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HELLENIC REPUBLIC
H.Q.A.A.
HELLENIC QUALITY ASSURANCE AGENCY
FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

EXTERNAL EVALUATION REPORT

DEPARTMENT of Business Administration

TEI of KAVALA

January 29, 2011

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External Evaluation Committee

The Committee responsible for the External Evaluation of the Department of Business Administration of the Technological Educational Institute of Kavala consisted of the following five (5) expert evaluators drawn from the Registry constituted by the HQAA in accordance with Law 3374/2005:

1. Director of studies Nikos Macheridis (Coordinator)
University of Lund, Lund
2. Dr George Athanassiadis
Expert, Dr University of Nancy, ex General Manager Air Liquid Hellas,
Athens, Greece
3. Professor Alexandros Apostolakis
University of Portsmouth, Portsmouth, UK
4. Professor George Kominis
University of Glasgow, Glasgow, UK
5. Professor Savvas Papagianidis
Newcastle University, Newcastle, UK

Introduction

The External Evaluation Procedure

The EEC (External Evaluation Committee) visit took place between 24th and 26th of January 2011.

After the informal introductions on Sunday evening, the EEC first met on Monday morning at the HQAA offices. The aims and objectives of the evaluation were presented by the coordinators and the EEC's questions were answered. The EEC departed for Thessaloniki and was greeted by 2 representatives of the Department who were kind enough to transfer the EEC to Kavala. After arriving in Kavala, the EEC met the TEI President and members of staff including the Head of the Department and the necessary introductions were made. The evaluation aims were made clear to the Faculty who expressed their support for the process.

On the first day, the evaluation started with a presentation by the Head of Department. This was followed by a discussion with permanent faculty. This was followed by an evaluation meeting with the postgraduate committee and Erasmus exchange coordinator. Meetings with members of faculty continued with the EEC visiting the Secretariat and meeting the administrative staff. Then the EEC met student representatives. There were two separate meetings, one with the undergraduates and one with the postgraduates students, during which students were invited to openly express their views about everything that they felt was important. The EEC then met with a group of local businesses to discuss the forms of engagement with the Department. Finally, the EEC met with a group of temporary members of staff. The day came to a close with a dinner organized by the TEI President that fostered the spirit of collaboration and provided a platform to stage further informal discussions about the evaluation.

On the second day, the EEC visited the local Chamber and met its President to find out more about how the Chamber, the TEI and the Department collaborate. The EEC then returned to the Department and met various members of faculty to address pending questions and reviewed samples of student work. There were also visits to the campus, to various staff offices, the library, the Kleoxenis teleconferencing room, lecture theatres, computer labs, the Student's Union and other TEI facilities, such as the Careers Office. During these visits the EEC had the opportunity to ask questions to various members of staff and students.

The EEC made full use of the material placed to our disposal. Available to the committee were among others:

- The internal evaluation report
- Statistical data evaluation reports
- Samples of final year projects/dissertations
- Study guides and module outline forms

The atmosphere during the visit was cordial and collegial, while remaining on a professional level. Faculty was friendly and facilitated the committee's work by answering questions, engaging in constructive dialogue and providing information and data, wherever possible.

The EEC expresses its gratitude to the senior management team, faculty and staff of the Department for facilitating the visit.

The Internal Evaluation Procedure

The evidence provided was satisfactory and the EEC would like to thank the Department for responding to its request very efficiently. The Department provided many internal reports, statistics, research contacts, information about academic partners and mobility exchanges, student performance data, and samples of student work among other sources of information. The ECC feels that the evaluation was holistic and comprehensive, despite the tight time constraints.

Comments from the EEC on the external evaluation procedure

The EEC is aware that the recommendations made, although in line with our international experience, may not be consistent with the existing institutional and legal framework in Greece.

Comments made at various points could also be applicable to questions under different sections of this report.

A. Curriculum

To be filled separately for each undergraduate, graduate and doctoral programme.

APPROACH

- ***What are the goals and objectives of the Curriculum? What is the plan for achieving them?***

The main aim of the Department of Business Administration is to equip graduates with the necessary set of management and managerial skills at both the operational and the strategic level required for employment at private firms and public sector. The particular set of priorities covered by the Department are:

- ensuring that graduates acquire an innovative and business like culture and approach in their professional life
- developing an innovative culture in solving problems
- acting as a professional and academic consultant to the local firms and businesses.

More specifically, the Department seems to have good informal relationships with the local Chamber of Kavala and a number of local firms. The relationship with the Chamber is developed in a semi-formal approach, which is based on informal interpersonal approaches (among academics and the Chamber), and more formal and structured forms (through the Centre of Vocational Education, which is actively supported by the Department). According to the President of the Chamber, examples of interactions between the two sides involves the organising of periodical events/conferences, aiming to establish better links among firms (local and regional) and professionals – graduates. The Chamber has also made a number of proposals with respect to new courses (e.g., short courses on entrepreneurship). The Department has developed short courses for professionals in cooperation with the Chamber in the past.

As far as the relationship among the Department and the local businesses is concerned, this is based on rather interpersonal informal links. As a result of the lack of structured linkages among firms and the Department (i.e., the absence of a career's office facilitating linkages with local employers), the Department has not fully exploited the full range of possibilities arising from this linkage. On the other hand, there seems to be a widespread consensus among local businesses as far as the good quality and employability of the Department's students. Representatives from local firms and businesses agreed that students working for them as part of their practical assessment (6 months period) were well-qualified for tackling challenges posed to them.

- ***How were the objectives decided? Which factors were taken into account? Were they set against appropriate standards? Did the unit consult other stakeholders?***

It should be noted that there is a lack of framework in Greece setting a formal set of guidelines and standards regarding the formation and provision of a Business Administration (BA) programme. As a result, there is no pre-defined set of standards across the higher education sector in Greece. According to the academic staff at the Department, the

proposed changes in the legal framework would provide a National Skills Framework across TEI and universities in Greece.

On the other hand, the Department has argued that there is input from professional and academic organisations from Greece and abroad. For example, through their participation in various ERASMUS programmes the Department aspires to achieve parity of programmes, aims and objectives with internationally approved standards. There is little evidence though of a strategy for operationalising this. In addition to the above, the Department has been ISO certified and as a result they have developed certain procedures, mostly in terms of formalising operational processes. Consequently, the curriculum follows certain guidelines that have universal acceptance and can be formally evaluated.

- ***Is the curriculum consistent with the objectives of the Curriculum and the requirements of the society?***

Overall, the Department offers guidelines regarding the transferable skills to be developed in the course ahead of each academic year. However, there is no evidence of mapping taking place among the modules offered as part of the academic curriculum and the set of particular skills and qualifications required for employment. Also, there is little evidence to suggest a longitudinal progressive development of skills in the course from one academic semester to the next.

The Department seems to be aware of the needs and requirements of the needs of the local community and businesses. On this basis, the Department has made an effort to train local professionals about solving practical issues and problems regarding the day-to-day business operations in the form of seminars/short courses. The Department also makes an effort to relate as much as possible the placement with practical business-related issues and problems. To the extent that this is achieved, students graduating from the course have a fairly good grasp of the local problems and issues.

Nevertheless, when commenting on this aspect of the curriculum, local business people argued that the Department has distance to cover regarding students' closer focus on practical / real life business problems and issues. More particular, business representatives thought that students do not get to realise what the real nature of the local economy is. Although there are exceptionally good students, they typically get very little opportunity to interact with local businesses as part of the taught element of the programme. There is no direct and continuous link between the industry and the institution.

Business representatives also maintained that the Department has not yet provided a clear cut distinction in terms of its priorities. Business people argued that the Department should become more practical and business-focused, and less focused on its academic/research role. Indicatively, business representatives argued that they would appreciate more action research (e.g. consultancy type of dissertations). In response to this, the Department indicated that firms should do more in order to approach the Department, improving formal links.

- ***How was the curriculum decided? Were all constituents of the Department, including students and other stakeholders, consulted?***

The curriculum is primarily decided by the permanent members of faculty. Temporary members of staff express a voice regarding the curriculum and regularly have an input on the curriculum. This is done mostly at the beginning of the academic year and it takes the form

of textbook recommendations, recommendations regarding particular case studies, and other relevant materials). Generally speaking, temporary staff takes part at the general assembly, and the course directors go through the main issues of the curriculum with them at the beginning of the academic year. At the end of the academic year, temporary staff undergoes an informal process with the course leader, in order to provide an evaluation of the course they delivered. Students have an input in the process through the participation of their representative either at the General Assembly, or during the staff student consultative committee. However, procedures regarding either of these two processes are rather informal and there is no evidence of structure in the process (measurement of recommendations and actions taken).

One of the criticisms being reported regarding the decision making involving the curriculum development came from industry. Representatives from the largest businesses in the area reported that the Department does not really consult with them (or seeks their advice). Business people argued that decision making is only informed more locally, indicating the Chamber is primarily responsible for this. Indicatively, business people reported that they have made some recommendations in the past, especially with respect to the development and design of new courses and modules (international accounting systems and new costing practices), without all being implemented.

- ***Has the unit set a procedure for the revision of the curriculum?***

There does not seem to be a formal procedure for reviewing and revising the existing curriculum. Permanent members of the academic staff have reported that they regularly update material and revise the content of the curriculum (new, updated and more relevant case studies), but the whole procedure is rather *ad – hoc* in nature.

- ***Postgraduate***

The MSc in Finance and Financial Information Systems (FFIS) is being delivered in cooperation with the University of Greenwich, UK in order to foster greater collaboration between the two academic institutions. The main aim of the course is to prepare candidates who wish to follow a career in banking and other financial services and require an academic qualification at an MSc level. More particularly, the objective of the MSc in FFIS is to offer a unique combination of teaching and learning in both Finance and IT, with a significant portion of Accounting material covered.

Given the nature of the agreement between the two academic institutions (the programme is delivered by the Department under a franchise agreement with the University of Greenwich), the particular academic objectives and standards of the MSc course were decided and followed the British experience and practice.

IMPLEMENTATION

- ***How effectively is the Department's goal implemented by the curriculum?***

Given the vocational element of education and set of skills required by graduates in order to meet businesses' expectations, the EEC feels that there is a fairly good degree of fitness between the Department's main goal and the curriculum being offered. Still there is scope for further improvement, which, following a comprehensive evaluation process, will inform the revision of the content of the curriculum. For example, we note the fairly limited focus on entrepreneurship and innovation modules/courses (there is only 1 module being offered) in the curriculum.

It is interesting to note that the Chamber expressed a high degree of satisfaction regarding

the ability of the Department's graduates to meet the needs of the local firms and businesses. Both the Chamber and local businesses expressed an interest on the introduction of more vocational elements in the curriculum.

- ***How does the curriculum compare with appropriate, universally accepted standards for the specific area of study?***

Evaluation regarding the comparison of the curriculum with other universally-accepted standards can only be achieved through the actions and activities that the Department has in place at the moment. Given the fact that the Department is part of an extensive academic network, and is also very active on the ERASMUS network provides an indication that the nature of the courses, as well as the nature of the skills and expertise is generally comparable and acceptable by other academic institutions internationally. In addition to that, the Department of BA at the TEI Kavala implements the ECTS system.

- ***Is the structure of the curriculum rational and clearly articulated? Is the curriculum coherent and functional? Is the material for each course appropriate and the time offered sufficient?***

By law, Greek universities and TEIs do not typically require pre-requisites, in order for students to progress to the next level. It is not clear how the curriculum can ensure the continuity and progressive development of knowledge and skills across the academic semesters/years. The structure of the curriculum could have been more clearly articulated.

Again, there is a lack of formal procedures, and things tend to operate at the personal and informal level. As far as the overlapping of modules and knowledge is concerned, this was examined during the respective re-evaluations of the curriculum (the latest in 2007-8). This was undertaken at the beginning of the redesign of the course. Members of staff, through informal discussions, brought to light potential overlapping among modules. The programme of studies has been updated twice so far. This means that they are gradually moving towards a more balance curriculum.

- ***Does the Department have the necessary resources and appropriately qualified and trained staff to implement the curriculum?***

Based on the evidence derived from the discussion with students, members have consistently received high marks on their evaluation. This applied to both permanent and temporary members of staff. The majority of permanent staff holds doctorate degrees in their respective areas. Many of the temporary staff also hold doctorate degrees or read towards them.

In terms of human resources, the Department seems to rely on temporary staff (approximately 30 members). This indicates that the Department has a shortage of skilled personnel to deliver its mandate. This is partly due to teaching resource not being focused on the Departments core activities. One additional challenge rests on the fact that due to the number of permanent members of staff, there is very little assurance on the fact that the Department will continue to deliver its mandate in the case of an unexpected event.

The Department does not offer the opportunity for any staff professional development and training to take place. Any opportunities for personal development are the result of informal agreements and external effort (e.g., through the ERASMUS network). Members of staff argued these issues regarding personal development etc on the staff assembly meeting. Staff also raised their issues with the area managers in each Department prior to raising the issue to the staff generally assembly. However, there is no predefined process or procedures in order to agree personal development that would help them deliver the curriculum. In this respect, the Department provides very little opportunity for staff to undertake any professional or educational training. The same applies to the permanent staff of the Department.

In terms of capital stock and equipment, students were satisfied with the quality of the labs (and the quantity of PC's available to them). Based on the information provided by the Head of the Department and the Vice Chancellor of the Faculty, the Department will be able to update its stock of computers due to an increase in the funding from the Ministry of Education and Life Long Learning. Stock of books available at the library appeared to be adequate and there were no major issues reported by the students.

In conclusion, there are informal ways and opportunities for personal professional and educational development, but there are no formal or structured ways through which a member of staff can receive training for his/her function.

- ***Postgraduate***

Given the fact that the MSc course is offered on the basis of a franchising agreement with the University of Greenwich, there does not seem to be complete congruency between the Department's and the course's aims and objectives. The focus of the department is mostly towards a vocational / professional level, whereas the course focuses mostly on the academic element of the curriculum.

The MSc in FFIS has been initially approved in the UK by a team of internal and external evaluators. In order to provide permission to deliver the course the course evaluation committee has examined the relevance of the course's standards against international practices and field requirements. Considering that the department offers the same programme of study (and correspondingly the same curriculum) implies that the MSC in FFIS delivered by the department follows internationally approved standards and practices.

The curriculum has been delivered on semesterised format. The delivery of the course mirrors current delivery practices in the UK. Specifically, the delivery of the course is broken down into a taught and research based element. During the taught element of the course, students attend a number of units split into two semesters. Students' progression from each semester is based on the accumulation of credits from each unit. Based on information the delivery of the course curriculum follows a rational and clearly articulated path that appears to provide a good degree of functionality and coherence for both academic institutions.

RESULTS

- ***How well is the implementation achieving the Department's predefined goals and objectives? If not, why is it so? How is this problem dealt with?***

Students' evaluation for members of staff was positive, but they stressed quite emphatically the need for more formalisation in their interaction with members of staff and the need for more accountability from the part of the members of staff (both permanent and temporary). The Department should also take certain steps to ensure that more explicit information regarding the particular set of skills and expertise obtained from each module is provided in each module outline. Members of staff tend to provide this information, but more consistent efforts should be put in providing this information in a more systematic, coherent and detailed way to students.

- ***Does the Department understand why and how it achieved or failed to achieve these results?***

The Department does not have standardised approaches in following procedures. Written approaches have not been formalised. They have shortcomings in terms of staff and time (resourcing). At the moment, there is a discrepancy between the U/G and P/G courses. This

is mostly due to the inelasticity of the legislation.

- ***Postgraduate***

Discussions with postgraduate students in the course indicated that the general level of teaching and delivery of the course follows good standards and practices. Students that have graduated from the course indicated that the course has helped them in securing employment, although the qualification was not directly relevant to their employment responsibilities. This implies that graduates value the extrinsic value of the course rather than the intrinsic qualities of it.

IMPROVEMENT

- ***What changes should the Department introduce? How should the Department implement these changes?***

The department used a number of sources of information to derive information and feedback that they could then use for improving the curriculum.

- In the U/G programme, the department uses feedback from professional organizations (primarily the local Chambers) and local businesses and firms (examples of this are proposals to introduce a unit on Enterprise Resource Planning, and short courses on entrepreneurship).
- Student feedback has been solicited and collected in various occasions. Students have an opportunity to contribute to the discussion through their involvement (students' representatives) in the department's General Assembly and during the staff – student consultative committee. In addition, the department seems to collect student feedback infrequently during the semester, although this is very difficult to prove and it was not certain how and whether the department takes this feedback into serious consideration. Another issue relates to the fact that the student feedback does not relate to the totality of the modules.
- The department has a number of collaborations with universities both at home and abroad and they certainly receive feedback from these collaborations, and get to know examples of best practice from elsewhere. Being part of a number of important academic networks, the department has the opportunity to revise operations and compare practices with what is the norm internationally.
- Finally, the department has been very clear about the fact that the general framework has been very rigid and does not allow them much opportunity to develop their own procedures. They had specific plans with respect to the introduction of short courses and more collaborative programmes, but the law did not allow for these initiatives.

As far as the U/G programme of studies is concerned, there are a number of suggestions for improvement that could be put forwards.

- First, there is the issue of formalizing procedures and approaches. The department seems to operate in a rather informal and unstructured manner. This is certainly aided by the small number of full time members of staff. However, transaction costs will increase and in return the ability to operate efficiently will be hampered in the future if the department wants to expand in numbers. So, this informal approach that the department has adopted will generate problems in the future if there are plans to increase the number of full time members of staff, or increase the number of students. As a result, the department should adopt more formalized and structured procedures in its implementation. In a few words, there is a lack of a written code of conduct that would describe how things should be done within the department.
- Another structural issue facing the department is that of staffing and human resources. Although this is a generic problem with the Greek higher education sector, there is a great imbalance in the department between full time (9 members of staff) and part time staff (30 members of staff).
- The department should improve the way that information is transmitted to actual and potential students. This means that the department should improve the web – site since this is the first point of conduct between the department and the society.

More information about the contents of the programme of studies should be provided, as well as providing more information regarding the particular strategic priorities of the course.

- The department is aware of the need to have a closer engagement with the society.

- ***Postgraduate***

The department has very little to no control in the improvement and revision of the programme. As a result the ability to improve the delivery of the course curriculum is restricted by the franchise agreement with the owning university. However, the Department of Business Administration could improve the relevance of the course by using relevant case studies, material and other resources drawn from the local and regionally environment wherever possible.

B. Teaching

APPROACH:

Does the Department have a defined pedagogic policy with regard to teaching approach and methodology?

It should be noted that as the MSc in Finance and Financial Information Systems is offered as a franchise of the University of Greenwich, the teaching, assessment and administrative processes are those of the British University. Consequently, there is much difference in how the Department approaches its undergraduate course and the MSc. This is to be expected given the differences between the two operational frameworks. However, the fact that the Department has a decade of experience running the MSc is a great opportunity as it has consistently and longitudinally proven it can operate within a demanding environment. This experience can be used in the undergraduate teaching and learning strategy, in reforming administrative process, and adopting a quality assurance framework. This also agrees with what postgraduate students felt about the course and how it operated compared to their first degrees.

1. Learning strategy

The Department has a mission statement as to what its core learning aims and what a graduate should be capable of. More specifically a graduate of the Department of Business Administration should possess the necessary scientific and technological knowledge and skills in order to work in the private or public sectors or even as self-employed. This overarching statement is made more specific via 4 knowledge and skills pillars mentioned in the mission statement. This information is included in the Programme of Study and on the Department's web site. However, there are no specific links as to how these aims and objectives are to be operationalised. For example, the mission statement refers to working in the public sector, but there is not any course specific to such core objective, neither is there clear evidence as to how this target is met across the modules offered.

There is no teaching or assessment strategy that is shared by all members of teaching staff. Each member of faculty typically follows an independent strategy based on their own professional opinion as to how teaching should be undertaken. Given that the size of the permanent faculty is small, informal discussions and having an understanding of how others approach teaching and assessment may partly address having no formal strategy. However, as there is a significantly bigger group of temporary members of staff who undertake teaching assignments, having a clearly defined strategy would have helped both communicate and implement an overall teaching strategy.

An important point that was brought up by local companies related to the nature of the knowledge and skills the Department should promote. More specifically, the key question was whether this should be more of a practical or theoretical nature. Given the core strategy set for Technological Education Institutions, the Department should clearly set its expectations in the context of the existing legislative framework.

1. It is recommended that the Department establishes such strategy for both teaching and learning and assessing students, defining and setting a knowledge and skills

map. This could ensure that students are exposed to different learning approaches and teaching methods and assessment in a balanced way.

2. The first time such a strategy is implemented modules should be mapped against the strategy's core aims and gaps identified. These should be addressed by revising where necessary the content, teaching methods and assessment techniques, after discussions and collaboration with the rest of the teaching staff.
3. A common module outline form should be used to capture all essential module information that will include the knowledge and skills mappings.
4. Strategy could be reviewed annually to ensure that the core aims are objectives remain up-to-date and that any changes are still in-alignment with the overall strategy.

Teaching methods

Teaching staff was enthusiastic about their usage of teaching methods and offered examples as to have they have innovated when it comes to teaching over the years. Apart from using traditional lectures, staff uses a variety of other teaching methods such as case studies, games, interactive sessions, student-led presentations etc. It was also reported that external speakers also contributed and that students visited relevant companies. Unfortunately, such initiatives are complicated by very strict regulations and the lack of resources (e.g. the TEI bus broke down and the funds to repair it or purchase a new one are not available).

When it comes to placements, which are mandatory for TEI students, they were found to be an effective way for students to gain valuable working experience by practicing knowledge and skills gained. The Chamber and local companies also reported that they found placements very useful.

1. It is recommended that more ways to engage with local companies beyond the scope of placement could be explored.

Assessment and Feedback

The assessment feedback consists mainly of summative assessment. There are exams at the end of the semester that accounts for up to 60% of the final mark. Students also sit exams after their practical laboratory work. This accounts for up to 40%. Other assessment methods are also used. For example, practical tests, group work, presentations and so on. Part of the assessment is following the TEI assessment framework that influences and determines much of the examination process.

There were no marking criteria for assignments and dissertations, clearly setting which knowledge areas and skills will be examined and how they will be mapped against the different marking bands. This may not be a major issue when there is typically one marker, but it would be very useful for students to know in advance what the assignment requires.

When it comes to feedback, staff reported that they are expected by law to return their marks to their students in 5 days. This is often very difficult, if not impossible, given the demands posed on their time especially during busy times, such as the exam period. There is a process for student to ask for feedback on their exam papers. Students receive feedback on their course work.

The EEC reviewed both undergraduate and postgraduate work. Particular emphasis was put in dissertations. These were often found to cover innovative topics. They had sufficient literature reviews and bibliography, albeit often dated. Conceptual frameworks could have been more critical and so could have been the discussion and conclusions. Students had undertaken good empirical work, demonstrating their statistical skills.

1. It is recommended a clear assessment strategy could be established that ensures students are exposed to different assessment methods that allow them to demonstrate their skills and knowledge in appropriate and relevant ways.
2. To set clear marking criteria for each assignment and for dissertations, that are given to students when the work is set. These should help address the module's aims in the context of the overall teaching assignment and contribute towards a more consistent grading scheme.
3. To lobby towards changing the law to enable a more flexible policy towards returning marks and feedback to students. Then, a clear and realistic internal marking and feedback policy could be established.
4. To consider formally introducing formative feedback.

Usage of Information Technologies

When it comes to using Information Technologies, the Department has adopted an Internet-based system (WebClass) mostly as a document management facility. This is also used for communicating with staff and setting assignments. Staff and students would have liked to do more over the Internet, although this is limited by the scope of the system and the possibility of expanding it by the third party that has developed it. They were also considering new innovative initiatives such a video recording classes and making them available over the Internet. Such initiatives could make the learning experience more exciting and interesting for students.

1. Staff could review the existing e-learning platform and benchmark it against other platforms. For example, alternatives such as Moodle that is open source, free and modular could help underpin the new initiatives and stream line online operations.

Teaching Resource

In the Department, there are 9 permanent teaching staff, complemented by a pool for 30 temporary teaching staff. Permanent staffs mostly revolve around different knowledge and skills areas. Teaching hours are set by internal regulations and law.

It was difficult to provide a specific staff/student ration as number fluctuates considerably from one year to the following one. Staff in a few cases invested much resource in secondary activities. For example, given the demand posed on staff time, there is little value in making all modules available to Erasmus students, especially when modules typically attract only a very small number of students (typical number of incoming Erasmus students annually is 15). For example, it was reported that the Department will attempt to accommodate requests for specific modules by Erasmus partners, even if these modules are not in its offered list. Ad hoc module provision following external requests creates demands that are difficult to plan and meet. Instead, the Department could offer a specific number of modules (e.g. 2-3 from each year across academic year or those that have been shown to be the most popular ones

consistently). Students who have not graduated in time may not have the right to attend labs again, but still seek support from teaching staff who are typically happy to provide. Over time this puts an additional burden which although may not be considered a major one, it is still an additional one that needs to be taken into consideration.

1. Staff needs to rationalize teaching activities and invest more in those that offer the highest return, in order to maximize the learning impact. As part of this process senior management can undertake the development of work allocation model that takes into consideration law and regulations. This may help identify areas of activities that need further human resource and areas from which resource could be potentially transferred to such areas.
2. After reviewing and rationalizing the activities undertaken, it is recommended that the Department makes a case to the Ministry to replace temporary staff resource with permanent one. This would not only help streamline teaching operations, but will also create new synergies on other levels (e.g. research). This has already been mentioned in the Curriculum section.
3. Many of the processes are determined by law, which often puts unnecessary resource demand on members of staff (e.g. having 3-member panels for undergraduate dissertation evaluation). The Department and TEI can lobby towards more flexibility in terms of determining its own process for handling such issues.

Adequacy of Teaching Means and Resources

The EEC visiting many lecture theatres and found them to offer sufficient for staging the learning experience. The majority of them had permanent teaching aids, such as overhead and video projects. Computer labs were also sufficient for teaching and typically offered 25 computers. The President of TEI and Department informed the EEC that the TEI has recently secured funding to replace all IT infrastructure (workstations, servers etc) with modern ones, which would greatly enhance the provision. The TEI also offered other learning facilities (e.g. library or computer clusters) that were found to be sufficient. These are discussed in a different section of this report.

1. Providing Internet connection in all teaching rooms.

Pedagogical training

Both permanent and temporary teaching staff reported that pedagogical training before commencing teaching and as part of a personal development plan is not required by law. Personal development is mostly undertaken as part of individual initiatives (e.g. attending seminars) or as part of staff exchange agreements. In particular, for temporary staff who are typically not very experienced teaching more institutional support should be provided. Staff was very interested in such opportunities and in particular in teaching innovation and would welcome opportunities to improve their teaching abilities via the adoption of new innovative teaching methods. New technologies could be adopted as part of the latter.

1. It is recommended that the Department, and TEI more generally, supports a pedagogical training programme, both in terms of funding and time allocated, so that permanent teaching faculty can improve longitudinally.
2. Bi-monthly internal seminars related to pedagogy could be used to disseminate best practice among members of staff, sharing ideas and discussing teaching issues faced.

For example, when a member of staff returns from an exchange visit he/she could disseminate key experiences via a staff seminar.

3. In particular for temporary staff, it is recommended that there is a teaching induction process and that they are allocated a permanent member of staff as a teaching mentor. The teaching mentor could peer-review them offering advice as to how their teaching practice could improve. Such review could take place at the early stages of their first assignment, at least one a year. This would not only help integrate temporary staff into the fabric of the Department and facilitate their personal development, but also ensure that they can perform their teaching duties adequately.

Student induction

Part of the challenges the Department faces relates to the transition of students, especially undergraduate one, who need to appreciate that TEI is a different learning environment with much higher learning demands compared to their secondary education. This is an even bigger challenge, considering that students come not only for all over Greece, but also Cyprus. This is not a unique to this Department challenge, but one shared by the majority of European HE institutions. The Department recognizes this, and teaching staff puts effort in the first couple of weeks of the first semester to facilitate the transition. However, this is not formalized and more structure over a longer period of time is needed. The Department has actually a much more organized induction process for Erasmus students which can offer many useful ideas as to how the undergraduate one may be organized. The social aspect is mostly left to the students themselves.

1. It is recommended that the Department organizes a more structured approach to facilitate the student's transition from secondary to higher education with much emphasis put on study and transferable skills. This could last for the 1st semester, potentially making a significant impact to their duration of their degree.
2. The Department collaborate with students, facilitating were needed their induction week activities. This can help strengthen the relationships among teaching staff and students which can be very beneficial for fostering the necessary culture underpinning a Department that aspires to improve continuously.

IMPLEMENTATION

Quality of teaching procedures

As already mentioned many of the teaching procedures are determined by various laws or internal regulations. Consequently, staff does not always have much freedom in terms of the teaching procedures. For example, virtually all modules are required to have an exam or practical element. These procedures are not always ideal and may restrict the scope of selecting appropriate teaching and assessment methods.

Quality and adequacy of teaching materials and resources. Quality of course material. Is it brought up to date?

Students receive free books for each module and supplemented reading list. This usually refers to books available in the library. The library does provide sufficient books often from international authors. It also provides access to online databases and journals. Postgraduate students reported they were happy with the syllabus which was up to date for both the Finance and the IS parts.

Linking of research with teaching

Apart from using research produced outside the Department for teaching purposes, staff reported that where possible they made use of their own practical and research experience in the module they teach, offering examples of using articles in various contexts. With research given more attention over the past few years and with staff publishing more this is expected to be a more widely used practice in the future.

1. It is recommended that the practice of linking research with teaching is continued and that staff are also encouraged to consider publishing their own materials (e.g. publish in journals welcoming teaching case studies).

Mobility of academic staff and students

Apart from the long-established relationship with the University of Greenwich, the Department should be complemented for aspiring to have 40 active agreements with various foreign Institutions. It is also very positive to note that everyone is keen to be involved and participate in exchanges, either as a guest or a host. Exchanges facilitate staff and student exchanges offering valuable experience for everyone involved. Everyone agreed this was a worthwhile activity and much resource is invested in it (please see section on teaching resource for Erasmus students). On the other hand, such a big number of partnerships for such a small Department results in fragmentation which in terms may hinder developing stronger relationships.

1. It is recommended that Department firstly establishes a strategy that will consider such issues (e.g. which approach is better for achieving its goals: few but very strong relationships or many but weaker ones?) and a set of criteria (not just geographic) based on which future partners are selected. This would help rationalize many of decisions made and the resource invested. Partnerships could be reevaluated every three years. The EEC view is that fewer carefully-selected partnerships can make a positive contribution to the achievements of the Departmental objectives.

Evaluation by the students of (a) the teaching and (b) the course content and study material/resources

Permanent staff reported that evaluation questionnaires were distributed in all modules and that the findings were taken into consideration were necessary to improve the modules and the overall course. However, it was evident from other discussions that this was not always clear. Students also reported that they felt their views were not taken into consideration and that module evaluations do not bring any tangible benefits. On the other hand, staff reported that innovations are often met with concerns from students, mostly due to political parties being involved. They also mentioned that student feedback can potentially be reviewed by the Head of the Department and any issues discussed with the teaching staff involved. There is also an established forum for staff and students to express their views in the General Assembly meeting.

1. Module and teaching evaluation questionnaires should be distributed to all classes.
2. A clear process for reviewing and implementing any changes deemed necessary should be implemented.

RESULTS

Efficacy of teaching.

There is a downward trend of the undergraduate student performance over the last decade (going from 7.09 in 2001/02 to 6.44 in 2009/10). Faculty accounted this to the increasing demand and expectations that they have from the student.

It should be noted that that the Department does not take part in the undergraduate admissions process which is handled centrally. Changes in the national examination system can significantly affect the quality of students attracted by the Department.

1. It is recommended that the Department examines carefully how the increasing demand and expectations as part of raising the quality of the course offered has affected student performance. This report should also consider ways to stabilise and reverse the student performance trend.

Discrepancies in the success/failure percentage between courses and how they are justified. Differences between students in the time to graduation, and final degree grades. Whether the Department understands the reasons of such positive or negative results?

Each member of the teaching staff marks his or her own modules. Consequently, there is typically no major issue of consistency stemming from many different markers grading work. However, the lack of marking criteria, as has already mentioned, is problematic. There is no internal process for the quality assurance of marking on the taught element of the curriculum. When students ask for clarification for why they received the grade they received, staff provide feedback. The Department now has a new information system in place that can provide sufficient information about student performance. This could enable staff to examine more closely student performance identifying consistency issues.

Also, the Department has identified that it needs to tackle the issue of students not completing in time and the implication this has on resources and it considering options for addressing it.

- It is recommended that the Department reviews the key reasons for failure longitudinally and specifies measures for tackling the issue.
- It is recommended that student performance should be considered both on a module level (e.g. success/failure rates, distribution of marks etc) especially for those modules that have very low success rates and also on student level (e.g. why does a student who consistently performs well, fails certain modules?)

IMPROVEMENT

The Department recognises the challenges and opportunities and is considering ways for improving its teaching offering in terms of quality and relevance. To achieve this though it will need to have well-defined processes, instead of just being reactive to challenges as they arise. A clear strategy with tangible and quantifiable goals would help towards formalising the direction it needs to follow. Although the legislative framework may delay and hinder change there is much scope for improvement which can still take place within it. Staff is open to change. Senior management should provide the leadership needed to implement a continuous cycle of reviewing, implementing and benchmarking.

C. Research

For each particular matter, please distinguish between under- and post-graduate level, if necessary.

APPROACH

- What is the Department's policy and main objective in research?
- Has the Department set internal standards for assessing research?

The enthusiasm and motivation of the Department's staff was evident during our discussions regarding their research activity. There is little doubt that all members of staff are aware of their responsibility to conduct research and contribute to their selected area of interest and knowledge. More specific discussions with regards to the Department's systemic approach to research, however, revealed lack of a specific research strategy. The Department as a whole seems to lack a clear-cut direction, a programme of research within which the planning, coordination, and support of the Department's overall research activity can be carried out. Discussions with research-active members of staff revealed that there are no specific aims or internal standards available in the Department, apart from the target number of publications which is expected of them (one publication per year for each member of staff). What is more, there appears to be no specific allowance for research in the Department's workload model, and the majority of the staff interviewed claimed that they work on their research projects outside working hours.

Our observations, both during the formal interviewing of the research-active staff and in our informal discussions with them, indicated the absence of a specific framework within which a formal research strategy can be articulated and implemented. This results in a lack of central direction for the specification of aims for each research-active member of staff, and, more importantly, in the lack of provision of support and evaluation mechanisms, which can operationalise, target, measure, monitor, and, in the final analysis, motivate the progress of each research-active member of staff towards individually agreed, pre-specified targets. Thus, in our view, research efforts in the Department are at present a result of individual initiative rather than a consequence of institutional / departmental strategy.

IMPLEMENTATION

- How does the Department promote and support research?
- Quality and adequacy of research infrastructure and support.
- Scientific publications.
- Research projects.
- Research collaborations.

All nine (9) permanent members of staff are active in research. Their research activity materializes in the participation in research projects, the presentation of completed or work-in-progress research in national and international research conferences, and the publication of research in national and international journals. The majority of these publications appear to be the result of intra-Departmental collaborations, evidence of the atmosphere of collegiality in the Department, and perhaps of the convergence in terms of research interests. The data provided in the Department's own self-assessment report indicates that research-active members of staff in the Department attend and present in conferences, take part in scientific committees and editorial boards, and are invited as key-note speakers in conferences at home and abroad. Evidence of the Department's visibility is also a number of

awards that selected members of staff have attained for their research work.

The existing infrastructure available to the research-active members of staff for the design and the carrying out of research (electronic libraries, databases, statistical packages, etc.) appears to be adequate, whereas the availability of a budget of 1,500 EURO per member of staff for the attendance of international conferences, the presentation of research, and the development of research networks and collaborations, is comparable with the current practice in universities abroad. However, in addition to (or perhaps as a consequence of) the aforementioned lack of a distinct research strategy in the Department, there appears to be no formal structure or institutional/Departmental mechanism to promote, plan support and evaluate research activity in the Department. All research efforts for the production of research, the development of research networks and the diffusion of produced knowledge in the Department, all appear to be *ad hoc*, essentially stemming from individual initiatives and the anxiety to respond to the requirements of the revised legislative framework that only recently specified research as an integral part of an academic's role, as well as the demands of an increasingly competitive market environment that reportedly uses research output as the main criterion for appointment/promotion.

All members of staff confirmed the supportive attitude of the Head of the Department and of the more experienced members of staff, for the exchange of ideas and the development of research collaborations within the Department, but these seem to depend more on the good personal relationships among the existing members of staff than on some institutional or Departmental mechanism that has been specifically and purposely designed to promote and support research.

RESULTS

- How successfully were the Department's research objectives implemented?
- Scientific publications.
- Research projects.
- Research collaborations.
- Efficacy of research work. Applied results. Patents etc.
- Is the Department's research acknowledged and visible outside the Department?
Rewards and awards.

In absence of a detailed research strategy, agreed performance indicators for the monitoring, and specific targets for the *ex-post* evaluation of the Department's research activity, the assessment of research output is conducted mainly on the basis of the data provided in the Department's own self-assessment report. Within the previously described context, and despite the fact that the Department is clearly experiencing the effects of the transition from a teaching-only to a research-active unit, the production of papers, at least in terms quantity appears to be satisfactory. As shown in the table below, in the last eight (8) years the Department has produced 82 journal publications and 92 publications in conference proceedings, that is, 9.1 journal publications and 10.2 publications in conference proceedings per year for the nine (9) permanent research-active members of staff. This publication activity has resulted in an average of 20.6 citations per permanent member of staff and 1.03 citations per research output in the last eight (8) years. A closer look at the list of publications reveals that, in their majority, they are made in international journals (77%), although most of them are of relatively low ranking and impact factor. The Department should adopt an international standard (e.g. ABS list or impact factor) for the evaluation of

research which would constitute the cornerstone of their research activity.

	Βιβλία/ μονογραφίες	Επιστημονικά περιοδικά με κριτές	Επιστημονικά περιοδικά χωρίς κριτές	Πρακτικά συνεδρίων με κριτές	Πρακτικά συνεδρίων χωρίς κριτές	Κεφάλαια σε συλλογικούς τόμους	Άλλες εργασίες	Ανακοινώσεις σε επιστ. συνέδρια (με κριτές) χωρίς πρακτικά	Ανακοινώσεις σε επιστ. συνέδρια (χωρίς κριτές) χωρίς πρακτικά	Άλλα
2010	1	16	0	15	0	0	0	0	0	0
2009	1	14	0	34	0	1	0	0	0	0
2008	1	6	0	6	0	0	0	0	1	0
2007	0	17	0	7	0	1	0	1	2	0
2006	0	13	0	8	0	0	0	3	1	0
2005	2	6	0	6	0	0	0	1	3	0
2004	1	6	0	11	0	1	0	1	0	0
2003	2	4	0	11	0	0	0	1	2	0
Σύνολο	7	82	0	98	0	3	0	7	9	0

A quick glance at the data provided in the Department's own self-assessment report indicates that current participation in research projects is limited - only four (4) out of the nine (9) permanent members of staff appear to be presently active in the research projects identifies. The participation of the research-active members of staff in the supervision of doctorate (PhD) students is limited.

IMPROVEMENT

- Improvements in research proposed by the Department, if necessary.
- Initiatives in this direction undertaken by the Department.

The findings of the present evaluation report should be considered within its given context, and in light of the inherent weaknesses of the process within which it was conducted and interpreted. The following recommendations for the improvement of the Department's research programme and output were tentatively discussed among the Department's research active staff and EEC. The recommendations made are:

1. There is an urgent need to establish a Research Committee in the Department, which will assist the Head of Department in the formulation and implementation of the Department's research strategy, encourage/facilitate staff to engage in and improve the quality of their research activities, research grant applications and outputs. The Committee should also be responsible for monitoring and reporting on staff performance, the management of staff research budget and recommendations to the Head of Department regarding research support, study leave applications, etc. for individual staff members. The role of this Research Committee should be supportive and consultative, its staffing should be based on research experience (rather than seniority), and its structure and scope can be materialised within the context of the recently approved institution of Research Centres in the Department.

2. There is an urgent need for the Department to proceed with a formulation of a research strategy/programme that will allow the planning, coordination, support and evaluation of the research activity of all research-active members of staff. This can be achieved under the 'umbrella' of the previously mentioned Research Committee, and will provide the necessary framework within which individual research activity is carried out. Such a strategy should provide clear research aims, measurable outputs and targets for the short- and long-term, as well as the actions necessary for the attainment of these results. This strategy formulation process can only take a bottom-up approach, with active participation from all the permanent members of staff involved.

The above two recommendations will hopefully be instrumental in fostering:

- a. a research output of higher quality
- b. a more purposive collective effort for the application and securing of funds for research from public and private, domestic and international sources of funding
- c. the intensification of research collaborations with academics and practitioners, both in Greece and abroad, for the development of a wider and more active network
- d. the utilisation of this network not only for collaborative research projects, but also for the involvement in doctoral programmes (secondary supervision/advising)
- e. the utilisation of the students (postgraduate and undergraduate) in current and future research efforts, through the appropriate design of both the practical and the research part of their programmes
- f. the diffusion of knowledge in the Department through the organisation of research seminars, work-in-progress series, etc, in the context of which research-active members can present and promote their work
- g. the development of a research 'culture' in the Department, according to which research is an integral and self-evident part of the academic's role.

D. All Other Services

For each particular matter, please distinguish between under- and post-graduate level, if necessary.

APPROACH

- **How does the Department view the various services provided to the members of the academic community (teaching staff, students).**
- **Does the Department have a policy to simplify administrative procedures? Are most procedures processed electronically?**
- **Does the Department have a policy to increase student presence on Campus?**

The Department has build up administrative services to offer effective services to students, faculty and staff. The Secretariat is well organised. Classrooms, laboratories and faculty offices are comfortable. The library is easily accessible. Areas for students to work both individual and in groups are available. The career office is in process to restart its activities. General facilities as cafeteria and sport are very good.

IMPLEMENTATION

- **Organization and infrastructure of the Department's administration (e.g. secretariat of the Department).**
- **Form and function of academic services and infrastructure for students (e.g. library, PCs and free internet access, student counseling, athletic-cultural activity etc.).**

The Secretariat is staffed by two persons. Internet and IT-programmes are used to facilitate their work. However the culture among the student population is to utilise the Secretariat by personally visiting them and completing the tasks needed offline, creating unnecessary burden.

Faculty and most administrative staff have individual workstations as part of their office equipment.

The EEC visited the TEI library, the recently re-established careers services, PC clusters and the student's refectory among other facilities. They were deemed satisfactory and offer good facilities for both students and staff. The library, in addition to all recommended books and literature, has a number of relevant journals/periodical and a large number of electronic books, journal databases and educational audiovisual material. More specifically, the library offered a good collection of books in Greek and English. It had a dedicated section for postgraduate students. It also offered ample space for students to meet and study. PC clusters have many computers for students to use, offering Internet access.

The Kleoxenis conference room had its own lab apart from the teleconferencing facilities which were very modern. TEI has its own gym which used to be staff by a permanent member of staff, who recently retired. Now it's staffed mostly during the afternoons. Refectory was clean and offered good quality Greek food.

RESULTS

- **Are administrative and other services adequate and functional?**
- **How does the Department view the particular results.**

Administrative services in the Department are in line and congruence with the operations of the Department.

IMPROVEMENTS

- ***Has the Department identified ways and methods to improve the services provided?***
- ***Initiatives undertaken in this direction.***

There are a number of improvements recommended by the EEC.

1. In order to have clarity about the effectiveness of administrative services, the Department can undertake a survey. The questions can be used to evaluate not only administrative services, but also facilities as cafeteria, toilettes etc. An important aim of this evaluation must be to identify the need for improvement in different areas, as well as which of identified improvements to prioritize.
2. In order to improve the environment inside and around the buildings more effort should be put in keeping the campus clean, especially the buildings. More bins can be provided which would help address this problem. TEI can also provide recycling bins to encouraging students to participate in the process. Unfortunately, despite Greek law forbidding smoking in public spaces, this was not followed and many smoked in the corridors.
3. The location of TEI is outside of the city centre of Kavala. TEI can optionally organize transport using its own bus to making it easier for the students to get to and from the TEI.
4. Access to Internet and different services on line are more similar to Intranet rather to Internet. Students and other stakeholders must have access to different services from different places and not only when they are in the campus. That is something that the management of the Department must prioritize. Furthermore, a lot of work especially at the Secretariat follows traditional ways, e.g. registration documents are filled manually. The efficiency of the Secretariat will increase, if similar activities are digitalized and the management of the Department works to create a climate that support students to use digitalized solutions.
5. The management of the Department must support Secretariat staff in the personal development so that they can fulfil the informal but often very important tasks (such as providing ad hoc mentoring support to students). The students have not only study- or job-relating needs, but also personal and social needs.
6. The Department in collaboration with the TEI reviews the external and internal condition of buildings and makes the necessary repairs (painting walls, improving toilet facilities etc).

Collaboration with social, cultural and production organizations

Please, comment on quality, originality and significance of the Department's initiatives.

The Department has acknowledged the important role it plays from an economical and business perspective in the local and regional community. This is expressed mainly by cooperation with local and regional firms and entrepreneurs, organization of events, and seminars and other educational activities.

Students have also the possibility to collaborate with local firms usually using case method working with the degree project applying a relevant question for one or many firms and using one or more firms as objects of the study. The same procedure is also usually in different course when students apply methods, tools and theoretical models using data and information from firms and other organizations.

The EEC has notice a very positive climate and attitude toward the Department in the meeting with representatives from local business. The representatives were both positive to cooperation and look forward to cooperating in different areas. Therefore, the EEC recommends that the Department organizes its relations i.e. a specific member of the staff has the responsibility for these relations, which are mostly between individuals.

E. Strategic Planning, Perspectives for Improvement and Dealing with Potential Inhibiting Factors

For each particular matter, please distinguish between under- and post-graduate level, if necessary.

Please, comment on the Department's:

- Potential inhibiting factors at State, Institutional and Departmental level, and proposals on ways to overcome them.
- Short-, medium- and long-term goals.
- Plan and actions for improvement by the Department/Academic Unit
- Long-term actions proposed by the Department.

Previous sections have touched on Department's strategy and more specifically the lack of it. The Department needs to review its teaching and research strategy and formalise by adopting specific mission statements and quantifiable objectives.

Senior management will need to undertake this exercise considering the legal framework and the medium and long future of the Department. The support of the TEI President should be sought. This could help significantly implement the strategy providing not only financial support but also in the form of policy directions. Great emphasis should be given on the change process and in particular in the cultivation of the necessary culture to underpin the Department's strategy. Students should be engaged and should encourage to actively and constructively participate. The same should be the case with administrative staff and temporary teaching staff.

The Department should also engage more with local businesses and the Chamber of Kavala and establish an external Advisory Board to which they will be invited. The Board could make recommendations and provide the formal communication conduit between the local and regional industry and the School and TEI. Academics from other European Universities could also be invited to participate. The Department should be complemented for actively seeking continuous improvement. This though should not be limited within the boundaries of the State evaluation but also consider how similar evaluation frameworks (like EQUIS, AACSB and AMBA) operate.

F. Final Conclusions and recommendations of the EEC

For each particular matter, please distinguish between under- and post-graduate level, if necessary.

Conclusions and recommendations of the EEC on:

- the development of the Department to this date and its present situation, including explicit comments on good practices and weaknesses identified through the External Evaluation process and recommendations for improvement
- the Department's readiness and capability to change/improve
- the Department's quality assurance.

The Department sits on very good foundations and is performing sufficiently well. There is much opportunity and scope for development and the EEC would hope that this evaluation would spark a new round of development.

The Department has very good teaching resource and an improving programme of research activity. The curriculum follows current trends and developments and has sufficient links with the local economy.

International experience and collaboration can provide a good stage for improving internal processes. The Department has the know-how for doing this and has demonstrated a good level of adaptability to local requirements. The Department offers good levels of services and infrastructure to the student.

It has the active support of the TEI and its senior management who consider them the spearhead of the Institution.

We wish them all the best in their endeavours.

The Members of the Committee

TECHNOLOGICAL EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTE
OF KAVALA
DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

Name and Surname

Signature

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