

QUALITY ASSURANCE POLICY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMICS AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT FOR THE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPROVEMENT OF ITS POSTGRADUATE PROGRAMMES

The Department of Economics and Sustainable Development (DESD) of Harokopio University of Athens is committed to implementing a quality policy that will promote the academic character and orientation of its postgraduate programmes, as well as its purpose and specific objective. It is also committed to implementing its goals, define the means and ways of achieving them, and apply the indicated quality procedures, aiming at its continuous improvement.

The DESD is committed to ensuring quality in the following areas:

Organization of the Postgraduate Programme – Curriculum

The DESD is committed to regularly reviewing the postgraduate programmes of studies to ensure that they remain scientifically up-to-date, relevant to its objectives and in line with scientific and workplace standards. A rigid curriculum threatens to become outdated and unable to effectively prepare students for the challenges and opportunities of their own field.

The DESD is committed to regularly reviewing the learning objectives for all postgraduate programmes to ensure that they remain demanding and aligned with the needs of its students and their evolving professional requirements. A key principle of the DESD is that the clear and well-defined expected learning outcomes are essential for effective teaching and learning, and it is therefore committed to ensuring that its programmes are designed to help students achieve them. The review is carried out by the Postgraduate Programme Coordinating Committees, which identify areas for improvement, develop new intended learning outcomes related to level 7 knowledge, skills and competences in line with the European and National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education, follow-up their implementation and evaluate them.

Teachers/Lecturers

The DESD is committed to providing its students with the highest possible academic experience. It is a key objective that the following quality principles should be adopted by the teachers of the postgraduate programmes:

Expertise: The teachers/lecturers of the Department's postgraduate programmes are experts in their respective scientific fields, with strong theoretical knowledge and practical training.

Teaching Skills: The teachers/lecturers of the postgraduate programmes are deep experts in their subject area and share their knowledge with students using student-centred teaching methods in an engaging, creative and constructive learning environment.

Communication Skills: The teachers/lecturers of the Department's postgraduate programmes are effective communicators, capable of conveying complex ideas in a concise manner. They should be able to adapt their teaching style to different learning styles and educational needs and capabilities.

Creativity and Innovation: The teachers/lecturers of the Department's postgraduate programmes ensure that they are creative and innovative in their approach to teaching. They should be willing to experiment with new methods and tools to engage students and enhance their learning experience.

Supportive: The teachers/lecturers of the postgraduate programmes are supportive mentors, guiding and advising students throughout their academic journey. They should be available to answer questions, provide feedback and help students achieve their goals.

Continuous Professional Development: The teachers/lecturers of the postgraduate programmes are committed to continuous professional development, staying up-to-date with the current advances in their areas of expertise. They should participate in conferences and publish in reputable international journals.

Quality Assurance of Educational Practices: To ensure that the teachers/lecturers of the Department's postgraduate programmes comply with the above principles, the Department applies the following:

- *Qualification Evaluation:* The teachers/lecturers are elected members of the Teaching and Research Staff, Special Teaching Staff, Laboratory Teaching Staff, or contract staff who are recruited following a call for applications. They are evaluated according to strict criteria before their recruitment by committees set up by the Department.
- *Assessment by the Students:* The Department conducts assessments of the teaching staff of its postgraduate programmes to evaluate their performance in teaching, effectiveness and adherence to quality principles.
- *Creating a Collaborative Environment:* A collaborative environment is encouraged in which the teachers/lecturers of postgraduate programmes can share good practices, exchange ideas and support each other in their professional development.

Support Services

The DESD is committed to providing its postgraduate students with high quality support services. Recognizing the crucial role of these services in the success of academic efforts and achievement of goals, the DESD offers equipped laboratories, library, network centre, counseling centre, career office, etc. to help students improve their academic skills and knowledge.

The Department is also committed to ensuring that support services are accessible, collaborate with students and support them effectively. The Department's support services are easily accessible to all students. The Department provides and implements multiple ways of communication and support, including face-to-face, online and/or telephone support.

The Department ensures that support services are aligned with the needs of postgraduate students. It regularly assesses support services through questionnaires and suggestions for improvement from students, staff and other stakeholders to identify areas that need strengthening and improvement.

Extroversion

The DESD's mission is to be distinguished by a clear vision of extroversion, maintaining and enhancing the high quality standards of its academic services. This includes collaborations, organization of international, national and local conferences, workshops, etc., and participation of teaching staff and students, undertaking research projects and opening the Department to the local and broader Greek society. The Department also promotes the participation of teachers and students in Greek and international scientific and professional organizations as well as networking with scientists, researchers and professionals. For

this purpose, it continuously invests in technology by creating websites of the postgraduate programmes and funding corresponding activities.

Funding

The DESD is committed to ensuring that the tuition fees of students are used efficiently and effectively to support the quality of its educational programmes and services. It is a core belief of the Department that its students deserve to receive quality services proportional to the money they spent on their education.

The Department's goal is to minimize unnecessary costs and to return money directly or indirectly to its students. Budgets are transparent and regarding expenses, all provisions of the law are applied. In addition, compensatory activities and scholarships are funded for the students of the Department.

Planning - Goal setting - Assessment

The DESD follows the Strategic Planning principles of Harokopio University of Athens, which prescribes the design, implementation, and review of specific annual quality goals for the improvement of the postgraduate programmes. In addition, it participates in the annual internal assessment and review of the quality assurance system for the postgraduate programmes, collaborating with the Department's Internal Evaluation Group and the University's Quality Assurance Unit.

QUALITY ASSURANCE POLICY FOR THE INTERNATIONAL, INTERINSTITUTIONAL AND INTERDEPARTMENTAL POSTGRADUATE PROGRAMME OF STUDIES (I.I.I.P.P.S.) "SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT: HERITAGE, ENVIRONMENT, SOCIETY"

Besides the general policies, principles and procedures of quality assurance implemented by the Department, a number of special policies and procedures have been implemented that focus on the needs and challenges of the I.I.I.P.P.S. "Sustainable Tourism Development: Heritage, Environment, Society".

Particular focus on research: Research is a significant part of the I.I.I.P.P.S. The programme provides its students with the opportunity to undertake a Master's Thesis on topics related to the disciplines of Tourism and Culture, which helps students to develop their research skills and gain a better understanding of their discipline.

Collaboration with tourism and cultural institutions: The programme collaborates with tourism and cultural institutions to provide students with opportunities for internship and professional development. Internship helps students to acquire specific knowledge and work experience, as well as to develop professional skills related to tourism management and sustainable tourism development, in relation to cultural heritage, environment and society.

Educational activities for students: The programme organizes educational activities for students, such as seminars, workshops and lectures. The educational events will provide students with the opportunity to learn about the latest updates in the fields of the I.I.I.P.P.S. and to develop their professional skills.

Overall, the I.I.I.P.P.S. "Sustainable Tourism Development: Heritage, Environment, Society" provides students with high quality education and professional training. The programme adopts a series of policies and procedures to ensure that students receive the highest academic experience.