



**ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ**  
HELLENIC REPUBLIC



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# **Accreditation Report for the Undergraduate Study Programme (Integrated Master) of:**

**Audio and Visual Arts**

**Institution: Ionian University**

**Date: 3 July 2023**



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



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Report of the Panel appointed by the HAHE to undertake the review of the Undergraduate Study Programme (Integrated Master) of **Audio and Visual Arts** of the **Ionian University** for the purposes of granting accreditation.

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## **PART A: BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT OF THE REVIEW**

### **I. The External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel**

The Panel responsible for the Accreditation Review of the Undergraduate Study Programme (Integrated Master) of **Audio and Visual Arts** of the **Ionian University** comprised the following five (5) members, drawn from the HAHE Register, in accordance with Laws 4009/2011 & 4653/2020:

- 1. Dr. George Tzanetakis, Professor, Computer Science (Chair)**  
Department of Computer Science, University of Victoria, Canada
  
- 2. Dr. Evis Sarmoutis, Associate Professor, Music Composition**  
School of Music, Theatre and Dance, Ithaca College, NY
  
- 3. Dr Stella Baraklianou, Senior Lecturer, Photography**  
School of Art and Humanities, University of Huddersfield
  
- 4. Dr. Vasilis Kallis, Professor, Music Theory & Analysis**  
Department of Music & Dance, University of Nicosia
  
- 5. Miss Ioanna Kerefiadou, Student of the Department of Visual Arts, ASFA, Greece**  
Athens School of Fine Arts

## **II. Review Procedure and Documentation**

The accreditation review took place remotely over video conferencing (zoom) over the course of two days (Jun 28, June 29, 2023). During the visit the accreditation panel had the chance to interact with several stakeholders from the department through attending presentations, asking questions, and discussing issues pertinent to the academic unit. The stakeholders consulted consisted of the senior management of the department and the university, faculty members, students, alumni, and collaborating organisations).

In order to prepare for the review, the accreditation panel was provided with documentation about the process and the academic unit under consideration from both the Hellenic Authority for Higher Education (HAHE) and from the Department of Audio and Visual Arts of the Ionian University. From HAHE, the documents provided included the template for the accreditation report, a mapping grid for framing questions under each principle during the remote visit, as well as guidelines about the process. The department provided all the required documents for accreditation such as the main accreditation report, measured performance indicators, the undergraduate study programme guide, and the quality assurance policy.

The panel examined all the provided documentation, as well as other publicly available resources such as the website of the department both before and after the visit. During the site visit, the panel was able to ask clarification questions, engage in dialog with the various stakeholders, and obtain a thorough picture of the undergraduate study programme. Decisions regarding compliance and the writing of the accreditation report were made with equal participation from each panel member and were unanimously agreed upon through a consensus-building process. The academic unit fully collaborated with the panel during the accreditation process and provided any additional information and clarifications that were requested in a timely and professional manner.

Overall, the accreditation panel was impressed by the well organised presentation of all the relevant material. In particular, the use of databases for maintaining information about the departments that are then used to generate on demand the relevant documents is an excellent approach that will serve the academic unit well.

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

The department of Audio and Visual Arts of the Ionian University, Greece was established in 2004. The goal was and is to provide high quality education and professional skills in both the art and technological aspects of Audio and Visual creation. Through the studies the students learn the theoretical and practical knowledge required to train interdisciplinary artists and technologists in a holistic manner that is not available in the more specialised departments in overlapping areas available in Greece. Since 2004 there has been increasing demand and interest in the department as evidenced by the growing number of incoming students (86 in 2022 vs 54 in 2004). The department also is frequently selected as the top choice for the incoming students and currently serves approximately 450 students. The expected duration of studies is 5 years and results in an integrated Masters in Audio and Visual Arts as specified by the National & European Qualifications Network.

The department is one of the 12 departments of the Ionian University and together with the Department of Music Studies forms a School within the University sharing some administrative and teaching resources. There are 6 departments that are located in Corfu, a city of 40000 people with a rich historical, cultural, and architectural heritage. The Ionian University was established in 1984 and welcomed the first cohort of students in 1985. Today the Ionian University has approximately 5000 students.

The strategic goals of the Department of Audio & Visual Arts are defined as follows:

1. Teaching of new forms of audio-visual expression
2. Scientific research on applications of contemporary audio-visual technology
3. Sound and image processing, as well as processing of the new artistic forms that produced by these applications.
4. Use of the acquired skills in the field of artistic creation and communication

There are several employment opportunities for graduates of the department. These include:

1. Artistic creation through image, sound, and video as well as their combinations
2. Teaching in general and professional fields
3. Audio and visual communication and management of cultural resources
4. Processing of audio and visual signals
5. Virtual and augmented reality
6. Multimedia application and web design
7. Multimedia education applications
8. Graphic design

## 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 organisation 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

#### Findings

The Panel has collected information regarding the quality assurance policy and practices of the Institution and Department from multiple sources. We specifically examined the Department's Accreditation Application (B1, 'Πρόταση Πιστοποίησης ΠΠΣ') and the Departments Quality Assurance Policy (B2 'Πολιτική Ποιότητας του Τμήματος Τεχνών Ήχου και Εικόνας της Σχολής Μουσικής και Οπτικοακουστικών Τεχνών του Ιονίου Πανεπιστημίου). We have also considered the report Management of Quality Assurance Indexes (B9), the Department's Formation of Quality Targets/Goals (B6) as well as the minutes of the MODIP meetings regarding the Quality Assurance Policy of the Department (B8.1, B8.2, B8.3, B8.4). Additionally, the Panel considered the information obtained through meetings with various stakeholders.

The Department of Audio and Visual Arts adheres to the Quality Assurance Policy of the Ionian University, which has been formulated and approved by the University Senate in accordance with established global tertiary education practices (see <https://modip.ionio.gr/gr/quality-assurance/policy/>). According to the state regulations overseeing higher education, the coordination, implementation, and monitoring of quality objectives are overseen by MODIP and OMEA, the University's and Department's quality assurance unit respectively. OMEA operates in conjunction with MODIP and collaborates with different entities within the Department to oversee and enhance quality assurance efforts.

The quality Assurance Policy of the Department is made public on the institution's website, along with the

- External evaluation report (Έκθεση Εξωτερικής Αξιολόγησης)
- Manual of Quality Assurance (Εγχειρίδιο Ποιότητας)
- Objectives of Quality Assurance (Στοχοθεσία Ποιότητας) that sets the following goals.
  - Development and implementation of processes and regulations of all the Department's programs
  - Promotion of research actions via the operation of labs and research initiatives in conjunction with the forming of research plans, including the creation of artistic output
  - Perpetual evaluation of the academic and administrative operations of the Department in accordance with the guidelines given by MODIP and the provisions set by HAHE regarding the active participation of students in all aspects of student life.

The Department of Audio and Visual Studies has set a well-defined mission and vision, core values, and a commitment to continuous quality improvement. These are made public mainly under the umbrella 'Quality Assurance Policy' public on its website. Additionally, the Department's website features a useful set of operational parameters of the educational experience under the umbrella 'Regulations and Guides', including:

- Diploma Thesis Regulation
- Postgraduate Studies Regulation
- Doctoral Studies Regulation
- Postdoctoral Studies Regulation
- Teaching Proficiency Regulation
- Guidelines for Academic Essays
- Access to Computer Labs
- Equipment Usage Regulation
- Disciplinary Issues and Plagiarism
- New Students Information Guide

Nevertheless, the Undergraduate Studies Regulation is not displayed. Overall, the displayed information indicates the commitment of the Department to the successful implementation of its academic and educational goals.



The established objectives, while somewhat ambitious, are clearly defined and capable of being measured. They are suitable for maintaining and enhancing academic quality. Although not all objectives may be fully attainable, as is often the case in higher education in Greece, they provide a clear impetus in the right direction. At times, the Department and University are faced with the challenge of mitigating the adverse impact of state-related constraints (i.e., lacking facilities whose improvement is primarily based on state funding).

### Analysis of judgement

The Panel report verifies that the Department of Audio/Visual Arts at Ionian University has effectively implemented quality assurance measures. Both the Department and University have established comprehensive and suitable quality assurance objectives. The strategic planning and vision of the University demonstrate a praiseworthy emphasis on quality assurance, as evident in the application documents (B2, B3). Moreover, there are well-defined processes and institutional bodies such as MODIP and OMEA responsible for monitoring and managing these objectives. The accreditation documents in the Department's folder indicate that the Department and University engage in an ongoing review process. The Quality Assurance policy is appropriately communicated to both internal and external stakeholders through the University and Department websites.

The Panel acknowledges that the Department's approach towards Quality Assurance

- Ensures the pursuit of learning outcomes and qualifications in accordance with the European and the National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education
- Assesses effectively the appropriateness of the qualifications of the teaching staff and promotes the enhancement of the quality and quantity of scholarly and artistic research.
- Promotes the link between teaching and research.

### Conclusions

Based on the Panel's assessment, it is determined that the Department of Audio and Visual Arts at Ionian demonstrates complete adherence to this principle.

### **Panel Judgement**

<b>Principle 1: Academic Unit Policy for Quality Assurance</b>	
Fully compliant	<b>X</b>
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

### **Panel Recommendations**

We highly commend the Department for its commendable practices in implementing the Quality Assurance Policy. It is imperative for the Department to maintain and further develop these practices to ensure the continuity and advancement of its operations and methodologies. Such efforts will yield benefits for the students, teaching and research faculty, administrative staff, local stakeholders, and society at large.

At the same time, we identify a minor discrepancy in the information provided to the students on the Department's website. More specifically, information such as the Undergraduate Thesis Regulation as well as data related to Quality Assurance (i.e., quality assurance indexes, internal evaluation) need to be provided.

## 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

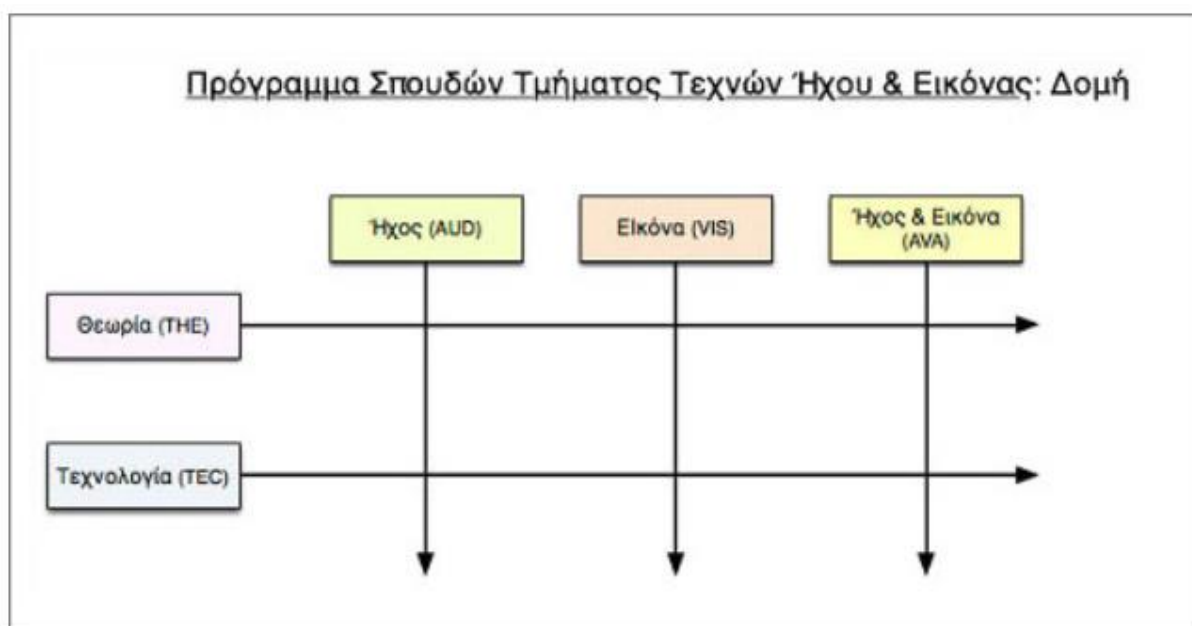
### Findings

The Department's primary aim, as displayed in its website (<https://avarts.ionio.gr/gr/department/aim/>) is 'to cultivate and promote audio-visual expression through teaching and research on the applications of modern audio-visual technology in the broader field of art and mass communication'. This aim is broken down into four strategic goals.

1. the teaching of new forms of audio-visual expression.
2. scientific research on applications of contemporary audio-visual technology.
3. sound and image processing, as well as the processing of the new artistic forms that are produced by these applications; and,
4. use of the acquired skills in the field of artistic creation and communication.

The above aim and goals are reflected in the UGP's curriculum, which is founded on the triptych theory, technology, and art (General Principles of the UGP as published on the Department's website: <https://avarts.ionio.gr/gr/studies/undergraduate/outline/>).

As per the Department's description, the UGP curriculum's structure is organised around three axes: two horizontal (theory and technology) and one vertical (arts) which is itself divided into three unofficial majors (sound, image, sound & image). The artistic axis (and its three components) crosses the two horizontal ones as follows.



In order to graduate, students are required to complete 300 ECTS (30 each semester for 10 semesters). During the last semester of studies, they also need to write and submit a thesis. The curriculum courses come in three categories.

- general background
- specific background
- deepening knowledge

and are further labelled as 'required' or 'elective'. Of the minimum 56 courses required for graduation, twelve are required (about 20%).

The successful completion of the study requirements leads to a Level 7 Qualification according to the (Integrated Master).

In addition to the aforementioned diploma (degree), the Department also offers a bouquet of courses leading to the Pedagogical Certification (Πιστοποιητικό Παιδαγωγικής Επάρκειας). Comprising nine courses worth 44 ECTS (in addition to the 300 ECTS required for graduation), the particular certification is a requirement for employment in the Greek state's elementary and secondary education institutions.

The allocation of ECTS is appropriate and follows a consistent logic that appears to be adjusted to the overarching philosophy of the UGP; an all-embracing approach that, while providing a strong foundation in the nurtured disciplines, runs the risk of ending up offering a 'mosaic-like' educational experience.

The UGP's curriculum content is displayed on the Department's website but only in a semester-by-semester format, which doesn't include sufficient information about curriculum structure

and suggested area pathways. More detailed information about the UGP, its curriculum, the pedagogical process, and other parameters of the educational experience and student life are offered in the Studies Guideline, General Principles, and Course Description - all properly displayed on the Department's website.

The Department has set specific goals regarding the objectives and the learning outcomes of the UGP under evaluation. These are in line with key performance indicators (KPIs). There seems to be a perpetual feedback process to ensure the successful implementation of these goals. As stated in the Application for Academic Evaluation (B1), the Department constantly receives feedback by

- collaborating closely with artistic and scientific institutions/organizations in the implementation of creative actions and projects
- maintaining contact with its alumni via online meetings and organizing study days during which the Faculty becomes informed about the students' professional engagements.
- the Student Internships

Most of the Department's faculty are also active professionals in the audio-visual field, an advantage that allows them to stay in touch with new trends in their fields and infuse their teaching with new knowledge and hands-on experience.

The set educational goals are monitored, updated, and communicated periodically by the Department's Special Curriculum Committee.

### Analysis of judgement

The External Evaluation & Accreditation Committee approves and validates the Department's efforts in reviewing its operations and curriculum. During the curriculum revision process, the Department actively engages with stakeholders, experts, and students for valuable input. Additionally, the said Unit has established specific and achievable annual goals to facilitate its growth and improvement.

The Department provides adequate information on its website and in written documents about its operations and educational process/experience. The absence of the curriculum structure and suggested area pathways aside, the provided Student Guide proves to be highly beneficial, comprehensive, succinct, and suitable for its purpose. The UGP curriculum effectively aligns with the objectives and learning outcomes established by the faculty. Furthermore, the course outlines are well-documented, clearly communicated, and appropriate in content.

The Teaching staff boasts diverse areas of expertise and possesses highly esteemed professional skills that are effectively applied in their respective classes.

On a less positive note, the overwhelming plethora of courses forms a bumpy road to the completion of the degree. The particular issue is enhanced by the lack of formal majors and/or concentrations. This absence of specific major outlines poses a challenge for students when making informed decisions at the start of their studies. Having comprehensive information about each major would enable students to make more informed choices regarding their

academic paths and align their educational goals more effectively. At present, the lack of such options limits students' ability to delve deeply into their preferred disciplines and pursue advanced studies in their chosen fields.

This might also thwart the Department's efforts to distinguish the UGP from similar programs in Greece and in Europe. Having a strong and specific identity is essential for a program to have a clear focus or mission that sets it apart from other relevant programs.

Last but not least, the current practice of awarding an integrated master's degree to undergraduate students comes with certain expectations. A master's degree traditionally signifies the completion of graduate-level studies, where students delve deeply into a specific subject area. Graduate-level programs and courses pursue the depth of a subject; their philosophy cannot engage a 'wide horizon' approach. Thus, this approach cannot but become an integral part of the UGP under review.

### Conclusions

In conclusion, the Accreditation Panel acknowledges that the provisions of Principle 2 (Design and Approval of Programs) are satisfied to a considerable extent.

At the same time, the Panel identifies several areas that require attention and improvement. The overwhelming number of courses, mosaic-like curriculum structure, lack of program identity, absence of majors or concentrations, and the implications of awarding an integrated master's degree to undergraduate students pose challenges to the program's effectiveness and cohesiveness. Addressing these concerns is vital to ensure a more focused, cohesive, and meaningful educational experience for students, as well as to establish a clear program identity that aligns with the goals and aspirations of the institution and its stakeholders.

The Panel wishes to clarify that it does not suggest the alteration of the UGP's curriculum - instead, we suggest its restructuring so that it includes majors and/or concentrations. The Department might begin the process 'unofficially' until it finds a suitable balance; then the majors and/or concentrations could be formally introduced.

### Panel Judgement

<b>Principle 2: Design and Approval of Programmes</b>	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	<b>X</b>
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

<b>The External Evaluation &amp; Accreditation Panel agrees that this Programme leads to a Level 7 Qualification according to the National &amp; European Qualifications Network (Integrated Master)</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO*</b>
	<b>X</b>	

## **Panel Recommendations**

- The Panel strongly recommends the introduction of majors and/or concentrations in the UGP's curriculum. There needs to be a re-design and alignment for the Programme. It is recommended that The Head of the Department has meetings with all academic staff involved to discuss how smaller elective courses can be amalgamated.
- The same elective courses can be designed to be delivered into the curriculum structure differently, without necessarily changing the whole scope of the Programme. A possible option to consider would be combining small (low ETCS number) elective courses into bigger courses with a large number of ETCS providing similar underlying content. This would stream-line the department's course offerings and workflow. It will also help the students make more informed choices about their course selection.
- Currently, the Department's website displays the curriculum content in a semester-by-semester format. We suggest that the website should additionally provide a file that demarcates the curriculum structure, course categories, and suggested area pathways.

### **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-centred learning and teaching play 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-centred 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**

#### **Findings:**

The Department of Audio and Visual Arts provided to the Panel all the necessary documentation relevant for the Accreditation. The documents were made available to the Panel in advance in PDF format. It was evident in the documentation provided that the Department takes student centred learning very seriously, since it had clear methods like problem-based learning, blended learning, peer learning and experiential learning indicated in the Accreditation documents.

Further to the documentation, the VC, Rector and academic staff and members of MODIP and OMEA briefed the panel, through their presentations, on the practical aspects of pedagogical delivery of the curriculum. The overall emphasis of the Department is inter-disciplinary and hybrid modes of teaching and content. The presentation material evidenced the application of a broad range of pedagogical methods, depending on the syllabus, which ranges from



theoretical courses to practical ones. Therefore, the pedagogical methods vary from traditional lectures in class, like art history and philosophy, to practical workshops including computer and sound and audio-visual labs. This is further evidenced in the broad range of courses related to mathematics, computer programming, sound engineering, audio visual art, digital art, photography, and graphic arts that are delivered within specific workshop style teaching.

An important aspect of the programme is the required Undergraduate Thesis during the final year of undergraduate study as is also the emphasis on Project based learning outcomes within undergraduate courses, especially lab and digital workshop-based courses.

### **Analysis**

As indicated through the website as well as in the staff presentations and during the discussion with current and former students, the Department offers a plethora of teaching methods. Student centred learning is evidenced in a variety of ways:

1. Effectively the best indicator is the close knit and small community of staff and students. This was supported throughout by staff and students. The students specifically commented on how they always have access to academic staff who are at hand to assist them with their theoretical or practical modules.
2. The website of the Department is exceptional and must be noted as good practice and made exemplary for other similar Universities. The information provided is comprehensive and coherent, providing in one place an easily accessible guide for students on their Programme, content of curriculum and individual modules, as well as clear mapping out of each individual module, clear outline of course content, ECTS credits, breakdown of what the course entails,, either theoretical or workshop based (Lab) or both, weekly breakdown of the Syllabus and mapping of Learning Outcomes and assessment strategy and links to E-class. Overall, the level and content of each individual course content is extremely high and directly linked to students' learning in a close-knit and supportive environment.
3. A strength of the delivery of the Programme is the emphasis on hybrid modes of teaching and delivery. This is evidenced in the Project based approach to course outcomes as well as the Final Year Undergraduate Thesis (semester 10, PRO050). As is evidenced in the practical work produced from Final Year students, that is extremely well documented via the Department website, this particular way of teaching and delivery of the Thesis is exceptionally well oriented toward student centred learning because it involves both a practical aspect (the production of a practical outcome, in the form of an exhibition, a portfolio) and a theoretical aspect of writing critically about the work.

### **Conclusion**

The Department's strength lies in the project based and lab-based approach to teaching and learning. As mentioned above, this is evident with the high quality of work produced by Final Year students for their Thesis in the form of a Practical Project.

The close-knit and small community of Corfu is ideal for allowing interaction and familiarity with both academics and students on a daily basis. Students also mentioned that academic staff coordinate and work harmoniously together, in instances of co-teaching.

It is evident in the way the Final Thesis is structured with the 3 staff members on board to supervise the direction of the student's work that the final assessment and grading is not the

work of only one member of staff. Therefore, each students' work is marked by more than one member of staff.

### Panel Judgement

<b>Principle 3: Student- centred Learning, Teaching and Assessment</b>	
Fully compliant	<b>X</b>
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

### Panel Recommendations

What was not clearly evidenced is the procedure for student appeals. Whilst this may appear on paper, it is not visible on the website. The Panel recommends that where this procedure is in place, to evidence and highlight by adding on the Departments relevant website content a section on this Guide for Appeals.

## **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**

#### **Findings**

Students are admitted via the traditional PanHellenic Exams (Πανελληνιες), with a score point entry system. It is noteworthy to state that the Department is in increasingly high demand. Since 2004, the popularity is evidenced by the growing number of students admitted into the first year. In the year 2022 this was 86 as opposed to 54 in 2004. The high score needed to gain entry, which in the last round of exams was a total of 9464 (μόρια) is clear evidence of the popularity of the Department, showing an increase overall, despite the setback of the pandemic and the impact of Covid of the two previous years. In the presentation slides of the Head of Department, it was noted that the overall number of registered students is 450.

Progression and recognition of credits: The Department has clear and distinct credits (ΔΜ) attached to each individual course (module) offered. These are fully compliant and aligned with ECTS. There are Compulsory and Elective courses. Students are required to choose which Elective courses for each semester they want to study. The Department has clear and transparent progression systems in place for each semester, leading to the Final Major Project of 10<sup>th</sup> semester. Students need to achieve an overall score of 210 ECTS (Winter Semester) and 230 ECTS (after September).

The Final Major Project during the 10<sup>th</sup> semester, leads to successful graduation. The procedure for the Major Project is rigorous and includes several points of monitoring progress, from the initial proposal submission to the final project submission/presentation, as well as the involvement of three academic supervisors and examiners.

Students' mobility is encouraged in two ways: through the Erasmus mobility scheme and through the Ionian University's Internships scheme.

Erasmus+: The Department is part of the ERASMUS mobility scheme and has established agreements with a list of Universities in countries including Belgium, Cyprus, Malta, Finland, the Czech Republic, Italy, Germany, Portugal and Turkey. The Department has evidence of clear and transparent procedures for the incoming Erasmus students from the countries with which the Department has bi-lateral relations with. It is assumed that similar rigorous procedures are

followed for outgoing students. There are currently two academic members of staff in place who are responsible for the management of Erasmus scheme, and they are accessible with all necessary information provided for students to contact them.

Alongside the core course curriculum, students are allowed to apply if they wish for the Internships/Placement, during the summer period, for July to August. This is supported and funded by European Regional Funding and part of the overall Internships scheme of the Ionian University. <http://dasta.ionio.gr/internship/> take part in and work placements at local museums, public and private institutions.

Graduation: students need to evidence proficient knowledge of English in order to graduate. The Department offers English language courses.

The procedure for generating the final grade and the results for the students for the Degree is based on a mathematical formula that is visible on the website. The Diploma Supplement is generated and provided at the same time as the degree is given to the student, on the day of graduation.

### **Analysis of Judgement**

The cohort of students admitted into the First Semester each year is roughly 80. Academic staff are aware of the varying degrees of educational backgrounds that the students upon entry to the Department have. This is taken into consideration in the first year, twofold: there is an orientation and guidance for first year students and secondly, through pastoral care of the academic staff, offering practical guidance and advice on the programme structure and curriculum, via the Student Advisors.

The Panel had a good insight into the unique structure of this multifaceted and multi-disciplinary Programme. The Panel was impressed with the extensive knowledge and breadth of subject matter and courses provided, ranging from computer labs to animation and story-telling and sculpture.

During the discussion with the student representatives, it was evident that the immense number of courses on offer was problematic, as students noted that whilst the courses were there, it was not always easy to decide which Elective course would benefit them best. Given that there are a vast number of Elective courses that give little amounts of ECTS credits, there needs to be clearer guidance to the students from one semester to the next.

For example, there is the Art and Natural Sciences elective course, 6th semester, offering 5 ECTS credits. The breakdown for this includes Lecture hours, Lab practice and literature and analysis. Another Elective, for example, in the 6th Semester is Multimedia Semiotics, 5 ECTS credits. The small number of ECTS credits is not analogous to the hours each one of these Electives involves, both for staff and students. Some electives that are registered as prerequisites, (unofficially), like Art History 1, 2, and so forth, also make it difficult for a student who may not wish to continue with a certain Elective after one Semester.

The Panel also did ask how many students graduate and how many are still registered as “students”. There is a disproportionate number of “students” or so-called continuing students, which do not graduate on-time. This is a result of the higher costs of living in Corfu and the impacts of Covid as the Head of Department explained. However, the high number of continuing students remains an ongoing issue.

The Erasmus scheme is popular and allows for opportunities for students to gain experience in other European countries. Following discussions with former students, it is clear that the scheme works well and is benefiting the mobility of students and leading to examples of good practice. Specifically, a former student gained employment following her graduation, as a result of the contacts she had made whilst taking part on the mobility scheme.

The Panel found that the links with the local community, including the National Gallery at Corfu, and others, are vital for the fostering of the links between students and employability.

Noteworthy is the Audio-Visual Arts Festival that has taken place for eighteen years since 2006 and is a showcase for the work of students and academic staff as well as research into the fields of interdisciplinary audio-visual arts.

Through Open Calls students have opportunities to gain experience in working with art professionals on designated projects, such as Projection Mapping. Graduates of the Programme may choose to continue their studies at a post-graduate level, either choosing to remain at the Ionian University or by applying to study elsewhere.

## Conclusion

The strengths of the Department are in the rising popularity and attractiveness of the courses offered. The currency of the content and also the prospects of students for employability within the digital industry are definitely factors that make the Department and course attractive to prospective students. However, the levels of engagement of students appear to diminish after the first two years of study, with students registered as “continuing.”

Whilst the presentations of the Academic Staff were extensive, the Panel did not see clear evidence or an outline of how many students are registered overall in for example, the Elective courses. The level of progression from one academic semester to the next is not very clear; this was not mentioned or evidenced in the presentation slides provided nor is there sufficient information on the website to sustain how many students actually progress each year from one year onto the next.

There should be rigorous data captured and analysed by the Programme and academic staff, in order to monitor progression during each academic year, leading up to the final semester. The graduates of each academic year need to be captured with the same amount of rigor as incoming students. From the discussions with current and former students, it appears that the number of students taking part in Internships is rather low.

## Panel Judgement

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

## **Panel Recommendations**

Whilst the Final Major project is a catalyst for generating very good work with multi-media and digital immersive installations, that are competitive with the overall standards of the industry, the number of students graduating to such a high and intensive degree is unclear.

Make evident on the Department's website the procedure for final graduation and the issuing of the Degree and the Diploma Supplement.

The panel recommends monitoring cycles between Head of Department and academic staff, in order to capture data of registered students. Annual reviews need to be in place of the percentage of continuing students versus graduating students. This will ensure progress is on track and, where this is not the case, will give the Department the opportunity to adjust actions in-cycle as appropriate.

## 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 recognise the importance of teaching and research;*
- *offer opportunities and promote the professional development of the teaching staff;*
- *encourage scholarly activity to strengthen the link between education and research;*
- *encourage innovation in teaching methods and the use of new technologies;*
- *promote the increase of the volume and quality of the research output within the academic unit;*
- *follow quality assurance processes for all staff members (with respect to attendance requirements, performance, self-assessment, training etc.);*
- *develop policies to attract highly qualified academic staff.*

### Study Programme Compliance

#### Findings

The Institution and its academic units maintain high standards for recruiting and retaining faculty and staff and provide a supportive environment that is conducive to the promotion of scientific and creative / artistic work. The department has a clear and transparent process for the recruitment of qualified staff, in accordance with Greek legislation. The hiring process is advised by a panel of internal and external experts that help select the Search Committee for each advertised position. In the last three years, the academic unit has expanded its special teaching personnel roster by adding four more positions, which is a promising sign of growth. The academic unit is following all legal and ethical procedures for hiring and offers conditions of employment that recognize the importance of teaching and research. In the figures regarding the 2020/21 Academic year, 15% of the faculty had received a rank promotion, an area that is of significance, since it helps encourage faculty to perform at a high level consistently.

The academic unit assigns teaching load in accordance with national legislation, and this framework ensures that faculty and staff are not overburdened with excessive load. Whereas there might be small deviations from teaching load due to unforeseen issues, overall, the institution follows the national guidelines rigorously. The faculty's teaching is multifaceted and dynamic, with hands-on teaching strategies and projects. In addition to traditional classroom teaching, the teaching staff delivers lab instruction and thesis advising, as well as dissertation supervision. The quality of the dissertations and internships is very high, partly because of the excellent advising and mentoring that the faculty provides. These additional tasks however are of sizeable time commitment, with faculty spending numerous hours supporting the students. This is not reflected in the national framework, as this type of mentoring does not count towards

the official teaching load. This issue is not a local or national concern, but one that is also seen internationally, especially concerning the supervision of thesis and dissertation.

The teaching staff is regularly evaluated by students through surveys. The anonymous internal student evaluations take place once a semester and they are organised, directed, and supervised by the secretariat with the coordination of IQAS (Internal Quality Assurance System). The entire process is clearly laid out in print format and online. The academic unit reviews and interprets the results of these evaluations, which are taken into full consideration by faculty members. This reflective process was confirmed during the meeting we had with students, where it was mentioned that faculty members often make changes to their teaching style, assignments, and course outlines, following student feedback and evaluations. The internal quality assurance process for all staff members creates an academic environment that respects attendance requirements, encourages increased performance, self-assessment, and training. The teaching staff is well informed about recent research developments. Their teaching methods, and the use of new technologies is well utilised, especially considering the limited resources afforded to them.

The teaching staff is actively encouraged to take part in several mobility opportunities. The institution has a strong international outlook, and several faculty members have an increasing international research and teaching profile and presence. However, the latest mobility figures we have for the 2020/2021 academic year show that there were no incoming or outgoing Erasmus faculty. One explanation is that this coincided with the COVID-19 pandemic, but it is an area we anticipate that future figures will be different, and we urge the department to place more attention to this program.

Furthermore, whereas the department has a budget for conference attendance, the allocation for the entire department is 1500 Euros only, a figure that makes it virtually impossible to travel internationally, unless travel is funded by an external body. That is why actively taking part in Erasmus+ projects is crucial to the program's expansion, and we encourage the department to develop even more partnerships. Our conclusion is that the academic unit offers opportunities that promote the professional development of the teaching staff, with very limited resources.

The institution is an attractive destination for high profile researchers since it offers several unique research and teaching thematic areas and it is committed to promoting academic freedom and innovation. The department has a strong local presence with events such as the Audio-Visual Arts Festival and the ICONA Animation Festival, the Digital Culture & Audiovisual Challenges"-DCAC International conference and the Taboo Transgression Transcendence in Art & Science 2020 Online Conference. These events serve as evidence to the faculty's efforts to link teaching with research and service to the community and the profession successfully. The students benefit from this type of activities, as it gives them access to high profile events and they can see their instructors model good research practices.

We find overall that the academic unit has a broad research profile and generally has a well-defined research strategy focusing on select scientific areas. We find that the academic unit



provides many professional development opportunities for the teaching staff on a local level, but we encourage this to be extended on the international stage. 4/5 faculty have received funding from ESPA, an impressive figure that we praise. However, there were no EU funded projects in the research roster, an area that needs improvement, for the institution to remain competitive, but also to gain valuable research resources and funding.

### **Analysis of judgement**

Overall, the EEAP members were satisfied by the department’s performance and efforts in this principle. Having reviewed several documents provided by the department, it is clear that there are structures and processes in place that support teaching and faculty development. All faculty members are highly qualified and skilled practitioners.

### **Conclusions**

We found that the institution is fully compliant in this principle. It has transparent and fair processes for recruitment and offers of employment demonstrate commitment to both teaching and research. It develops policies to attract highly qualified academic staff, follows internal and external quality assurance processes, encourages innovation and the link between teaching and research. Overall, the teaching workload of the teaching staff is deemed appropriate, allowing for engagement in research activities, as much as possible. We are concerned however about the additional tasks of supervising and mentoring, and we want to caution faculty to maintain a balance between teaching, research, and service.

### **Panel Judgement**

<b>Principle 5: Teaching Staff</b>	
Fully compliant	<b>X</b>
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

### **Panel Recommendations**

- Faculty should strive to maintain a balance between teaching, research, and service.
- More allocation of funding for conferences and for travel, if possible (right now it is 1500 Euros for the entire department)
- More streamlined processes for dissertation / thesis supervision, so as to safeguard research time
- Increase Erasmus+ mobility.

## **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**

#### **Findings**

The academic unit has 32 faculty members: 20 full time permanent Teaching/Research Faculty, 5 Special Teaching personnel, 2 Technical / Laboratory faculty members, 1 adjunct instructor, and 4 academic postdoctoral fellows. The 5-year academic program is also supported by an efficient secretariat team and other corresponding offices and units. Overall, this is an adequate staff roster.

The academic unit has the essential infrastructure to support student learning with several auditoriums, lecture rooms, creative studios, and laboratories. More specifically, the Department operates two computer labs, one video studio, one animation studio, an electronic music studio, a photography studio, and a design / art studio. There are notably three labs in operation: The Interactive Arts Laboratory (In.Arts), the Audiovisual Signal Processing Laboratory (EP.OA.SI.), and the Performative Environments Art Research Laboratory (PEARL). All three laboratories are housed in the academic unit's premises, and they are essential components of the degree program. Overall, the number of classrooms, laboratories, and the IT infrastructure support the teaching and learning environment, but in an ever-changing Higher Education landscape more customised spaces will be needed.

This infrastructure is the minimum required for the size of the program and for the successful operation of the academic unit, the effective delivery of the curriculum, and implementation of all academic program goals. The student needs are currently met thanks to the thorough

planning and efforts of teaching staff and administration. Moving forward, this issue must be addressed by adding more spaces to the existing facilities, as many popular courses are currently overcrowded. Considering the Department's future collaborative actions, teaching and research, the addition of more spaces will ease the pressure from overcrowded labs and workshop spaces and will give even more flexibility to the academic class schedule. The faculty offices are housed in two different locations in Corfu, an issue that must also be taken into consideration when planning thesis / dissertation supervision.

The existing buildings are equipped with projectors, screens, and computers with specialised software and hardware that are limited in numbers. The faculty has been resourceful in its efforts of increasing the diversity and scope of the installed hardware and software, through various externally funded research projects. The limited financial resources and the small annual departmental budget make participation at major research projects a necessity and this is an area that we encourage the department to grow further by applying for various EU grants and competitive programs. These deficiencies in relation to building infrastructure are acknowledged by both faculty and students.

The academic unit has sufficient online resources to support students. The students can find registration information, course content, class schedule, exam timetables and all other relevant course information through the dedicated University website. This reliable online presence is particularly helpful to all incoming students, who, after admission, are encouraged to visit the webpage to be informed of all-important announcements as they are preparing to attend the program. The Incoming freshman cohort is welcomed during a special ceremony at the beginning of each academic year, where they have the chance to meet the Chair of the School, faculty members, administration, and have an orientation session. The students are well informed about all available services throughout all years of their studies, and we found these services to be functional and easily accessible to them. Alumni have commented on the excellent environment cultivated and the "family" atmosphere that makes them feel included, and activities such as the orientation give students a sense of belonging from day 1.

The e-class platform is another important resource, through which students have the chance to access all course materials. This centralised platform is of imperative significance towards student success, as it makes materials more accessible and, in many cases, supports flexible modes of learning and teaching. The library, IT services, Erasmus office and other administrative services are another essential infrastructure and resource that supports both faculty and students. Overall, students have access to several electronic databases, scientific and artistic equipment.

Students can meet their instructors during office hours. Because there is not a central campus, however, sometimes these appointments require advance notice and planning, but the excellent communication between faculty and students helps resolve any difficulties. There is an assigned faculty advisor for each study year that helps students with class choices, registrations, and other academic issues.

The academic unit helps administer and deliver student resources afforded to them by the state such as scholarships, housing stipend, and medical coverage among many others. Students have access to essential information and communications services, support, and counselling services. The needs of all students (full-time or part-time students, employed or international students, students with disabilities) are taken into consideration when allocating the available resources. The level and scope of these services is continuously reviewed, mainly through the internal quality assurance system that ensures a continuously evolving student-centred learning and growth.

The faculty has access to several professional development opportunities mainly locally and nationally. They participate in workshops, conferences, and training that help them continue to develop lifelong learning skills that best prepare them to support any challenges that students might face within a 21st century fast changing academic environment.

The Institution has adequate funding and means, on a planned yearly basis, but it faces many financial challenges and hardships in continuing to operate at such a high level with ever increasing budgetary cuts and higher cost of living. The annual budgets are disproportionately small when compared to the research and teaching outcomes that are produced. It is worth mentioning that the department manages the little resources afforded to it in a very considerate and economical manner demonstrating fiscal responsibility, whilst not neglecting important investments in infrastructure updates so that it can create even more inclusive spaces and accessible resources, to accommodate the needs of people with disability and special needs. There is a rational distribution of the existing facilities to maximize learning impact and it is because of this well thought distribution that the department can operate successfully by making full use of all its resources.

Finally, there is legal counselling for students, and the academic unit provides student counselling services and financial support / welfare services. These provisions are essential, since one of the main problems that both students and faculty face is affordable housing. Corfu is a major tourist destination, and as a result, the cost of living is much higher considering other parts of the Greek periphery.

### **Analysis of judgement**

Overall, the EEAP members were satisfied by the department's performance and efforts in this principle. Having reviewed several documents provided by the department, the deficiencies in infrastructure create a lot of pressure for the daily functioning of the department. Students are supported through many services, but the department cannot develop much further without allocation of more resources.

### **Conclusions**

We found that the institution is substantially compliant in this principle, at no fault of its own. Overall, we found the support services available to the students to be accessible and of adequate range and scope. The services and offices are staffed with permanent specialist

support and administrative personnel. There is sufficient and competent administrative staff to ensure the smooth operation of the student support services. It is worth mentioning however, that even though the level of services provided is at a satisfactory level, the building and material infrastructure is rather basic and needs to be supplemented with more and / or newer buildings and facilities, in addition to the expansion of specialised hardware and software.

It is noteworthy to mention that the department faculty, under the circumstances, are making enormous efforts to use the allocated space and equipment in the best possible way. Most of the weaknesses cannot be overcome unless there is available funding to serve the needs of the Department in terms of space and equipment. It is difficult to have a full and clear impression of the facilities, since this was an online review in full, with no panel members on site. The committee was only presented with a short video demonstrating the facilities, so it is difficult to have an unequivocally solid opinion about the true nature of the facilities and we base our findings in this area based on the documentation and meetings we conducted with several stakeholders.

### Panel Judgement

<b>Principle 6: Learning Resources and Student Support</b>	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	<b>X</b>
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

### Panel Recommendations

- The three labs can be developed further internationally.
- More international synergies must be developed to help overcome budgetary issues and faculty must be encouraged to apply for more external funding.
- The building and material infrastructure are rather basic and needs to be updated and supplemented with more and / or newer buildings and facilities, in addition to the expansion of specialised hardware and software. This last recommendation is of the utmost essence, and the main reason for not awarding full compliance.

## 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 analysing information and planning follow-up activities.*

### Study Programme Compliance

#### Findings

The study program has clear procedures in place for the collection, analysis, and use of information. The panel was impressed by the organisation of all the data in databases that supports the generation of documents such as the program study guide and the key performance indicators. It is clear that the department has put a lot of effort into setting up information management systems that we believe will serve them well in the future. As a small piece of evidence showing the effectiveness of the department's information management the accreditation panel asked for a table organising the courses according to themes that was not readily available in the documents provided and they were able to provide the requested information quickly and efficiently. The accreditation panel found that the information collected is thorough, well-maintained, and organised. The process is coordinated through the quality assurance structures at the level of the institution (Ionian University). Following the guidelines provided by the Hellenic Quality Assurance agency a large number of key performance indicators about various aspects of the department are collected. The process of information management is mostly coordinated by the secretarial administrative office of the department. All records related to students, faculty, and administrative processes are maintained electronically as well as physically when needed. This is supervised and coordinated by the chair of the department and the faculty responsible for quality assurance.

The information management related to teaching and the program study guide is handled by specific committees explicitly formed for these purposes and consisting of faculty members. The information related to the program study guide is maintained electronically in a database and various documents are generated as needed. The database also keeps track of the calculation of ECTS related metrics and statistics. Faculty mentors are in communication with the students and help with updating and making current the various courses so that the flow of information is optimised. In addition, the department is engaged in various collaborations with other institutions that inform the evolution of the program.

The department is part of a small school of Music and Audio/Visual Arts and there is an educational school committee that coordinates educational aspects of the school and especially the possibility of offering courses across the two departments. The academic unit has a dedicated quality assurance committee that interfaces with the quality assurance processes of the Ionian University and the Hellenic Quality Assurance agency. They are responsible for coordinating the external and internal reviews of the program, the administering of questionnaires, and all data collection related to quality assurance.

Resource allocation software is used to optimise teaching allocations, classes, and course times. This is managed by a technical team that manages and collects the necessary information. The system is accessible to all faculty and has helped with the smooth operation of teaching. There is also software support for analysing the grades of students in courses and examinations and extracting statistical information from it. There is also a software platform (e-class) for supporting teaching with electronic submission of assignments, viewing of grades, publication of course related materials, and group chat and management. Information is also collected from the practicums that students do and helps with the connection of the academic unit to various potential employers and the market needs.

### **Analysis of Judgement**

The academic unit is fully compliant with respect to information management. The data collected is thorough using the procedures outlined by the Hellenic Quality Assurance Agency as well as the Ionian University. More importantly the data has been used to inform and guide various decisions related to the evolution of the program.

### **Conclusions**

The department has clear procedures in place for collecting data about all relevant aspects. They follow the guidelines and procedures provided by the institution and at the national level. These procedures are in line with the current best practices regarding data collection in academic institutions from around the world. The data indicates that students are satisfied with the quality of teaching and that their voices are heard when they have issues or feedback to the faculty.



## Panel Judgement

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

## Panel Recommendations

Overall, the accreditation panel found that the data collection regarding all aspects of operation of the academic unit is excellent. In terms of recommendations, the panel encourages the academic unit to continue to engage with data collection and more importantly use the information analysed to continuously adapt and improve the program. For future accreditation reviews it would be good to provide specific concrete examples of how analysis of the collected information has led to specific changes, adaptations, and decisions.

## **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**

#### **Findings**

The main communication channel for providing information about the department is the main department website (<http://avarts.ionio.gr>). This website is comprehensive, clear, and well maintained. Information is provided both in English and Greek. There is also information about the department on the university website (<http://www.ionio.gr>). Various email mailing lists are maintained and updated in order to provide targeted information to different groups in the departments such as faculty, students, staff, graduate students etc. The department has also an active presence in social media (for example Facebook and YouTube). The website makes it easy to find information about different aspects of the program such as the program study guide, new student information, information about Erasmus, the different labs, various processes and regulations, the information about practicums, access to hardware and software, academic integrity rules, and many others. There is also information about the faculty members and staff. The information is well connected and cross-linked. The panel was particularly impressed with how well the study guide was structured. It is also clear that the website is very regularly (daily) updated and maintained. There are also well-defined hierarchical processes for careful checking of any material uploaded depending on its importance. A webmaster is in charge of ensuring that all material is of high quality and accuracy. The department is actively engaged with the local community and organizes on a regular basis festivals, seminars, and conferences.

#### **Analysis of Judgement**

The department is fully compliant in providing public information mostly through the comprehensive bilingual website but also through other means such as organizing festivals and events.

#### **Conclusions**

Overall, the department has done a great job of organizing information about all aspects of its operation in a clear, comprehensive and up to date website. There are well established hierarchical protocols for the update of information on web site and other channels of public information depending on how important it is.

## Panel Judgement

<b>Principle 8: Public Information</b>	
Fully compliant	<b>X</b>
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

## Panel Recommendations

The panel found that the public information found mostly through the website is comprehensive, clearly organised, and well-maintained. We encourage the department to continue updating and organising this information. When examining the information about faculty members of the department it was noted that some of the CVs do not have any new entries over the last few years. This could be because of lack of activity, possibly due to Covid, but it would be good to ensure that all the CVs and information provided by individual faculty is current and up to date.

## **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**

#### **Findings**

The Foundation has a continuous evaluation of the academic and administrative functions of the Department at all levels, twice a year, in accordance with the instructions of the Quality Assurance Unit (QAQ) of the Foundation and with what is institutionally defined by the National Higher Education Authority (ETHAAE) for the active participation of students in all aspects of student life (attendance of courses, participation in exams, participation in committees and representation in department bodies, etc.), for the recording of research and artistic results of the Teaching and Scientific Staff, but also to support the management of Study Programs based on valid and reliable data.

In order to implement the above policy, the Audio and Visual Arts Department is committed to implementing quality control and assessment procedures that ensure:

- the appropriateness of the structure and organisation of the Study Programs, as well as the Quality, efficiency and effectiveness of the teaching work,
- the achievement of learning outcomes and qualifications in accordance with the European and National Framework of Higher Education Qualifications, the organic connection of teaching methodologies with the multifaceted and interdisciplinary characteristics of the research carried out in the Department, the high level of demand for the acquired knowledge, qualifications and skills of graduates in the labour market,
- the Quality of the research and artistic work of the Members of the Department,

- the Quality of Administrative and other Support functions, as well as Student Care services.

The Quality Policy is approved and updated by the Assembly of the Department of Audio and Visual Arts and is monitored by the Department's Internal Evaluation Team, which is responsible for the certification of the Study Programs, as well as the preparation of reports self-evaluation, documented with quantitative data for the Students, the Teaching and Scientific Staff, the Study Program, the Administrative Staff and any other matter related to the academic operation of the Department. All of the above are submitted to MO.DI.P. of the Ionian University.

Consequently, the findings of internal reviews help in individual and collective reviews. On an individual basis, the feedback teachers receive from their students and peers helps them deliver more effective lessons. Collectively, the various committees are also informed by these processes and in turn make critical changes in processes and mechanisms for the benefit of the entire academic community.

### **Analysis of judgement**

Overall, the accreditation team was satisfied with the department's performance and efforts in this authority. It is clear that the mechanisms in place are working well and that all stakeholders are committed to active participation. The system is dynamic and is reviewed regularly and methodically.

### **Conclusions**

The University fully complies with this Authority as well. The program's self-evaluation process is carried out annually with the provision that the results of the self-evaluation are properly recorded and submitted to the Foundation's QAU/MODIP. Self-assessment findings are shared within the academic unit and beyond, and self-assessments result in evidence-based action plans.

### **Panel Judgement**

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

## **Panel Recommendations**

The University is fully compliant for Principle 9, even taking steps beyond the guidelines. The institution fully embraces quality assurance mechanisms and reviews and revises these on a frequent basis, either annually or per semester. We encourage the Institution to continue on this trajectory of self-reflection and development.

## Principle 10: Regular External Evaluation of Undergraduate Programmes

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

*HAHE is responsible for administrating the programme accreditation process which is realised as an external evaluation procedure, and implemented by a committee of independent experts. HAHE 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

The department follows all the procedures for the regular external accreditation of academic programs established by the Hellenic Accreditation Agency (HAHE). An external evaluation review of the department took place in 2014. The report was overall positive but identified few areas of potential improvement. The department addressed the majority of the issues identified to the best of their ability subject to the regulatory and funding constraints of the Greek Higher education system.

The department will take into account any recommendations provided by the external panel of experts through the accreditation process to improve and evolve the program over time. This process takes place in coordination with the institution (the Ionian University). The changes take place through coordination of various committees in the academic unit and the institution.

### Panel Judgement

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

## **Panel Recommendations**

The regular periodic external accreditation process is important in keeping the programme current and following best practices. The department is fully engaged with the accreditation process and was very helpful in collecting and preparing the material for the external committee of experts to write this report. We hope that all this work will make the next accreditation process easier and congratulate the department for their hard work.



## **PART C: CONCLUSIONS**

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

There are many features of good practice. In this section we list some of the ones that the accreditation panel members thought are particularly good examples worth highlighting:

- Hybrid modes of teaching and delivery within the Department: lab and digital workshops alongside theoretical engagement. This is evidenced in the Project based approach to course outcomes as well as the Final Year Undergraduate Thesis (semester 10, PRO050).
- The broad range of content delivered that ranges from mathematics to computer science to sculpture, animation, and storytelling.
- The Department's website and online content which is exemplary.
- The Animation Festival and links with the digital industry
- The three existing labs operate at a high level on a national level with a strong local presence.
- 4/5 faculty have received funding from ESPA.
- The fact that members of the Department's faculty are highly active professionals in their field.

### **II. Areas of Weakness**

- Lack of overall vision or strategic direction of the curriculum. There are too many courses and especially elective ones. Although this provides specialisation, it makes regular delivery challenging and having so much choice can be confusing for students.
- Repetition and overlaps of elective courses, both in content and also in delivery and teaching allocation.
- The UGP curriculum would benefit greatly from the introduction of majors and/or concentrations. At present, it suffers from a lack of identity that would distinguish it from similar programs in Greece, a trait that would enhance its sustainability. It is also important to provide more specificity and identity in the broader context of the European higher education sector. In addition to more specific majors, the department could retain a broad major that specifically targets interdisciplinarity.
- The building and material infrastructure are rather basic and needs to be updated and supplemented with more and / or newer buildings and facilities, in addition to the expansion of specialised hardware and software.
- Faculty don't always maintain a good balance between teaching, research, and service, or in some cases this balance is not clear since several artistic activities are not documented.
- The number of graduating students is significantly lower than the number of incoming students. Based on our discussions with the department the primary reason behind the discrepancy is the high cost of living and travelling to the island of Corfu. Although to a large extent this is not something that the department can solve alone it is worth

thinking about ways that this discrepancy could be reduced. Increased student housing could be one answer to this challenge.

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

- The Department needs to decide on the strategic vision. Some examples to look at from UK institutes are the School of Digital Arts at Manchester Metropolitan University:  
<https://www.schoolofdigitalarts.mmu.ac.uk/>
- It is important to keep the faculty CVs regularly updated.
- The Head of School and VC need to conduct industry-oriented research, to chart the trends of employability in the foreseeable future. One of these trends is moving into UX, Gaming, Animation etc.
- The program study guide should be restructured along individual themes/concentrations initially as a soft “recommended” progression of courses and gradually evolving into specific concentrations reflected on the integrated masters degree. A statistical analysis of course selection by existing students could assist with the formation of such “concentrations” along with discussions with the external stakeholders collaborating with the department.
- The Department should not consider becoming a competitor with Art Schools or the likes but rather focus on Digital direction.
- There should be more streamlined processes for dissertation / thesis supervision, so as to safeguard research time.
- More international synergies must be developed to help overcome budgetary issues and faculty must be encouraged to apply for more external funding.
- The department should try to find ways to increase Erasmus+ mobility.
- Increase allocation for participation at international conferences and / or other relevant research activities.
- Additional student housing together with other supports such as potentially some remote courses and exams could assist with improving the number of incoming students who graduate.

#### IV. Summary & Overall Assessment

The Principles where full compliance has been achieved are: **1, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, and 10.**

The Principles where substantial compliance has been achieved are: **2 and 6.**

The Principles where partial compliance has been achieved are: **None.**

The Principles where failure of compliance was identified are: **None.**

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

The External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel agrees that this Programme leads to a Level 7 Qualification according to the National & European Qualifications Network (Integrated Master)	YES	NO
	X	

## The members of the External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel

Name and Surname

Signature

- 1. Dr. George Tzanetakis, Professor, Computer Science (Chair)**  
Department of Computer Science, University of Victoria, Canada
- 2. Dr. Evis Sammoutis, Associate Professor, Music Composition**  
School of Music, Theatre and Dance, Ithaca College, NY
- 3. Dr Stella Baraklianou, Senior Lecturer, Photography**  
School of Art and Humanities, University of Huddersfield
- 4. Dr. Vasilis Kallis, Professor, Music Theory & Analysis**  
Department of Music & Dance, University of Nicosia
- 5. Miss Ioanna Kerefiadou, Student of the Department of Visual Arts, ASFA, Greece**  
Athens School of Fine Arts