office, Library, etc. The Office can also support the taught postgraduate (master) programmes as it currently does with research programme. This could eventually lead to the

establishment of a postgraduate studies administrative unit. Additionally, the Office should be in charge of the upgrading of the Department's webpage and its continuous updating. The EEC has expressed in other parts of this report that the web page of the Department is poorly presented and does not make justice to the wealth of the activities the Department is involved in and the output is producing. In sum, the EEC would recommend a re-consideration of the mandate of the Department's Administration Office in order to enhance and modernise its services and at the same time avoid, where possible, duplication of activities. Last but not least, the Administration Office should be equally offered upgraded infrastructure in the form of more space, more telephone lines, and better electronic resources.

2. With regard to the **Erasmus Office**, it was evident that the Department maintains excellent collaboration with this office which has resulted in the success of the programme. The Department is committed to various internationalisation activities and the Erasmus Office provides all necessary information and support towards this direction. The EEC would encourage better coordination between the Erasmus Office and the Department's Administration Office in the form of dissemination of information. This will extend the reach and speed of information on relevant programmes which, as it was stated in the Internal Evaluation Report (p.48), does not always reach on time possible interested recipients. Last but not least, the EEC would encourage the adoption of courses in English in a more coordinated manner in order to allow Erasmus students to benefit from regular (i.e. weekly) interaction with Faculty and students. Acknowledging that the number of Erasmus students is still small, the EEC feels that Erasmus students should be advised to take elective courses only which could be delivered in English and adopt non-Greek bibliography.

3. With regard to the **Library**, the EEC visited the library and had discussions with the Head Librarian. The impression of the EEC was that Library staff is doing its best to meet the needs of Faculty and students. Nevertheless, efforts are compromised by the lack of funds. It is worth highlighting the fact that the Library is actively seeking private funding in order to improve its services and has been successful in this regard. The Internal Evaluation Report acknowledges the good support the Department is receiving from the Library but at the same time it highlights the lack of infrastructure in terms of electronic resources, such as

databases, which hinders the research activities of both Faculty and students. The EEC would like to stress the need to improve access to databases but also to conform with copyright-related requirements. The Internal Evaluation Report states that introductory library visits are run by library staff which the EEC welcomes. The EEC would further encourage the upgrading of library resources as well as the coordination between the Library and the Department's Administration Office in the dissemination of information, e.g. updating news on purchases of resources.

4. With regard to the **Student Welfare Office** the EEC visited their office and had discussions with its Director. They welcomed the excellent collaboration between the Department and the Office. The EEC was impressed by the quality of services offered to students without medical insurance, to students with special need as well as students coming from different cultural backgrounds. The EEC was also impressed by the commitment of this Office to student welfare. The Student Welfare Office also informed the EEC about the forthcoming renovation of the Student Halls which will resolve in an efficient manner the problem with student accommodation. The EEC notes that the role of the Student Welfare Office in offering certain student services could allow the re-organisation of the Department's Administration as discussed under point 1. The appointment of a Faculty in charge of student welfare would be recommended. This would allow for a more systematic and efficient approach towards students' welfare compared to the current ad hoc approach (see p.71-72 of the report).

University infrastructure

The EEC had the opportunity to spend time on the university campus. Although effort is made to maintain the campus premises in good condition, there are traces of neglect. There are pleasant exceptions such as some floors of the main University building and the building which houses the Research Centres and the Institute. The surrounding area also exhibits some signs of degradation. The municipality of Kallithea should work together with University authorities to improve the surrounding environment and thus not only upgrade the quality of university life but also that of the municipality itself.

The University provides facilities to people with special needs. However, the relevant infrastructure should be further improved. Other University units, such as the Library, also try to improve facilities available to students with special needs in order to offer them unconstrained access to knowledge. As far as the availability and adequacy of teaching rooms is concerned, on page 37 of the Internal Evaluation Report, it is stated that the number of teaching rooms available to the Department is inadequate and, although some of them have recently been renovated, there are still problems which are associated with the lack of electronic infrastructure or even of basic infrastructure e.g. no seating availability for the teaching Faculty.

The Internal Evaluation Report also highlights the lack of a Departmental IT lab which, as stated, was recently destroyed during the occupation of the Department by 'students'. The EEC also noticed the lack of WiFi access in a large parts of the University premises.

The EEC had the opportunity to check the good food quality offered by the student union restaurant.

The EEC would like to stress the importance of the strict implementation of a non-smoking policy in all university premises.

Finally, the EEC expresses the hope that space and infrastructure constraints will be soon resolved in order to improve the quality of life in the University premises for Staff and students. It also encourages the swift renewal of security services in order to maintain security in the University's campus.

Collaboration with Social, Cultural and Production Organizations

The Department has developed a wide network of collaboration with social, cultural, governmental or non-governmental institutions in Greece but also internationally. The Research Centres and the Institute are having a remarkable societal impact both in Greece and abroad through the educational and research programmes they are engaged in and by pursuing a very dynamic dissemination activity.

E. Strategic Planning

- There might be a strategic planning for the Department, but it is not clearly defined and articulated. The Department's strategic goals as far as research, teaching, and impact are concerned should be debated and put down in writing to serve as guidelines. They should serve as a broad framework of reference for future planning.
- The lack of research funding (and resources in general) is one of the main problems the Department and the University are facing. It seems that things are going from bad to worse. Innovative ways for securing funding should be explored. One idea would be to establish an Alumni Association at both University and the Departmental level. The benefits of such an initiative are obvious as it will make it possible to foster lifelong connections among students, friends, Faculty and the institution. Cultivating goodwill and maintaining a societal network makes cooperation and involvement easier and more meaningful. The Department could set up an advisory Committee to pursue this task.
- Faculty members should be encouraged to produce high impact research. International research visibility is expected to be a criterion and an objective in this regard.
- Strategic planning and research guidelines may also serve as a guide for younger Faculty to define their research agenda, strengthen their CV and shape their career path.
- The internationalization of the Department's activities—in accordance with its ultimate ambition—may include the translation of its website (i.e., into English) as well as the establishment of summer schools or training courses in English or French

F. Final Conclusions and recommendations of the EEC

- The general impression of the EEC for the Department is very positive. It is academically rigorous, open and entrepreneurial. It is definitely one of the top Departments of its kind in the country.
- From now on, the main challenge is to enhance its international reputation and recognition. It is certainly capable of doing so, especially if we take into account the motivation, enthusiasm, excellent academic credentials and international activities of Faculty.
- There is a positive and cooperative culture in the Department which is conducive to collaboration among disciplines, fields and colleagues. This is an important element which must be sustained and reinforced in order to support creativity and consolidate further interdisciplinarity. Along these lines, perhaps the introduction of an informal monthly “brown bag” lunch can provide an opportunity for presenting ongoing research, sharing ideas, providing feedback and creating synergies.
- Although there is a problem with “eternal” students (which is expected to be solved soon), active students seem to be happy with the education they receive. Ph.D. candidates are intellectually competent, enthusiastic and ambitious.
- The Department offers taught postgraduate programmes which are very popular with students and professionals. The EEC strongly recommends the introduction of tuition fees for all taught postgraduate programmes offered by the Department. Tuition fees will allow the Department to improve the facilities and services it provides to students in a very competitive market. The introduction of tuition fees can be accompanied by scholarships or sponsorships. The EEC also strongly recommends the introduction of professional/executive courses paid by the sponsoring institution.

- It is reassuring and promising to note that sustaining and improving quality of research and teaching and making a valuable contribution to the society are firm and clear objectives of the Department. This is reconfirmed by the strong sensitivity and the ongoing debate on issues of quality assurance within the Department and the central administration of the University.
- The Department's research output is voluminous and impressive by any standards. Adopting a strategic plan, as outlined above in the Report, will help the Department utilize its full potential and further enhance research quality, output and international visibility. In this regard, the Department should also reinforce its existing internal research structures by promoting a more balanced development of existing divisions and, at the same time, by further enhancing synergies among all divisions.
- Overall infrastructure and facilities, including classrooms, library, computer equipment and labs are satisfactory with Greek standards. However, renewing, updating and utilizing information technologies are a constant challenge which the Department is doing its best to meet with very limited resources. The website in particular should be redesigned and upgraded as suggested above.
- Administrative services are generally supportive and efficient but rationalizing and modernizing their structures, facilities and mandate are important in order to continue to offer good quality service and manage effectively the needs of the Department.

The Members of the Committee

Name and Surname

Signature

1. Marina Papanastassiou (Coordinator) _____

2. Nikolaos Georgantzis _____

3. Nicholas Tsagourias _____

4. Joseph Joseph _____