



ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ
HELLENIC REPUBLIC



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STANDARDS

FOR QUALITY ACCREDITATION

OF

FOREIGN LANGUAGE PROGRAMMES

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1. STRATEGIC PLANNING

INSTITUTIONS AND ACADEMIC UNITS SHOULD HAVE IN PLACE AN APPROPRIATE STRATEGY FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT AND PROVISION OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE PROGRAMMES (FLP).

In particular

By decision of the Institutional Senate, the Institutions and their academic units should adapt their strategy to allow for the provision of FLP, in addition to attending to any special needs in terms of infrastructure, services, human resources, procedures, financial resources, and administrative systems. In this strategy, the Institutions and the academic units should anticipate the potential benefits, weaknesses, opportunities, and/or risks from their implementation and plan all the necessary actions to achieve their goals.

Relevant documentation

- *Institutional Strategy*
- *Academic unit Strategy, including a plan for effective revenue utilization*

2. QUALITY ASSURANCE POLICY

ACADEMIC UNITS SHOULD DRAFT AND IMPLEMENT A QUALITY ASSURANCE POLICY, ARISING FROM THEIR STRATEGY AND SPECIALISED FOR THE SPECIFIC FLP DOMAIN, THAT IS ACCOMPANIED BY ANNUAL QUALITY ASSURANCE TARGETS, FOR CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT.

In particular

The quality assurance policy of the academic unit must be formulated in the form of a statement, which is made public, and is implemented with the contribution of all stakeholders. The objective is to pursue specific annual quality goals, related to the quality assurance of the study programmes offered by the academic unit, including its FLP. In order to implement this policy, the academic unit, along with other assurances, is committed to implement effective procedures that will provide the suitability of the structure and organization of the FLP, the suitability of the qualifications of the teaching staff, as well as the quality of the support services of the academic unit that has adequate administrative staff. The academic unit also commits itself to conduct an annual internal evaluation of the FLP, realised by the Internal Evaluation Group (IEG) in collaboration with the Quality Assurance Unit (QAU) of the Institution.

Relevant documentation

- *Quality Policy*
- *Quality Targeting (utilizing S.M.A.R.T. methodology)*

3. DESIGN, APPROVAL, AND MONITORING OF THE QUALITY OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE PROGRAMMES

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

In particular

Academic units develop their Foreign Language Programmes following a well-defined procedure. The academic profile and orientation of the programme, the objectives, the subject areas, the structure and organisation, the expected learning outcomes and the intended professional qualifications according to the National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education, are described at this stage. The above components should be taken into account and pertain to a feasibility study, which, among other things, should take into consideration the strategy of the Institution, the experience of external stakeholders from the labour market, the smooth progression of students throughout the stages of the Programme, the anticipated student workload according to the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS), the option to provide work experience to the students, the linking of teaching and research, the international experience in Programmes of the given discipline, the relevant regulatory framework, and the official procedure for the approval of the Programme by the Institution. The process of the approval or revision of the Programmes provides for the verification of compliance to the basic requirements of the Standards by the Quality Assurance Unit (QAU).

Relevant documentation

- *Institutional Senate decision for the establishment of the FLP (par. 2, 3, and 5 of article 82 of Law 4692/2020)*
- *FLP Guide (bilingual, in Greek and English)*
- *Course outlines*
- *Teaching staff (list of names with scientific specialisations, employment relationship, and assignment of teaching in the FLP and other Programmes)*
- *Special protocols on cooperation or memoranda of agreement*
- *Feasibility study*
- *QAU records*

4. STUDENT-CENTRED LEARNING, TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT

ACADEMIC UNITS SHOULD ENSURE THAT THE FOREIGN LANGUAGE PROGRAMMES ARE DELIVERED IN A WAY THAT ENCOURAGES STUDENTS TO TAKE AN ACTIVE ROLE IN CREATING THE LEARNING PROCESS. THE ASSESSMENT METHODS SHOULD REFLECT THIS APPROACH.

In particular

In the implementation of student-centered learning and teaching, the academic unit:

- *Respects and attends to the diversity of students and their needs, enabling flexible learning paths*
- *Considers and uses different modes of delivery, where appropriate*
- *Flexibly uses a variety of pedagogical methods*
- *Regularly evaluates and adjusts the modes of delivery and pedagogical methods aiming at improvement*
- *Regularly evaluates the quality and effectiveness of teaching, as documented especially through student surveys*
- *Reinforces the student's sense of autonomy, while ensuring adequate guidance and support from the teaching staff*
- *Promotes mutual respect in the student - teacher relationship*
- *Applies appropriate procedures for dealing with students' complaints*

Relevant documentation

- *Questionnaires for assessment by the students*
- *Operating procedure for managing student complaints*
- *Operating procedure for the function of the academic advisor*
- *Report on teaching methods and student assessment*

5. STUDENT ADMISSION, PROGRESSION, RECOGNITION OF ACADEMIC QUALIFICATIONS, AWARD OF DEGREES AND CERTIFICATES OF QUALIFICATIONS OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE PROGRAMMES

ACADEMIC UNITS SHOULD DEVELOP AND APPLY PUBLISHED REGULATIONS COVERING ALL ASPECTS AND PHASES OF STUDIES (ADMISSION, PROGRESSION, RECOGNITION OF STUDIES, AND DEGREE AWARD).

In particular

The internal regulations that govern the Foreign Language Programmes should regulate all the matters pertaining to these, from the beginning to the end of the studies. Indicatively:

- *The admission criteria and the required supporting documentation according to the law*
- *The rights and obligations of students*
- *Internship issues*
- *The language of instruction*
- *Procedures concerning the award and recognition of higher education degrees, the duration of studies, rules ensuring students progression*
- *Terms and conditions for enhancing student mobility*

Appropriate recognition procedures rely on institutional practice for recognition of credits among various European academic departments and Institutions, in line with the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention. Graduation represents the culmination of the students' study period. Students need to receive documentation explaining the qualification gained, including achieved learning outcomes and the context, level, content and status of the studies that were pursued and successfully completed (Diploma Supplement).

All the above must be made public within the context of the Study Guide.

Relevant documentation

- *Internal regulation for the operation of the FLP (Senate decision)*
- *Regulation of studies, internship, mobility, and student assignments*
- *Diploma Supplement*

6. ENSURING HIGH QUALITY OF THE TEACHING STAFF OF THE FOREIGN LANGUAGE PROGRAMMES

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

In particular

The academic unit and the Institution should attend to the adequacy of the teaching staff numbers, the appropriate student-teacher ratio, the appropriate categories of staff (and in the respective foreign language of instruction), the appropriate learning outcomes, a fair selection procedure, high research performance, training, an effective personnel development policy / participation in mobility schemes, conferences, and educational leave (according to the law).

More specifically, the academic unit should set up and follow clear, transparent, and fair processes for the recruitment of properly qualified staff and offer them conditions of employment that recognise the importance of teaching and research. It should offer opportunities and promote the professional development of the teaching staff, encourage scholarly activity to strengthen the link between education and research, encourage innovation in teaching methods and the use of new technologies, and promote the increase of the volume and quality of the research output within the academic unit. It should also follow quality assurance processes for all staff members (with respect to attendance requirements, performance, self-assessment, training, etc.) and develop policies to attract highly qualified academic staff.

Relevant documentation

- *Procedures and criteria for teaching staff recruitment*
- *Regulations or employment contracts, obligations*
- *Staff support and development policy*
- *Performance of the teaching staff in research and teaching*

7. LEARNING RESOURCES AND STUDENT SUPPORT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE PROGRAMMES

ACADEMIC UNITS SHOULD HAVE ADEQUATE FUNDING TO COVER ALL THEIR TEACHING AND LEARNING NEEDS. THEY SHOULD PROVIDE ADEQUATE INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES FOR LEARNING AND STUDENT SUPPORT AND FACILITATE DIRECT ACCESS BY ESTABLISHING INTERNAL RULES TO THIS END (E.G. LECTURE ROOMS, LABORATORIES, LIBRARIES, NETWORKS, BOARDING, CAREER AND SOCIAL POLICY SERVICES, ETC.).

In particular

Institutions and their academic units must have sufficient funding and means to support learning and academic activity in general, so that they can offer to the students of the FLP the best possible level of studies. The above means include facilities such as libraries, study rooms, educational and scientific equipment, information and communications services, support, and counselling services. When allocating the available resources, the needs of all students -including foreign students- must be taken into consideration (e.g. whether they are full-time or part-time students, employed or international students, students with disabilities, etc.), in addition to the shift towards student-centered learning and the adoption of flexible modes of learning and teaching. Support activities and facilities may be organised in various ways, depending on the institutional context. Internal quality assurance processes should ensure that all resources are appropriate, adequate, and accessible, and that students are informed about all available services. In delivering support services, the role of support and administrative staff is crucial and therefore this segment of staff needs to be qualified and have opportunities to develop its competencies.

Relevant documentation

- *Insurance contract for foreign students*
- *Level, structure, and organizational setup of the Foreign Students Support Unit (Senate Decision)*
- *Administrative support staff of FLP (positions, qualifications, and responsibilities)*
- *Information material for the students with reference to the services provided (in English)*

8. COLLECTION, ANALYSIS, AND USE OF INFORMATION FOR THE ORGANIZATION AND OPERATION OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE PROGRAMMES

ACADEMIC UNITS BEAR FULL RESPONSIBILITY FOR COLLECTING, ANALYSING, AND USING INFORMATION, AIMED AT THE EFFICIENT MANAGEMENT OF FLP AND RELATED ACTIVITIES, IN AN INTEGRATED, EFFECTIVE, AND EASILY ACCESSIBLE MANNER.

In particular

Efficient procedures for collecting and analysing information on FLP provide data to the internal quality assurance system. The information collected depends, to some extent, on the type of accreditation (initial, or re-accreditation).

The following are of interest: key performance indicators, student body profile, student progression, success and drop-out rates, student satisfaction with the FLP, availability of learning resources and student support, career paths of graduates.

During the initial accreditation, the data concerning the profile and structure of the FLP must be entered (National Information System for Quality Assurance in Higher Education - NISQA fields: M4001 - M4030, M4033 - M4038, and M4127 - M4133).

Relevant documentation

- *Report from the National Information System for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (NISQA) on the launching of FLP*
- *Operation of an information management system for the collection of administrative data for the implementation of the Programme (Students' Record)*

9. PUBLIC INFORMATION CONCERNING THE FOREIGN LANGUAGE PROGRAMMES

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

In particular

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

Therefore, Institutions and their academic units must provide information about their activities, including the Foreign Language Programmes they offer, the intended learning outcomes, the degrees awarded, the teaching, learning, and assessment procedures used, the pass rates and the learning opportunities available to their students, as well as graduate employment information.

Relevant documentation

- *Dedicated segment on the official website of the Department for the promotion of the FLP*
- *Bilingual version of the website with complete, clear, and objective information*
- *Provision for website maintenance and updating*

10. PERIODIC INTERNAL REVIEW OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE PROGRAMMES

ACADEMIC UNITS SHOULD HAVE IN PLACE AN INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM FOR THE AUDIT AND ANNUAL INTERNAL REVIEW OF THEIR FOREIGN LANGUAGE PROGRAMMES, SO AS TO ACHIEVE THE OBJECTIVES SET FOR THEM, THROUGH MONITORING AND AMENDMENTS, WITH A VIEW TO CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT. ANY ACTIONS TAKEN IN THE ABOVE CONTEXT SHOULD BE COMMUNICATED TO ALL PARTIES CONCERNED.

In particular

Regular monitoring, review, and revision of the FLP aims in maintaining the level of educational provision and creating a supportive and effective learning environment for students.

The above comprise the evaluation of: the content of the FLP in light of the latest research in the given discipline, thus ensuring that the programme is up to date; the changing needs of society; the students' workload, progression, and completion; the effectiveness of the procedures for the assessment of students; the students' expectations, needs, and satisfaction in relation to the FLP; the learning environment, support services, and their suitability for the programme; FLP are reviewed and revised regularly involving students and other stakeholders. The information collected is analysed and the FLP is adapted to ensure that it is up to date.

Relevant documentation

- *Procedure for the re-evaluation, redefinition, and updating of the curriculum*
- *Procedure for mitigating weaknesses and upgrading the structure of the FLP, and the learning process*
- *Feedback processes on strategy implementation and quality targeting of the FLP, and relevant decision-making processes (students, external stakeholders)*

11. REGULAR EXTERNAL EVALUATION AND ACCREDITATION OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE PROGRAMMES

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

In particular

HAHE is responsible for administrating the FLP accreditation process which is realised as an external evaluation procedure, and implemented by a committee of independent experts. HAHE grants accreditation of these programmes, with a specific term of validity, following to which revision is required

The accreditation of the quality of the FLP acts as a means of verification of the compliance of the programme with the Standards, and as a catalyst for improvement, while opening new perspectives towards the international standing of the awarded degrees.

Both academic units and Institutions must consistently consider the conclusions and recommendations submitted by the committee of experts for the continuous improvement of the FLP.

Relevant documentation

- *Utilization of the recommendations of the external evaluation of the academic unit and / or the Institution for the establishment and the continuous improvement of the operation of the FLP (reference to the action plan)*