

## A19.2.1 Έκθεση Εξωτερικής Αξιολόγησης

Οι σελ. 11-12 αφορούν το Π.Μ.Σ. «Επιστήμες της Αγωγής: Ειδική Αγωγή».



ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ

Α.Δ.Ι.Π.

ΑΡΧΗ ΔΙΑΣΦΑΛΙΣΗΣ & ΠΙΣΤΟΠΟΙΗΣΗΣ ΤΗΣ  
ΠΟΙΟΤΗΤΑΣ ΣΤΗΝ ΑΝΩΤΑΤΗ ΕΚΠΑΙΔΕΥΣΗ

HELLENIC REPUBLIC

H.Q.A.

HELLENIC QUALITY ASSURANCE  
AND ACCREDITATION AGENCY

## EXTERNAL EVALUATION REPORT

DEPARTMENT OF SPECIAL EDUCATION UNIVERSITY OF  
THESSALY



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### **External Evaluation Committee**

The Committee responsible for the External Evaluation of the Department of Special Education of the University of Thessaly consisted of the following four (4) expert evaluators drawn from the Registry constituted by the HQA in accordance with Law 3374/2005 :

1. **Professor Panayiotis Angelides**, University of Nicosia, Cyprus
2. **Dr. Lucas Amiras**, University of Education, Weingarten, Germany

3. **Associate Professor Antonis Tsakmakis**  
University of Cyprus, Department of Classics and Philosophy, Cyprus

4. **Professor Yiannis Dimitriadis**, University of Valladolid, Spain

## ***Introduction***

### I. The External Evaluation Procedure

The External Evaluation Committee (EEC) visited the Department of Special Education, University of Thessaly during the period of December 9 – 11, 2013. The EEC received the Department's Internal Evaluation Report (IER) on 21st November 2013.

During the first day of our visit, EEC members attended an orientation and briefing at the HQA offices from 9:30-11 am, by Professor Memos, to set the stage and provide contextual information on the role of the committee.

The program of the visit was the following:

Monday, Dec 9<sup>th</sup>

Meeting with the staff of the Department and the Vice-rector for academic affairs Athanasios Koustelios. The vice-rector presented the history and the structure of the university. The briefing from the vice-rector was followed by constructive discussion with all staff members of the department on a range of issues associated with resources and other administrative issues at the University of Thessaly. This discussion was situated in the general context of the Greek Higher Education landscape, which in recent years has been characterized by severe budget cuts and restructuring due to austerity measures and legislation changes.

Tuesday Dec 10<sup>th</sup>

Meeting with the department faculty at the main conference room of the Department of Special Education (SED).

EEC attended presentations from the following faculty:

- Philippos Vlachos, Head of SED
- Ch. Karayiannides & E. Gana (Undergraduate programs)
- K. Botsoglou & S. Tzivinikou (Practicum of undergraduate students)
- A. Karapetsas, G. Kleftaras & D. Vavouyios (Laboratories of the department)
- P. Stavrousi & E. Didaskalou (Research and Development)
- S. Paraskeuopoulos (Publications)
- D. Vavouyios & E. Dermizaki (Teaching)
- V. Argyropoulos & A. Sapountzaki (Teaching methods for the deaf and blind)

- I. Nisiotou & M. Nikolarazi (Mobility-Erasmus)
- M. Nikolarazi & I. Nisiotou (Contribution to the society)
- M. Nikolarazi (Student support)
  
- Meeting with Students (approximately 20 students)
  - Undergraduate students (primarily in the 4<sup>th</sup> year of studies)
  - Postgraduate students (Masters and Ph.D.)
  - Recent graduates
  
- Meetings with SED faculty
- Meeting with the administrative staff
- Meeting with Special Laboratory Personnel

Wednesday Dec 11th

- Visit to the university library, meeting with the library director.
- Visit to the research committee, meeting with the vice-rector of public and international relations, innovation and entrepreneurship Dimitrios Kouretas.

Meeting with the department faculty at the main conference room of the Department of Special Education.

EEC attended presentations from the following faculty:

- G. Andreou (Master's in Special Education)
- G. Kleftaras (Master's in Counseling )
- A. Vlachou (Doctoral Studies)
- S. Tzivinikou (on-line platform)

At the end of the visit the EEC met with the rector of the University Ioannis Messinis.

In addition to the IER, the EEC requested and examined a number of additional documents including the following:

- Faculty CVs
- Program of Study (Study Guide), 2013-2014
- Course syllabi
- Sample student assessments including assessments conducted during school

practicum and field experience.

- PhD proposals
- Master theses
- Student artifacts (e.g., student projects, reports, etc.)
- Copies of slides of all presentations prepared by SED faculty in anticipation of our visit.

We visited some of the Department's facilities including:

- Faculty offices
- Administrative staff offices
- Laboratories

We also attended a seminar and a lecture (around half hour for each)

## II. The Internal Evaluation Procedure

The Internal Evaluation Committee (IEC) delivered the updated Internal Evaluation Report (IER) for the academic year 2012-2013, following the guidelines provided by the Hellenic Quality Assurance and Accreditation Agency (HQA). The report included the basic information and evidence required in order to fulfill its objectives and was accompanied by the Study Program Guide of the SED department. The IEC also willingly provided a complete CD with additional information, as well as supporting evidence of qualitative and quantitative nature. Finally, during the review process all SED faculty members willingly provided all information that was required by the EEC.

Overall, the global set of sources and documentation provided was appropriate, containing multiple and complementary types of information. The attitude of the IEC and the complete department was very positive towards providing all necessary information and evidence to the EEC. On the other hand, the internal evaluation process was completed in a satisfactory way according to the guidelines provided by the HQA.

## ***A. Curriculum***

### **Undergraduate**

#### **APPROACH**

The SED offers a four years Undergraduate Program in Special Education with two specializations (Pre-Primary Special Education and Primary Special Education).

Department's priorities.

#### IMPROVEMENT

The faculty of the SED are well aware of the possibilities and challenges of special education and have expert knowledge of current developments in the international field. However the SED is faced with unfavorable conditions and is deeply concerned about future shortages of means. Nevertheless it has a plan to collaborate with the two other Departments of Education which belong to the same School, in order to monitor the course offer in basic subjects and maximize the effectiveness of teaching.

In the course of the last years the Department has repeatedly addressed the Ministry of Education in order to offer its expertise in the subject as well as in order to make the needs of the education of special teachers understood. Suggested improvements include the appointment of new faculty (including specialized personnel - *επόπτες*) in the disciplines which are understaffed and the creation of new laboratories.

#### **Postgraduate Program MSc “ Special Education”**

#### APPROACH

The Program's objective is to provide knowledge and to enhance the development of skills which are necessary for the effective education of persons with special educational needs. It is addressed to graduates from various fields, especially to teachers of all levels of education. A primary goal of the program is to develop new teaching approaches, educational interventions and apply up-to-date scientific knowledge in educational practice.

At this stage only one specialization in “Education of Individuals with Special Needs” is offered, following the Departmental Decision of 8-4-2009. It combines theory, methodology and practice.

#### IMPLEMENTATION

The Program is coherent and functional. It consists of 120 ECTS and has a duration of 4 semesters. It includes 12 courses (1 is a restrictive elective, another is an independent study under the supervision of a member of the faculty that leads to a dissertation; it provides preparation for the research and writing of the Masters thesis), a practicum of 10 ECTS and a Masters thesis which is credited with 20 ECTS.

Various educational and social institutions, both governmental and private host the students



making their practicum in collaboration with supervisors, who often belong to these institutions.

The Program is consistent with the objectives of the Department and meets the whole range of its mission as defined by the law. Especially the practicum aims at the association of theory and practice, the development of practical skills for the educational and social support of individuals with special needs, etc.

#### RESULTS

The Program is of high importance for the dissemination of scientific knowledge and for the improvement of services provided to individuals with special needs. This dissemination is crucial for the implementation of innovative policies aiming at the inclusion of individuals with special needs in society. The Department also displays a remarkable readiness to change society views; this may be understood as an element of their scientific identity.

#### IMPROVEMENT

The Department has already designed two further specializations within the Program. These concern “Learning Disabilities” and “Language Development, Language Pathology and Educational Intervention”.

Both specializations will satisfy high academic requirements and meet acute social needs.

The state should provide the necessary resources for the introduction of both. At present the Program admits students every two years, due to the limited staff numbers.

#### **Postgraduate Program MSc "Counseling in Special–General Education and Health"**

#### APPROACH

The Program’s primary objective is specialization in Counseling Psychology particularly in education, health and special education settings. It provides not only theoretical knowledge but also cultivates high-level professional skills for people working in Counseling Psychology and Counseling.

The Program is subdivided in two specializations: “Counseling in Education/School Counseling” and “Counseling in Psychic Health/Psychotherapy”. Both combine theory, methodology, and practice.

The Program is offered since 2009. The evaluation of the Program by students is seriously taken into account for its improvement.