



ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ  
HELLENIC REPUBLIC



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## Accreditation Report for the Postgraduate Study Programme of:

Global Challenges and Analytics

School: Social Sciences

Institution: Hellenic Open University

Date: 04/12/2025



Με τη συγχρηματοδότηση  
της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης



Πρόγραμμα  
Ανθρώπινο Δυναμικό και  
Κοινωνική Συνοχή

enQA.

Report of the Panel appointed by the HAHE to undertake the review of the Postgraduate Study Programme of **Global Challenges and Analytics** of the **Hellenic Open University** for the purposes of granting accreditation

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## PART A: BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT OF THE REVIEW

### I. The External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel

The Panel responsible for the Accreditation Review of the postgraduate study programme of Global Challenges and Analytics of the **Hellenic Open University** comprised the following five (5) members, drawn from the HAHE Register, in accordance with Law 4653/2020:

1. PAPAKOSTAS APOSTOLIS (Chair)  
*(Title, Name, Surname)*  
Södertörn University  
*(Institution of origin)*
2. FOKAS NIKOS  
*(Title, Name, Surname)*  
Eötvös Loránd University (ELTE)  
*(Institution of origin)*
3. JOSEPH JOSEPH  
*(Title, Name, Surname)*  
University of Cyprus (Πανεπιστήμιο Κύπρου)  
*(Institution of origin)*
4. KARAKASIDOU ANASTASIA  
*(Title, Name, Surname)*  
Wellesley College  
*(Institution of origin)*
5. RALLIOS PETROS  
*(Title, Name, Surname)*  
University of the Peloponnese  
*(Institution of origin)*

## II. Review Procedure and Documentation

*Brief reference to the Panel preparation for the postgraduate study programme review, as well as to the documentation provided and considered by the Panel. Dates of the review, review, meetings held, and any additional information regarding the procedure, as appropriate.*

In reviewing the inter-departmental Postgraduate Study Programme of “Global Challenges and Analytics” of Hellenic Open University and the University of Peloponnese (hereafter the “Programme”), the objectives of the Panel, as described in the Guidelines for the Members of the EEAP, are:

- to establish whether the data provided from the various resources is consistent among one another and reflects the actual situation
- identify strengths and areas of weakness
- engage in a constructive dialogue with the Institution, leading to reflection and continuous enhancement of the study programme

Following a well-prepared schedule provided by HAHE, the Panel held several separate interactive virtual (by electronic means, ZOOM platform) meetings and visits for two days as follows:

On Monday, 3/11/2025, the following virtual meetings took place:

- with the Vice-Rector/President of MODIP
- with the Dean of the School of Social Sciences
- with the Director of the Programme
- with MODIP members and staff
- with Steering Committees/OMEA members
- an online tour of virtual classrooms, online platforms, and other facilities related to the Programme. The online tour followed a discussion of the facilities and infrastructure in which teaching and administrative staff participated.

On Wednesday, 5/11/2025, the following virtual meetings took place:

- with teaching staff of the Programme
- with current students of the Programme
- with social partners, mainly from other academic environments
- meeting with the Vice-Rector/President of MODIP, the Dean of the School of Social Sciences, the Director of the Programme, the Head, members and staff of MODIP, and members of Steering Committees/OMEA members.

During the above virtual meetings, the Panel had the chance to meet, talk, and interact with all the participants, who were successfully encouraged to express their views and suggestions and answer the Panel's questions. It is worth pointing out that the students were especially encouraged to demonstrate their overall learning experience freely. They welcomed the opportunity to talk to the Panel and to voice their views. The discussions were very

constructive and fruitful and were conducted in a cooperative manner and attitude. All the meetings included presentations, discussions, and question-and-answer sessions. During the last meeting, some clarifications were provided, and the Panel made an informal presentation of some initial key findings.

The internal evaluation report and other extensive material were made available to the Panel electronically in advance through HAHE. More information and materials were made available during the meetings. The School worked diligently to prepare the internal evaluation report and other relevant materials and organise and host the virtual meetings. It is the feeling of the Panel that the School has performed an excellent job throughout the internal evaluation process and that the objectives of the process have been fully met. The efficiency and eagerness of the School to answer questions and provide additional information and clarifications during the meetings are worth noting. The Panel wishes to express its gratefulness and appreciation to the School and the University administration for their co-operation and professionalism.

This Accreditation Report is based on information collected and views expressed during the virtual meetings as well as on information provided in the internal evaluation report and other documents submitted before and during the virtual meetings.

### **III. Postgraduate Study Programme Profile**

*Brief overview of the postgraduate study programme with reference to the following: history, academic remit, duration of studies, qualification awarded, employment opportunities, orientation challenges or any other key background information. Short description of the home Department and Institution, with reference to student population, campus or any other related facts.*

The Inter-disciplinary and Inter-University Postgraduate Studies Programme “Global Challenges and Analytics” aims to foster and develop an interdisciplinary approach to identifying, analyzing, and understanding global developments using analytical methods and tools from risk management and data analysis. It entails attendance of five Thematic Units, four Laboratory modules and the preparation of a postgraduate diploma thesis (optional for students with a previously completed postgraduate thesis). The Programme lasts 3 semesters. The language of the Programme is Greek. The Programme was previously given in situ at the University of Peloponnese and is now taught remotely at the Hellenic Open University.

The programme offers two specializations:

- 1: “Risk management in international politics”
- 2: “Data analysis in international policy”

Upon successful completion of the Inter-university Post-graduate programme, graduates will be able to

- identify, understand, and interpret in depth the interaction of political, economic, and social developments on a national or an international level,
- apply risk management to the study of international events and developments in a comprehensive manner,
- use analytical techniques and related software technologies to collect, process, analyze, and visualize data and information in the above areas, individually or in combination.

Students are expected to acquire multidimensional and interdisciplinary skills and qualifications, covering risk management and data analysis in international policy. In particular, the program aims to equip graduates with the critical ability to identify, understand, and interpret the complex network of relationships between political, economic, and social variables on national and international levels. In addition, the program is designed to provide students with risk management expertise, enabling them to explore and address the multifaceted challenges that arise in the international arena. At the same time, the program provides in-depth training in innovative technologies and data analysis techniques. Students learn how they can effectively collect, process, and visualize relevant data to facilitate decision-making in a complex and ever-changing environment.

Programme completion requires 90 ECTS. During the first two semesters the programme is structured in six thematic units, compulsory for all students. A thesis (30 ECTS) is mandatory for students with no previous experience of designing and completing a thesis in another

PSP. Students with a completed thesis are offered the option to choose elective courses in each specialization. The structure of the Programme follows thus conventional European standards.

The fee for the whole Programme is 4 050 Euros. Approximately 15 students are enrolled each academic year.

The Programme is well situated in the international field of international relation studies, and it is supported by academic staff from HOU's School of Social Sciences, and the University of Peloponnese. All teaching staff are Ph.D. holders who are active scholars and researchers in diverse areas of international relations and other related disciplines.

## PART B: COMPLIANCE WITH THE PRINCIPLES

### PRINCIPLE 1: QUALITY ASSURANCE POLICY AND QUALITY GOAL SETTING FOR THE POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES OF THE INSTITUTION AND THE ACADEMIC UNIT

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD APPLY A QUALITY ASSURANCE POLICY AS PART OF THEIR STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT. THIS POLICY SHOULD EXPAND AND BE AIMED (WITH THE COLLABORATION OF EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS) AT THE POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES OF THE INSTITUTION AND THE ACADEMIC UNIT. THIS POLICY SHOULD BE PUBLISHED AND IMPLEMENTED BY ALL STAKEHOLDERS.

*The quality assurance policy of the academic unit should be in line with the quality assurance policy of the Institution and must be formulated in the form of a public statement, which is implemented by all stakeholders. It focuses on the achievement of special goals related to the quality assurance of the study programmes offered by the academic unit.*

*Indicatively, the quality policy statement of the academic unit includes its commitment to implement a quality policy that will promote the academic profile and orientation of the postgraduate study programme (PSP), its purpose and field of study; it will realise the programme's goals and it will determine the means and ways for attaining them; it will implement appropriate quality procedures, aiming at the programme's improvement.*

*In particular, in order to implement this policy, the academic unit commits itself to put into practice quality procedures that will demonstrate:*

- a) *the suitability of the structure and organisation of postgraduate study programmes*
- b) *the pursuit of learning outcomes and qualifications in accordance with the European and National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education - level 7*
- c) *the promotion of the quality and effectiveness of teaching at the PSP*
- d) *the appropriateness of the qualifications of the teaching staff for the PSP*
- e) *the drafting, implementation, and review of specific annual quality goals for the improvement of the PSP*
- f) *the level of demand for the graduates' qualifications in the labour market*
- g) *the quality of support services, such as the administrative services, the libraries and the student welfare office for the PSP*
- h) *the efficient utilisation of the financial resources of the PSP that may be drawn from tuition fees*
- i) *the conduct of an annual review and audit of the quality assurance system of the PSP through the cooperation of the Internal Evaluation Group (IEG) with the Institution's Quality Assurance Unit (QAU)*

#### **Documentation**

- *Quality Assurance Policy of the PSP*
- *Quality goal setting of the PSP*

#### **Study Programme Compliance**

##### **I. Findings**

## Institutional Strategy

Since its establishment, the Inter-Institutional Postgraduate Programme (IIPSP) Global Challenges and Analytics (GCA) has been founded on a philosophy of comprehensive quality. It operates in accordance with the regulations governing postgraduate programs of the School of Social Sciences (SSS) of the Hellenic Open University (HOU) and the School of Social and Political Sciences of the University of the Peloponnese (UoP). The aim of this Inter-Institutional Programme is to provide knowledge and skills in areas related to risk management and data analysis within the field of international politics. The Quality Policy of the GCSA aligns with the Quality Policies of both founding institutions and is adapted to current conditions and requirements.

To implement this policy, the two institutions commit to applying procedures that demonstrate:

- The adequacy and quality of the Schools' resources
- The appropriateness of the structure and organization of the Programme
- The qualifications of the teaching staff
- The quality of support services across Schools, Departments, Offices, and Units, including staffing with suitable administrative personnel

The Schools also commit to working with the Programme Director and teaching staff to implement quality assurance procedures that demonstrate:

1. The appropriateness of the Programme's structure and organization
2. The pursuit of learning outcomes and qualifications in line with the European and National Qualifications Frameworks for Higher Education
3. The promotion of teaching quality and effectiveness
4. The suitability of teaching staff qualifications
5. The drafting, implementation, and review of annual quality objectives for programme development
6. The demand for graduates' qualifications in the labor market
7. The strengthening of ties with programme alumni
8. The quality of administrative and support services
9. The efficient use of financial resources
10. The conduct of annual reviews and internal evaluations, including documentation of preventive or corrective actions
11. The promotion of the quality and quantity of faculty research output
12. The integration of teaching with research
13. The enhancement of the Programme's outward orientation and visibility

## Quality Assurance Policy

The formulation of the Quality Policy for the GCA Programme focuses on promoting its mission and objectives, as well as achieving annual goals through targeted actions, with the ultimate aim of continuous development and improvement.

The Programme reflects and highlights the academic identity of both the School of Social Sciences (HOU) and the School of Social and Political Sciences (UoP), which are dedicated to providing knowledge and developing skills in the field of Social Sciences.

Specifically, the GCA Programme ensures:

1. Emphasis on the critical importance of risk management and data analysis in decision-making processes within public administration and private sector organizations.
2. Thematic Units addressing a wide range of theoretical and practical challenges in risk management and data analysis across international politics.
3. Provision of specialized knowledge and skills, training high-level professionals capable of addressing complex global challenges.
4. Promotion of interdisciplinarity, in line with international best practices, by integrating fields such as international relations, risk management, data analysis, decision-making, economics, organizational and business management, public policy, and governance.

The Quality Policy of the GCA Programme is approved by the Joint Inter-Institutional Committee of the collaborating institutions. It is binding, articulated in a formal statement, and published on the Programme's website and the main pages of both institutions. It is continuously updated through the active participation of faculty, students, and administrative staff. Implementation, monitoring, and revision are carried out in accordance with the procedures of the Internal Quality Assurance System.

#### Objectives

The annual objectives of the Programme are assessed using performance indicators, with the ultimate goal of continuous development and improvement. Objectives are articulated within the framework of the Schools' Operational Plans and aligned with the Institution's Strategic Plan.

Strategic objectives are formulated with a four-year horizon and defined across six core areas of activity:

1. Education
2. Research
3. Engagement with society
4. Internationalization
5. University environment
6. Quality assurance

Planning and definition of goals and actions are conducted in accordance with the approved Target Plan (Annex M1.2).

#### Communication of the Quality Policy

The Quality Policy of the GCA Programme is published on the Programme's website, accessible via the Institution's main page: <https://www.eap.gr/education/postgraduate/biannual/psa/>. The content has been discussed and approved by the relevant collective bodies and during a session of the Internal Quality Assurance Unit (MODIP).

Quality goals and their corresponding KPIs are outlined in document A3, where strategic objectives for each institutional activity axis (Education, Research, Societal Engagement, Internationalization, University Environment, and Quality Assurance) are accompanied by specific actions assessed using performance indicators. In the annual target-setting process, effectiveness and efficiency

indicators are defined and may be revised as needed, with additional strategic objectives introduced for designated activity axes.

Actions undertaken by the Schools aim at academic advancement and are aligned with the Institution's Strategic Plan. The planning and definition of objectives and actions within the Programme are consistent with the approved target-setting framework outlined in Appendix A3. These include:

1. Upgrading and quality control of the postgraduate program
2. Broadening recognition of the postgraduate program
3. Strengthening student welfare
4. Advancing academic development within the postgraduate program
5. Establishing links with external organizations

#### ECTS and Learning Outcomes

The Hellenic Open University follows the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS), which is based on transparency in learning, teaching, and assessment processes (ECTS Guide). A key feature of the ECTS system is the documentation of the level of knowledge, skills, and competences acquired by students upon completion of the educational process, verified through assessment. This is achieved through the formulation of Learning Outcomes (LOs), which are assigned to individual courses and to entire Study Programs. These will be further discussed under Principle 2.

## II. Analysis

The Hellenic Open University (HOU) and UoP follow the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS), which is based on the principle of transparency in learning, teaching, and assessment processes (ECTS Guide). One of the key features of the ECTS system is the documentation of the level of knowledge, skills, and competences acquired by the student upon completion of the educational process and verified through assessment. This is achieved through the formulation of Learning Outcomes (LOs), which are assigned to individual courses and to entire Study Programs and to be discussed in Principle 2.

The Strategy, Quality Assurance Policy and Quality Goals are included in the strategic management of the IPPS, and they are all definitive aspects of the development, organization and implementation of the Program. A thorough investigation of its feasibility and sustainability was conducted.

The Quality Assurance policy is published and implemented by all parties, including external stakeholders.

## III. Conclusions

The Quality Policy of this IIPSP is approved by the School of Social Sciences (SSS) of the Hellenic Open University (HOU), is binding, and is formulated as an official statement. It is published on the program's website and on the Institution's central homepage, and is continuously updated through the active participation

of all School members (faculty, students, administrative staff). Its implementation, monitoring, and revision are carried out in accordance with the procedures of the Institution's Internal Quality Assurance System. Given the above findings and the analysis, the Panel find the PSP to be fully compliant with Principle 1.

### **Panel Judgement**

<b>Principle 1: Quality assurance policy and quality goal setting for the postgraduate study programmes of the institution and the academic unit</b>	
Fully compliant	<b>X</b>
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

### **Panel Recommendations**

None

## PRINCIPLE 2: DESIGN AND APPROVAL OF POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD DEVELOP THEIR POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES FOLLOWING A DEFINED WRITTEN PROCESS WHICH WILL INVOLVE THE PARTICIPANTS, INFORMATION SOURCES AND THE APPROVAL COMMITTEES FOR THE POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES. THE OBJECTIVES, THE EXPECTED LEARNING OUTCOMES AND THE EMPLOYMENT PROSPECTS ARE SET OUT IN THE PRORAMME DESIGN. DURING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES, THE DEGREE OF ACHIEVEMENT OF THE LEARNING OUTCOMES SHOULD BE ASSESSED. THE ABOVE DETAILS, AS WELL AS INFORMATION ON THE PROGRAMME'S STRUCTURE ARE PUBLISHED IN THE STUDENT GUIDE.

*The academic units develop their postgraduate study programmes following a well-defined procedure. The academic profile and orientation of the programme, the research character, the scientific objectives, the specific subject areas, and specialisations are described at this stage.*

*The structure, content and organisation of courses and teaching methods should be oriented towards deepening knowledge and acquiring the corresponding skills to apply the said knowledge (e.g. course on research methodology, participation in research projects, thesis with a research component).*

*The expected learning outcomes must be determined based on the European and National Qualifications Framework (EQF, NQF), and the Dublin Descriptors for level 7. During the implementation of the programme, the degree of achievement of the expected learning outcomes and the feedback of the learning process must be assessed with the appropriate tools. For each learning outcome that is designed and made public, it is necessary that its evaluation criteria are also designed and made public.*

*In addition, the design of PSP must consider:*

- *the Institutional strategy*
- *the active involvement of students*
- *the experience of external stakeholders from the labour market*
- *the anticipated student workload according to the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) for level 7*
- *the option of providing work experience to students*
- *the linking of teaching and research*
- *the relevant regulatory framework and the official procedure for the approval of the PSP by the Institution*

*The procedure of approval or revision of the programmes provides for the verification of compliance with the basic requirements of the Standards by the Institution's Quality Assurance Unit (QAU).*

### **Documentation**

- *Senate decision for the establishment of the PSP*
- *PSP curriculum structure: courses, course categories, ECTS awarded, expected learning outcomes according to the EQF, internship, mobility opportunities*
- *Labour market data regarding the employment of graduates, international experience in a relevant scientific field*
- *PSP Student Guide*
- *Course and thesis outlines*

- *Teaching staff (name list including of areas of specialisation, its relation to the courses taught, employment relationship, and teaching assignment in hours as well as other teaching commitments in hours)*

## **Study Programme Compliance**

### **I. Findings**

This is a Joint Postgraduate Program on the theme of “Global Challenges and Analytics” offered by HOU and UoP. These two Higher Education Institutions design Postgraduate Programs following a specific documented procedure, which defines the participants, the sources of information, and the approval bodies for the program. In the design phase of the program, the objectives, expected learning outcomes, and employment prospects must be determined. During the implementation of the PSP, the degree of achievement of the learning outcomes must be evaluated. These elements, along with the structural details of the Program are published as part of the Study Guide.

The academic focus of the Inter-Institutional Postgraduate Program (IIPP) centers on knowledge and skills essential for accessing demanding and high-level positions in both the public and private sectors, across a broad range of economic fields (e.g., industry, banking, tourism), as well as in consulting, technical, and development assistance services (e.g. reconstruction of state and societal sectors, organizational and business management, defense, foreign policy, international economic transactions, and the organization and operation of NGOs).

The purpose of the IIPP is to cultivate and advance an interdisciplinary approach to identifying, analyzing, and understanding political, economic, and social developments on a global scale, through the use of methods, analytical tools, and techniques from the fields of risk management and data analysis.

Overall, the Hellenic Open University and the University of the Peloponnese possess extensive teaching and research experience in the academic treatment of the scientific subject matter of this IIPP. Therefore, they have decided to join forces to develop optimal synergies through the methodology of Open and Distance Learning in the fields of risk management, data analysis, and international relations-global politics.

The following Courses are offered:

1st Semester: International Politics (10 ECTS) PSA51, Risk Management (10 ECTS), and Data Analysis (10 ECTS)

2nd Semester: Special Topics in International Politics (10 ECTS), Risk Analysis in International Politics (10 ECTS), and Data Analysis in International Politics (10 ECTS)

3rd Semester: 1st Specialization: “Risk Management in International Politics:” a) Structure without Master's Thesis: Advanced Topics and Applications in International Politics (15 ECTS), and Empirical Study of Risk in International Politics (15 ECTS); b) Structure with Master's Thesis: Master's Thesis in Risk Management in International Politics (30 ECTS) 2nd Specialization: “Data Analysis in

International Politics;" a) Structure without Master's Thesis: Advanced Topics and Applications in International Politics (15 ECTS), and Empirical Study of Data Analysis in International Politics (15 ECTS); b) Structure with Master's Thesis: Master's Thesis in Data Analysis in International Politics (30 ECTS).

The program follows the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS), which is based on the principle of transparency in learning, teaching, and assessment processes (ECTS Guide). One of the core features of the ECTS system is the documentation of the level of knowledge, skills, and competencies acquired by the student upon completion of the educational process and verified through assessment. This is achieved through the formulation of Learning Outcomes (LOs), which are assigned to individual Thematic Units and to entire Study Programs. LOs are measurable and describe what each student is expected to be able to do upon successful completion of a Thematic Unit or the Program at-large. HOU primarily uses the Bloom & Krathwohl taxonomy (Bloom, B.S., Engelhart, M.D., Furst, E.J., Hill, W.H., and Krathwohl, D.R. (1956). *Taxonomy of Educational Objectives: Handbook 1 – Cognitive Domain*. Longmans, Green and Co Ltd, London), ECTS Guide, Hellenic Authority for Higher Education Guidelines for the development of LOs, according to which they are grouped into the following categories: knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. The achievement of LOs at HOU is assessed through students' performance on final and final examination questions, which are designed in alignment with the aforementioned taxonomy.

Upon successful completion of the Inter-Institutional Postgraduate Program (IIPP), graduates will be able to:

1. Knowledge: The Program aspires to map the driving forces of international politics by drawing on the practical experiences of state and non-state actors operating within the temporal and spatial boundaries of the international system, combined with (re)reflective inquiries from International Relations theory. Its central aim is to deepen understanding of the conceptual and analytical categories within the discipline of International Relations. This is achieved through the selective yet thorough study of characteristic case studies, enabling the exploration and highlighting of the multifaceted dimensions of collective human activity on the international stage.

2. Skills: Students will develop skills that will help them to: a) identify, understand, and deeply interpret the interaction of political, economic, and social developments at the national or international level; b) apply comprehensive risk management strategies in the study of international incidents and developments; and, c) use analytical techniques and related software technologies to collect, process, analyze, and visualize data and information relevant to the above areas, either individually or in combination.

From this perspective, the Thematic Unit aims to enhance each learner's analytical thinking so that they can:

1. Critically navigate a significant portion of the body of knowledge on international affairs accumulated by the academic community to date.

2. Trace the main theoretical and methodological tools through which experts and students of International Relations produce, exchange, and communicate their ideas.
3. Integrate theoretical discourse with the systematic examination of events shaping international political developments.
4. Reflect on and (re)construct the international realm, with the deep aspiration to contribute their own insight to the clear analysis of the theory and practice of international politics, thereby highlighting the multi-level and multidimensional nature of various global challenges.

3. Competencies Successful completion of the Thematic Unit is expected to help learners acquire:

1. Sufficient familiarity with the fundamental theoretical and methodological approaches to international politics.
2. Adequate ability to apply concepts and analytical categories from International Relations theory to the systematic, scientific investigation of international developments.
3. Solid experience in collecting and synthesizing factual information from a variety of print and digital sources.
4. Sufficient autonomy in articulating arguments orally and engaging in dialogue, as well as in writing, evaluating, and presenting (re)structured knowledge.
5. Overall, strong skills in the well-documented and critical analysis of events that shape international affairs and the diverse global challenges.

The Student Guide for the Joint Postgraduate Program on “Global Challenges and Systems of Analysis” is both comprehensive and precise. It lists information on the following topics: Subject and Purpose of the Program, Acquired Qualifications, Learning Outcomes, Characterization of the Postgraduate Program, Classifications according to UNESCO’s ISCED-2011 and 2013 Codes, Admission Requirements, ECTS Credits of the Study Program, Duration of Studies, Language of Instruction, Contact Information, Detailed Curriculum, Structure, Guidelines for Selecting Thematic Units (TUs), Student Evaluation, and descriptions of the offered Thematic Units (TUs) (PSA50: International Politics, PSA51: Risk Management, PSA52: Data Analysis, PSA53: Special Topics in International Politics, Risk Analysis in International Politics, Data Analysis in International Politics, Advanced Topics and Applications in International Politics, Empirical Study of Risk in International Politics, Empirical Study of Data Analysis in International Politics, Master's Thesis in Risk Management in International Politics, and Master's Thesis in Data Analysis in International Politics)

## II. Analysis

The purpose of the IIPP is to cultivate and develop an interdisciplinary approach to the identification, analysis, and understanding of political, economic, and social developments on a global scale, through the use of methods, analytical tools, and techniques from the fields of risk management and data analysis.

Higher Education Institutions like HOU and UoP design Postgraduate Study

Programs (IIPSPs) following a specific documented procedure, which define the participants, the sources of information, and the approval bodies.

In the design of this IIPSP, the objectives, expected learning outcomes, and employment prospects are determining factors. During the implementation of the program, the degree of achievement of the learning outcomes is also evaluated. These elements, along with the structural details of the program, are published, as part of the Study Guide. All the pertinent information is available in this document that makes it fairly easy for students to acquire easily available knowledge about the program's regulations and requirements.

The curriculum appears to be in line with the global level in journalism studies, and its structure is appropriate for the achievement of the learning objectives. It appears from the discussions that the Panel held with students, graduates and external stakeholders, that they are consulted and their voices are heard when curriculum revisions are in order.

The Hellenic Open University and the University of the Peloponnese possess extensive teaching and research experience in the academic treatment of the subject areas covered by this IIPP. Therefore, they have decided to join scientific forces to develop optimal synergies through the methodology of remote learning in the fields of risk management, data analysis, and international relations-global politics. However the EEAP feels that the integration of the field of risk management and the field of data analysis is not fully achieved.

### III. Conclusions

The Institutions of HOU and UoP follow a defined written process for the design and approval of PSPs. It involves participants, information sources and the approval committees for the program. The objectives and the specific subjects and specializations are well communicated in the Student Guide. The expected learning outcomes and the employment prospects of the graduates are taken into consideration in the design of the program, and they are eventually assessed, and taken into consideration for curriculum changes. The Panel finds the IIPSP to be substantially compliant with Principle #2, since the integration between the field of risk management and data analysis needs further consideration.

### Panel Judgement

<b>Principle 2: Design and approval of postgraduate study programmes</b>	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	X
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

## **Panel Recommendations**

Work to improve the integration of the two major fields of the Programme.

### **PRINCIPLE 3: STUDENT-CENTRED LEARNING, TEACHING, AND ASSESSMENT**

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD ENSURE THAT POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES PROVIDE THE NECESSARY CONDITIONS TO ENCOURAGE STUDENTS TO TAKE AN ACTIVE ROLE IN THE LEARNING PROCESS. THE ASSESSMENT METHODS SHOULD REFLECT THIS APPROACH.

*Student-centred learning and teaching plays an important role in enhancing students' motivation, their self-evaluation, and their active participation in the learning process. The above entail continuous consideration of the programme's delivery and the assessment of the related outcomes.*

*The student-centred learning and teaching process*

- *respects and attends to the diversity of students and their needs by adopting 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*
- *strengthens 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 the students' complaints*
- *provides counselling and guidance for the preparation of the thesis*

*In addition*

- *The academic staff are familiar with the existing examination system and methods and are supported in developing their own skills in this field.*
- *The assessment criteria and methods are published in advance. The assessment allows students to demonstrate the extent to which the intended learning outcomes have been achieved. Students are given feedback, which, if necessary is linked to advice on the learning process.*
- *Student assessment is conducted by more than one examiner, where possible.*
- *Assessment is consistent, fairly applied to all students and conducted in accordance with the stated procedures.*
- *A formal procedure for student appeals is in place.*
- *The function of the academic advisor runs smoothly.*

#### **Documentation**

- *Sample of a fully completed questionnaire for the evaluation of the PSP by the students*
- *Regulations for dealing with students' complaints and appeals*
- *Regulation for the function of academic advisor*
- *Reference to the teaching modes and assessment methods*

### **Study Programme Compliance**

#### **I. Findings**

The evaluation of teachers and students by the Hellenic Open University plays a key role in its strategic goals. This is a general framework provided by all programs. Student participation rates of around 50 percent, quite impressive number when compared to traditional universities. Both university leaders and program participants believe that students can contribute significantly to the continuous improvement of the program in this way. At the university level, they strive to conduct student evaluations in a way that involves everyone and is useful to everyone. This includes evaluating administrative services. as well The Strategic Planning and Development Office plays a key role in this process.

## **II. Analysis**

The Global Challenges and Analytics Postgraduate Study Program is very young, having only been launched in the 2024/25 academic year. It draws on the HOU's decades of experience. In the process, they worked closely with the Educational Material and Methodology Laboratory. They used institutions developed there earlier. The institution of Professor-Advisor is a stark example. The role of the faculty is very important, given that in addition to their usual teaching duties, they also play an advisory, supportive, guiding, and spiritual role in their relationship with students.

At the Hellenic Open University, two online platforms also assist the work of teachers.

Due to the low number of students per teacher, the faculty is able to develop close, personal relationships between teachers and students, even in distance learning. This makes it easy for students to understand the educational process and experience. Advisory meetings for newly admitted students also play a key role in understanding student perspectives.

One of the strengths of the program is that the instructors come from a wide variety of fields, including academia, industry, public administration, and research. Education is student-centered because the faculty view students as partners and 'patients' to be served.

## **III. Conclusions**

It is noteworthy that not only do students hold their teachers in high regard, but conversely, teachers also find it extremely inspiring that their students come from such a wide variety of backgrounds.

As part of its student-centered education, the university has developed and operates a system for recording and assessing student complaints. The university has a very detailed set of procedures for this.

An educational complaint is defined as the formal expression (written or verbal)

of a student's dissatisfaction with the educational-advisory process during their studies at the Hellenic Open University.

The purpose of this system is to improve the educational experience, and therefore, substantiated complaints can be submitted. The Programme has at its disposal a system for:

- Determining the method for managing, recording, and counting educational complaints.
- Determining the method by which the Institution obtains information regarding its students' perception of the educational process.

### **Panel Judgement**

<b>Principle 3: Student-centred learning, teaching, and assessment</b>	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

### **Panel Recommendations**

The program is still very new, but it is already necessary to consider the institutional frameworks that will enable the utilization of the human capital embodied in the students.

## **PRINCIPLE 4: STUDENT ADMISSION, PROGRESSION, RECOGNITION OF POSTGRADUATE STUDIES, AND CERTIFICATION.**

**INSTITUTIONS SHOULD DEVELOP AND APPLY PUBLISHED REGULATIONS COVERING ALL ASPECTS AND PHASES OF STUDIES (ADMISSION, PROGRESSION, THESIS DRAFTING, RECOGNITION AND CERTIFICATION).**

*All the issues from the beginning to the end of studies should be governed by the internal regulations of the academic units. Indicatively:*

- *the student admission procedures and the required supporting documents*
- *student rights and obligations, and monitoring of student progression*
- *internship issues, if applicable, and granting of scholarships*
- *the procedures and terms for the drafting of assignments and the thesis*
- *the procedure of award and recognition of degrees, the duration of studies, the conditions for progression and for the assurance of the progress of students in their studies*
- *the terms and conditions for enhancing student mobility*

*All the above must be made public in the context of the Student Guide.*

### ***Documentation***

- *Internal regulation for the operation of the Postgraduate Study Programme*
- *Research Ethics Regulation*
- *Regulation of studies, internship, mobility, and student assignments*
- *Degree certificate template*

## **Study Programme Compliance**

### **I. Findings**

The main goal and uniqueness of the Global Challenges and Analytics Postgraduate Study Program is the combined acquisition of two different skills and abilities: risk analysis and data analysis. The average age of students attending this program is 43, and half of them already have another postgraduate degree. The vast majority of them already have jobs.

In general, at the university's PSP students are informed via online platforms in accordance with pre-set deadlines. In the case of this particular program, this was not always the case at the beginning. The university administration was unable to

meet all deadlines, which caused temporary problems for students and teaching staff in their planning. Program management ensures that students are aware of the deadlines that apply to them in good time.

Consultation hours last four hours. Lecturers must guarantee three hours of office hours per week.

## **II. Analysis**

At present, among the issues the programme needs to address is the fact that, of the two available thesis tracks, all students have chosen the risk analysis option. Students tend to avoid the data analysis track, and something must be done about this.

The Global Challenges and Analytics Postgraduate Study Programme primarily attracts students with a social sciences or humanities background, while also having a noteworthy proportion of students with prior training in the natural sciences.

The number of newly admitted students is around twenty. In recent years, as a consequence of the crisis affecting mass communication enterprises, these organisations have no longer been able to financially support the further education of their employees. This has also left its mark on the number of new enrolments.

## **III. Conclusions**

According to one graduate who is now working in the field, the programme could be complemented with a thematic unit on sports journalism, for which there would likely be considerable demand.

The literature used in the programme is almost exclusively in English. The programme leadership has recognised that students initially expressed dissatisfaction in this area, although they assessed that as the training progressed, this was offset by the increased familiarity students gained with English-language sources. In contrast, most graduates pointed out the lack of Greek-language literature as a shortcoming. They found that they had to spend a great deal of time searching for appropriate sources.

At the meeting with the stakeholders, we were surprised to find that most of the participants had a dual identity. On the one hand, they were the social partners; on the other hand, most of them were also graduates of the programme. We found that the majority were able to report on what the programme had provided for them, or, if they had not personally completed it, how much more professional and confident their colleagues had become through their participation in the programme.

The other aspect of the relationship—namely, what support they as social partners could offer the programme—was disproportionately weaker. Institutionalised cooperation was minimal; the relationship was mostly occasional and personal. Here we identified an underutilised pool of human capital.

A striking comparative advantage of those who completed the programme is the confidence with which they use the most modern communication technologies and their ability to verify the reliability of their sources.

### **Panel Judgement**

<b>Principle 4: Student admission, progression, recognition of postgraduate studies and certification</b>	
Fully compliant	<b>X</b>
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

### **Panel Recommendations**

One of the main characteristics of the program is that a significant proportion of students work in various parts of Greece and even abroad. The fact that exams require personal attendance causes them serious organizational problems and additional financial expenses. Arranging this could be one of the important tasks of the program.

## PRINCIPLE 5: TEACHING STAFF OF POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD ASSURE THEMSELVES OF THE LEVEL OF KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS OF THEIR TEACHING STAFF, AND APPLY FAIR AND TRANSPARENT PROCESSES FOR THEIR RECRUITMENT, TRAINING AND FURTHER DEVELOPMENT.

*The Institution should attend to the adequacy of the teaching staff of the academic unit teaching at the PSP, the appropriate staff-student ratio, the appropriate staff categories, the appropriate subject areas, the fair and objective recruitment process, the high research performance, the training-development, the staff development policy (including participation in mobility schemes, conferences, and educational leaves-as mandated by law).*

*More specifically, the academic unit should set up and follow clear, transparent and fair processes for the recruitment of properly qualified staff for the PSP and offer them conditions of employment that recognise the importance of teaching and research; 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; promote the increase of the volume and quality of the research output within the academic unit; follow quality assurance processes for all staff (with respect to attendance requirements, performance, self-assessment, training, etc.); develop policies to attract highly qualified academic staff.*

### **Documentation**

- *Procedures and criteria for teaching staff recruitment*
- *Employment regulations or contracts, and obligations of the teaching staff*
- *Policy for staff support and development*
- *Individual performance of the teaching staff in scientific-research and teaching work, based on internationally recognised systems of scientific evaluation (e.g. Google Scholar, Scopus, etc.)*
- *List of teaching staff including subject areas, employment relationship, Institution of origin, Department of origin*

## **Study Programme Compliance**

### **I. Findings**

The University and the School of Social Sciences, in which the Programme is offered, recognizing the importance of teaching and research, follow a clear, transparent and fair process for the recruitment of qualified teaching staff as adjunct professors (Συνεργαζόμενο Εκπαιδευτικό Προσωπικό), on a contract basis from other Institutions.

Attracting highly qualified academic staff is, indeed, a top priority and a diligently followed practice. The Panel confirms that the expertise, international background, high qualifications, and enthusiasm of the teaching staff enhance the quality of teaching and research output. All of them are Ph.D. holders, active researchers, productive scholars and dedicated teachers. New and suitable

technologies are widely used for remote teaching, which is in line with the nature and mission of the University in offering distance education. Electronic means including teaching platforms, websites, email and social media are used when interacting with students. The staff-student ratio is very good.

## II. Analysis

The teaching staff follow innovative and widely used pedagogical practices and instructional methods that are appropriate for distance learning and meet international standards. There is enthusiasm and skills in utilizing new technologies for teaching, communication and interaction among faculty, students, administrative staff and University services. The Panel had the opportunity to talk and listen to members of the teaching staff and received the impression that they are committed, accessible, understanding, and ready to provide support and guidance to their students. Overall, there is a good distance learning environment, a positive attitude and a supportive educational culture which guarantee encouragement and advising of the highest standards for the students.

## III. Conclusions

The Programme, the School and the University provide encouragement and opportunities for the professional development of the faculty, although there is room for improvement. All adjunct teaching staff should be commended for their firm commitment, concentrated effort and enthusiasm in maintaining high-quality teaching and research despite the obstacles and difficulties created by the lack of permanent teaching staff, limited resources and other external factors for which the Programme, the School and the University cannot be blamed. It is pointed out that there is a collaborative climate within the Programme built on, and reflecting, mutual respect and collegial spirit, not only among faculty members, but also between students and teaching staff.

### Panel Judgement

<b>Principle 5: Teaching staff of postgraduate study programmes</b>	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

### Panel Recommendations

- The School and the University could seek ways and means to provide further support to faculty members to enhance teaching and research by attracting external funding, especially through international and European projects. Hiring at least one permanent member to support the Programme will help a lot in many respects. This is in line with the broader need and duty of the State to address the general systemic problem of an inadequately funded public university system.
- The excellent collegial atmosphere in the School and the Programme, and accessibility of faculty by the students should be maintained and further enhanced, as it is instrumental in sharing experiences and getting feedback.

## PRINCIPLE 6: LEARNING RESOURCES AND STUDENT SUPPORT

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD HAVE ADEQUATE FUNDING TO COVER THE TEACHING AND LEARNING NEEDS OF THE POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMME. THEY SHOULD –ON THE ONE HAND- PROVIDE SATISFACTORY INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES FOR LEARNING AND STUDENT SUPPORT, AND – ON THE OTHER HAND- FACILITATE DIRECT ACCESS TO THEM BY ESTABLISHING INTERNAL RULES TO THIS END (E.G. LECTURE ROOMS, LABORATORIES, LIBRARIES, NETWORKS, CAREER AND SOCIAL POLICY SERVICES ETC.).

*Institutions and their academic units must have sufficient resources and means, on a planned and long-term basis, to support learning and academic activity in general, so as to offer PSP students the best possible level of studies. The above means include facilities such as the necessary general and more specialised libraries and possibilities for access to electronic databases, study rooms, educational and scientific equipment, IT and communication services, support and counselling services.*

*When allocating the available resources, the needs of all students must be taken into consideration (e.g. whether they are full-time or part-time students, employed students, students with disabilities), in addition to the shift towards student-centred 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. However, the internal quality assurance proves -on the one hand- the quantity and quality of the available facilities and services, and -on the other hand- that students are aware of all available services.*

*In delivering support services, the role of support and administration staff is crucial and therefore this segment of staff needs to be qualified and have opportunities to develop its competences.*

### **Documentation**

- *Detailed description of the infrastructure and services made available by the Institution to the academic unit for the PSP, to support learning and academic activity (human resources, infrastructure, services, etc.) and the corresponding firm commitment of the Institution to financially cover these infrastructure-services from state or other resources*
- *Administrative support staff of the PSP (job descriptions, qualifications and responsibilities)*
- *Informative / promotional material given to students with reference to the available services*
- *Tuition utilisation plan (if applicable)*

### **Study Programme Compliance**

#### **I. Findings**

The Hellenic Open University hosts the Master's Degree Program "Global Challenges and Analytics". This is a distance learning master's degree program. The Hellenic Open University does not receive any official state funding for the operation of its programs. For this reason, its programs include tuition fees that are paid from the students. The University operates its programs using distance learning, which makes it difficult to create a student community. However, the University does offer support services for students, digital classrooms, career counseling, a library, and electronic document repositories where instructors post useful educational material.

## II. Analysis

The Hellenic Open University has the necessary digital infrastructure to support the teaching of this Master's Program. In addition to online classes, the university has a digital platform where students can register and add the courses they are taking each semester, and have access to a wealth of educational material shared by the instructors of the educational modules. In addition, students in the program have access to the university library, where they can search for the bibliography they are interested in from the electronic catalog and reserve the book, which is loaned to them by the university library and sent to them by mail. In this regard, students have mentioned as a problem the number of copies of each book, which is considered small. This creates a problem when students are assigned a task and need to find specific bibliography as part of their research obligations. In addition, the distance lending library system is considered time-consuming and not very convenient for students.

Due to the nature of the university and distance learning, it is difficult to create a student community and encourage student participation in joint activities. This is definitely a challenge for the university right now, but it's also a long-term goal.

## III. Conclusions

The university provides all the necessary resources for the smooth running of the program. The university strives to be friendly and accessible to students in order to serve the educational process in the best possible way.

### Panel Judgement

<b>Principle 6: Learning resources and student support</b>	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

### Panel Recommendations

Further access to contemporary bibliographies, articles, and scientific journals, whether in foreign languages or Greek, relating to the content of the postgraduate program should be ensured.

The university should collaborate with the libraries of other academic institutions and other public libraries so that students can borrow books with their student ID. This is undoubtedly

an important step towards better serving students and the overall educational process.

## PRINCIPLE 7: INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

INSTITUTIONS BEAR FULL RESPONSIBILITY FOR COLLECTING, ANALYSING AND USING INFORMATION, AIMED AT THE EFFICIENT MANAGEMENT OF POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES AND RELATED ACTIVITIES, IN AN INTEGRATED, EFFECTIVE AND EASILY ACCESSIBLE WAY.

*Institutions are expected to establish and operate an information system for the management and monitoring of data concerning students, teaching staff, course structure and organisation, teaching and provision of services to students.*

*Reliable data is essential for accurate information and decision-making, as well as for identifying areas of smooth operation and areas for improvement. Effective procedures for collecting and analysing information on postgraduate study programmes and other activities feed data into the internal system of quality assurance.*

*The information collected depends, to some extent, on the type and mission of the Institution. The following are of interest:*

- *key performance indicators*
- *student population profile*
- *student progression, success, and drop-out rates*
- *student satisfaction with their programmes*
- *availability of learning resources and student support*

*A number of methods may be used to collect information. It is important that students and staff are involved in providing and analysing information and planning follow-up activities.*

### **Documentation**

- *Report from the National Information System for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (NISQA) at the level of the Institution, the department, and the PSP*
- *Operation of an information management system for the collection of administrative data for the implementation of the PSP (Students' Record)*
- *Other tools and procedures designed to collect data on the academic and administrative functions of the academic unit and the PSP*

## **Study Programme Compliance**

### **I. Findings**

The Programme, the School and the University have established mechanisms and procedures for the collection, storing, management and monitoring of data regarding students, teaching staff, learning resources, services and support. Several methods are used to collect information, including the administration of questionnaires. The data collected includes, among others, key performance indicators, student population profile, progression, success, dropout rates and student satisfaction. Students, administrative and teaching staff are involved in providing and analyzing information and planning follow-up activities. Student records and demographics are diligently kept as required by the University. During the current external review, the Programme provided evidence of data in the

form of comprehensible, clear and easy to interpret graphs and tables showing changes over time.

## II. Analysis

There are in place robust and well-functioning tools and procedures for the collection, storing, management and monitoring of data in support of the academic and administrative operation of the Programme. The electronic procedures for monitoring admission, enrolment, attendance and student welfare are reliable and efficient. The protection of student data, intellectual rights and ownership of student work is secure. There are also clear rules and procedures for registering and resolving issues and complaints. During presentations and discussions with faculty, students and administrative staff, it became very clear that they all have very positive experiences of smooth data management. It is also noted that the School and the Programme are well aware of the fact that reliable data is essential for identifying areas of strengths and weaknesses, as well as for informed decision-making. Overall, the Panel has the clear impression that the procedures and mechanisms of data collection and management are straightforward, reliable, accessible, well-performing and feeding data into the internal system of quality assurance.

## III. Conclusions

The operations enabling and safeguarding efficient data collection and management in relation to all aspects of the Programme are of high quality and efficiency. The tools and procedures in use are in compliance with the national and European standards of collection, protection and management of electronic information. The high degree of student satisfaction and the positive accounts of teaching and administrative staff testify to the successful implementation of suitable data management principles and practices.

### Panel Judgement

<b>Principle 7: Information management</b>	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

### Panel Recommendations

- Consider introducing a more systematic monitoring of graduates and their career paths that could be useful for both the Programme and the graduates.

- Keeping in mind the limitations questionnaires entail, consider encouraging students to provide written anonymous feedback at the end of the terms and/or upon completion of the Programme.

## PRINCIPLE 8: PUBLIC INFORMATION CONCERNING THE POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD PUBLISH INFORMATION ABOUT THEIR TEACHING AND ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES RELATED TO THE POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES IN A DIRECT AND READILY ACCESSIBLE WAY. THE RELEVANT INFORMATION SHOULD BE UP-TO-DATE, OBJECTIVE AND CLEAR.

*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 PSP they offer, the intended learning outcomes, the degrees awarded, the teaching, learning and assessment procedures applied, the pass rates, and the learning opportunities available to their students. Information is also provided on the employment perspectives of PSP graduates.*

### **Documentation**

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

## Study Programme Compliance

### **I. Findings**

The Master's website allows the publication of relevant informations specifically about this Programme. It offers information about the overarching structure of the MA program and the courses offered. The website is bilingual, offering content in both English and Greek, thereby broadening its accessibility to a more diverse audience.

### **II. Analysis**

The program under examination has fulfilled the obligations specified under this particular principle. The website provides a clear, objective, and up-to-date overview of the Programme, catering to the informational needs of a diverse audience, including prospective students, graduates, and other interested parties. The bilingual content promotes inclusivity and wider accessibility.

### **III. Conclusions**

The school's website for the Program meets the requirements of Principle 8. It provides information about the general structure of the program and the courses offered.

## Panel Judgement

### **Principle 8: Public information concerning the postgraduate study programmes**

Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	

Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

### Panel Recommendations

None

## **PRINCIPLE 9: ON-GOING MONITORING AND PERIODIC INTERNAL EVALUATION OF POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES**

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

*The regular monitoring, review, and revision of postgraduate study programmes aim at maintaining the level of educational provision and creating a supportive and effective learning environment for students.*

*The above comprise the evaluation of:*

- a) the content of the programme in the light of the latest research in the given discipline, thus ensuring that the PSP is up to date*
- b) the changing needs of society*
- c) the students' workload, progression and completion of the postgraduate studies*
- d) the effectiveness of the procedures for the assessment of students*
- e) the students' expectations, needs and satisfaction in relation to the programme*
- f) the learning environment, support services, and their fitness for purpose for the PSP in question*

*Postgraduate study programmes are reviewed and revised regularly involving students and other stakeholders. The information collected is analysed and the programme is adapted to ensure that it is up-to-date.*

### **Documentation**

- *Procedure for the re-evaluation, redefinition and updating of the PSP curriculum*
- *Procedure for mitigating weaknesses and upgrading the structure of the PSP and the learning process*
- *Feedback processes concerning the strategy and quality goal setting of the PSP and relevant decision-making processes (students, external stakeholders)*
- *Results of the annual internal evaluation of the PSP by the Quality Assurance Unit (QAU), and the relevant minutes*

### **Study Programme Compliance**

#### **I. Findings**

The Global Challenges and Analytics Postgraduate Study Program has a unique comparative advantage in its human capital resources. This applies to both teachers and students. The teachers come from a wide variety of other universities and have extensive teaching experience. Their teaching and research areas are also very diverse. They range from management and risk analysis to statistics.

The criteria for hiring teachers at the university are transparent and clearly regulated. The scoring system for applicants is public in advance and meritocratic.

One of the characteristics of online education is that, compared to face-to-face teaching, it takes longer to find out what abilities and motivations the students who have been admitted to the program have. For this reason, conducting consultations requires special preparation on the part of the instructors. In such cases, consultations cover administrative, theoretical, and empirical issues.

The creation of an organic link between teaching and research is weakened by the fact that teachers employed under the SEP have only teaching obligations. The program has no DEP category members. Such a colleague would also be suitable for coordinating research activities.

The programme management listed among the good practices of the curriculum that students regularly participate in conferences. Students who are preparing their theses are given the opportunity to present them at a wide variety of workshops. In this way, an organic link is created between teaching and research.

Both the university and the representatives of the Global Challenges and Analysis Systems Postgraduate Study Programme, believe that its online, nationwide reach across Greece provides the programme with comparative advantages.

The students' evaluation of the programme provides essential information for flexibly and effectively adapting the programme to changing needs, while also enabling its continuous and efficient further development.

In accordance with the general faculty procedures, the Study Program Committee, with the involvement of all relevant instructors, discusses the status of the program, the main areas of education, and the opportunities that have arisen.

## **II. Analysis**

Programme Origins and Development:

The creation of the Postgraduate Study Programme (PSP) "Global Challenges and Analytics" is particularly noteworthy. Its predecessor had long operated under the auspices of the Department of Political Science and International Relations at the University of the Peloponnese. Building on this foundation, the initiators of the new PSP sought to extend and enhance the earlier experience by integrating both quantitative and qualitative methods into the analysis of international relations. The professional obligations of students in the Peloponnese program highlighted the need for greater flexibility, leading faculty to recognize the demand for a fully online postgraduate program.

At this stage, the initiators engaged with officials of the Hellenic Open University (HOU), who possessed substantial expertise in both the technical and pedagogical aspects of online education.

Transition to Online Delivery:

Transforming a program originally designed for in-person instruction into one suitable for online delivery posed significant challenges. Nevertheless, the

leadership is convinced that the effort has been successful, as the program has attracted mature, conscientious, and highly motivated students. This positive assessment was fully confirmed by the Committee during its meeting with enrolled students.

Newly appointed instructors undergo training to familiarize themselves with the specific requirements of online education, followed by ongoing professional development to ensure continuous improvement in teaching practices.

#### Good Practices and Teaching Support:

Among the good practices observed in related programs, such as the Global Challenges and Analytics PSP, is the requirement for instructors to hold group advisory consultations. These sessions provide students with opportunities to present theoretical frameworks and key empirical findings essential for their thesis work, fostering academic dialogue and peer learning.

Teaching materials are continuously updated and adapted to reflect current developments. However, program leadership has noted that the process of revising and approving materials within the university framework can be bureaucratic and slow.

#### Emerging Challenges:

One area of concern identified by the leadership is the declining student interest in study trips abroad in recent years. While such activities have traditionally enriched the academic experience, the trend suggests a need to reconsider how international exposure and intercultural engagement can be integrated into the program in alternative ways.

### III. Conclusions

#### Programme Responsiveness and Innovation:

The leadership of the Postgraduate Study Programme (PSP) “Global Challenges and Analytics” is aware of the increasing competition posed by traditional universities expanding their online education offerings, as well as by newly established private institutions. In consultations with graduates, it was noted that the Programme began with highly contemporary topics from its inception. More recent graduates confirmed that the curriculum continues to be regularly updated. For example, greater emphasis has been placed on the analysis of social media and the phenomenon of fake news.

Graduates with long-standing professional experience in journalism—often predating their enrolment in the Programme—praised it highly. They emphasized that one of its key strengths is its ability to address questions and challenges that introduce new perspectives and innovative approaches into everyday professional practice.

#### Strengthening the Research Dimension:

Building on this foundation, the Programme leadership recognizes the need to strengthen its research dimension. One proposed initiative is the establishment of

a permanent research group, which would enhance scholarly output and foster a culture of inquiry. The leadership is confident that the instructors, equipped with broad and strongly interdisciplinary academic expertise, are well positioned to meet these challenges. Particular attention is directed toward reinforcing the fields of methodology and the sociology of information. Furthermore, artificial intelligence (AI) is identified as a new challenge, and related issues are planned to be incorporated into the Programme's thematic structure.

#### Quality Assurance Procedures:

As part of its quality assurance framework, the Quality Assurance Unit (MODIP) of the Hellenic Open University prepares a brief anonymized report based on information contained in the Complaint Registration Form (E KFP). This report is presented to the MODIP Committee during its meetings, where any necessary follow-up actions are determined.

#### Institutional Governance:

In accordance with the general procedures applied across all training programs, initiatives involving program restructuring and development are ultimately subject to approval at the faculty level. This ensures that changes are aligned with institutional priorities and academic standards.

### Panel Judgement

<b>Principle 9: On-going monitoring and periodic internal evaluation of postgraduate study programmes</b>	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

### Panel Recommendations

Greater efforts should be made to encourage students to take better advantage of the educational and research cooperation opportunities offered by international exchange programs.

## **PRINCIPLE 10: REGULAR EXTERNAL EVALUATION OF POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES**

**THE POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES SHOULD REGULARLY UNDERGO EVALUATION BY PANELS OF EXTERNAL EXPERTS SET BY HAHE, AIMING AT ACCREDITATION. THE TERM OF VALIDITY OF THE ACCREDITATION IS DETERMINED BY HAHE.**

*HAHE is responsible for administrating the PSP accreditation process which is realised as an external evaluation procedure, and implemented by panels of independent experts. HAHE grants accreditation of programmes, based on the Reports delivered by the panels of external experts, with a specific term of validity, following to which, revision is required. The quality accreditation of the PSP acts as a means for the determination of the degree of compliance of the programme to 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 the recommendations submitted by the panels of experts for the continuous improvement of the programme.*

### **Documentation**

- *Progress report of the PSP in question, on the results from the utilisation of possible recommendations included in the External Evaluation Report of the Institution, and in the IQAS Accreditation Report, with relation to the postgraduate study programmes*

### **Study Programme Compliance**

#### **I. Findings**

During the current first external evaluation of the Programme, all internal and external stakeholders were actively engaged. The Programme, the School and the University worked diligently in preparing materials, presentations, as well as in organizing and hosting the online virtual meetings. The meetings with the Panel included presentations, discussions, and question-and-answer sessions with teaching and administrative staff, students, employers and social partners. The Panel had the opportunity to meet, talk, and interact with all the participants at all meetings. The discussions were very constructive, informative and fruitful, and were conducted in a cooperative manner and attitude. The efficiency and eagerness of the School and the teaching and administrative staff supporting the Programme to answer questions and provide additional information and clarifications during the meetings are worth noting.

#### **II. Analysis**

Based on the materials submitted and the information gathered during the online presentations and discussions, it appears that all members of staff (teaching and administrative), as well as students and other stakeholders are aware of the importance of external evaluation, its usefulness and the contribution it can make in improving the Programme. Throughout the current external evaluation process, it was convincingly demonstrated that the School and the Programme are committed to the letter, spirit and process of quality assurance and external

review. There is already in place a plan for utilizing the findings and recommendations of this external evaluation. As they pointed out during the meetings, it will help them become better by enabling them to identify any problematic areas and find suitable solutions.

### **III. Conclusions**

It is the impression of the Panel that the Programme, the School and the University are committed to external evaluation as a key component of their quality assurance system. They worked diligently to facilitate the current evaluation and meet its objectives. Overall, their positive approach toward quality assurance and external review is expected to have a positive impact on the Programme and contribute to its continuous improvement. However, more tangible results and a more meaningful assessment regarding this Principle will be possible when a second external evaluation is carried out.

#### **Panel Judgement**

<b>Principle 10: Regular external evaluation of postgraduate study programmes</b>	
Fully compliant	<b>X</b>
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

#### **Panel Recommendations**

- Maintain and further enhance the existing positive attitude toward the external review process, its findings and recommendations.

## **PART C: CONCLUSIONS**

### **I. Features of Good Practice**

#### **Programme Orientation and Academic Scope**

The Interdisciplinary and Inter-University Postgraduate Study Programme (PSP)

“Global Challenges and Analytics” is structured along two main axes:

1. Risk Management in International Politics
2. Data Analysis in International Policy

Students are expected to acquire multidimensional and interdisciplinary skills and qualifications, encompassing both risk management and data analysis in international policy. The Programme aims to equip graduates with the critical ability to identify, understand, and interpret the complex network of relationships among political, economic, and social variables at both national and international levels. In addition, it provides specialized expertise in risk management, enabling students to explore and address the multifaceted challenges that arise in the global arena.

**Innovation and Academic Collaboration:** A distinctive innovation of the Programme is its implementation through the cooperation of academic specialists from multiple universities and disciplines. The teaching staff are to be commended for their commitment, concentrated effort, and enthusiasm in advancing the Programme despite obstacles posed by limited resources and external constraints. The academic environment is characterized by collegiality, mutual respect, and a cooperative spirit, which has been instrumental in its success.

**Teaching Staff and Curriculum:** The teaching staff possess appropriate qualifications, which are continuously enhanced through their institutional activities. The curriculum is organized in line with the latest trends in the scientific field, ensuring relevance and rigor. The Programme has been praised by both social partners and students, and it enjoys the full support of the University’s leadership.

**Student-Centred Education:** The Programme delivers student-centred distance education that fosters diverse perspectives, independence, and preparation for significant roles in the field of global studies. It prioritizes transparent student selection and operates on a full-time attendance model. Comprehensive guidance is provided through the Regulation of Studies document.

**Continuous Improvement:** The Programme actively encourages and values ongoing student course evaluations, using them as a key mechanism to drive continuous improvement in teaching and learning.

## **II. Areas of Weakness**

- The research environment that supports the Programme is not structured in terms of an institutionalized research profile in global studies at the Hellenic Open

University.

- Relying on external competence as regards the core themes of the Programme may be counter-productive in the long term.
- Relations and interactions with stakeholders are rather underdeveloped, mainly established within the broader academic community and not with stakeholders in society.
- The linkages between the two axes of the programme are rather weak.
- The sense of community among students and instructors is relatively weak due to the geographic distances of students' residences and the disparity of institutional affiliation of the teaching staff.

### **III. Recommendations for Follow-up Actions**

#### **General Recommendations**

1. Establish stable research structures. Current research activity is occasional and dependent on individual faculty members. The School and the University should explore ways to provide stronger support to faculty, particularly by attracting external funding through international and European projects. Hiring at least one permanent staff member dedicated to supporting the Programme would significantly strengthen its operations. This recommendation aligns with the broader responsibility of the State to address systemic underfunding in public higher education.
2. Strengthen relations with social actors beyond academia. The Programme should consider establishing a Programme Advisory Board as an ad hoc committee to facilitate dialogue and exchange of Quality Assurance practices. Membership could include representatives from government, local academia, industry, international scholars, stakeholders, alumni, current students, and other relevant partners.
3. Enhance academic community cohesion. The EEAP encourages the Programme to create opportunities that foster belonging and cohesion within the academic community, thereby reinforcing student and faculty engagement.

#### **Specific Recommendations**

1. Develop a new Student Guide. A comprehensive guide should be prepared that includes postgraduate programs and provides detailed information about available courses, thereby improving transparency and student orientation.
2. Improve theoretical and methodological integration. Greater coherence should be achieved between the two major fields of the Programme to ensure stronger interdisciplinary outcomes.
3. Align examination schedules with student needs. Examination timetables should be synchronized more effectively with students' circumstances to support participation and reduce barriers.
4. Introduce systematic graduate monitoring. Establish mechanisms to track

graduates' career paths, which would provide valuable feedback for both the Programme and its alumni.

5. Expand access to bibliographic resources. Ensure broader access to contemporary bibliographies, articles, and scientific journals, in both foreign languages and Greek, relevant to the Programme's content.

6. Collaborate with external libraries. The University should partner with other academic and public libraries to allow students to borrow books using their student ID. This would significantly enhance student support and strengthen the educational process.

7. Encourage written anonymous feedback. Recognizing the limitations of questionnaires, students should be encouraged to provide written anonymous feedback at the end of each term and/or upon completion of the Programme. This would enrich the evaluation process and contribute to continuous improvement.

#### **IV. Summary & Overall Assessment**

The Principles where full compliance has been achieved are:

1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10

The Principles where substantial compliance has been achieved are:

2

The Principles where partial compliance has been achieved are:

None

The Principles where failure of compliance was identified are:

None

<b>Overall Judgement</b>	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

## The members of the External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel

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