



ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ

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ΑΡΧΗ ΔΙΑΣΦΑΛΙΣΗΣ ΚΑΙ ΠΙΣΤΟΠΟΙΗΣΗΣ
ΤΗΣ ΠΟΙΟΤΗΤΑΣ ΣΤΗΝ ΑΝΩΤΑΤΗ ΕΚΠΑΙΔΕΥΣΗ

HELLENIC REPUBLIC

H Q A

HELLENIC QUALITY ASSURANCE
AND ACCREDITATION AGENCY

Accreditation Report
for the Undergraduate Study Programme of:
Geology
Institution: University of Patras
Date: 02.05.2019

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Επιχειρησιακό Πρόγραμμα
Ανάπτυξη Ανθρώπινου Δυναμικού,
Εκπαίδευση και Διά Βίου Μάθηση
Με τη συγχρηματοδότηση της Ελλάδας και της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης



Report of the Panel appointed by the HQA to undertake the review of the Undergraduate Study Programme of **Geology** of the **University of Patras** for the purposes of granting accreditation

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PART A: BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT OF THE REVIEW

I. The Accreditation Panel

The Panel responsible for the Accreditation Review of the Undergraduate Study Programme of the Higher Education Institution named: **Department of Geology** comprised the following five (3) members, drawn from the HQA Register, in accordance with the Law 4009/2011:

1. Prof. Theodoros Ntaflos (Chair)
University of Vienna, Austria

2. Prof. Nikolaos Dimakis
University of Texas Rio Grande Valley, USA

3. Mr Evangelos Spyridonos
Geotechnical Chamber of Greece, Thessaloniki, Greece

II. Review Procedure and Documentation

The Accreditation Panel (AP) convened on Monday March 3rd 2019 at the Royal Olympic Hotel in Athens. The AP was briefed by the HQA on the Quality Assurance (QA) accreditation guidelines and standards. During the briefing, the panel received the folder of needed materials for the site visit at the Department of Geology of the University of Patras. Moreover, the AP received the Proposal for Accreditation of the Internal Quality Assurance System, as well as information on the quality indicators from 2015-16 and 2016-17 and the departmental External Evaluation Report. Subsequently, the AP met and discussed on the strategy and issues to be considered during the site visit. On the same day, the AP traveled to Patras.

On Tuesday March 4th the AP visited the Department of Geology and met with the University Vice Rector, the Quality Assurance Unit (MODIP), and the Department Head. The Vice Rector also serves as the MOPID President. The AP was briefed on the history and academic profile of the University of Patras, its current status, its strengths and areas for improvement. The above were supported by additional documents complementing the on-screen presentations.

The AP met with the Internal Evaluation Group (OMEA) and MODIP and discussed the compliance of the Geology undergraduate program to the standards for quality accreditation set by HQA. Subsequently, the AP met with faculty and staff members of the Department of Geology discussing professional development opportunities, student evaluations, faculty workload, connections between teaching and research, etc. After that, the AP met with undergraduate, MSc, and PhD candidates of the Department of Geology. During lunch, the AP discussed matters regarding the program, based on the information received by that time. The AP met with graduates, alumni, and external stakeholders via face-to-face and skype video conference. At the end of the day, the AP further discussed the outcomes of the first-day meetings.

On Wednesday March 6th, the AP visited the Department of Geology classrooms, its teachings and research laboratories, and the departmental libraries. During these visits, the AP discussed with Geology students about their undergraduate program reforms and proposed changes. After meeting with students, the AP had a short debriefing meeting discussing the site visit outcomes. A final meeting was held among the AP, Vice Rector, the Head of the Department, the OMEA, and the MODIP. Soon after, the AP left Patras travelling to Athens and initiated drafting the accreditation report.

On Friday March 8th, the AP completed the draft Accreditation Report.

III. Study Programme Profile

The Department of Geology at the University of Patras was founded on 1977. The expected duration of studies for the Geology undergraduate program is 4 years (8 semesters). However, only about 60+ students graduate with Geology undergraduate degrees out of about 180+ first year enrolled students (i.e., ~ 30 % retention rate, old degree plan). MOPID data show that these 60+ graduates are distributed as follows: 6,15% graduated in 4 years, 38,46 % in 5 years, and 27,69 % in 6 years. In the Fall 2019, MODIP information shows that the Department of Geology student enrolments was as follows: 1025 undergraduates, 35 postgraduate (MSc) Geol., 20 postgraduate (MSc) SNS, and 90 Ph.D. candidates. The department academic staff (DEP) is distributed as follows: 7 Professors, 8 Associate Professors, 5 Assistant Professors, 7 teaching staff (EDIP), and 1 technical personnel. The department also has 6 administrative staff.

The AP found that the Department of Geology at the University of Patras is severely understaffed. Specifically, the department has approximately 1025+ undergraduate students for 20 Professors, leading to excessive teaching load. These 20 Professors also teach MSc and PhD courses and supervise undergraduate and postgraduate thesis (55 MSc and 90 PhD students, 2017-2018 data). Furthermore, the AP noticed building issues (i.e., water leaks), aged teaching, and research equipment. It is very important to state that the existing single ocular microscopes used for teaching purposes raise severe safety issues and are not in compliance with current EU safety norms. The AP strongly recommends that these microscopes should be replaced as soon as possible.

AP found that OMEA worked diligently and effectively in order to revise and improve the Geology undergraduate program.

PART B: COMPLIANCE WITH THE PRINCIPLES

Principle 1: Academic Unit Policy for Quality Assurance

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 ALL INSTITUTION'S AREAS OF ACTIVITY, AND PARTICULARLY AT THE FULFILMENT OF QUALITY REQUIREMENTS OF UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMMES. THIS POLICY SHOULD BE PUBLISHED AND IMPLEMENTED BY ALL STAKEHOLDERS.

The quality assurance policy of the academic unit is in line with the Institutional policy on quality, and is included in a published statement that is implemented by all stakeholders. It focuses on the achievement of special objectives related to the quality assurance of study programmes offered by the academic unit.

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 programme, its purpose and field of study; it will realise the programme's strategic goals and it will determine the means and ways for attaining them; it will implement the appropriate quality procedures, aiming at the programme's continuous improvement.

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

- a) the suitability of the structure and organization of the curriculum;*
- b) the pursuit of learning outcomes and qualifications in accordance with the European and the National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education;*
- c) the promotion of the quality and effectiveness of teaching;*
- d) the appropriateness of the qualifications of the teaching staff;*
- e) the enhancement of the quality and quantity of the research output among faculty members of the academic unit;*
- f) ways for linking teaching and research;*
- g) the level of demand for qualifications acquired by graduates, in the labour market;*
- h) the quality of support services such as the administrative services, the Library, and the student welfare office;*
- i) the conduct of an annual review and an internal audit of the quality assurance system of the undergraduate programme(s) offered, as well as the collaboration of the Internal Evaluation Group (IEG) with the Institution's Quality Assurance Unit (QAU);*

Study Programme compliance

The University has established an appropriate Quality Assurance policy clearly defining review processes and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). These are monitored by MODIP. The continuous improvement of the above is assured by OMEA, a committee by members from the Geology department. The OMEA is in line with the MODIP for the improvement of the undergraduate program. Relevant information is shared to Geology academic staff members and student representatives by email and presentations at departmental meetings. Students, academic staff, and administrative personnel roles are well defined.

Panel judgement

Please tick one of the following:

Principle 1: Institution policy for Quality Assurance	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

The AP strongly recommends that student participation and say is of significant importance for curriculum continuous improvement.

Principle 2: Design and Approval of Programmes

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

Academic units develop their programmes following a well-defined procedure. The academic profile and orientation of the programme, the objectives, the subject areas, the structure and organisation, the expected learning outcomes and the intended professional qualifications according to the National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education are described at this stage. The approval or revision process for programmes includes a check of compliance with the basic requirements described in the Standards, on behalf of the Institution's Quality Assurance Unit (QAU).

Furthermore, the programme design should take into consideration the following:

- *the Institutional strategy*
- *the active participation of students*
- *the experience of external stakeholders from the labour market*
- *the smooth progression of students throughout the stages of the programme*
- *the anticipated student workload according to the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System*
- *the option to provide work experience to the students*
- *the linking of teaching and research*
- *the relevant regulatory framework and the official procedure for the approval of the programme by the Institution.*

Study Programme compliance

The AP found that the Geology undergraduate program is fully compliant with the above. This statement is verified by appropriate departmental documentation and academic staff presentations. Moreover, the anticipated student workload is in accordance with the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS). However, the AP is unable to have a full view of Geology graduates' employment record.

The AP found that Geology undergraduate students unanimously favored the implementation of course prerequisites.

Course Syllabus student learning outcomes are in compliance with the European and the National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education. However, the AP noticed that some outcomes must be edited to be in full compliance with the HQA guidelines. For example, "to do", "must do", and "should do" must be replaced by "do".

The AP commends on the academic staff-working environment, which also positively affects the student body.

The undergraduate program meets the expectations set by the Geotechnical Chamber of Greece.

Panel judgement

Principle 2: Design and Approval of Programmes	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	X
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

The AP recommends that the Department of Geology maintains the compliance for the above. Moreover, the Department should keep updated employment records for its graduates via collaboration with the Geotechnical Chamber of Greece.

The AP strongly recommends that undergraduate thesis must be mandatory for all students as it strengthens experiential learning. The AP decision on this important matter is unanimously supported by the Geology undergraduate students. However, the AP understands the difficulties in fully implementing this decision, due to the large number of stagnated students. Therefore, the above decision could be implemented only to n, n+1, and n+2 students at this stage (n are the excepted years of study, currently 4).

Principle 3: Student- centred Learning, Teaching and Assessment

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

Student-centered learning and teaching plays an important role in stimulating students' motivation, self-reflection and engagement in the learning process. The above entail continuous consideration of the programme's delivery and the assessment of the related outcomes.

The student-centered learning and teaching process

- *respects and attends to the diversity of students and their needs, enabling flexible learning paths;*
- *considers and uses different modes of delivery, where appropriate;*
- *flexibly uses a variety of pedagogical methods;*
- *regularly evaluates and adjusts the modes of delivery and pedagogical methods aiming at improvement*
- *regularly evaluates the quality and effectiveness of teaching, as documented especially through student surveys;*
- *reinforces the student's sense of autonomy, while ensuring adequate guidance and support from the teaching staff;*
- *promotes mutual respect in the student - teacher relationship;*
- *applies appropriate procedures for dealing with students' complaints.*

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;*
- *the regulations for assessment take into account mitigating circumstances*
- *assessment is consistent, fairly applied to all students and carried out in accordance with the stated procedures;*
- *a formal procedure for student appeals is in place.*

Study Programme compliance

The AP found that for the majority of lecture courses the overall grade is heavily weighted towards the final exam grade. It is well known that different students have various areas of strengths and weakness: No two students are alike. Therefore, most Universities in the EU, USA, Canada, and other countries are using multiple examination measurements. For example, homework assignments, group presentations, small group discussions, term exams, essays, etc., could serve as grading indicators.

The AP found that only about 50% of students participates in the course evaluations.

Panel judgement

Principle 3: Student- centred Learning, Teaching an Assessment	
Fully compliant	x
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

The AP recommends the following actions:

1. The final grade should not be based on a single examination measurement. Diverse and multiple measurements should be applied for determining the overall student grade.
2. The following steps must be made to increase student participation in these evaluations:
 - a. Students should be notified and reminded by email that their course is due for evaluation.
 - b. During class hours, the instructor should also emphasize the importance of participation in the evaluation process.

Principle 4: Student Admission, Progression, Recognition and Certification

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

Institutions and academic units need to put in place both processes and tools to collect, manage and act on information regarding student progression.

Procedures concerning the award and recognition of higher education degrees, the duration of studies, rules ensuring students progression, terms and conditions for student mobility should be based on the institutional study regulations. Appropriate recognition procedures rely on institutional practice for recognition of credits among various European academic departments and Institutions, in line with the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention.

Graduation represents the culmination of the students' study period. Students need to receive documentation explaining the qualification gained, including achieved learning outcomes and the context, level, content and status of the studies that were pursued and successfully completed (Diploma Supplement).

Study Programme compliance

Undergraduate Students are mostly admitted via state examinations. A small percent of students is also admitted via departmental administered examinations. It is important to state that the Department of Geology has no control over the admitted undergraduate students.

Panel judgement

Principle 4: Student Admission, Progression, Recognition and Certification	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

The AP strongly believes that Departments should have some control over the admitted undergraduate students.

Principle 5: Teaching Staff

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

The Institutions and their academic units have a major responsibility as to the standard of their teaching staff providing them with a supportive environment that promotes the advancement of their scientific work. In particular, the academic unit should:

- *set up and follow clear, transparent and fair processes for the recruitment of properly qualified staff and offer them conditions of employment that recognize 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 members (with respect to attendance requirements, performance, self-assessment, training etc.);*
- *develop policies to attract highly qualified academic staff;*

Study Programme compliance

MODIP closely monitors the procedure for hiring new academic staff. The Department of Geology maintains an updated web site for informative and self-promoting purposes. Moreover, its academic staff promote the department via public and private media appearances. The department encourages academic staff collaboration with other Universities, research laboratories, and the industry.

However, it is difficult for the academic staff to have sabbatical leaves due to small number of teaching staff available.

Panel judgement

Principle 5: Teaching Staff	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

The AP strongly recommends that new academic staff hires are initiated as soon as possible.

Principle 6: Learning Resources and Student Support

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD HAVE ADEQUATE FUNDING TO COVER TEACHING AND LEARNING NEEDS. 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, BOARDING, CAREER AND SOCIAL POLICY SERVICES ETC.).

Institutions and their academic units must have sufficient funding and means to support learning and academic activity in general, so that they can offer to students the best possible level of studies. The above means could include facilities such as libraries, study rooms, educational and scientific equipment, information and communications services, support or 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 or international students, students with disabilities) and 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 ensures that all resources are appropriate, adequate, and accessible, and that students are informed about the services available to them.

In delivering support services the role of support and administrative staff is crucial and therefore they need to be qualified and have opportunities to develop their competences.

Study Programme compliance

The Vice Rector informed the AP that the annual operating University budget is very limited. The AP found that existing classroom spaces are insufficient to host the incoming and current students. Storage space, which is needed for scientific and teaching equipment and samples, is not available. The AP found severe water damages on many classrooms, teaching and research laboratories, offices, and general spaces. This problem could cause health issues (i.e., breathing problems and infections due to mold growth) to students and academic staff in addition to equipment damages.

We should emphasize that the Department of Geology have identified these problems and informed the University administration multiple times. The University performed building repairs for fixing these water leaks. However, these problems remain as of today.

The AP noticed aged teaching and research equipment. It is very important to state that the existing single ocular microscopes used for teaching purposes raise severe health and safety issues and are not in compliance with current EU safety norms.

As stated on principle 3, the AP found that for the majority of lecture courses the student grade is heavily weighted towards the final exam grade. Courses that have Erasmus funded international students are also taught in English.

Geology department library has been upgraded, which positively contributes to student learning for both undergraduates and postgraduate students.

Panel judgement

Principle 6: Learning Resources and Student Support	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	x
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

The AP emphasizes the important of increases in the University annual operating budget. Moreover, the AP also emphasizes the importance of repairing the building water leaks as soon as possible.

The AP strongly recommends that the existing microscopes used in the Geology teaching laboratories should be replaced as soon as possible.

The Department should undertake efforts towards offering all undergraduate and graduate Geology courses in both Greek and English languages, as this will dramatically enhance Geology graduates' jobs placement probabilities. Geology lecture instructors should employ additional student performance indicators as recommended on principle 3.

Principle 7: Information Management

INSTITUTIONS BEAR FULL RESPONSIBILITY FOR COLLECTING, ANALYSING AND USING INFORMATION, AIMED AT THE EFFICIENT MANAGEMENT OF UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMMES OF STUDY 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 as well as to the academic community.

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

The information gathered 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 programme(s)*
- *availability of learning resources and student support*
- *career paths of graduates*

A number of methods may be used for collecting information. It is important that students and staff are involved in providing and analyzing information and planning follow-up activities.

Study Programme compliance

MODIP published annual reports are hosted at the Department of Geology website. These reports provided all needed information.

Panel judgement

Principle 7: Information Management	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

None.

Principle 8: Public Information

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

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

Therefore, institutions and their academic units provide information about their activities, including the programmes they offer, the intended learning outcomes, the qualifications awarded, the teaching, learning and assessment procedures used, the pass rates and the learning opportunities available to their students, as well as graduate employment information.

Study Programme compliance

The Department of Geology website provide most of the above needed information. However, the AP was unable to find student pass rates and graduate employment information.

Panel judgement

Principle 8: Public Information	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

The AP recommends that the Department of Geology website provides updated information regarding student pass rates and graduate employment information.

Principle 9: On-going Monitoring and Periodic Internal Review of Programmes

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

Regular monitoring, review and revision of study programmes aim to maintain the level of educational provision and to create a supportive and effective learning environment for students.

The above comprise the evaluation of:

- the content of the programme in the light of the latest research in the given discipline, thus ensuring that the programme is up to date;*
- the changing needs of society*
- the students' workload, progression and completion;*
- the effectiveness of the procedures for the assessment of students*
- the students' expectations, needs and satisfaction in relation to the programme;*
- the learning environment, support services and their fitness for purpose for the programme*

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. Revised programme specifications are published.

Study Programme compliance

Annual internal review processes are performed by OMEA. These reports can be found in the departmental website and are available to the public.

Panel judgement

Principle 9: On-going Monitoring and Periodic Internal Review of Programmes	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

None.

Principle 10: Regular External Evaluation of Undergraduate Programmes

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

HQA is responsible for administrating the programme accreditation process which is realised as an external evaluation procedure, and implemented by a committee of independent experts. HQA grants accreditation of programmes, with a specific term of validity, following to which revision is required. The accreditation of the quality of the programmes acts as a means of verification of the compliance of the programme with the template's requirements, and as a catalyst for improvement, while opening new perspectives towards the international standing of the awarded degrees.

Both academic units and institutions participate in the regular external quality assurance process, while respecting the requirements of the legislative framework in which they operate.

The quality assurance, in this case the accreditation, is an on-going process that does not end with the external feedback, or report or its follow-up process within the Institution. Therefore, Institutions and their academic units ensure that the progress made since the last external quality assurance activity is taken into consideration when preparing for the next one.

Study Programme compliance

In 2012, an external committee appointed by HQA has evaluated the Department of Geology. The AP found that the Department of Geology complied with the majority of the past review recommendations. However, the Department did not implement the courses prerequisites, requested by the 2012 committee.

Panel judgement

Principle 10: Regular External Evaluation of Undergraduate Programmes	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	X
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

The AP strongly recommends that courses prerequisites are implemented as soon as possible.

PART C: CONCLUSIONS

I. Features of Good Practice

1. Excellent relationships between students and academic and administrative staff.
2. OMEA worked very hard to fulfill the HQA requirements.
3. The academic staff promotes the department via extensive school outreach activities, excellent academic staff publication records, and media appearances.

II. Areas of Weakness

1. The Department is severely understaffed.
2. Building and equipment issues raise health and safety concerns.
3. Aged equipment needs to be replaced with modern ones.
4. Key issues, such as student enrolment, academic staff hiring, funding, etc., are beyond the University authority.

III. Recommendations for Follow-up Actions

Future external audits should examine if these recommendations have been adopted by the Department and appropriate authorities.

IV. Summary & Overall Assessment

The Principles where full compliance has been achieved are: 7

The following principles are in full compliance: 1, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, and 9.

The Principles where substantial compliance has been achieved are: 3

The following principles are in substantial compliance: 2, 6 and 10.

The Principles where partial compliance has been achieved are: 0

The Principles where failure of compliance was identified are: 0

Overall Judgement	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

**The members of the Accreditation Panel for the Undergraduate Programme Geology
of the University of Patras**

Name and Surname

Signature

- **Prof. Theodoros Ntaflos (Chair)**, Universität Wien, Austria
- **Prof. Nikolaos Dimakis**, University of Texas-Rio Grande Valley,
USA
- **Mr. Evangelos Spyridonos**, Representative of the Geotechnical
Chamber of Greece, Thessaloniki, Greece