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ΑΡΧΗ ΔΙΑΣΦΑΛΙΣΗΣ ΚΑΙ ΠΙΣΤΟΠΟΙΗΣΗΣ  
ΤΗΣ ΠΟΙΟΤΗΤΑΣ ΣΤΗΝ ΑΝΩΤΑΤΗ ΕΚΠΑΙΔΕΥΣΗ

HELLENIC REPUBLIC  
H Q A  
HELLENIC QUALITY ASSURANCE  
AND ACCREDITATION AGENCY

## EXTERNAL EVALUATION REPORT

UNIVERSITY OF PIRAEUS

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Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση  
Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινωνικό Ταμείο

Επιχειρησιακό Πρόγραμμα  
Ανάπτυξη Ανθρώπινου Δυναμικού,  
Εκπαίδευση και Διά Βίου Μάθηση

Με τη συγχρηματοδότηση της Ελλάδας και της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης



<b>TABLE OF CONTENTS</b>		pages
<b><i>1. EXTERNAL EVALUATION COMMITTEE</i></b>		4
<b><i>2. INTRODUCTION</i></b>		5
<b><i>2.1 The External Evaluation Procedure</i></b>		5
<b><i>2.2 The Self-Evaluation Procedure</i></b>		11
<b><i>3. PROFILE OF THE INSTITUTION UNDER EVALUATION</i></b>		13
<b><i>3.1 Institutional Governance, Leadership &amp; Strategy</i></b>		13
3.1.1 Vision, mission and goals of the Institution		13
3.1.2 Organizational Development Strategy		14
3.1.3 Academic Development Strategy		17
3.1.4 Research Strategy		19
3.1.5 Financial Strategy		21
3.1.6 Building and Grounds Infrastructure		22
3.1.7 Environmental Strategy		23
3.1.8 Social Strategy		24
3.1.9 Internationalization Strategy		25
3.1.10 Student Welfare Strategy		27
<b><i>3.2 Strategy for Study Programmes</i></b>		28
3.2.1 Programmes of Undergraduate Studies (first cycle)		28
3.2.2 Programmes of Postgraduate Studies (second cycle)		30
3.2.3 Programmes of Doctoral Studies (third cycle)		31
<b><i>3.3 Profile of The Institution under evaluation – Conclusions and recommendations</i></b>		33
<b><i>4. INTERNAL SYSTEM OF QUALITY ASSURANCE</i></b>		37
<b><i>4.1 Quality Assurance (QA) Policy and Strategy</i></b>		37

<i>4.2 Design, approval, monitoring and evaluation of study programmes and degrees awarded</i>	38
<i>4.3 Teaching and learning - Assessment by students</i>	40
<i>4.4 Admission of students, progression and recognition of studies</i>	42
<i>4.5 Quality Assurance as regards the teaching staff</i>	43
<i>4.6 Learning resources and student support</i>	45
<i>4.7 Information Systems for Recording and Analysing Data and Indicators</i>	47
<i>4.8 Dissemination of information to stakeholders</i>	49
<i>4.9 Continuous monitoring and periodic review of the study programmes</i>	50
<i>4.10 Periodic external evaluation</i>	51
<i>4.11 Internal System of Quality Assurance - Conclusions and recommendations</i>	52
<b>5. OPERATION OF THE CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION OF THE INSTITUTION</b>	58
<i>5.1 Central Administration Services of the Institution</i>	58
<i>5.2 Operation of the Central Administration of the Institution – Conclusions and recommendations</i>	60
<b>6. FINAL CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	62
<i>6.1 Final decision of the EEC</i>	65

## ***1. EXTERNAL EVALUATION COMMITTEE***

The Committee responsible for the External Evaluation of the University/Technological Education Institution named: UNIVERSITY OF PIREAUS comprised the following five (5) expert evaluators drawn from the Registry kept by the HQA in accordance with Law 3374/2005 and the Law 4009/2011:

1. Prof. Spyros Economides (Chairman)  
California State University, U.S.A.
2. Dr. Demetrios Giannaros  
LLC & Giannaros Associates, U.S.A.
3. Prof. Helen Hadjiconstantinou  
Frederick University, Cyprus
4. Prof. Emer. Michael Romanos  
University of Cincinnati, U.S.A.
5. Prof. Constantine Danopoulos  
San Jose State University, U.S.A.

## **2. INTRODUCTION**

### **2.1 The External Evaluation Procedure**

- Dates and brief account of the site visit
- Whom did the Committee meet?
- List of Reports, documents, other data examined by the EEC
- Groups of teaching and administrative staff and students interviewed
- Facilities visited by the EEC

The first session of May 31, 2016 was a meeting between the EEC members and the Hellenic Quality Assurance and Accreditation Agency (HQA / ADIP) representative, Professor Prodromos Yannas in the presence of the ADIP President Nikoletta Paisidou and members of the support staff at the offices of the Agency. Professor Yannas' detailed presentation focused mainly on the elaboration of the criteria and requirements that must be addressed by the EEC as they are enumerated in each one of the External Evaluation Report (EER) sections (paragraphs) based on which the Committee must evaluate the University of Pireaus (UNIPI). He also mentioned the relationship between ADIP and the European Academic Quality Assurance (ENQA) Agency of which ADIP is a member.

President Paisidou briefly explained the legal framework upon which ADIP was structured as well as its mission, responsibilities and limitations in the authorities that it has. She explained that the responsibilities of ADIP are the implementation of the Departmental and Institutional evaluation process of Quality Assurance mechanisms and practices for all Greek institutions of higher learning and the certification of their Academic Programs and Internal Evaluation procedures. She also mentioned that the mission of ADIP is to establish a culture of quality awareness within the institutions by establishing measurable goals to the extent that is possible, such as standardization of the rules and processes of quality assurance among institutions, the recognition of their strengths and weaknesses and ability to be accountable to the public and the taxpayers. She emphasized that institutional ranking or interference in the deliberations or the findings of the EEC are not within the responsibilities or jurisdiction of ADIP.

Following the meeting the EEC members were transported to the campus of the institution and greeted by the Rector of the institution, Professor Nikolaos Georgopoulos and immediately proceeded into a meeting joined by the Deputy Rector of Academic Affairs and Personnel, Professor Pantelis Pantelidis and Deputy Rector of Economic Affairs Professor Gregorios Chondrokoukis. In this informative discussion and interactive question and answering session related to the status and the activities of the institution, the following issues and points were addressed:

- The drastically reduced budget for the institution in the last five years
- The drastically reduced academic and administrative staff levels of the last five years with 45 academic retirements and 13 authorized, yet not implemented new hires
- The significant increase of student population in both undergraduate and graduate levels
- The unfortunate delays in the utilization of the Nikaia campus facility and the resulting over 100% utilization of the campus classroom facilities

Professor Georgopoulos pointed out a number of positive trends and developments for the institution, including but not limited to:

- The recently signed memorandum of cooperation between UNIPI and the University of the Urals during the recent visit of President Putin in Greece
- The increased and expanded role of the Employment and Career Center (ECC) of the institution
- New and existing cooperative agreements with institutions of higher learning and research institutions of 23 other countries
- Significant increase in the post graduate student enrollments
- The prospective student outreach initiatives by visiting local high schools
- The community outreach initiatives by contacting local businesses and instituting seminars and adult education programs
- The initiative to organize and implement an alumni association
- The local government, local business associations and general community outreach initiative

Assorted questions of the EEC pertaining to the criteria for the evaluation for promotion of the faculty members, the role of the University Council, the policy for faculty Sabbaticals, the degree of computerization of the various functional units of the institution and others were answered. The meeting concluded with the mention of some of the perceived “niches” of the institution, such as the relationship between the department of Maritime Studies and the harbor of Piraeus and the student oriented character of the institution.

The next meeting was with the HQA / ADIP committee highlighted by the presentation of Professor Georgios Bohoris. The detailed presentation included:

- The evolution of the institutional entity
- The organizational structure of the institution
- Statistics, indicators, historical ratios and benchmarks for funding, expenditures and student numbers
- An overview of the Internal Evaluation Procedure
- Mission and goals for the institution
- Strategies for the attainment of the goals

He responded to a number of assorted questions pertaining to:

- The mutual interaction and support between teaching and research in the delivery of knowledge to the students
- The channels of dissemination of information and communication with the institution’s stakeholders
- The workload of the faculty members and its impact on quality on various activities of the institutional domains
- The Ministry of Education interference and mandates on the management of funds
- The strategy and procedures for revision of academic programs

After a lunch break the EEC was taken to a tour of selected campus facilities because of time availability restrictions. The members visited:

- The ECC office. They were given an overview of its operation and activities by the director.
- The workshop and research hub for doctoral students

-The central computing support facility

-The Student Support Services center which mainly focuses on the support of psychological and personal distress problems of students and staff, as indicated by the professional competences of its own staff.

The following meeting of the day was with the University Council. Two members, the President of the Council, Professor Katherine Fleming and Professor Anastasios Malliaris joined the meeting via SKYPE. The discussion mostly pertained to the frequent changes of its charter and responsibilities by the Greek Ministry of Education that most recently have weakened its authority and decision making power relative to the institutional concerns and processes of budget planning, academic planning and strategic planning as well as its loss of veto power over any decision by the University Senate. It was concluded that even its advisory role, to propose or recommend is currently inactive to the point that the EEC feels the Council will soon be abolished.

The next meeting was with the School Deans and the Heads of the Departments. One of the issues discussed was the interaction between School and Department as it pertains to the revision of academic programs. It was stated that the revision starts with its assessment of 3 or 4 members of the departmental faculty, then goes for consideration by the departmental faculty, followed by an institution wide committee and finally for approval by the Academic Senate. Another issue discussed and explained was the operational structure and interaction between departments, Internal Evaluation Groups (IEG / OMEA) and QAU / MODIP, toward continuous quality assurance and improvement. Within this context, it was mentioned that this synergy has resulted in better organization of research activities and encouragement for increased quality research.

Heads of the departments discussed some of their concerns, such as the availability of funds for all purposes including staff increases, their race with time to keep up with the frequently changing or newly introduced legal directives by the Ministry of Education that often result in irrational and unworkable rules in the departmental operations, procedures and resources.

Each department head gave a brief presentation to highlight some of their department's accomplishments as well as strengths and weaknesses. They reported on the status of their implementation and adoption of the recommendations from their previous EEC evaluation. They reported on their significant accomplishments which individually pertained to academic rankings in Europe or Greece, the exceptional income levels resulting from increased enrolments in the graduate degree programs as a result of job market demand, significant memoranda of understanding signed with local, national or international organizations or enterprises or recognitions in national or international research oriented forums.

The final meeting of the day was with the departmental IEG / OMEA representatives. As a result of the internal evaluations of the departments, other than the attempt to implement some of the previous external evaluation recommendations, a number of issues and operational practices were reassessed and actions were taken resulting in quality improvements such as:

-Reduction in the number of courses within certain academic programs

-Decisions on the optimum review period for academic program revisions with input and feedback from prospective employers

-Reassessment of program electives as they relate to job placement and career progress

-Identification of other competitive academic programs

- Identification of content overlap between courses in an academic program of a department or between departments
- Recognition for lack of adequate data bases for the support of certain courses
- Recognition of partial incompatibility of departmental support information systems to the extent that they exist
- The need to combine financial resources or support systems of departments to the extent that is acceptable or compatible

This ended the meetings of the first day

The first meeting of May 31, 2016 was with the members of the academic staff. The EEC found this meeting quite informative and substantial as a number of concerns were voiced by the faculty and pertained to a number of departmental areas and endeavors.

Unfortunately, a good percentage of concerns stems from the policies, regulations and decisions imposed to the institution by the Ministry of Education. A list of serious concerns included the excessive number of new entering students assigned to many departments of the institution by the Ministry of Education far above the capacity of the available classroom facilities thus making it impossible to accommodate the students in a given classroom or laboratory working stations and creating uncomfortable and unsafe learning environment. This is coupled with a reduction of faculty positions without replacement resulting in unreasonable student-to-faculty ratios impacting adversely the quality of instruction delivery and learning. The current mode of three examination periods in a year and the number of eligible students to be examined creates a tremendous grading workload for the instructors who do not have any grading assistants. The availability of their time for more productive activities such as research or opportunities for professional meetings is thus greatly reduced or outright eliminated. The reduction in the availability of funds by nearly 62% over the last few years has resulted in a disproportionate relationship between salaries and hours of work to be carried out. In spite of this, faculty members are to be highly commended for carrying out their duties with passion and dignity and engaging in diversified activities that should normally be out of the realm of their responsibilities.

EEC also noted that there is no mentoring, an advising mechanism or a formal evaluation process for junior faculty members accompanied by the maintenance of a professional dossier to assist and support their path toward promotion and tenure.

Finally, there were concerns voiced by faculty utilizing laboratories of technical nature and equipment regarding the equipment maintenance and replacement, yet there were a couple of comments regarding new equipment acquisition which has been delivered for some time but has not been installed yet due to lack of adequate space available.

The EEC met with undergraduate student representatives next. The majority of their comments were positive and pertained to their excellent interpersonal relations, availability and support from the faculty. Students in certain departments considered the practice of frequent visits and presentations by external practitioners in their field enlightening and interesting. In other departments students view the practice of reciprocal peer evaluations as a constructive self-improvement process while one department provided some students with opportunity for a scholarship.

Even though the majority of courses utilizes the e-class platform for delivery of class materials and information, some students expressed their dissatisfaction with some faculty members that are not utilizing the platform and even continue to use hand written notes in their classroom lectures. They felt that the library facilities were adequate for their needs in spite of the reduction in the library resources due to lack of adequate funding.



There were two students present that had been participants in the ERASMUS program. Based on their comments it appears that their experience was excellent but it was also revealed that the program management has no formal structure or personnel and information systems support mechanisms, resulting in unnecessary bureaucracy and poor growth prospects.

The next meeting was with the institution's administrative officers and staff in the areas of personnel management, Academic Affairs, Financial Services, Computer Network Operations, Library, International Public Relations and Employment and Career Center.

This was a session during which a wealth of information was exchanged due to the diversity of the participants' duties and responsibilities. A considerable amount of time was devoted to the issue of financial resources management with the discussion focusing on the practice of decentralization of budget allocation which was advocated by the departments participating in a previous meeting and the practice of centralized budget allocation as currently done by the central administration. The advocates on each side of the issue presented their arguments and rational while the EEC realized that this is a controversial adversary arena.

Another rather lengthy discussion was carried out to determine the existence of statute and bylaws for UNIFI. It was explained that an updated and revised statute document has been produced and updated by the institution's Human Resources department but the Ministry of Education is far behind in approving and adopting this legally complex document and the institution is still operating under the 2008 version of the document while it is asked to follow updated practices and procedures that are part of the revised and yet not formally approved document.

The discussion relating to the Student Employment and Career Center revealed a number of ongoing activities ranging from web based communications with alumni, web based mentoring of students by employed graduates on an international basis, promotion and management of practical student internships, communication with the institution's stakeholders and outreach to the local community. Planned activities are the expansion and enhancement of the Center's computer based information system and its integration with other institutional information systems as well as the establishment of an Alumni Association with all the accompanying support systems and procedures. It was also revealed that currently there are no significant funding sources for the institution but there are developing relationships with the Local Government and the Port Authority of Piraeus. Finally, the placement of students in need of residence, if needed, can only be managed through a cooperative effort with other sister institutions since UNIFI has no building facilities available for this purpose. On the contrary it has excellent student dining facilities and services right on the campus.

There was an informative discussion on the Library and its resources. In spite of the drastic funding cuts, the Library that still has good building facilities, continues to provide electronic access to periodicals and data bases through synergies and cooperative agreements of the consortium of libraries of sister institutions because the funds for this capability have been cut and that has created great hardships to the institution's research community which is forced to obtain access to needed resources through peer and colleague acquaintances abroad. However, in anticipation of some approved ESPA funding to be released, the library is planning to introduce some new state of the art capabilities.

The next meeting was with the graduate students (Master's and Phd). This meeting was dominated by student requests that would facilitate and improve their academic endeavors and by suggestions that would enhance their prospects for employment such as:

- The acceleration of the computerized platform of networking with the Alumni
- The establishment of strategic cooperative relationships with other institutions of similar competences.
- The expansion and strengthening of the ERASMUS+ opportunities by establishing the required framework and infrastructure.
- The adoption of a practical training internship program similar to the undergraduate
- The institutionalization and certification of laboratory facilities of technical nature to with the potential to generate funds by providing services to the community at large

Without exception, they praised their personal and working relationship with their professors. They expressed their apprehension and anxiety for the possible termination of graduate program tuition fees that is debated by the Ministry of Education.

The next meeting was with the institution's stakeholders which was a rather diversified group of prominent community and local government executives coming from the Municipality of Piraeus, the Piraeus chamber of Commerce, Eurobank, companies like Nokia, Us Embassy, Public Gas Corporation, Maritime consulting Company and others. Some of these stakeholders have established student scholarships, such as the Public Gas Corporation, have requested support and expertise for employee training programs, such as the Municipality of Piraeus or have established student mentorship programs. They all expressed their respect for the institution's competencies and seemed willing to enhance their cooperation and support. Of particular interest was an informal presentation by the President of the Piraeus Chamber of Commerce in which a number of interesting ideas for project implementation in the local area were proposed. In fact, a joint memorandum of understanding for cooperation has been prepared between UNIPI and the Piraeus Chamber of Commerce outlining a number of joint efforts and projects to be pursued. Proposed are:

- The development of a digital geographical (topological) base of the coast line of Piraeus to be used for the planning and eventual construction of an open mall to entice the disembarking tourists from visiting cruise ships.
- The formation of a "business nautical cluster", combining a diversified group of products and services associated with the maritime industry that could be promoted and developed to benefit the local economy and job market, under the auspices of the Piraeus Chamber of Commerce.
- The implementation of the findings and results of a number of studies already conducted by UNIPI related to the maritime industry, such as in the sector of nautical maintenance and construction or the reestablishment of a stock exchange market focusing on products and value added services.
- The creation of a series of lectures and seminars delivered by academicians and successful business executives of the maritime profession and business sectors.
- The development of a Business to Business (BtoB) digital platform to enhance and facilitate the commercial transactions and communications between the maritime sector businesses in the area.
- The promotion for provision of a private health insurance coverage under the provision of the "ergosimo" tax regulation by the local maritime business employers on behalf of the student interns.
- The increase of mentorships available for students by the maritime business employers.

Based on the memorandum of understanding, it is evident that there is a genuine interest by the Piraeus Chamber of Commerce to join efforts with UNIPI in order to assist the local business community and contribute to the local economy.

The last meeting of the day was with the UNIPI alumni. A number of alumni from a diversified group of businesses were present. Looking back on their academic experience, they all agreed that their experience on the interpersonal relations and congenial environment was excellent. They also all agreed that their academic programs and gained knowledge was relevant to their professional job responsibilities. The ones with graduate degrees recall a cooperative and mutually supportive environment in their everyday academic research activities. They also expressed a regret for the inadequate library support services which they attributed to inadequate funding. Some suggested an increased effort by the institution in order to secure some funding in support of graduate student partial scholarships some very limited number of which currently exist is a small number of departments.

That concluded the two days of meetings. The EEC thanked all colleagues, administration, staff and students for their cooperation, understanding, integrity and superb hospitality.

<i>Please decide in respect to the specific evaluation area (&amp;2.1):</i>	Tick
<b>Worthy of merit</b>	X
<b>Positive evaluation</b>	
<b>Partially positive evaluation</b>	
<b>Negative evaluation</b>	

*Justify your rating:*

The organization, the support, the cooperation and the management for the meetings and all associated tasks and services were excellent and provided in a professional and genuine manner.

## ***2.2 The Self-Evaluation Procedure***

*Please comment on:*

- Appropriateness of sources and documentation used
- Quality and completeness of evidence provided and reviewed
- The extent to which the objectives of the internal evaluation procedure have been met by the Institution
- Description and Analysis of the Self-Evaluation Procedure in the Institution
- Analysis of the positive elements and difficulties which arose during the self-evaluation procedure
- Whether the self-evaluation procedure was comprehensive and interactive

The Internal Evaluation Report (IER) was given to the EEC team by the HQA in advance for review. It covered the academic years 2009 to 2014 and was major point of reference during the discussions. A comprehensive update document for the academic period September 2014 to 2015 was not provided to the EEC prior to the meetings. The members of the EEC felt that a supplement should be provided, given that there were developments in this period, such as the establishment of ten new postgraduate programs as it was mentioned in the meetings.

The EEC felt that the IER documents were well written, and reflected most of the committee's observations during the ensuing meetings and visits. There is, however, inadequate information regarding some of the activity areas of interest such as the Social Activities and Strategy or Student Welfare Support and Strategy as mandated by the ADIP directives.

The EEC felt that the mission statement and the associated goals in the IER are not properly presented and not specific enough to the profile of the institution and its specific competences. A critical assessment on this issue is provided in section 3.1.1 of this report.

The IER provides a wealth of information (over 320 pages, including summary tables, and lists of publications) on the institution and addresses most issues and questions posed by the HQA / ADIP. It includes many comments in order to assist in the understanding and clarification of its mostly narrative content but contains very little critical self-evaluation that might lead to an analysis of the positive elements and/or difficulties that may have been identified during the process. There is no indication of student participation in the preparation of the IER. It would have been useful to include a detailed Table of Contents of the IER to facilitate its reading and finding the information.

The EEC feels that the IER document should be disseminated to the UNIPI community given that the information contained therein may serve as a point of reference for assessing the status quo of operations and practices but most importantly setting the guidelines for a continuous improvement process.

<i>Please decide in respect to the specific evaluation area (&amp;2.2):</i>	Tick
<b>Worthy of merit</b>	
<b>Positive evaluation</b>	X
<b>Partially positive evaluation</b>	
<b>Negative evaluation</b>	

*Justify your rating:*

### 3. PROFILE OF THE INSTITUTION UNDER EVALUATION

#### 3.1 Institutional Governance, Leadership & Strategy

Please comment on:

##### 3.1.1 Vision, mission and goals of the Institution

- What are the Institution's mission and goals
- Priorities set by goals
- How are the goals achieved
- Procedures established by the Institution to monitor the achievement of goals
- What is your assessment of the Institution's ability to improve

Institutions normally establish and justify themselves by outlining a mission statement, which is then elaborated through a set of goals, i.e., ideal statements in pursuit of that mission statement. These goals are in turn translated into a set of objectives, i.e., desirable outcomes that can be measured as progress towards the achievement of the institution's goals. And they in turn are defined in terms of sets of strategies designed to advance and implement these objectives.

Regarding the UNIPI, according to the statement of university mission and goals (page 14 of the Institutional Internal Evaluation Report/IER): "The Mission of the institution is to cultivate and promote science, research and teaching in the disciplines represented by the Schools and Departments, and to provide high-level scientific training to its students. It aims to become a university with an international recognition and reputation in conjunction with the labor market". This is a commendable, though too general statement of the university's special purpose and standing as an educational and cultural institution. In response to enquiries by the EEC for a more focused mission statement, a number of specific goals (not a mission statement *per se*) were described by the university administration, namely: (a) a special emphasis placed by the institution on the creation of a positive and friendly environment for the students, and on an effort to establish cordial and open-door relations between students and faculty members; (b) a strong interest in connections and formal linkages with the city and community of Piraeus and a multitude of external stakeholders; and (c) a clear emphasis on international connections, collaborations, partnerships, and exchanges. Of these goals, the first one is not mentioned clearly in the internal evaluation report, which instead emphasizes "theoretical education, technological proficiency, excellence in teaching and graduate education" (Section B.3.2, page 14). The second and third goals are given more emphasis in Section B.3.2. , as extroversion/external connections and internationalization" and "contributions to regional development".

The institution does not appear to have these goals prioritized, nor to have them broken down into measurable objectives and outcomes. The EEC was not able to find a specific spelled-out set of strategies for the achievement of these goals, nor did it find any monitoring procedures or mechanisms in place for the measurement of the degree to which these goals are being achieved. Reference is made to such procedures (Section B.3.4, B.3.5), but they are not described in the IER, and they were not presented to the EEC during the interviews. Nevertheless, a clear interest in the overall improvement of the institution and its functions is evident, the three above mentioned goals appear to be

consistently pursued, and the university leadership and administration appear genuinely committed to the achievement of excellence for the university and its programs.

It is the recommendation of the EEC that a more specific-to-the-institution mission statement be prepared, one that would reflect the special strengths and orientations of the institution (such as reference to the Maritime Studies focus, the International Studies focus, and the Finance and Accounting focus, all of which appear to be special strengths of the institution, and among the major reasons students select the UNIPI for their undergraduate and graduate studies). Also, that the mission statement should be translated into a clear set of goals emanating from it, and that these goals should be defined in terms of measurable objectives. Specific strategies should be outlined for the achievement of these measurable objectives, and monitoring mechanisms should be put in place for the continuous evaluation of the university's progress towards achieving its goals. The EEC believes that under such a framework, the institution will not only be able to better monitor and measure its improvements and successes, but that the framework itself will assist it in the systematic pursuit of its priorities, the allocation of its resources to meet strategic objectives, and as a tool to use in justifying requests to the central administration for resources and more autonomy in decisions.

<i>Please decide in respect to the specific evaluation area (&amp;3.1.1):</i>	Tick
<b>Worthy of merit</b>	
<b>Positive evaluation</b>	
<b>Partially positive evaluation</b>	X
<b>Negative evaluation</b>	

*Justify your rating:*

While the institution appears to have a clear understanding of its goals and priorities for the implementation of its mission, the mission statement itself, and its elaboration in terms of goals and objectives, are not clear and unambiguous. No priorities are defined, and no monitoring mechanisms appear to be in place for the assessment of the university's progress towards achieving its targets.

### **3.1.2 Organizational Development Strategy**

- Effectiveness of administrative officials
- Existence of effective operation regulations
- Specific goals and timetables
- Measures taken to reach goals

The structure of the UNIPI administration consists of:

First echelon, Central Governance: the Council (Symvoulio), the Senate, the President (Prytanis), and the three Deputy Presidents (Anaplirotes Prytani).

Second echelon, Schools: The Dean (Kosmitoras), The Kosmiteia, and The General Assembly.

Third echelon, the Departments: Department Head (Proedros Tmimatos), Department Assembly (Synelefsi), Director of the Division (Tomeas), General Assembly of Division.

The current organizational structure, internal and external operations and bylaws of the UNIPI are not clearly defined at the moment, and this creates conditions of uncertainty and contains dangers for the responsible officers of the institution. The reason for this is that Law 4009 of 2011 required the preparation of new statutes and rules of operation by all Greek universities, but that law was later rescinded. The UNIPI has completed and submitted its proposed Organizational (Statutes and Rules) structure, and has updated parts of it in the past three years. However, the document is still awaiting the Ministry's review and approval. In the interim, the university operates under the old rules and regulations, following procedures prescribed by the 1997 and 2003 laws, and has been reluctant to take on initiatives for which there may be legal ramifications once the new rules are approved and implemented by the Ministry of Education. The only exception to this is the devolution of certain academic responsibilities to the Departments according to Laws 4009/2011-2012 and 4076/2012.

The university administration is clearly committed to solving the problems facing the Institution, and is working creatively to address these problems under tremendous limitations and lack of resources. It is also evident that it has good working relationships with the administrative staff and the academic units (Schools, Departments, and postgraduate programs). However, due primarily to uncertainties created by continuously changing laws and regulations of the Ministry of Education, there are serious organizational and operational problems that have been detected by the EEC:

- a. The role and functions of the Council have been undermined, weakened, and rendered practically inoperable, making the Council simply a routine approval body, without real tasks, responsibilities, and mission for the improvement of the role and operations of the university. It is not even clear if the Council will continue to exist in the near future, since the Ministry has announced that it plans to abolish the existing Councils. As a result, the members of the Council are demoralized, its leadership sees no purpose or value in its existence, while the officers of the university appear to be in disagreement as to the current and on-going role and responsibilities of the Council, beyond the routine approval of the university budget.
- b. The establishment of Schools was supposed to assist in the decentralization of the university's responsibilities and operations, at least as far as the academic functions are concerned, thus allowing the central administration to focus more effectively on the overall mission of the institution, the creation of a long term vision for the university, and the active pursuit and building of external constituencies, coalitions and collaborations. Unfortunately, this structure has not been implemented effectively. The Deans of the Schools have practically no jurisdiction, authority or responsibilities, and for the time being it is not even clear if this organizational structure will be retained once the Ministry of Education issues its to-be-announced educational reforms.
- c. There appears to be a debate within the university as to the wisdom and the legality of decentralizing certain functions, currently performed by the central

administration, and transferring them to the Departments. The Departments argue that such transfers would allow them to do their job better, without bureaucratic interference and with more flexibility. The central administration argues that such a transfer would be inefficient, and brings up legal limitations to it. It is a fact witnessed by the EEC that the current state of affairs creates some friction between the Departments and the administrative offices and officers of the university. Therefore, it is recommended that the issue of what decisions and resources can be allocated directly to the Departments should be addressed by the President's Office, by establishing a good-intentions dialog with the Departments. It may be possible that there are simple issues of resource allocation that can be resolved easily, but it is the impression of the EEC that the central administration and its offices are not aware, or do not give priority to addressing this difference of opinion regarding Departmental responsibility for at least a portion of the university's budget and budgetary decisions. If there are serious reasons why such an allocation cannot be made at this time, they should be clearly and persuasively communicated to the academic units. There is danger of more serious conflict imbued in this issue, if it is not addressed.

There was no evidence of current goals and objectives specific to the administration and management of the institution, on top of those discussed in Section 3.1.1 above. However, the proposed new organizational structure and bylaws of the university define a number of innovations, most notable of which are the establishment of nine new Advisory Councils and a reorganization of the structure and functions of the various central administrative offices.

<i>Please decide in respect to the specific evaluation area (&amp;3.1.2):</i>	Tick
<b>Worthy of merit</b>	
<b>Positive evaluation</b>	X
<b>Partially positive evaluation</b>	
<b>Negative evaluation</b>	

*Justify your rating:*

The proposed organizational structure of the university would introduce several innovations and models of more effective and efficient administration. Because it is not currently clear which provisions of the previous bylaws and procedures are still relevant and which ones cannot be used, there is a general reluctance to proceed with decisions that might have legal repercussions for the faculty members and the administrative officers involved. Until therefore the new structure is approved by the Ministry of Education and implemented by the university (within 3-4 months after its approval) the institution is doing its best under the state of uncertainty to which it has been placed by the Ministry.

The Rector is an enthusiastic, dedicated and energetic scholar with a great desire to serve his institution. He and his administrative team are doing everything within their means to effectively govern the university. Action and inaction by the national government seriously inhibits this effort. The Rector's team could be much more effective if the legal framework



under which it operates was clarified and kept stable for a period of several years by the national government.

### **3.1.3 Academic Development Strategy**

- Response of the Institution to Faculties and Departments
- Goals and timetables
- Measures taken to reach goals

The University is organised into 4 Schools, containing a total of 9 Departments, as follows: School of Economic, Business and International Studies (Department of International and European Studies, Department of Economic Science, Department of Organisation and Business Management), School of Marine and Industry (Department of Industrial Management and Technology, Department of Maritime Studies), School of Finance and Statistics (Department of Statistics and Insurance Science, Department of Banking and Financial Management), and School of IT and Telecommunication Technologies (Department of IT, Department of Digital Systems).

The Departments offer 9 undergraduate degree programs and 19 postgraduate degree programs (as of 2014). All Departments have been reviewed under the first round of the HQA reviews. Since their reviews were delivered, they have been in the process of studying the comments and recommendations of their respective review committees, and deciding on their implementation. Departments are in various stages of this effort. Some of them have already completed the review process and are well into the gradual implementation of the more feasible recommendations. Others have formed internal committees to begin the process, this coming fall. It appears that these reviews are being conducted in a democratic and collegial manner, with careful deliberations and attention paid to the specific suggestions and recommendations of the external review comments and suggestions.

Part of the time discrepancy for the implementation of these recommendations can be attributed to the different timing of the reviews, which have spanned three years. It is not clear to the EEC, however, that there has been a formal and specific strategy by the central university administration for considering and using these reviews, beyond urging the faculties of the individual Departments to do so.

There are currently upwards of 300 doctoral students (there were 297 such students as of 2014 -- Table of page 29 of internal report) conducting research for their dissertations under the supervision of three-member advisory committees. The EEC finds that this is a very large number of doctoral candidates, considering the small number of current faculty as compared to the large and increasing numbers of undergraduate and postgraduate students, the inability of the University to hire new faculty, and the limited and dwindling financial and other resources available to the institution. Doctoral students require intensive and continuous faculty supervision, by 3-member committees. This supervision is ethical as well as methodological, makes the supervisory faculty members responsible for errors or plagiarisms of the doctoral candidate, and requires a significant time commitment. In addition, it imposes obligations on the Departments, because of requirements for the students' conference participations, and perhaps other financial commitments to the students. Finally, it is customary for the members of doctoral committees to take an active interest in the professional placement of the students upon

graduation. This again is a demanding task that is better carried out by faculty members with a long tradition of research and already established professional contacts. Assistant professors, in particular, do not have the time or the resources to commit to such endeavours while they are pursuing their own, heavy obligations to their institution and their careers, except in exceptional circumstances of significant funded research. The EEC therefore recommends that the University reconsider (and reduce/limit) its admissions to the doctoral programs in light of available resources and needs. In addition, the EEC recommends that UNIPI put special emphasis on the close supervision of its doctoral students and make a major attempt to improve and facilitate their access to research data and library holdings, especially as concerns internationally recognized scientific journals in the fields relevant to the doctoral candidates' areas of research.

A major problem faced by most Departments is the increasingly large numbers of freshman students admitted or transferred into them by the Ministry of Education without consultation and without taking into consideration the declared capacity and resources of the Departments. With the admission of special-case students (e.g., special needs, family situation, etc.) and the transfer of students from other academic institutions, on top of admitting many more students than the University's academic units have determined to be able to educate, the final numbers of students admitted can be more than triple the number of students the institution has the educational and physical capacity to accommodate. This situation, while not unique to the UNIPI, places particular constraints for this institution because of the small size of the university and the limited physical space and resources available. Unfortunately, it appears that this is a problem faced by most higher education institutions in Greece at this time, and that the situation is beyond the control of individual institutions.

The university has a number of goals regarding its educational mission, which are spelled out on page 36 of the IER. They are: (a) the production and dissemination of knowledge, (b) the delivery of high quality education, (c) the development of critical thinking among its students, (d) the introduction of advanced educational methods, (e) to offer continuing education opportunities, (f) to respond to the needs of the labor market and the development needs of the country, (g) to cultivate the arts, culture, science and technology, (h) to participate in international efforts for the creation of new knowledge, (i) to promote collaborations with other academic institutions, (j) to contribute to the advancement of European universities, and (k) to contribute to the improvement of Greek society.

Through all these targets, the administration aims to emphasize quality education and friendliness of the institution towards its students, and this appears to be happening extensively throughout the university, abided to by the faculty and by the staff, and acknowledged by the students. There is a general agreement and effort to keep the institution technologically updated and the students trained in the use of advanced technologies; and there is a consistent effort to expand the practical aspects of the students' education through practical training placements and the use of the ERASMUS Plus program. The above are what the EEC considers the Academic Development Goals of the institution.

In terms of future development targets and timetables, there is an extensive list consisting of 16 priorities for the immediate future (pages 37-38 of the internal evaluation document) spanning the range of academic concerns, from the support of individual academic programs to the improvement of the university's infrastructure and the improvement of the qualifications of the teaching faculty. A number of strategies towards the achievement of

these targets are outlined on pages 38-39 of the document, heavily dependent of course on collaborations and support from the appropriate government agencies. No other goals regarding academic development were observed or detected by the EEC.

It was not clear that there is a unified and consistent strategy for reaching these goals or for monitoring progress towards them. There are a number of data collected by the university on a regular basis, but they are not necessarily measuring the specific objectives associated with the main mission of the university, and are not part of a unified system of monitoring progress towards goal achievement. The EEC believes that such a unified system of data organization and monitoring should be established in the near future. Such a tool would be extremely useful to the university administration, its academic and its administrative units, would facilitate better coordination and collaboration among those units, and would provide a clearer picture of the progress of the university in its various endeavours.

<i>Please decide in respect to the specific evaluation area (&amp;3.1.3):</i>	Tick
<b>Worthy of merit</b>	
<b>Positive evaluation</b>	X
<b>Partially positive evaluation</b>	
<b>Negative evaluation</b>	

*Justify your rating:*

There is a major effort at quality education in a friendly environment enhancing the students' academic experience and developing positive feelings among the student population towards the institution, their fields of study, and educational opportunities in general. (There have been no university "kataleipseis" in the UNIPI, the EEC was told!). There is also a plan with priorities, timetables and strategies for the further development of the programs and curricula.

On the less positive side, there is no systematic and unified method, model or mechanism for the monitoring of current academic goals and objectives at the Departmental, School or university level, beyond the term student course evaluations, which offer a limited, and occasionally questionable in terms of objectivity, view of the academic performance of the university and its individual instructional units.

### **3.1.4 Research Strategy**

- Key points in research strategy
- Research strategy objectives and timetables for achieving them
- Laboratory research support network
- Research excellence network

- Existence of research assistance mechanisms (for preparing proposals, capitalising on patents and innovations, finding partners for research programmes, etc.)

This appears to be a relatively undeveloped area of the university's goals and priorities at present. While individual faculty members are involved in research, manage research projects, and supervise numbers of doctoral students, the university as a whole does not have a solid program of research incentives, research infrastructure provision, research productivity, research directions or rewards. The relevant section on Research Strategy of the internal evaluation document (Section Γ.3, page 39-43) is devoted primarily to the spelling out of the ethics associated with research and the responsibilities of researchers. It also outlines the obligations of faculty carrying out funded research. These are definitely necessary items in a university's research agenda, and it is commendable that this institution has them prominently publicized. In the area of research strategy *per se*, however, there is only a statement of expectations that a system of research productivity evaluation will be designed and implemented in the near future. Beyond that, there is an acknowledgement that there are no networks of laboratory research support at the university at present. The EEC was also told multiple times about the lack of data sources available to students and faculty, and about the recent complete elimination of all the electronic journal subscriptions of all the Greek university libraries due to the inability of the Greek government to pay its 50% share of these subscriptions. While this is a universal tragedy for all Greek university education and research, it appears to penalize most severely the smaller academic institutions like the UNIPI because of their lack of other resources to at least try to make up for some of these losses. UNIPI needs to develop a cohesive, short and long term strategy for the encouragement of research among the members of its faculty and students, one that would include the establishment of research contacts, networks and collaborations, that would create incentives for seed research money to faculty and students, that would encourage and fund participation in significant conferences under conditions of actual research paper presentation, and with incentives for measurable research productivity.

<i>Please decide in respect to the specific evaluation area (&amp;3.1.4):</i>	Tick
<b>Worthy of merit</b>	
<b>Positive evaluation</b>	
<b>Partially positive evaluation</b>	X
<b>Negative evaluation</b>	

*Justify your rating:*

There is no formal research strategy in this university at present. Individual faculty members do conduct research and publish, and they also supervise a large number of doctoral students conducting research under severely limited circumstances. However, the university as a whole does not at present have a comprehensive research strategy, and has an extremely limited institutional infrastructure for the conduct of advanced research, including laboratories and network collaborations. There was no evidence that there exists any formal and on-going research assistance mechanism for the preparation of proposals and related initiatives.

**NOTE: This grading is not unanimous. One member of the EEC does not agree with this evaluation because does not believe that there is any evidence of such strategy, and has given a grade of “Negative Evaluation”.**

### 3.1.5 Financial Strategy

- General financial strategy and management of national and international funds
- Regular budget management strategy
- Public investment management strategy
- Organisation and strategy of the Special Account for Research Funds (SARF)
- Organisation and strategy of the University Property Development and Management Company
- Existence of a Quality System for Financial Management (e.g. ISO), computerisation management and Budget monitoring (Regular Budget, Public Investments Programme, SARF Budget, etc.)

Without a doubt finance is a major problem of the university and a limiting factor for the development of a more proactive strategic view regarding the future of the university. UNIPI officials informed the EEC that state budgetary support has been reduced drastically. In 2009, the state allocated 5.150.000 Euros to cover operating expenses. Six year later (2016) the amount dwindled to 1.950.000,00 Euros. This amounts to about 62% loss of income. The university has cut its operating expenses by nearly 50%. The difference is covered by the transfer of funds generated by fees of the growing number of graduate programs. Administrative and academic staff members interviewed seem aware of the financial limitations and are grateful for the modest financial support provided. Though a genuine strategic approach is lacking, it is recognized that a more proactive approach will be necessary in the near future in order to reach a sustainable financial situation. Regular budget management is undertaken centrally by specialized services.

It came to the EEC’s attention that the financial management is too centralized (some see it too personalized) and lacks sufficient transparency. Several department heads lament the absence of small department budget that can be used to meet immediate needs, such as purchasing classroom supplies and offer a small stipend to guest speakers. To the administration’s argument that legislation does not allow such transfers they point out that other Greek institutions have found ways to do it.

The Special account for Research Funds (SARF/ELKE) seems flexible and well handled, allowing some capacity for the development of a more strategic management profile and setting priorities. More information is needed before one can make any additional comments. However, a clearer and more detailed account as to how the funds are allocated would be helpful.

The University Property Development and Management Company (UPDMC) seems to handle well income generated from publications, organizing of conferences, etc. The financial crisis appears to have hurt the UPDMC’s activities. More clarity and more emphasis on a proactive strategic approach in funding and fundraising activities would help alleviate the financial crunch the university faces.

The EEC was informed that there is an on-going effort aimed at creating a better financial management system. The university is taking steps to obtain higher level of certification, like ISO.

<i>Please decide in respect to the specific evaluation area (&amp;3.1.5):</i>	Tick
<b>Worthy of merit</b>	
<b>Positive evaluation</b>	X
<b>Partially positive evaluation</b>	
<b>Negative evaluation</b>	

*Justify your rating:*

Overall, the various parts of the university's financial strategy is sound, but university officials should look carefully into the issue of department budgetary allocations and take steps to rectify the problem.

### **3.1.6 Building and Grounds Infrastructure Strategy**

- Strategy key points
- Objectives and timetables
- Measures taken to reach goals
- Deviations from model 1 campus/HEI

UNIPI is an urban university located in the busy and congested port city of Piraeus. Located in the downtown area, the university consists of a number building structures; some owned and some rented. All classrooms are used from early in the morning till 9:00 in the evening. The university's chronic space shortage has deteriorated with substantial increases in student enrolment in recent years. Efforts to lease additional space in the area have proven unsuccessful as the area is highly congested and there are no affordable buildings suitable for classroom usage. As such, the university was forced to look elsewhere and managed to locate the Nikea (Nikaia) facility, which is located some kilometres away. But the space requires substantial improvements before it can be available for use, and the university has requested 30 million EUROS from the Program of National Investments to make the necessary work. The request has yet to be approved. UNIPI authorities are hopeful that the funds will be approved and the facility will be in operation within the next five years. When it becomes functional, the Nikea facility will help ameliorate the critical lack of space the university faces at the present time. But the Nikea facility will be a satellite classroom space detached from the main campus of UNIPI. The university's current facilities seem to be in relatively good condition, and are well maintained, both inside and outside. The space between the different buildings is also clean and generally well kept.

<i>Please decide in respect to the specific evaluation area (&amp;3.1.6):</i>	Tick
<b>Worthy of merit</b>	X
<b>Positive evaluation</b>	
<b>Partially positive evaluation</b>	
<b>Negative evaluation</b>	

*Justify your rating:*

UNIFI faces space issues similar to many universities located in congested metropolitan centers. In addition, lack of institutional autonomy, coupled with the country's severe financial crisis, and the slow-moving and hydrocephalic, inefficient, and heavy-handed state bureaucracy, have made nearly impossible for university authorities to act proactively.

### 3.1.7 Environmental Strategy

- Recycling strategy and measures taken to reach goals
- Hazardous waste management and measures taken to reach goals
- Urban waste management and measures taken to reach goals
- Green energy strategy and measures taken to reach goals

The nature of UNIFI's facility does not require an extensive program of waste recycling, and as such the university has no formal environmental policy. Never the less, there are some recycling activities, particularly with regard to paper. Electronic mail is used extensively and the university has made a commitment to move toward a paperless campus. The university sees to it that no harmful substances are generated and solid wastes are collected by the city on a regular basis. In addition, automatic light switches have been installed in nearly all rooms to reduce electric power use. A study was conducted to determine the feasibility of installing solar energy equipment, but was found that it would little benefit. As stated in 3.1.6, the campus is clean, well maintained, and free of litter and environmentally harmful emissions.

<i>Please decide in respect to the specific evaluation area (&amp;3.1.7):</i>	Tick
<b>Worthy of merit</b>	
<b>Positive evaluation</b>	X
<b>Partially positive evaluation</b>	
<b>Negative evaluation</b>	

*Justify your rating:*

For a metropolitan campus situated in the center of a bustling and densely populated port city, UNIFI has done a very good job maintaining a clean and environmentally safe campus. Both university personnel and students contribute to keeping the facility safe and environmentally sound.

### 3.1.8 Social Strategy

- Exploitation and dissemination of the Institution's Research Activities for the benefit of society and economy
- Promotion of interaction between the Institution and the Labour Market
- Sustained relationships with key local and regional bodies
- Contribution to the cultural development of society, the city and the region
- Reciprocal and long-lasting relationship with the alumni community

Although it varies from department to department, UNIPI as a whole appears to have good and improving relations with the city. Statements by numerous university administration officials, faculty, the chamber of commerce and other stakeholders provide supporting evidence.

A representative of Piraeus Chamber of Commerce reported that a study by members of the Department of Finance and banking Management was instrumental in reviving the defunct Commerce and Shipping Values Exchange (Χρηματιστήριο Εμπορευμάτων και Ναυτιλιακών Αξιών). Moreover, the chamber and the university are working together to create the Hellenic Nautical Cluster, which the two sides believe that it would be a key “pillar in the productive and economic development of the country.”

The memorandum of understanding between the city and the university to create an “open mall” would lead to greater ties and would enhance the cultural and social ambiance of entire community.

The deputy mayor of Piraeus spoke about the strong and deepening connection between the city and the university. For example, he said that help by university faculty and students was instrumental in helping the relevant agency in the city government to reduce the time of issuing of birth certificates from several hours to few minutes. He also spoke positively of the social and cultural value and importance of lectures and seminar between co-sponsored by the two sides, and argued in favor of a closer and deepening relationship.

Representatives from the business sector highlighted the good chemistry between the university and local businesses. The Eurobank, for instance, employs a substantial number of UNIPI graduates and mentioned that the bank is happy to provide number of scholarships to deserving students.

The representative of the US Embassy sees UNIPI as one of the most open and outward looking institutions of higher learning in Greece and reported that the embassy helps foster links between exchange programs involving business representatives between Greece and the United States.

A person speaking on behalf of small businesses feeding off the shipping industry suggested the potential of employment opportunities in the sector she represents and was enthusiastic of highlighted the importance of mentoring. Business owners in the sector often enjoy close relations with the shipping community and serve as important link helping introduce UNIPI graduates to business establishments and land internships that could lead to regular employment positions.

University officials indicated that they are in contact with the Chinese entity that assumed responsibility of major parts of the Piraeus Port and members of the Beijing government



have visited the university. The two sides appear to have established a good working relationship.

Finally, the university's Employment and Career center (ECC) maintain contact with growing alumni community than the center is in the process of creating a comprehensive list so that contact with the group would become more frequent and regularized. The center organizes seminars and other similar events in which alumni participate. Alumni are often asked to lecture in classes, especially at the post-graduate level.

<i>Please decide in respect to the specific evaluation area (&amp;3.1.8):</i>	Tick
<b>Worthy of merit</b>	
<b>Positive evaluation</b>	X
<b>Partially positive evaluation</b>	
<b>Negative evaluation</b>	

*Justify your rating:*

The EEC feels that the university has done well in this area and has plans to do even better. Though understaffed and overworked, the ECC plays a key role in strengthening social ties with the city and beyond. The center is forward looking, dynamic, and a clear and well-defined mission.

### **3.1.9 Internationalization Strategy**

- Integration of the international dimension in the curricula
- Integration of the international dimension in research
- Integration of the intercultural dimension within the campus
- Participation in international HEI networks
- Collaboration with HEIs in other countries (with a specific collaboration agreement) - measures taken to reach goals

An important component of the UNIPI's vision is to integrate the university to the international academic community, especially in the areas the university specializes (entrepreneurship). This view is shared by the university administration, faculty, students as well as shareholders. Despite the severe budgetary constraints, efforts are undertaken to support the participation of faculty and graduate students in international conferences to present their papers and mingle with colleagues from around the world. UNIPI's Public and International Office is severely understaffed but seems to be doing a decent job promoting the university's international image and providing support for the important ERASMUS program.

According to the internal evaluation report, UNIPI has established significant cooperation agreement with non-Greek universities and research institutions. University personnel stated that the intent to broaden and deepen these contacts. The university is actively seeking membership in the European Foundation of Quality Management whose primary focus is commitment to excellence. The EEC could not ascertain the extent and level of

these efforts. Moreover, the university is seeking international help to improve the quality and breadth of its main publication outlet, *SPOUDAI—Journal of Economics and Business*. Similar efforts are under way to strengthen the quality of the university’s main research center—Center of Research of the University of Piraeus (Κέντρο Ερευνών του Πανεπιστημίου Πειραιώς—ΚΕΠΠ). To accomplish this goal, UNIPI is seeking to enlist the support of international players as well as the local and the Greek business community. University officials report the Ministry of Education’s changing and often contradictory and restrictive laws and directives are a stumbling block.

Worth noting is the recent agreement between the UNIPI and the University of the Urals to engage in cooperative endeavors. This agreement was signed in the presence of the heads of government of Greece and the Russian federation during President Vladimir Putin’s recent visit to Greece. Although the nature and texture of this agreement have yet to be solidified, UNIPI officials view this as a very hopeful step and feel that it would bring about significant benefits.

The visit of senior Chinese government officials to the university is seen is another important step in the drive toward greater internationalization.

The EEC was informed that a number of UNIPI graduates haven been accepted and are pursuing graduate degrees in major western institutions including the University of Chicago. The EEC notes that there are no foreign students enrolled at UNIPI, barring a small number ERASMUS students who are here for short time.

Finally, discussions about creating a foreign language graduate program are taking places and officials hope to have such a program in place in the not too distant future.

<i>Please decide in respect to the specific evaluation area (&amp;3.1.9):</i>	Tick
<b>Worthy of merit</b>	X
<b>Positive evaluation</b>	
<b>Partially positive evaluation</b>	
<b>Negative evaluation</b>	

*Justify your rating:*

While more efforts should be made to promote participation in international networks, UNIPI has taken solid steps toward the international integration in many of its activities. The university’s aim to strengthen international ties is an important part of its internationalization strategy and hopes to make the institution an important hub of higher education in the greater Balkan area and beyond.

### 3.1.10 Student Welfare Strategy

- Student hostel operation and development strategy
- Student refectory development strategy
- Scholarships and prizes strategy
- Sports facilities operation and development strategy
- Cultural activities strategy
- Strategy for people with special needs

The university has no living accommodation facilities, but has entered in to agreements with other educational institutions in the greater Athens area and some UNIFI students are provided with living space.

Free meals are available for a large number of students in the university refectory, which also offers food at very low prices (about 15 Euros per week) to students who are not eligible for free meals. Food portions are adequate and students appear satisfied with the quality of the food served. The kitchen staff includes regular workers as well as some students. The refectory seems well run and the staff appears friendly and accommodating.

A small medical facility consisting a medical doctor and a nurse attend to emergencies or provide routine medical care. In addition, the university has a small psychological support unit that can provide assistance to needy students, both currently enrolled as well as what are usually referred to as perennial students. Cases requiring additional care are referred to outside more comprehensive medical facilities.

The university possesses some facilities to accommodate students with special needs, including those with limited mobility and non-ambulatory. The EEC feels that more should be done in this area and electronic maps to aid students with vision problems.

One of the most innovative and forward-looking developments is the creation of the career center (ECC). The office is supervised by the university rector and day-to-day operations are in the hands of very able and resourceful person. In addition to acting as a link between the university and the community (including alumni), the center devotes a considerable amount of energy to secure employment to graduates. Among other things, the staff seeks to match employment opportunities with candidate qualifications. The organization of the alumni group and the strengthening of the university's ties with the community are likely to lead to better quality services in this area.

UNIFI has no physical education and recreation facilities, such a gym or tennis courts. Space limitations and the very nature of UNIFI campus are impeding factors, but the university has secured agreements with nearby athletic facilities and a growing number of students are able to engage in recreation activities.

Finally, worth mentioning is the availability of a good number of scholarships supported by the university and the business community, such as the Eurobank.

<i>Please decide in respect to the specific evaluation area (&amp;3.1.10):</i>	Tick
<b>Worthy of merit</b>	X
<b>Positive evaluation</b>	
<b>Partially positive evaluation</b>	
<b>Negative evaluation</b>	

*Justify your rating:*

UNIPi's student welfare strategy is efficient, covering a broad spectrum of needs, delivering many and good quality services. Establishment of a student grievances process is missing and should be created as soon as possible.

### **3.2 Strategy for Study Programmes**

#### **3.2.1 Programmes of Undergraduate Studies (first cycle)**

*Please comment on:*

- the main strengths and weaknesses of the Programmes
- the basic obligations of students, e.g. attendance of lectures, course requirements, etc.
- the way the Central Administration of the Institution deals with any remarks and recommendations that the external experts pointed out in the External Evaluation of Academic Unit

The charge of the EEC was to evaluate the overall University and not specific programs.

However, during the discussions with all the stakeholders, it became apparent that the University provides some excellent undergraduate and special post-graduate programs that are highly recognized and address the needs of core components of the economy or of specific industries. Such examples are: the programs on Maritime, Transportation, Finance and Banking Management, International Affairs, and Tourism.

An apparent weakness and rigidity is created by the national government's restrictive regulatory environment preventing the normal desired integration of undergraduate and post-graduate studies and cross-fertilization/integration of such. It reduces potential efficiency, efficient allocation of resources and, by default, the quality of programs and attraction/retention of the best possible faculty. This is due to the legal framework that treats individual undergraduate programs as independent entities from the rest of the programs, the way we understood it.

The course requirements of the programs of study vary by subject and level of course, based on our discussion and information reviewed. In general, the learning process is based on lectures, some online information and labs. The primary mode of evaluating student performance is the final exam at the end of the semester. There is no requirement of class attendance – which, in our opinion, encourages low levels of student attendance and unlimited repetition of taking final exams to complete the coursework and the program of study. The EEC believes that this system encourages a significant waste of economic and human capital resources and causes thousands of students in each unit to

prolong their studies – way past the normal four-year program. This is at a tremendous social and private cost (opportunity cost of not participating in the workforce at an earlier stage of life). We believe the regulations and course requirements ought to change allowing for shorter multiple semester exams or other measures of performance to encourage attendance and completion of studies in a timely fashion. That is, a great portion of the students ought to qualify to complete their studies within a four-year framework. This would be beneficial to society, through more efficient use of limited public resources (government budget), and the individual who will enter the workforce earlier. It is also humane that the poor/middle class families supporting their students will have a shorter time frame of support needed.

To make this approach successful, students ought to be limited to just two attempts of taking final exams for completion of a course. In the USA, for example, the system allows for only one chance to pass your course, otherwise, you repeat it or are dismissed for cumulatively low performance -- based on stipulated standards for success. There are a number of shorter exams given during the semester or research papers, etc.

The institutions of higher education should not become exam centers but rather devote their energy and resources to teaching, learning and research -- not be year-round exam giving entities for students that have failed to attend classes and fail to do their studying and class work during the regular semester. The current system is wasteful -- both from an individual and societal point of view. Precious human capital and physical capital resources are being wasted instead of being used to advance quality, research, innovation, technological breakthroughs and increased productivity, which the Greek economy desperate needs.

Based on our discussion and observations (although there are no standard procedures for such) MODIP and UNIPI's Central Administration seem to pay attention to the external departmental evaluations and their recommendations. However, it was not clear if there was a consistent internal mechanism for responding to such reports. At least, that we are aware of.

Regardless of the above comments suggested for qualitative improvements in the longer term, the students that the EEC members spoke with seemed to be very satisfied with their programs of study and, especially, with the dedication of their professors who create a positive academic experience under a very difficult budgetary and regulatory environment of higher education.

The EEC recommends that UNIPI should pay special attention to comments and requests made by their stakeholders on the needs for practical learning experiences and integration of such in the curriculum. These approaches are used extensively by many schools of business in the USA with positive outcomes. Usually students get hired by companies they did internships with at the end of their studies.

In general, the stakeholders praised the cooperative environment with UNIPI and requested further collaboration for internships and student participation on special projects. This creates a more integrated approach to learning through both the theoretical and practical aspects of education.

Please decide in respect to the specific evaluation area (&3.2.1):

	Tick
<b>Worthy of merit</b>	
<b>Positive evaluation</b>	X
<b>Partially positive evaluation</b>	
<b>Negative evaluation</b>	

*Justify your rating:*

Although the EEC believes that the above mentioned suggestions would result in significant allocative efficiency and qualitative improvements, the faculty and staff (even with excessive student faculty ratios) seem to be doing a great job to meet the needs of their students and to provide a good learning experience under very difficult circumstances. Most of the complications referenced above seem to be created by the excessive and inefficient regulatory environment of higher education, by the dramatic reductions in UNIPI's budget allocations and by the continuously changing laws and their implementation, or lack thereof, by the Ministry of Education. Autonomy in academic decision making would create a more productive academic environment, with more innovation to address the ever-changing needs of the economy and society. This will also promote a higher quality of education as institutions would compete for the best students.

### 3.2.2 Programmes of Postgraduate Studies (second cycle)

*Please comment on:*

- the main strengths and weaknesses of the Programmes
- the basic obligations of students, e.g. attendance of lectures, course requirements, etc.
- the way the Central Administration of the Institution deals with any remarks and recommendations that the external experts pointed out in the External Evaluation of Academic Units

The post-graduate Masters programs seem to be well organized and address the special needs of business and the public sector. Since students pay tuition for their attendance and many are employed concurrently, they have higher expectations and the programs are more responsive to their academic and market needs. They seem to be more innovative and structured outside of the restrictive national government regulatory environment. They also generate revenue which assists in covering expenses that otherwise would not be available. In general, faculty, students and the external stakeholders we met seem to be positive and excited about the post-graduate Masters programs -- since they address the needs of the economy, are of high quality and allow students to pursue specializations in areas of personal interests. This is reflected by the high demand for such specialized programs and by the willingness of the students to pay for them, unlike the undergraduate programs that are free.

Based on our limited discussions with post-graduate students, a variety of modes of student performance evaluation are used. Exams, papers, special projects, research, etc. It varies with the course and program.

There seemed to be a relatively open communication between students and the administrative units the Master's programs are offered in. We sensed a generally high level of satisfaction by faculty and students participating in these post-graduate Masters programs. It seemed that the departments or schools offering such programs dealt with those administrative issues better, since there is less regulatory control.

UNIFI ought to pay special attention to comments and suggestions made by the external stakeholders regarding the need of graduate programs. In general, the stakeholders praised the special Masters programs and requested further collaboration for internships and work on special projects by the students. This they suggested creates a more integrated approach to learning by combining the theoretical and practical aspects of education. There is a need for such an approach for both undergraduate and graduate programs.

<i>Please decide in respect to the specific evaluation area (&amp; 3.2.2):</i>	Tick
<b>Worthy of merit</b>	X
<b>Positive evaluation</b>	
<b>Partially positive evaluation</b>	
<b>Negative evaluation</b>	

*Justify your rating:*

The graduate program offerings seem to be more innovative and are, generally, structured outside of the restrictive national government regulatory environment. Also, they generate extra revenue that assists in covering expenses that otherwise would not be available to support academic and faculty activities. In general, faculty, students and external stakeholders seem to be positive and excited about the post-graduate Masters programs -- since they address some special needs of the economy, are of high quality and allow students to pursue specializations in areas of personal interests. The high demand and willingness to pay for such programs is a positive testament itself.

### **3.2.3 Programmes of Doctoral Studies (third cycle)**

*Please comment on:*

- the main strengths and weaknesses of the Programmes
- the basic obligations of students, e.g. attendance of lectures, course requirements, etc.
- the way the Central Administration of the Institution deals with any remarks and recommendations that the external experts pointed out in the External Evaluation of Academic Units

The EEC's observations regarding the doctoral studies is quite different. For the doctoral programs, we found that there are too many students enrolled for a faculty that is stressed out by excessive demands to serve a very large undergraduate population and many Masters programs, relative to the size of the faculty. The student faculty ratio is excessive. The doctoral programs seem to be mostly unorganized. They lack specific rules

and requirements that are consistent and meet international standards. Based on conversations with some students in the program, it is not clear that there is sufficient supervision of such. Also, requirements for completion of the degree are inconsistent and confusing. For example, the PhD program in Finance and Banking Management has a very well structured academic program requiring one and a half years of course work, special seminars and available merit-based scholarships for all students. This structure is similar to the PhD programs offered in the USA which are internationally recognized as high quality. However, most of the doctoral programs at the UNIPI have no specific requirements for course work or research methods seminars -- other than completing research for a dissertation or completing multiple research papers. There seems to be little consistency in quality control and programming at the doctoral level.

While the doctoral program in Finance and Banking seems to be better structured and more rigorous, most do not seem to be so. Moreover, the institution has tremendous financial and faculty resource limitations in servicing the undergraduate and post-graduate Masters programs. The faculty seem to be stretched beyond the level of normal expectations and seem to be exhausted. The faculty loads seem to be excessive in many respects. It is not clear that they can support (under the current structure and resources) the volume of PhD/doctoral programs with a “western” type structure of curriculum.

Thus, the EEC recommends that the University develop some common policies for doctoral programs that would guarantee qualitative consistency, setting guidelines for prioritizing the offering and maintaining such programs, have minimum standards and proper academic support for doctoral level courses (such as advanced research methods) and other relevant subjects needed for a modern doctoral program. This change would strengthen the programs qualitatively and provide the support needed by students to complete their doctoral studies in a timely fashion, improve their marketability and strengthen the reputation of the programs and the University itself. To accomplish the above, the number of doctoral programs should be reduced significantly. UNIPI can choose to be specially recognized in a very limited number of doctoral programs by incorporating the above mentioned suggestions. Currently, UNIPI does not seem to have the resources required for excellence in all the different doctoral programs it offers.

The University and the individual units have to prioritize in the allocation of resources and provide for the programs that it can sustain and observe continuous improvement. The resources do not seem to be sufficient, at this juncture, to offer such a wide array of post-graduate doctoral programs in an efficient, qualitative and sustainable way. Choices have to be made as to what is feasible to deliver.

It was not clear to the EEC that there is a consistent policy and process for implementing the above suggestions. The University’s QAU/MODIP, within a short period of time, has made significant inroads on this issue. However, we recommend that QAU/MODIP develop some procedural guidelines to be followed by all units in addressing this issue. This would improve the process of quality assurance and make their task less demanding and more productive over the long term.



<i>Please decide in respect to the specific evaluation area (&amp; 3.2.3):</i>	Tick
<b>Worthy of merit</b>	
<b>Positive evaluation</b>	
<b>Partially positive evaluation</b>	X
<b>Negative evaluation</b>	

*Justify your rating:*

Please see comments made in 3.2.3 above elaborating in more detail this evaluation

\*This ranking reflects the overall weak composition of the doctoral programs and the insufficient resources to support them. Note: For some doctoral programs, such as the doctorate in finance and banking management, the ranking would definitely be much higher.

### ***3.3 Profile of the Institution under evaluation - Conclusions and recommendations***

*Please complete the following sections regarding the overall **profile of the Institution under evaluation**:*

- *Underline specific positive points:*
- The EEC was impressed by the positive comments made by both undergraduate and postgraduate students regarding their productive relationships with the faculty. They stated repetitively that the faculty is accessible and interested to meet directly with them in the office or communicate electronically to discuss their issues and concerns. There seems to be a cooperative culture between students and faculty with substantial emphasis on academic support and guidance. The feeling is that the University has created a student focussed environment, regardless of the external and internal challenges or threats it faces.
- Even with the extreme budgetary and regulatory challenges, the faculty and staff we met, by and large, exhibited a high level of dedication and commitment to the institution and their students.
- UNIFI offers some unique programs in the undergraduate and Masters level that specifically address the needs of the economy, specific needs of important industries and those of the public sector.
- The high level of enthusiasm of the Rector and Deputy Rectors and staff regarding the institution, its prospect of continuous qualitative improvement, the institution's competitive advancement and for its contribution to business and society is noteworthy.
- There was strong support exhibited for UNIFI by local businesses, government representatives and institutions for the University's openness to collaborate with

such entities. The University provides well educated employees to the region and to specific industries such as Maritime and Transportation, Computer Technology, Tourism and International Affairs. These are key and important economic sectors for the local economy and Greece, at large.

- Willingness of the University to create special post-graduate programs that address the special market and government needs but also provide new opportunities for faculty development and research, through the creation of additional resources to finance such activities is commendable.
- Based on comments of stakeholders and alumni some of the research is very well integrated -- reflecting the needs of the local and national business and the overall economy.

- *Underline specific negative points:*

- Lack of sufficient human capital and physical capital resources to service the very large number of students relative to the size of faculty and classroom capacity is a major concern. Class sizes have increased significantly, due to an insufficient number of faculty in in most disciplines. Some students have no place to sit in certain classrooms. Some courses cannot be taught in multiple sections due to lack of sufficient space or faculty resources -- even though such courses would reduce the class size, improve academic quality and make them accessible to all students (employed or not).
- Both students and faculty told us that, for some classes, the number of students registered to attend is higher than the capacity of the classroom to accommodate such number resulting in a lower quality learning environment, frustration and excessive absences. Some students told us that they do not go to class because there is no place to sit.
- There seems to be insufficient coordination between departmental units and Schools and the University as a whole -- due to the archaic administrative structure imposed by government regulation/legislation. This approach is much less productive, creates barriers to learning, research, internal cooperation and reduces the possible economies of scale to bring down marginal and average costs.
- There are insufficient resources for graduate program research, especially access to professional journals and databases, to accommodate the large number of post-graduate students and their needs -- in addition to the research needs of the faculty.
- There are significant problems as the institution, due to the excessive centralized system of higher education decision-making by the national government, is unable to make student acceptance decisions and determine the number of entering students on strictly academic parameters and student qualification for the specific academic programs. The allocation of qualified students and determination of faculty and staff resources by the central government creates imbalances and reduces the potential quality of programs and the timely graduation of students. This, in the longer term, is very costly to government budgets, society, the individual students and to the competitiveness of business and the economy.
- There is concern that the lack of institutional rules and regulations on many aspects of the University's operation is due to the bureaucratic hold ups of approving such documents, the ever changing legal environment for higher education resulting from the frequent changes of law and the ever changing process of approving of

rules and regulations by the Ministry of Education, as Ministers come and go. Instability and uncertainty is detrimental to the advancement of quality education and for the preparation of strategic plans and programs to appropriately prepare the future workforce.

- *Make your suggestions for further development of the positive points:*

- *Make your suggestions on needed steps for improvement:*
- The EEC recommends that the institutions of higher education be allowed to operate more autonomously, be allocated an annual budget and be allowed to make their own decisions based on priorities on hiring, programming and the admission of students that reflect their ability to service them well and to maintain or advance quality of programming. If autonomy is granted, institutions should be required to have a mission, a strategic plan for action and accountability measures to evaluate their performance in achieving their goals.
- The University ought to be able to create its own rules and regulations for academic and operational purposes within a legal framework that allows promotion of innovation, productivity, timely response to the needs of a changing society and economy while producing high quality qualified graduates for work in different industries and government.
- Since this is a University composed primarily of applied fields of study (business administration, financial management and analysis, accounting, economic analysis, computer science, management information systems, maritime management and financing, the creation of new e-commerce, tourism, etc.), it is highly advisable for the University to create a strategic plan on how to organize formal programs of internships, work-study, research collaboration and co-operative education. The aforementioned options have, in general, a component of the academic credits of study completed as practicum under the supervision of faculty -- while the student works at a relevant business, not-for-profit or government entity while possibly receiving income and practical learning. These approaches could be carried out on a voluntary basis or mandated in a particular field or program of study. This strategy can enhance the student's learning and marketability, improve relations with businesses and government agencies and better prepare graduates to enter the workforce with some relevant experience.
- The EEC recommends that UNUPI create a university wide strategy or guidelines that encourage and promote more faculty publication in peer-reviewed Journals and to state clearly the criteria and expectations for promotion and tenure.
- The EEC recommends that all stakeholders (internal and external) be involved in an advisory capacity in providing feedback in developing both undergraduate and graduate programs.
- It is also advisable for the University to create a strategy, with good public affairs personnel, to communicate effectively with lawmakers and the Ministry of Education to promote changes that will enhance its operation and allow the personnel and its doctoral students to be used more effectively -- with a proper program of training to become a resource for teaching and research. Properly educated and trained doctoral students could be used more effectively as Teaching

Assistants and Research Assistants, and Teaching Fellows with some appropriate financial reward, as an incentive and fairness. This will strengthen their educational experience, relieve faculty from some rudimentary duties, improve delivery of teaching and possibly reduce class sizes at a nominal cost. This approach of “lobbying” would be stronger if many institutions combine their efforts to advance this agenda.

## **4. INTERNAL SYSTEM OF QUALITY ASSURANCE**

### **4.1 Quality Assurance (QA) Policy and Strategy**

*Please comment on:*

- the Institution's policy and goals regarding QA and Improvement
- whether the Institution has developed a specific system of QA
- how the Institution's internal QA system has been organized
- how the students and staff of the Institution are protected from biased interventions and discriminations
- whether a detailed implementation guide has been put together, containing an analysis of the QA system's operating procedures
- the involvement of students in QA
- how the Institution evaluates the effectiveness of its QA system regarding the achievement of its goals

According to the Institution's policy and goals for QA listed on pages 178-181 of the Internal Evaluation Report (IER), these are determined via a systematic, documented and detailed analysis of the teaching and research performance and the efficiency of services offered by the institution in line with its academic mission and goals, as defined and described in the relevant Greek legislation.

The QA policy is implemented through the internal QA system of the Institution which is currently in the process of being developed. This system includes evaluation criteria and quality indicators specified by the Greek legislative framework for Quality Assurance and the guidelines of the Hellenic Quality Assurance and Accreditation Agency (HQA). The system is operated and used by the Quality Assurance Unit (QAU/MODIP) and the Internal Evaluation Groups (IEGs/OMEAs) at both institutional and departmental levels, respectively.

The EEC has been informed that the QA system was revised in 2014. The system is aimed to be used for the collection and processing of detailed quality-related data and analysis of quality indicators at both Departmental and institutional levels. This provides the basis for producing internal evaluation reports on an annual basis or as required.

Based on information presented on pages 7-8 of the IER, there is a reference to the different University stakeholders participating in the development of the QA system: student representatives, faculty, administrators, etc.

The goals of the QA and basic documents of the internal QA system are uploaded on the Institution's website. The external evaluation reports are also publically available. However, as far as the EEC can determine, a detailed guide for the implementation of the QA system at the institutional level is not currently available.

The Institution evaluates the effectiveness of its QA system through the close monitoring of the relevant mechanisms and operating procedures by QAU/MODIP and their proposals for improvement. The QA system is enhanced by the results of the internal departmental evaluation reports (every four years) and the external evaluation of all nine departments organized by the HQA. This process allows the improvement of the quality of education offered by the Institution.

During the onsite visit, the EEC has met with various members of the teaching and administrative staff, current students, both at undergraduate and post-graduate level, and professionals who have graduated from the Institution. As far as the EEC can see, the students' involvement in the QA process is at departmental level mainly through their participation in the Internal Evaluation Groups (IEGs/OMEAs). They provide feedback on teaching quality, course delivery and study programs via the student evaluation questionnaires. The role of students in the QA system can be enhanced via their participation in the assessment of the learning outcomes for each course.

<i>Please decide in respect to the specific evaluation area (&amp;4.1):</i>	Tick
<b>Worthy of merit</b>	
<b>Positive evaluation</b>	X
<b>Partially positive evaluation</b>	
<b>Negative evaluation</b>	

*Justify your rating:*

The overall assessment of the EEC is that the QA and improvement system is fair and well communicated to students and staff.

The EEC identifies the need to further develop the QA culture among all academic and administrative staff so that all units participate in the internal system of QA and recommends that students become more involved in the process at the departmental and institutional level.

It is proposed that the QAU/MODIP organizes occasional internal seminars/ workshops to inform staff about the QA progress of the various departments and the Institution itself.

In addition, the QAU/MODIP is encouraged to organize conferences/ events to disseminate information and cultivate the QA culture not only among its staff and students but also extend this to the industry and local community as well.

#### ***4.2 Design, approval, monitoring and evaluation of the study programmes and degrees awarded***

*Please comment on:*

- whether the learning outcomes have been clearly formulated and whether they have been published
- whether the programmes are designed in such a way as to involve students and other stakeholders in the work
- how the achievement of learning outcomes is monitored
- whether there is a published Guide regarding the organization of programmes of study
- whether the ECTS system is taken into consideration and implemented

- whether there is a periodic evaluation of the programmes according to set procedures and criteria aimed at safeguarding their consistency and regular updating
- the student participation in the QA procedure of the study programmes
- whether the programmes include well-structured international mobility and -where appropriate- placement opportunities

All study programmes at both the undergraduate and postgraduate level include clear statements about learning outcomes at the programme level and for individual courses. Departments have implemented the ECTS system. Information related to the study programmes and the study guides is uploaded on the webpage of the respective Department. The study guide contains information regarding the curriculum, the level of qualification, the organisation of studies, the relevant bibliography and the student workload expressed in ECTS.

The study programmes are submitted for approval to the General Assemblies of the respective Departments and subsequently to the respective Schools. Final approval is given by the University Senate in accordance with the stipulations of Greek legislation. New study programmes also follow the internal procedures for approval but they also have to be submitted to HQA for formal approval by a team of experts.

The participation of students' representatives in the work programmes is ensured at the IEG/OMEA level which are concerned with the evaluation of programs and in Departmental Assembly which approves actions for improvement of programs. However, there are no student representatives at the QAU/MODIP level.

An informal involvement of stakeholders outside of the institution, like employers, is practiced by the Institution. During our visit, the EEC had the opportunity to interact with students and stakeholders from local industry. The overall assessment of the EEC is that there are some mechanisms established which allow stakeholders from local industry to provide feedback for the revision and update of the curricula of the study programs. The EEC recommendation is to enhance and formalize these mechanisms as part of the QA system.

During the meetings with staff and students of the Institution, the EEC has been informed that the achievement of learning outcomes is monitored in different ways: (i) The IEG/OMEA at Departmental level uses the student evaluation questionnaires. (ii) Employers of students in work placements may identify and propose skills that need improvement. (iii) The Head of Department monitors the implementation of the decisions of the Departmental Assembly.

At the Institutional level, the QUA/ MODIP plays a coordinating role in monitoring the Departmental IEG/OMEA reports submitted each year. It also provides feedback to the Departments relating to quality indicators of the learning process as well as the effectiveness of corrective actions undertaken by the Departments.

The study programs are reviewed on a regular and periodical basis by a Departmental programme committee specifically set up for this purpose.

The student participation in the QA procedures of the study programmes is achieved through the evaluation questionnaires that they fill to assess the quality of teaching for each course. The EEC has been informed that student feedback is collected every semester and results are assessed by the Heads of Departments for all study programmes according to Greek law. Additional questionnaires are designed and used for some postgraduate programmes to provide more specific information on quality indicators. The Institution is currently developing an electronic system for the student feedback evaluation process.

The EEC has realised that the international mobility of students and staff (either outgoing or incoming) is rather low. International mobility (including placement) is not properly integrated in the structure of the programs. Opportunities for international mobility are currently promoted by the UNIPI's public and International office and students can apply to participate.

Therefore, the EEC believes that the Institution and the Departmental units could establish a strategy aiming at the improvement of international mobility and, where appropriate, placement opportunities. To this end, an ERASMUS Liaison office can be set-up to efficiently coordinate student and staff mobility activities at institutional level and to promote active participation in the ERASMUS Plus Program.

*Please decide in respect to the specific evaluation area (&4.2):*

	Tick
<b>Worthy of merit</b>	
<b>Positive evaluation</b>	X
<b>Partially positive evaluation</b>	
<b>Negative evaluation</b>	

*Justify your rating:*

### **4.3 Teaching and learning - Assessment by students**

*Please comment on:*

- whether multiple and coherent learning paths are provided according to the needs of students in the Institution's Departments / Faculties
- how proper guidance and support is offered to students by the Departments / Faculties' teaching staff
- whether students are informed clearly and in detail regarding the strategy of evaluation that is implemented for their programme of study, the exams or other methods of assessment they will be subjected to, what is expected of them and which criteria will be applied for the evaluation of their performance
- whether there is a formal procedure for addressing complaints and objections by students in the Departments / Faculties of the Institution

As stated on page 196 of the IER produced by QAU/MODIP, in general, no multiple learning paths are provided by the Institution to meet special needs of students, such as, physical or learning disabilities. However, some facilities are available to accommodate students with special needs, including those with limited mobility. The EEC feels that more should be done to accommodate students with special needs, such as, electronic maps to aid students with vision problems.

Students are basically informed by the teaching staff regarding methods of course assessment and evaluation of their performance for the respective course. The EEC notes that this information is communicated to students either verbally at the beginning of the course or uploaded on the e-class platform of the respective course.



Based on meetings with students during the onsite visit, the EEC is informed that detailed information is given to students regarding preparation of their work, peer-review and self-assessment methods. In some cases (e.g. Department of Finance and Banking Management), students are provided with very detailed course outlines including information on specific type of assessments. However, it was also stated that mid-term assessment of students is used only in some cases, many members of academic staff still do not use e-class for the delivery of their course whereas staff involved in Computer Science related subjects make extensive use of this facility. It was also stated that “a number of academics continue to use hand-written notes taken from textbooks”. On the other hand, many of the students expressed their preference “to use technology-based facilities for their courses”.

The EEC feels that continuous student assessment and not only a terminal examination will enhance the quality of the learning process and will help identify students with weak or poor performance at an early stage.

According to the IER (page 196), guidance and support are offered to students by the teaching staff in three ways: (i) during lectures, (ii) use of e-mails (iii) through direct contact with the students (formally or informally, during office hours). The EEC believes that there are alternative and well-defined ways for providing students with guidance and support at both group and personal level. Examples of guidance offered at group level include the encouragement by the Departments’ teaching staff to widen the learning experience with multiple learning processes or offer reward to students for active participation and initiatives. The EEC would like to emphasize the importance of working together with students providing guidance to project work and support for personal issues. It is recommended that each Department appoints on a yearly basis one member of the teaching staff as “Non-Academic Student Advisor”, who can counsel students on personal non-educational issues.

Finally, worth mentioning is that Heads of Departments and Coordinators of study programs are dealing with students complaints and / or objections by students in their respective Departments. During the visit, the EEC met with student representatives, all of whom expressed their overall satisfaction with the levels of support they receive from faculty. They felt that no specific need was identified for a formal process of addressing such problems outside specific Departments.

The EEC has seen no evidence to suggest that the institution of “Students’ Advocate” is in operation at the Institution (this aims to intervene between students and staff and to assure adherence to regulations and legal status). Establishment of the “students advocate” institution should be created as soon as possible.

<i>Please decide in respect to the specific evaluation area (&amp;4.3):</i>	Tick
<b>Worthy of merit</b>	
<b>Positive evaluation</b>	X
<b>Partially positive evaluation</b>	
<b>Negative evaluation</b>	

*Justify your rating:*

The “student-centered learning” approach employed across the various study-programmes is commendable and delivers many and good quality services.

The EEC would like to encourage the teaching staff at the institutional level to further explore the development of modern teaching and assessment methods based on a continuous student assessment process and making use of the advantages of the e-class facilities.

Furthermore, the EEC would like to emphasize the importance of working together with students providing guidance to project work and support on personal issues. It is recommended that each Department appoints on an annual basis one member of the teaching staff as “Senior Tutor or Academic Advisor”, who can counsel students on personal non-educational issues.

#### ***4.4 Admission of students, progression and recognition of studies***

*Please comment on:*

- whether the procedures and criteria for admission to the second and third cycle of studies are implemented with consistency and transparency
- whether there are clear and distinct procedures within the Departments/Faculties, as regards recognition of higher education degrees, periods of study and knowledge acquired at an earlier stage
- whether there are clear and distinct procedures of recognition of study periods and prior learning (including the recognition of non-formal and informal learning)
- whether there are clear procedures in place regarding the cooperation of other Institutions with national ENIC/NARIC centres for ensuring coherent recognition and mobility among programmes within / among Institution (s)
- whether students are provided with detailed information (e.g. Diploma Supplement) regarding the degrees conferred to them, the achieved learning outcomes as well as the framework, the level and the content of studies they successfully completed
- whether the Institution has in place processes and tools to collect, monitor and use information regarding student progression

The admission process of students to undergraduate studies is entirely controlled for all Greek HEIs by the national entrance examination process administered by the Ministry of Education. Admission requirements and criteria for post-graduate study-programmes are published on the Institution’s website.

The recognition of qualifications obtained at foreign Higher Educational Institutes falls under the responsibility of the National Academic Recognition Information Centre (ΔΟΑΤΑΠ - the Hellenic NARIC) which operates at national level.

Based on the IER (page 198), the General Assembly of each individual Department has the authority of recognition of study periods and prior learning, including mobility among programmes (e.g., Erasmus mobility). This process is carried out based on a case-by-case approach following the procedures defined in the relevant legislation. The EEC recommends that clear guidelines are developed and applied at the institutional level to facilitate the process of recognition of study periods and prior learning.

On page 198 of the IER, it is stated that the Diploma Supplement is implemented across the Institution. The EEC believes that this is an important step taken by the University as it contributes to both the employability of graduates and the visibility of the study programmes.

The Institution has not yet implemented any systematic procedures for monitoring the progress of students during their studies. The EEC has been informed that the QAU/MODIP is in the process of developing an Information System for Internal QA purposes. The EEC recommends that QA Information System should aim to collect and analyse student progress data in a systematic and meaningful way, calculate quality indices and contribute towards the overall monitoring and improvement of students' performance.

<i>Please decide in respect to the specific evaluation area (&amp;4.4):</i>	Tick
<b>Worthy of merit</b>	
<b>Positive evaluation</b>	X
<b>Partially positive evaluation</b>	
<b>Negative evaluation</b>	

*Justify your rating:*

The EEC proposes that the QUA/MODIP undertakes the development of an Information System and relevant initiatives linked to the QA system, with respect to improving the quality of data and analysis to obtain more accurate picture of student progression and associated trends.

#### ***4.5 Quality Assurance as regards the teaching staff***

*Please comment on:*

- how it is guaranteed that the vacancy notices and recruitment of teaching staff include procedures which provide assurance that all new teaching staff members have at least the basic teaching skills
- opportunities offered to the teaching staff for their professional/scientific advancement
- how potential weaknesses of the teaching staff are identified as regards the delivery of their teaching courses
- the Institution's procedures for the support of new teaching staff as regards the teaching and evaluation methods
- how scientific activity is assessed and encouraged among the teaching staff in order to strengthen the connection between education and research
- the procedures in place so that the teaching staff members receive the necessary feedback on their personal performance as well as on the opinion of students
- whether a regulatory framework is in place for the investigation of disciplinary and academic misconduct of the teaching staff

According to the IER, pages 199-201, the recruitment procedures for teaching staff are the same across all institutions and follow the provisions of the relevant legislation. The evaluation process of the candidates is managed via the electronic system APELLA while, the minutes arising from the completion of each stage of the selection process are posted on the website of each specific Department. The teaching skills of the candidates are

usually evaluated in an open seminar in which each candidate is asked to present part of their research activity. Recommendation letters and/ or student evaluations of previous relevant work experience of the candidate are also considered to ensure a fair selection process.

Teaching staff in place are encouraged to establish research collaborations with other local or international universities and institutions as well as undertake teaching at other universities for short periods via the ERASMUS program. Furthermore the University of Piraeus Research Centre is funding the participation of teaching staff in scientific conferences, seminars, workshops etc. However, during the onsite visit, the EEC has been informed that such opportunities for personal development are rather limited. For example, the extended examination periods three times a year (each period may last from 6 to 8 weeks) not only creates heavy grading load on teaching staff due to the lack of available teaching / research assistants but also does not allow enough time for research activity (e.g. visits abroad). The institutions of higher education should not become exam centers but rather devote their energy and resources to teaching, learning and research.

New teaching staff feel the pressure of having to operate within strict constraints, such as, an uncertain academic calendar and a heavy teaching load as a result of a specific Department being understaffed (for example, people retiring and no new appointments made). It is also noted that no rewards are given for teaching or research excellence. The EEC has not seen any evidence of formal procedures for the support of new teaching staff regarding teaching and evaluation methods, neither at departmental nor at institutional level. New teaching staff rely on their own initiatives regarding personal advancement in terms of teaching abilities and skills.

Despite the enforced legislative environment, the EEC would like to encourage the teaching staff to make every effort to participate in educational seminars, scientific conferences and mobility programs in view of promoting their professional/scientific educational abilities and skills. With reference to new teaching staff, the EEC would like to suggest that the Institution develops training and/or professional development programs to enhance the teaching skills and capabilities of new teaching staff. In addition, a mentoring system for new staff could positively contribute in their personal and research development. This is normal practice in most world-class universities in Europe and USA.

The procedure of identifying potential weaknesses of the teaching staff seems to be mainly based on (i) the analysis of results from the student evaluations for each taught course and (ii) the learning outcomes achieved by students each semester (the awarded grades). The results of this analysis are communicated by the Head of each Department to the relevant teaching staff at the end of each semester in order to provide feedback on personal performance, identify potential problems and improve deficiencies. Feedback is given to the Departmental Assembly by the corresponding IEG/ OMEA which also makes suggestions for qualitative improvements and possible corrective measures. To this end, the EEC notes that this procedure can be enhanced so that the findings of each IEG/OMEA and relevant Departmental recommendations are reviewed by the QAU/ MODIP which operates at the university level.

An identified flaw of method (i) above is that a relatively small number of students participate in the evaluation process. The EEC encourages the university management to think of ways of increasing student participation in the QA process.

It is noted that, unfortunately, there is no formal appraisal system for providing the necessary feedback on staff personal development both in terms of teaching and research. The EEC recommends that a formal appraisal system is in place for evaluating individual staff performance by more senior academics on an annual basis. This would significantly enhance staff personal development and career advancement.

The EEC has been informed that the teaching staff are encouraged to participate in research projects. However, this seems to be happening at the individual level. Based on the Greek legislation, the establishment and operation of research teams (laboratories) at School and/ or Departmental level will enhance the chances of successful participation in research projects and significantly contribute in developing synergies between education and research. The EEC encourages the university management to promote structural changes in this direction.

Finally, it is noted that a regulatory framework is in place for the investigation of disciplinary and academic misconduct of the teaching staff and is governed by the provisions of the current legislation. There is a reference to the framework in the IER- page 201.

<i>Please decide in respect to the specific evaluation area (&amp;4.5):</i>	Tick
<b>Worthy of merit</b>	
<b>Positive evaluation</b>	X
<b>Partially positive evaluation</b>	
<b>Negative evaluation</b>	

*Justify your rating:*

Based on the recorded data and to the extent that relevant information has become available during the onsite meetings, the EEC finds it difficult to make specific comments on the effectiveness of the Institution's QA procedures with regards to the teaching staff. The EEC recommends that quality indices and KPIs are developed, monitored and used to assess the university's performance in this area.

#### ***4.6 Learning resources and student support***

*Please comment on:*

- whether there are procedures for the systematic monitoring, evaluation, review and improvement of the appropriateness and effectiveness of supporting services available to students
- the available support services in regard to Libraries, Information systems and infrastructure
- the procedure in place for offering individual assistance (counselling and tutoring) to students

The EEC had the opportunity to review how the students make use of some of these services. The only means of evaluating the appropriateness of supporting services available to students seem to be via the completed student questionnaires at the end of each semester. Overall, students were satisfied with the quality of the provided services

and support. However, they noted that better workshop facilities with modern and working lab equipment are needed.

It is worth noting that, in areas identified as in need of improvement, such as access to research journals and useful databases, better and wider use of the eClass platform by the teaching faculty, the Institution did not provide clearly formulated plans for remedial action.

Library:

The library provides free access to all members of the academic community. Students can access the University Services, outside of the campus, using a VPN service.

The services provided are described in the IER, page 202 and are evaluated by students as part of the QA framework. Results are fed back to the library in order to make improvements.

The library is a member of the Network for University Libraries. During the last year, subscription for access to journals via the x-link has been terminated by the state due to the financial crisis. The EEC proposes that the universities in Greece could come to an agreement at national level to buy useful specialist databases (e.g. in the field of Finance) for mutual use and research benefit of their staff and students.

Information systems:

The Information Systems operating at UNIPI includes (i) the Student Management Information System (management of student data, enrolment and student progression), (ii) the Financial Management Information System (monitoring payroll, management of accounts), (iii) the Management Information System for Admin Support (currently under development), (iv) the Library Information System, (v) e-class (electronic learning platform) and (vi) MODIP (management of quality indices, system under development).

According to the recorded data, an e-learning system operates under the supervision of Academic Departments, providing e-material and distance-learning services to students. Special software is also used in specific departments, as appropriate.

During meetings with students, the EEC was informed that the e-class platform was mainly used by faculty from specific Departments, such as, the Department of European Studies). The EEC encourages the wider use of the electronic platform and other modern teaching and assessment methods via e-learning tools to provide qualitative improvement in student support services.

Overall, the EEC identifies an obvious need for the university to establish procedures, such that, data relating to learning resources and student support can be collected in a consistent way, and be electronically linked to MODIP, so as to enable the systematic review and production of relevant information, statistical analysis and management of quality indices. It is also advisable that the university's Information System incorporates a system for the management of data relating to graduates.

UNIPI has a small medical facility where a medical doctor and a nurse attend to emergencies or provide routine medical care. In addition, a small psychological support unit can provide assistance to students in need. Cases requiring additional care are referred to outside the university facilities.

Teacher-student communication at UNIPI is achieved in two ways, namely, personal (in private) communication with the students and/ or communication via e-mail. Personal assistance is provided during tutorials and laboratory/practical training. As staff numbers

are decreasing over time, while the number of students is increasing, may lead to the reduction of useful time for personal contact between staff and students.

The EEC would like to emphasize the importance of working together with students providing guidance to project work and support on personal issues.

The Employment and Career Center provides counselling on career paths to students. Although understaffed, the Employment and Career Center devotes a considerable amount of energy to secure employment to graduates. The EEC would like to encourage the further development and activity of the Center in organising the alumni group and strengthening the institution's links with the local community of Piraeus.

<i>Please decide in respect to the specific evaluation area (&amp;4.6):</i>	Tick
<b>Worthy of merit</b>	
<b>Positive evaluation</b>	X
<b>Partially positive evaluation</b>	
<b>Negative evaluation</b>	

*Justify your rating:*

Based on the recorded data and on the experience of the site visit, the EEC members believe that there are adequate support services with regards to student support. It is the view of the EEC that the staff (even with excessive teacher-student ratios) seem to be doing a commendable job to meet the needs of their students and to provide a good learning experience operating within very strict constraints imposed by the inefficient regulatory environment of higher education in Greece and the associated dramatic reductions in university budget allocations.

#### ***4.7 Information Systems for Recording and Analysing Data and Indicators***

*Please comment on:*

- whether the Institution possesses reliable means for collecting, analysing and utilizing valid information in respect to key performance indicators, the profile of the student population and student progression, success and drop-out rates
- whether the Institution possesses reliable means for collecting, analysing and utilizing valid information regarding its other functions and activities
- whether the Institution collects information about student satisfaction with their programmes of study and the career paths offered to graduates
- whether the Institution seeks comparison with other similar establishments within and beyond the European Higher Education Area, with a view to developing self-awareness and finding ways to improve its operation

Based on the answers provided in the internal report (pages 206-207) there does not seem to be a system that records and monitors student performance and other qualitative variables over time. The only reference made by MODIP was about the evaluations done by the undergraduate and post-graduate students which are recorded by the OMEA of each unit. Students complete an end-of-semester evaluation of professors, the

infrastructure and the administrative offices of the university, as referenced in the IER on page 206. It does not reference the method of documentation and monitoring of such information. It is not clear if such data are recorded over time in a comparative statistical format.

Data from student evaluations should be collected and maintained over time by the various OMEA units and made available to the administration, faculty and students, as it is done at other institutions. This is an important variable for evaluation of quality assurance and progress.

As referenced above, and in the MODIP internal report on page 206 and based on conversations with students and faculty, there is a student evaluation process for all courses. The problem seems to be that the information is not made available to all the university constituents so that it is used in a manner that will promote more vigorously qualitative improvements. Based on what we were told, the student evaluations are given to the President of the academic unit who provides it to the faculty who teaches such a course and then passed on to OMEA, as referenced above. The students never see those results to help them make better course selection choices. This inhibits the qualitative improvement of learning in many different ways. Information ought to be available, after it has been discussed with the professor in question, to all constituencies that have an interest in such.

Based on the MODIP internal evaluation report (page 207), the Institution has no process in place to compare performance with other institutions with a view to developing self-awareness and finding ways to improve its operation.

Student evaluations ought to be supplemented with faculty peer evaluations from other units to provide a better perspective on course and material delivery. Professors would have other important factors in mind, other than those done by students that may influence qualitative improvements. This process can be applied at random and not for every course and every semester, to avoid excessive use of faculty time devoted to such tasks. Most of the time, this type of evaluation is to suggest to faculty experiencing some difficulties alternative methods for improvement by peers who have a record of good performance.

*Please decide in respect to the specific evaluation area (&4.7):*

	Tick
<b>Worthy of merit</b>	
<b>Positive evaluation</b>	X
<b>Partially positive evaluation</b>	
<b>Negative evaluation</b>	

*Justify your rating:*

It seems that important qualitative institutional and teaching information is collected from the primary stakeholder, the students in every course and every semester. This is a great accomplishment. We suggest sharing this information with other constituencies so they may be able to use them appropriately for qualitative improvements. In addition, consider doing faculty peer evaluations.



#### ***4.8 Dissemination of information to stakeholders***

*Please comment on:*

- how the Institution sees to the publicizing of information on the programmes offered, the expected learning outcomes, the degrees awarded, the teaching, learning and assessment procedures it uses and the learning opportunities it offers to students
- whether the information regarding the Institution's offered programmes of study is available in English or in other languages
- whether the teaching staff's CVs are included in the publicized information, both in Greek and in English

The University has a core website for the whole institution in addition to separate websites for individual Units and relevant centers. Based on MODIP's report (page 208), these online sites are updated regularly.

Based on MODIP's report (page 208) and a visual review of the site, they present the online information in Greek and for some units in English, too. Since the University attracts international students, the information should be available in English and/or other relevant languages. This would enhance the institution's internationalization by attracting more international students and international faculty, through exchanges or full participation in the institution's programs.

Based on MODIP's report, most of the faculty have CVs online in Greek and English with the standard information of their academic profile and research and publications. Some of the relevant information is also available through the national system of APELLA.

However, our site visit indicates that the information is incomplete and some of it is under construction. We recommend that more information is available to visitors of the site on programs' curriculum, description of courses, and details on faculty teaching such courses. The website should be made more informative and user friendly.

Unfortunately, when we attempted to get on to the University website, the virus protection software (NORTON) would not allow entrance into the site referring to DANGER. We assume there may have been some technical problem at that time. But the University should verify that our problem is not a permanent issue. We did attempt with a different computer in a different virus scanner and were able to examine the websites (Greek and English versions).

Ideally, all teaching full-time and part-time staff should have an online CV and webpage which can easily be accessed by anyone who has an interest in the institution and its studies. These CVs and webpages should be in at least two languages given the multilingual environment of Greece. The same should be done for presenting the required curricula for each program with description of the courses taught so that the visitor is fully informed of the offerings.

Please decide in respect to the specific evaluation area (&4.8):

	Tick
<b>Worthy of merit</b>	
<b>Positive evaluation</b>	
<b>Partially positive evaluation</b>	X
<b>Negative evaluation</b>	

*Justify your rating:*

The websites we visited were of limited use to the visitor in terms of getting important information on the curriculum, requirements of study, expectation for completing programs of study, individual course descriptions and easily accessing CV information of faculty for each departmental unit and for each "School." There is information but it is not sufficient nor well-presented using today's standards of international university websites. One can look for website examples of USA or other European institutions for ideas for enhancement.

#### ***4.9 Continuous monitoring and periodic review of the study programmes***

*Please comment on:*

- the procedure followed with regard to assessment and periodic review of the contents of study programmes
- whether this procedure takes into account the changing needs of society
- whether this procedure takes into consideration the findings emanating from monitoring the graduates' career paths
- the procedure with which the reviews take into account the students' work load, the progress rate and completion of studies
- whether this procedure takes into account the cutting edge research activities in that particular discipline
- whether the involvement of students and other stakeholders is secured in the revision of the programmes

As per our discussions and based on comments in the MODIP report, the assessment responsibility falls to the committees of the specific programs and the units/departments of the University. The assessments were based on their internal evaluations and the recommendations of the external evaluations committees of the individual programs. The MODIP report suggests that these recommendations are taken into account by individual units in the short term and even on an annual basis. It is not clear, however, how the information is used in a coherent way university wide.

University activities of different types have an impact on society directly or indirectly, as professors get involved in research and lecture internally and externally on the needs of society and the application of their research to local and national issues. Additionally, some offer their services in public forums such as lectures and seminars. Others are appointed government officials, members of public committees or consultants that contribute to social wellbeing as they disseminate important and valuable information. We are not aware of the process of specific documentation of all of these activities.

We do not have any specific evidence regarding the monitoring of the graduate students' career paths. The University has a Career Office that provides great career related services but we are not aware of possible monitoring of student career paths.

Based on the MODIP internal report, the work load and comments relating to such by the students is determined from the student evaluations and the relevant questions in the questionnaire handed out. This includes the post-graduate programs.

The assessment procedure takes into consideration the research activities of the faculty in the individual academic units and reports such data. We are not aware if there is a separate special designation for cutting edge research activities.

On pages 7-8 of the MODIP report, there is a reference to the different University stakeholders participating in the development of the assessment. The list referenced includes student representatives, faculty, administrators, etc. We assume these committees may make recommendations for revising the programs taking into account the internal and external evaluations' recommendations. We hope that is the case.

<i>Please decide in respect to the specific evaluation area (&amp;4.9):</i>	Tick
<b>Worthy of merit</b>	
<b>Positive evaluation</b>	X
<b>Partially positive evaluation</b>	
<b>Negative evaluation</b>	

*Justify your rating:*

UNIFI makes a serious effort to monitor and review the academic programs since the individual program evaluations were completed. The process used has to be clarified and made a permanent procedure for continuous improvement. It ought to be properly identified so that different UNIFI constituencies know where to go for information and suggestions for qualitative improvements.

#### ***4.10 Periodic external evaluation***

*Please comment on:*

- the procedure already planned by the Institution in order to deal with the observations of the Institutional External evaluation
- how the anticipated implementation of plans by Departments / Faculties is monitored in response to any comments included in their external evaluation and in the accreditation of their programmes

We do not have any specific evidence of a formal and specific strategy in place by the University for dealing with the outcome of the Institutional External evaluation. It is however noteworthy that the overall culture and attitude of faculty towards the institutional external evaluation process was very positive. Faculty were well informed about the process and were ready to assist the EEC in the completion of its task.

The external evaluation of all Departments of the Institution and their study programmes has been completed during the first round of the HQA reviews which has taken up to a

period of three years. Since then, the Departments are in various stages of the planning and implementation process of the more feasible external review comments and suggested recommendations. For example, the Business Administration Department has successfully implemented a recommendation by the external review to reduce the number of courses offered by the study program. The aim of the external evaluation process was for Departments to develop procedures in place for recording, reviewing and monitoring the quality of their study programmes. The EEC would like to suggest that the QAU/MODIP makes a serious effort to monitor and review the results and recommendations of the external evaluations for Departments/ study programmes and develop a permanent procedure for the systematic monitoring of implemented changes and for continuous improvement. This procedure ought to be clarified so that different UNIPI stakeholders can make good use of relevant information to achieve qualitative improvements for the institution.

<i>Please decide in respect to the specific evaluation area (&amp;4.10):</i>	Tick
<b>Worthy of merit</b>	
<b>Positive evaluation</b>	X
<b>Partially positive evaluation</b>	
<b>Negative evaluation</b>	

*Justify your rating:*

It is noteworthy that the overall culture and attitude of faculty towards the institutional external evaluation process was very positive. However, we do not have specific evidence of a formal and specific strategy in place by the University for dealing with the outcome of the Institutional External evaluation. On the other hand, Departments are in various stages of planning and implementing some of the more feasible comments and suggested recommendations by their external evaluation reviews.

#### ***4.11 Internal System of Quality Assurance – Conclusions and recommendations***

*Please complete the following sections regarding the **internal system of quality assurance**:*

- *Underline specific positive points:*
- **QA system.** The QA policy is implemented through the internal QA system of the Institution which is still under construction. The system is operated and used by the Quality Assurance Unit (QAU/MODIP) and the Internal Evaluation Groups (IEGs/OMEAs) at both institutional and departmental levels, respectively. Based on information presented on pages 7-8 of the IER, there is a reference to the different university stakeholders participating in the development of the QA system: student representatives, faculty, administrators, etc. It seems that important qualitative institutional and teaching information is collected from the students in every course and every semester. This is a great accomplishment. UNIPI makes a serious effort to

monitor and review the academic study programmes since the individual external programme evaluations were completed during the first part of the HQA reviews (2011-14).

- **Students' involvement in the QA process.** The involvement of students in the QA process, the primary stakeholder, is at departmental level mainly through their participation in the Internal Evaluation Groups (IEGs/OMEAs). They provide feedback on teaching quality, course delivery and study programs via the student evaluation questionnaires. The Institution is currently developing an electronic system for this process.
- **External stakeholders' involvement in the QA process.** An informal involvement of stakeholders outside of the institution, like employers and local businesses, is practiced by the Institution. UNIPI is an outward-looking institution in terms of links with the professional world and is in the process of developing flexible ways of working with the external community, e.g. links with USA Embassy, Municipality of Piraeus. The overall assessment of the EEC is that there are some mechanisms established which allow stakeholders from local industry to provide feedback for the revision and update of the academic curricula.
- **Student guidance and support.** Based on the recorded data and on the experience of the site visit, the EEC members believe that there are adequate support services with regards to student support. The “student-centered learning” approach employed across the various study-programs is commendable and delivers many and good quality services to students. During the visit, we met with student representatives and we were impressed as most of them praised their professors and expressed their overall satisfaction with the levels of support they receive from faculty. The staff (even with excessive teacher-student ratios) seem to be doing a commendable job to meet the needs of their students and to provide a good learning experience operating within very strict constraints imposed by the state and the associated considerable reductions in university budget allocations. Some departments offer scholarships from the revenue generated of postgraduate study programmes. The Employment and Career Center provides counselling on career paths to students. Although understaffed, the Center devotes a considerable amount of energy to secure employment to graduates, operates efficiently and promotes the links with industry. The Public and International Relations Office promotes the internationalisation of study programmes and student exchanges. Finally, the EEC notes that the Rector and Deputy Rectors provide continuous support to students despite the strict legislative university framework and their efforts seem to focus on the institution's continuous qualitative improvement.

• *Underline specific negative points:*

- **QA system and students' involvement in the QA process.** As far as the EEC can determine, a detailed guide for the implementation of the QA system at the institutional level is not yet available. There does not seem to be a system for recording and monitoring student performance and other qualitative variables over time in a comparative statistical format. It was not clear that there is a unified and consistent strategy for reaching these goals or for monitoring progress towards them. The participation of students' representatives in the work programmes is ensured at the IEG/OMEA level which is concerned with the evaluation of programs and in Departmental Assembly which approves actions for academic improvement. However, there are no student representatives at the QAU/MODIP level. It is also

noted that the problem with the student evaluation process for all courses seems to be that the information is not made available to all the university internal stakeholders so that it is used in a manner that will promote more vigorously qualitative improvements. For example, students never see those results to help them make informed course selection choices.

- **International mobility.** The EEC has realised that the international mobility of students and staff (either outgoing or incoming) is rather low. International mobility (including student placement) is not properly integrated in the structure of the academic programs. Opportunities for international mobility are currently promoted by the UNIPI's Public and International Relations Office and students can apply to participate.
- **Students with special needs.** In general, no multiple learning paths are provided by the Institution to meet special needs of students, such as, physical or learning disabilities. It is noted that some facilities are available to accommodate students' limited mobility.
- **Learning resources and student support.** Although, in general, students are satisfied with the quality of the provided services and support, they noted that better workshop facilities with modern and functional lab equipment are needed. Other areas identified as in need of improvement, include: lack of building space and facilities and human capital to service the very large number of students, over-crowded classes, lack of sufficient access to professional and research journals and useful databases to support research activity, insufficient use of the e-class platform by the teaching faculty, etc. In these cases, the Institution did not provide clearly formulated plans for remedial action.
- **Decision making process.** There seems to be lack of significant synergies between Departmental units and Schools and the Institution in terms of resources and decision making. The role of Deans seems to be under-estimated as there is centralisation of decision making in management and finance resulting in a divide between the academic programme decision making and the allocation of financial resources. For example, if a need arises to teach a specific course/ programme, the corresponding funds are not easily identified or approved, income generated by one postgraduate programme cannot be allocated elsewhere according to arising needs. This approach impacts the learning process, is less productive, more costly and hinders internal collaboration in teaching and research. Although UNIPI initiated the process of making use of the HQA external evaluation reports and reviews (2011-14) to achieve qualitative improvements per department and academic study programmes, there is lack of an institutional implementation process for incorporating feasible recommendations.
- **QA procedures for teaching staff.** During the onsite visit, it has become evident that opportunities for personal development of teaching staff are limited and there is a concern with regards the lack of institutional procedures to provide support in this direction. For example, the extended examination periods three times a year (each period may last from 6 to 8 weeks) not only create heavy grading load on teaching staff due to the lack of available teaching / research assistants but also does not allow enough time for the development of research activity (e.g. visits abroad, attending summer seminars). Institutions of higher education should not become exam centers but rather devote their energy and resources to teaching, learning and research. New teaching staff feel the pressure of having to operate within strict constraints, such as, an uncertain academic calendar or a heavy teaching load as a result of a department being seriously understaffed (people retire and no new appointments made). It is also

noted that no rewards are given for teaching or research excellence. The EEC has not seen any evidence of formal procedures for the support of new teaching staff neither at departmental nor at institutional level. Furthermore, the lack of institutional rules and regulations on certain aspects of university operations coupled with the ever changing laws relating to the Greek higher education system creates an environment where academics feel restricted or even threatened with legal actions for decisions relating to their duties.

- **Dissemination of information to stakeholders.** Based on a visual review of the university's core website and other sites for individual Units, the EEC notes that these were of limited use to the visitor in terms of getting important information on the curriculum, requirements of study, expectations for completing programmes of study, individual course descriptions and easily accessing CV information of faculty for each departmental unit and for each "School." There is insufficient information which is not well presented using today's standards of international university.

- *Make your suggestions for further development of the positive points:*

- **Teaching and assessment methods.** The EEC would like to encourage the teaching staff at the institutional level to further explore the development of modern teaching and assessment methods making use of the advantages of the e-class facilities. In addition, the use and practice of continuous student assessment will enhance the quality of the learning process and will help identify students with weak or poor performance at an early stage.
- **Student guidance and support.** The EEC recommends alternative and well-defined ways for providing students with guidance and support at both group and personal level. Examples of guidance offered at group level include the encouragement by the Departments' teaching staff to widen the learning experience with multiple learning processes or offer reward to students for active participation and initiatives. The EEC would like to emphasize the importance of working together with students providing guidance to project work and support for personal issues. It is recommended that UNIPI creates the role of academic advisor to monitor students' academic progress and monitor the performance of weak students or their "problems" on personal non-educational issues. In addition, the EEC would like to see the institution of "Students' Advocate" be established at the university level; this aims to intervene between students and staff and to assure adherence to regulations and legal status.
- **Teaching staff evaluation.** The procedure of identifying potential weaknesses of the teaching staff seems to be mainly based on the analysis of results from the student evaluations for each taught course. An identified flaw of this method is that a relatively small number of students participate in the evaluation process. The EEC encourages the university to think of ways of increasing student participation in the QA process. Based on the results of student evaluations, feedback is given to the Departmental Assembly by the corresponding IEG/ OMEA which also makes suggestions for qualitative improvements and possible corrective measures. To this end, the EEC notes that this procedure can be enhanced so that the findings of each IEG/OMEA and relevant Departmental recommendations are reviewed and incorporated by the institution's QAU/ MODIP.

- *Make your suggestions on needed steps for improvement:*

- **Develop a QA culture.** The EEC identifies the need to further develop the QA culture among all academic and administrative staff so that all units participate productively in the internal system of QA and recommends that students become more involved in

the process at the departmental and institutional level. It is proposed that the QAU/MODIP organizes occasional internal seminars/ workshops to inform staff about the QA progress of the various departments and the Institution itself. In addition, the QAU/MODIP is encouraged to organize conferences/ events to disseminate information and cultivate the QA culture not only among its staff and students but also extend this to the industry and local community. The EEC recommends that UNIPI enhances and formalizes the mechanisms of the QA system to allow all stakeholders (internal and external) to provide constructive feedback for the revision and update of the curricula of the study programs. It is also advisable that data recorded by the IEG/OMEA of each unit from student evaluations is maintained over time in a comparative statistical format and then this information is provided to the administration and faculty and is also made available to students, as it is done at other institutions. This is an important variable for evaluation of quality assurance and progress. Finally, it is noted that UNIPI is making a serious effort to monitor and review the academic programs since the individual program evaluations were completed in 2014. The process used has to be clarified and made a permanent procedure for continuous improvement. It ought to be properly identified so that different UNIPI stakeholders know where to look for information and suggestions for qualitative improvements.

- **International mobility.** The EEC recommends that the Institution and Departmental units establish a strategy aiming at the improvement of international mobility and, where appropriate, placement opportunities. A specialised office at institutional level may be established in this respect, an ERASMUS Liaison office, to efficiently promote and coordinate student and faculty exchanges via the ERASMUS and ERASMUS Plus Program.
- **Student progression and recognition of studies.** The process of recognition of study periods and prior learning, including mobility among programmes (e.g., Erasmus mobility) is currently carried out by individual Departments based on a case-by-case approach following the procedures defined in the relevant legislation. The EEC recommends that clear guidelines are developed and applied at the institutional level to facilitate the process of recognition of study periods and prior learning. It is noted that the QAU/MODIP is in the process of developing an Information System for internal QA purposes. It is advisable that this QA Information System should aim to collect and analyse student progress data in a systematic and meaningful way, calculate quality indices and contribute towards the overall monitoring and improvement of students' performance.
- **QA procedures for teaching staff and quality of teaching.** Despite the enforced legislative environment, the EEC would like to encourage the teaching staff to make every effort to participate in educational seminars, scientific conferences and mobility programs in view of promoting their professional/scientific, educational abilities and skills. Similarly, it is advisable that UNIPI introduces a training program for doctoral students so that they could be used more effectively as Teaching or Research Assistants and Teaching Fellows with some appropriate financial reward. With reference to new teaching staff, the EEC would like to suggest that the Institution organizes training and/or professional development programs to develop their teaching skills. In addition, a mentoring system for new staff could positively contribute to their personal and research development. This is normal practice in most world-class universities in Europe and USA.  
With regard to improvements in teaching quality, the EEC suggests that, student evaluations ought to be supplemented with faculty peer evaluations from the same or



other units to provide a better perspective on course and material delivery. A member of teaching staff may be asked to observe the teaching of a colleague and provide feedback. Professors may offer alternative methods for improvement or may have other important factors in mind that may influence qualitative improvements. This process can be applied at random and not for every course and every semester. Finally, there is a concern regarding the lack of formal appraisal system of providing feedback on individual staff performance and development both in terms of teaching and research. The EEC recommends the use of an organised process of faculty development, for example, introducing a system of annual or bi-annual appraisal of academics and administrative staff. In addition, it is suggested that quality indices and KPIs should be developed, monitored and used to assess the university's performance in this area.

- **Strengthening the links between education and research.** The EEC recommends that, based on the Greek legislation, the establishment and operation of research teams (laboratories) at School and/ or Departmental units will enhance the chances of successful participation in research projects and significantly contribute to developing synergies between education and research. The EEC encourages the university to promote changes in this direction. It is also advisable that UNIPI creates guidelines for promoting faculty publications in peer-reviewed academic journals.
- **Learning resources and student support.** The library is a member of the Network for University Libraries. During the last year, subscription for access to journals via the x-link has been terminated by the State due to the financial crisis. The EEC proposes that the universities in Greece could come to an agreement at national level to buy useful specialist databases (e.g. in Finance) for mutual use and research benefit of their staff and students. During meetings with students, the EEC was informed that the e-class platform was not widely used by faculty. The EEC encourages the wider use of the electronic platform and other modern teaching and assessment methods via e-learning tools to provide qualitative student support services. Overall, the EEC identifies an obvious need for the university to establish procedures, such that, data relating to learning resources and student support can be collected in a consistent way, and be electronically linked to QAU/ MODIP, so as to enable the systematic review and production of relevant information, statistical analysis and management of quality indices. It is also advisable that the university's Information System incorporates a system for the management of data relating to graduates. To this end, the EEC would like to encourage the further development and activity of the Employment and Career Center in organising the alumni group and strengthening the institution's links with the local community of Piraeus.
- **Dissemination of information to stakeholders.** Ideally, all teaching staff (full-time and part-time) should have an online CV and webpage which can easily be accessed by anyone interested in the institution and its studies. These CVs and webpages should be in at least two languages given the multilingual environment of Greece. The same should be done for presenting the required curricula for each program and description of the courses taught so that the visitor is fully informed of the offerings.

## **5. OPERATION OF THE CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION OF THE INSTITUTION**

### **5.1 Central Administration Services of the Institution**

Please comment on:

- The operation of the central administration services of the Institution in regard to the:
  - Special Account for Research Funds (SARF)
  - Financial services
  - Supplies department
  - Technical services
  - IT services
  - Student support services
  - Employment and Career Centre (ECC)
  - Public/ International relations department
  - Foreign language services
  - Social and cultural activities
  - Halls of residence and refectory services
  - Institution's library

The IER of UNIPI provides a detailed description of the above referenced Central Administration Services with an abundance of statistical tables in every category. Additional material and information was provided during the meeting presentations.

In the **Special Accounts for Research Funds (SARF)** category, UNIPI shows a satisfactory volume of activity in terms of foreign and domestic grants, both from public and private industry sources. It demonstrates a good number of collaborative research activities on institutional and individual professional level. The total funds received are tabulated in the respective section of the IER. They are allocated to a number of research oriented categories, they come from a variety of public and private sources and are managed by the administrative unit (KEIII) the staff of which includes 4 members and operates under legal guidelines and directives that are certified according to ISO9001. Statistical tables are provided in the IER that display the information in an organized way. The displayed information which covers the periods 2009-2010 through 2013-2014 includes annual budgeted figures showing a slight decline in total, sponsoring organization type (public or private), research activity by department and research funds by department (from domestic and foreign organizations). A list of publications is given, showing the results and publications associated to these grants. Overall, both the total research funds available have not changed drastically one way or another while research activity shows an increasing trend.

The **Financial Services** division has 12 employees (a reduction from base year) and manages the budget for the institution and some special accounts and interfaces with all other institutional units that have expenditures on an on-going basis. It is responsible for the annual allocation of government funds to the departments which does not include staff salaries. The annual government budget allocated to the institution that does not include employee salaries has been reduced by 62% since 2009 while the institution has reduced its operating expenses by 50% since 2009. It is fully automated for the functions that it manages and all comments indicate a good delivery of services.

The **Supplies Department** has 3 employees and manages all processes and functions associated with the purchasing of goods and services from a wide variety of external contractors and suppliers. It is also responsible for leasing space owned or space leased by UNIPI. It is fully automated for the functions that it manages and all comments indicate a good delivery of services.

There is no separate **Technical Services** Department mentioned in the IER, as it relates to new construction and maintenance and repairs of the building infrastructure of UNIPI. The IER indicates that the security and cleaning of the buildings is outsourced. The EEC noted that all building facilities and laboratories visited were clean and in good condition.

The centralized **Information Technology** services for the institution are constantly evolving, as expected, with newly developed computerized modules that are implemented. The Head of the IT Department mentioned that there is an ongoing effort to integrate (project Business Intelligence) all independent computerized systems (Student affairs and classroom management, HR management, Library, Financial Services, MODIP, DASTA) throughout the institution, as recommended by the EEC.

UNIPI has a strong **Career Office** under the auspices of ΔΑΣΤΑ (Δομή απασχόλησης και Σταδιοδρομίας) the activities, duties and responsibilities of which include but not limited to:

- Innovation and Entrepreneurship (MOKEII)
- Internships
- Public Relations and Student Support Services

The offices of MOKEII and internships are supported by one temporary employee each. The internships office shows considerable activity (over 3,000 placements for the period 2009 to 2014) even though internship is not a requirement in the undergraduate program.

The EEC was impressed with the energy, effort, innovation, accomplishments and plans of the Career Office and Student Support Services of 4 employees that are on a contractual basis. It has a variety of ongoing projects, facilitates and manages networking and communications between graduates and prospective employers and the Chamber of Commerce, students and businesses for internship placements, provides employment counseling to graduates for domestic and foreign based employment and is in the process of organizing an alumni association and creating an information data base aiming at networking the alumni between themselves and with the institution. The International Relations Office has been managing the networking between the institution and the alumni up to now.

The **International Relations Office** has an Institutional Coordinator, a Director and two assistant officers. Its responsibilities are the management of the ERASMUS Program, the creation of the bilateral agreements with other universities and institutions abroad for joint graduate and PhD programs and research projects. It has a respectable record for placements of students and staff members both outgoing and incoming in the ERASMUS and ERASMUS+ programs but the effort should be further expanded.

In **Foreign Languages** offering, only 12 English courses are currently taught by 3 instructors with a participation of 95% of the active registered students.

There are no **Cultural Activities** carried out under the auspices of the institution.

There are no **Halls of Residence** available this being an urban institution but there is cooperation with other sister institutions in the region to find housing for students that are

in need. The EEC was very impressed with the student **dining facility** in which they had two meals. The food was excellent and the variety was impressive, the service was great and the facility was clean and civilized.

The EEC did not have the chance to visit the **Library** facility. However, in the material presented by the librarian during the meeting, a wealth of credible information given. It is noted that the Library's operation and services are certified according to ISO9001:2008. The Library has a number of agreements with other institutions and is linked to a number of known data bases nationally and internationally for sourcing of reading material and information. It has a number of new projects under way such as the creation of an electronic collection of material from past courses for access by students and the establishment of a new station with facilities aiming to serve the needs of students with special needs.

*Please decide in respect to the specific evaluation area (&5.1):*

	Tick
<b>Worthy of merit</b>	
<b>Positive evaluation</b>	X
<b>Partially positive evaluation</b>	
<b>Negative evaluation</b>	

*Justify your rating:*

## ***5.2 Operation of the Central Administration of the Institution – Conclusions and recommendations***

*Please complete the following sections regarding the operation of the Institution's central administration :*

### ***Underline specific positive points:***

- Overall, the Centralized Services of UNIPI operate and deliver their services in a quite satisfactory way. Efforts of further improvement in some areas of services were noted by the EEC.
- The Public / International Relations office seems to be taking some initiatives to enhance the effectiveness of its activities and expand the realm of its involvement in areas close to or within its functional responsibilities.
- The Student Services Office manages a good quality student dining facility both in terms of food and service. It is also actively engaged in improving and expanding the facilities and services for students with special needs.

- The practical exercise is a good experience of both undergraduate students and the business community and the Public / International Relations Office provides good promotional and management services.

***Underline specific negative points:***

- Due to the constantly decreasing budget funds, the development of an integrated information system for the institution-wide information flow has been delayed.
- There seems to be a difference of opinion regarding the discretion related to funds allocation by the Financial Services to the individual departments. The EEC has heard the arguments of both Central Financial Services and Departmental administrations. It recognizes that the two different perceptions would not exist if there were sufficient funds to cover all needs, therefore, the issue should be further discussed and clarified thus avoiding any controversy.

***Make your suggestions for further development of the positive points:***

- During discussions in different meetings the EEC realized the benefits of the practical exercise (internship) for undergraduate students and their “sponsors” and suggests that the practical exercise be made into a requirement of the undergraduate programs, as appropriate

***Make your suggestions on needed steps for improvement:***

- The EEC recommends that efforts for integration and interconnectivity of all IT operational modules should be accelerated to provide true, centralized interconnectivity.
- The institution should consider undertaking the task of organizing the alumni more effectively, perhaps through the formal establishment of an alumni association with elected officers.

## 6. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

*In connection with the*

- general operation of the Institution
- development of the Institution to this date and its present situation
- Institution's readiness and capability to change/improve
- Internal system of Quality Assurance of the Institution

*please complete the following sections:*

- *Underline specific positive points:*
- The EEC was impressed by the positive comments made by both undergraduate and postgraduate students regarding their productive relationships with the faculty. They stated repetitively that the faculty is accessible and interested to meet directly with them in the office or communicate electronically to discuss their issues and concerns. There seems to be a cooperative culture between students and faculty with substantial emphasis on academic support and guidance. The feeling is that the University has created a student focussed environment, regardless of the external and internal challenges or threats it faces.
- UNIPI offers some unique programs in the undergraduate and Masters level that specifically address the needs of the economy, specific needs of important industries and those of the public sector.
- There was strong support exhibited for UNIPI by local businesses, government representatives and institutions for the University's openness to collaborate with such entities. The University provides well educated employees to the region and to specific industries such as Maritime and Transportation, Computer Technology, Tourism and International Affairs. These are key and important economic sectors for the local economy and Greece, at large.
- Willingness of the University to create special post-graduate programs that address the special market and government needs but also provide new opportunities for faculty development and research, through the creation of additional resources to finance such activities is commendable.

- *Underline specific negative points:*
- The mission statement of the institution is very general and does not reflect its special strengths and orientations.
- Lack of sufficient human capital and physical capital resources to service the very large number of students relative to the size of faculty and classroom capacity is a major concern. Class sizes have increased significantly, due to an insufficient number of faculty in in most disciplines. Some students have no place to sit in certain classrooms. Some courses cannot be taught in multiple sections due to lack of sufficient space or faculty resources -- even though such courses would reduce the class size, improve academic quality and make them accessible to all students (employed or not). These conditions have a negative effect on qualitative improvements.

- There seems to be insufficient coordination between departmental units, Schools and the University as a whole -- due to the archaic administrative structure imposed by government regulation/legislation. This approach is much less productive, creates barriers to learning, research, internal cooperation and reduces the possible economies of scale to bring down marginal and average costs.
- There are insufficient resources for graduate program research, especially access to professional journals and databases, to accommodate the large number of post-graduate students and their needs -- in addition to the research needs of the faculty.
- There are significant problems as the institution, due to the excessive centralized system of higher education decision-making by the national government, is unable to make student acceptance decisions and determine the number of entering students on strictly academic parameters and student qualification for the specific academic programs. The allocation of qualified students and determination of faculty and staff resources by the central government creates imbalances and reduces the potential quality of programs and the timely graduation of students. This, in the longer term, is very costly to government budgets, society, the individual students and to the competitiveness of business and the economy.
- There is concern that the lack of institutional rules and regulations on many aspects of the University's operation is due to the bureaucratic hold ups of approving such documents, the ever changing legal environment for higher education resulting from the frequent changes of law and the ever changing process of approving of rules and regulations by the Ministry of Education, as Ministers come and go. Instability and uncertainty is detrimental to the advancement of quality education and for the preparation of strategic plans and programs to appropriately prepare the future workforce.
- The EEC feels that a more comprehensive research strategy should be developed capitalizing on the institution's academic personnel strengths and community needs for project development and implementation.
- There should be a formal student grievances process in place.

- *Make your suggestions for further development of the positive points:*
- The EEC recommends that the institutions of higher education be allowed to operate more autonomously, be allocated an annual budget and be allowed to make their own decisions based on priorities on hiring, programming and the admission of students that reflect their ability to service them well and to maintain or advance quality of programming. If autonomy is granted, institutions should be required to have a mission, a strategic plan for action and accountability measures to evaluate their performance in achieving their goals.
- The University ought to be able to create its own rules and regulations for academic and operational purposes within a legal framework that allows promotion of innovation, productivity, timely response to the needs of a changing society and economy while producing high quality qualified graduates for work in different industries and government.
- Since this is a University composed primarily of applied fields of study (business administration, financial management and analysis, accounting, economic analysis, computer science, management information systems, maritime management and financing, the creation of new e-commerce, tourism, etc.), it is highly advisable for the University to create a strategic plan on how to organize

formal programs of internships, work-study, research collaboration and co-operative education. The aforementioned options have, in general, a component of the academic credits of study completed as practicum under the supervision of faculty -- while the student works at a relevant business, not-for-profit or government entity while possibly receiving income and practical learning. These approaches could be carried out on a voluntary basis or mandated in a particular field or program of study. This strategy can enhance the student's learning and marketability, improve relations with businesses and government agencies and better prepare graduates to enter the workforce with some relevant experience.

- The EEC recommends that UNUPI create a university wide strategy or guidelines that encourage and promote more faculty publication in peer-reviewed Journals and to state clearly the criteria and expectations for promotion and tenure.
- It is also advisable for the University to create a strategy to promote changes that will enhance its operation and allow the personnel and its doctoral students to be used more effectively -- with a proper program of training to become a resource for teaching and research. Properly educated and trained doctoral students could be used more effectively as Teaching Assistants and Research Assistants, and Teaching Fellows with some appropriate financial reward, as an incentive and fairness. This will strengthen their educational experience, relieve faculty from some rudimentary duties, improve delivery of teaching and possibly reduce class sizes at a nominal cost. This approach of promoting regulatory change would be stronger if many institutions combine their efforts to advance this agenda.
- The EEC strongly recommends the establishment of a foreign language post-graduate program, especially in the areas of maritime and international finance.

- *Make your suggestions on needed steps for improvement:*
- Specific strategies should be incorporated in the mission statement associated with specific measurable goals and objectives.
- Given the trend of decreasing resources and budgetary cuts, the institution should consider streamlining and perhaps reducing the number of doctoral student admissions and alleviate some of the heavy workload of the faculty personnel and implicitly emphasizing on quality rather than quantity of teaching and research activities
- The university should make concerted efforts to approach the business community as well as national and international donors to secure funds to complete the Nikaia project as soon as possible.
- Establish a formal student grievances process
- The QA management process would be greatly enhanced if QAU/MODIP were to establish a detailed guide for the implementation of the QA system at the institutional level.
- QAU/MODIP should consider organizing occasional internal seminars/ workshops to update and inform staff about the QA progress of the various departments and the Institution itself.
- QUA/MODIP should enhance and formalize some of the existing mechanisms which allow stakeholders from local industry to provide feedback for the revision and update of the curricula of the study programs thus making the institution more responsive to the needs of the market.



- It is recommended that each Department appoints on a yearly basis one member of the teaching staff as “Non-Academic Student Advisor”, who can counsel students on personal non-educational issues.
- The EEC recommends the use of peer observation/ evaluation, whereby, a member of teaching staff from another department may be selected randomly to observe the teaching of a colleague and provide feedback as regards the delivery of their teaching courses.

### ***6.1 Final decision of the EEC***

*Please decide in respect to the overall Institutional evaluation:*

	Tick
<b>Worthy of merit</b>	
<b>Positive evaluation</b>	X
<b>Partially positive evaluation</b>	
<b>Negative evaluation</b>	

*Justify your rating:*

## The Members of the Committee

## UNIVERSITY OF PIRAEUS

Name and Surname

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