Accreditation Report
for the Postgraduate Study Programme of:

Critical Illness

Department: Medicine
Institution: University of Thessaly
Date: 1 July 2024

Report of the Panel appointed by the HAHE to undertake the review of the Postgraduate Study Programme of **Critical Illness** of the **University of Thessaly** for the purposes of granting accreditation

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PART A: BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT OF THE REVIEW

I.   The External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel

The Panel responsible for the Accreditation Review of the postgraduate study programme of **Critical Illness** of the **University of Thessaly** comprised the following four (4) members, drawn from the HAHE Register, in accordance with Laws 4009/2011 & 4653/2020:

1. **Prof. Nikolaos Venizelos (Chair)**
    Örebro University, Örebro, Sweden

2. **Prof. Panagiotis Karanis**
    University of Nicosia, Nicosia, Cyprus

3. **Dr Andreas A. Roussakis**
    Imperial College London, United Kingdom

4. **Ms. Valentini Tzimogianni, PhD Candidate**
    School of Medicine, University of Patras, Patras, Greece

II.   Review Procedure and Documentation

In accordance with the requirements of Quality Assurance in Higher Education (laws 4009/2011 & 4653/2020), the Authority of Higher Education (HAHE), by individual invitation and after formal acceptance dated 20/6/2024, establishes an independent External Accreditation Panel (EEAP), with the mission to assessing the compliance of the Postgraduate Studies Program (PSP) in **Critical Illness** (**CI**) of the Department of Medicine (DM) of the School of Health Sciences of the University of Thessaly (UTh), scheduled 01–06/07/2024. The established EEAP consists of four experts (4), three from universities abroad and one from Greek University.

The evaluation was carried out through reviews of documents, as well as online interviews with Directors of PSP, the Head of the Department, MODIP members, Steering Committees, OMEA members, teaching staff, students, graduates, and external stakeholders. The method used was focusing on the sampling of the activities of the Department and aimed at assessing the fulfilment of the requirements according to the protocol of HAHE, regarding the Quality of the PSP and compliance, its effectiveness, and implementation within the scope of the requirements. All information and documents provided by the Department was considered by the EEAP to be factually correct.

On 25 June 2024, the EEAP accessed all supporting documents from the HAHE via the following link: https://docs.ethaae.gr/s/getowRNoWzxTD8E

Materials provided by the Department
A0. Contents
A1. Proposal of Academic Accreditation
A2. Quality Policy of Postgraduate Study Programme
A3. Quality Objectives of the Academic Unit for the Postgraduate programmes
A4. Senate Decision on the Establishment of PSP
A5. Study Guide
A6. Course Outline
A7. List of names of teaching stuff
A8. Report of the internal evaluation
A9. Evaluation from students
A10. Regulation on complaints handling
A11. Operating rules of the academic adviser institution
A12. Internal rules of procedure of PSP
A13. Research ethics regulations
A14. Study Regulations
A15. Diploma Annex
A16. Summary report on teaching staff allowances

A17. Data reports from the Integrated National Quality Information System (INQIS) - Institution Report 2017-2022
A18. External evaluation of the postgraduate programme
A19. Other documentation material

Materials provided by HAHE

Acronyms, PSP-Guidelines for the EEAP, European Qualifications Framework, Standards PSP En., M12 PSP Mapping Grid, Accreditation Management System - expert manual, M13 PSP Accreditation Report Template, Guidelines of Accreditation-En., M6 PSP Guidelines for the EEAP, M1 STANDARDS PSP EN, and M12 PSP MAPPING GRID.

The whole evaluation and accreditation process was carried out solely remotely using the Zoom platform. All the accreditation reviews were scheduled and performed at Greek time zone.

Monday, 01/07/2024, 15:00 to 16:00 hrs.

The EEAP members met remotely in view of getting know each other and to establishing a modus operandi regarding the accreditation mission, to schedule and discuss the content and structure of the Report Template, allocation of tasks, for to be prepared ahead of the site visit that would be performed via online using Zoom platform.

Monday, 01/07/2024, 16:00 to 17:00 hrs.

The EEAP started formally the evaluation reviews of the PSP programme in "Critical Illness". In the first part of this virtual meeting, the EEAP met the Head of the Department Prof. Theofilos Karachalios and the Director of the PSP programme Prof. Epameinondas Zakynthinos. Prof. Theofilos Karachalios was briefly presented the Department, physiognomy, teaching and administrative staff, facilities, course, and milestones of the Department of Medicine (DM).

Then the Director of the programme Prof. Epameinondas Zakynthinos was briefly presented the programme's origins, current status, strengths, possible areas of concern and different aspects of compliance with the accreditation principles.

Present during this meeting, were the Steering Committee of PSP Assoc. Prof. Ioannis Pantazopoulos, the OMEA members, Ass. Prof. Anna Vasilaki, Department of Medicine – Pharmacology, Assoc. Prof. Christina Katsiari, of Department of Medicine -Pathology – Rheumatology, the MODIP staff/members, Prof. Dimitrios Bogdanos, Ms Eleni Tsironi MODIP coordinator, Ms Dimitra Manou MODIP staff.

Same day, at 17:00 to 17:30 hrs., was scheduled a tour of facilities by a video produced to access the classrooms, lecture halls, libraries, research laboratories, and other facilities related to the PSP. Video access via the following link: MSc Critical Illness - Promo.mp4.

Next after the EEAP members finished the first day sessions by a debrief meeting, to reflect on the first day impressions and to prepare the next day on-line reviews.

<u>Tuesday, 02/07/2024, 15:00 to 15:45 hrs.</u>, the EEAP met with the teaching staff of the PSP in Critical Illness, and discussed the opportunities of professional development, mobility, teaching methods, evaluation by students, and possible areas of weakness.

Presenters at the meeting with the teaching staff were:

1) Prof. Demosthenes Makris, of Department of Medicine, Critical Care.
2) Assoc. Prof. Markos Sgantzos, of Department of Medicine -Anatomy-History of Medicine.
3) Mr Dimitrios Mantzaris, Department of nursing-Computational Intelligence & Health Informatics.
4) Assoc. Prof. Vasiliki Tsolaki, teaching academic staff of Department of Medicine.
5) Ass. Prof. Konstantinos Mantzarlis, teaching academic staff of Department of Medicine.
6) Ass. Prof. Georgios Fotakopoulos, teaching academic staff of Department of Medicine.

<u>At 16:00 hrs.</u>, the EEAP met with 7 students from 2nd and 4th semester of the PSP, where the students' satisfaction of their study experience, the Department and Institution facilities, the students input in quality assurance of PSP and student life and welfare was discussed.

<u>At 17:30 hrs.</u>, the EEAP met with the follow seven (7) PSP graduates and discussed their experience and the importance of PSP concerning their career path.

1. Ms Asimina Valsamaki, ICU General University Hospital of Larissa, Internist, fellow in Critical Care.
2. Mr Vasileios Aslanidis, ICU General University Hospital of Larissa, Nurse.
3. Ms Maria-Eirini Papadonta, Intensivist, Consultant in Critical Care, ICU General University Hospital of Larissa.
4. Ms Georgia Ganeli, Anesthesiologist, Intensivist, ICU Director, General Hospital of Karditsa.
5. Mr Christos Doudakmanis, Fellow in Surgery, Athens Laiko.
6. Ms Evmorfia Pagkaki, 1st Supervisor, ICU General Hospital of Trikala.
7. Mr Grigorios Sirmos, Fellow in Cardiology General Hospital of Trikala, Hellenic Air Force, Cardiologist in Ippokrateio Hospital Athens.

<u>At 18:30 hrs.</u>, the EEAP met with employers and external stakeholders from the private sector to discuss external relations of the PSP. Present at the meeting were:

1. Mr Fotis Tsimpoukas, ICU Director General Hospital Lamia
2. Ms Mairi Koutsioumpa, Director of General Hospital Karditsa
3. Ms Aikaterini Malita, Director of ICU Nursing section, General University Hospital of Larissa
4. Ms Xanthi Michail, Honorary President of EEFIAP
5. Ms Marianna Fragkaki, Medical Director Animus Private Rehabilitation Clinic
6. Mr Athanasios Tsivgoulis, Instructor of Neurology, University of Thessaly, Scientific associate of Attica and Apolloneion Rehabilitation clinics

Next after the EEAP members had a debriefing in private, to discuss the outcomes of the daily meetings and prepare a preliminary oral report to the closure meeting.

At 20:00 hrs., the EEAP in a short closure meeting was finalised the scheduled PSP reviews in Critical Illness by a short informal oral report of the initial impressions/key findings, to the Director of the PSP Prof. Epameinondas Zakynthinos, the head of the Department Prof. Theofilos Karachalios, the Steering Committee members of PSP Critical Illness, Assoc. Prof. Ioannis Pantazopoulos, the OMEA members, Ass. Prof. Anna Vasilaki, Assoc. Prof. Christina Katsiari, the MODIP members and staff, Prof. Dimitrios Bogdanos, MODIP member, Ms Eleni Tsironi, MODIP Coordinator, and Ms Dimitra Manou, MODIP staff.

The evaluation process took place via the virtual rooms. The Panel had the opportunity to engage in a dialogue and questioned the Head of the Department, the Director of the PSP, members of MODIP, Steering Committees/OMEA members, and several faculty members, and graduates, which were sincerely very helpful.

During the period 3 to 5 of July 2024, the EEAP members were getting familiar to all material send by HAHE and MODIP and worked on the completion of a draft of Accreditation Report (AR) of PSP programme.

III.   Postgraduate Study Programme Profile

The University of Thessaly (UTh) was founded in 1984 with the Presidential Decree 83/1984, which was modified in 1985 with the P.D. 302/1985 and P.D. 107/86. Volos was designated the central location of the University of Thessaly.

The UTh consists with 37 Departments, 8 schools and 14 institutes, is the third biggest University in Greece, with its own identity. University of Thessaly provides 110 undergraduate and postgraduate programs, and extra-curricular modules in specific research and business fields. It has more than 43.000 undergraduate students, about 4300 postgraduate students and about 1500 PhD students. It also has 1000 members of teaching and research staff and 450 members of administrative personnel. It is known for its excellent research performance and outstanding scientific achievements, in accordance with the international standards. Has excellent equipped Laboratories of the different Departments, and the Research Units have several well-trained researchers to support them.

According to its founding decree, the University of Thessaly today comprised 5 Campuses and 8 Schools inclusive School of Health Sciences located in Larisa. By the provisions of Act 4589/2019, Article 22 (Government Gazette 13/A'), was established the Larissa General Department, addressed the educational needs of the University of Thessaly Departments, which also operates all the Postgraduate Study Programmes (PSPs) formerly delivered by the TEI of Thessaly (former T.E.I. of Larissa), to students that we admitted until the academic year 2019-20. The University of Thessaly's, School of Health Sciences Library Building, is also in BIOPOLIS, Larissa.

The School of Health Sciences in Larissa, comprised of six departments, and operates 27 PSPs. The Department of Medicine (Faculty of Medicine) was founded in 1985 and it has been autonomously operating in Larissa since 1995 and comprised 24 PSPs (2 In English, 2 Intra-University and 2 Inter-University) inclusive the PSP "Critical Illness". https://www.med.uth.gr/pmsDABP/en/eng/

The PSP in Critical Illness was established 2019 (198 / τ.B / 1-2-2019), by the Government Gazette Regulation (2978 / τ.B / 19-7-2019), the regulation was updating by the Government Gazette (7086 / τ.B / 31-12-2022), and the establishment of the PSP was modified by decision of the Senate No. Prot: 8803/24/ΓΠ 29-04-2024: https://www.med.uth.gr/pmsDABP/en/official-gazette-of-foundation-and-regulation/

The postgraduate program "MSc in Critical Illness" aims to provide a high level of specialization in the management of patients who have a serious illness or are in a period of rehabilitation after a serious illness. The present PG aims to provide strong scientific background, experience and know-how in modern issues of managing the critically ill for a successful professional career in the private and public sector.

The PSP in Critical Illness has a duration of two (2) academic years and is divided into 4 semesters. The successful completion of the programme includes the attendance and examination in nine (9) courses equivalent to 90 ECTS, a course of practical training of 10 ECTS and the preparation of a Master's Degree Thesis of 30 ECTS. The total number of credits (ECTS) required for the award of the Diploma of Postgraduate Studies is 120 ECTS.

The IPSP-Critical Illness, register a maximum of forty (40) students each year. The tuition fees amount to 750 euros for each semester of stud, total 3,000 euros: https://www.med.uth.gr/pmsDABP/en/tuitionfees/

The language of instruction and dissertation of the Postgraduate Programme is Greek or English.

Study guide for the academic year 2024-2025 of the postgraduate program M.Sc. In Critical Illness, is described in detail in Appendix A5 and in the PSPs Website: https://www.med.uth.gr/pmsDABP/, https://www.med.uth.gr/pmsDABP/en/eng/

PART B: COMPLIANCE WITH THE PRINCIPLES

PRINCIPLE 1: QUALITY ASSURANCE POLICY AND QUALITY GOAL SETTING FOR THE POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES OF THE INSTITUTION AND THE ACADEMIC UNIT

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD APPLY A QUALITY ASSURANCE POLICY AS PART OF THEIR STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT. THIS POLICY SHOULD EXPAND AND BE AIMED (WITH THE COLLABORATION OF EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS) AT THE POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES OF THE INSTITUTION AND THE ACADEMIC UNIT. THIS POLICY SHOULD BE PUBLISHED AND IMPLEMENTED BY ALL STAKEHOLDERS.

The quality assurance policy of the academic unit should be in line with the quality assurance policy of the Institution and must be formulated in the form of a public statement, which is implemented by all stakeholders. It focuses on the achievement of special goals related to the quality assurance of the study programmes offered by the academic unit.

Indicatively, the quality policy statement of the academic unit includes its commitment to implement a quality policy that will promote the academic profile and orientation of the postgraduate study programme (PSP), its purpose and field of study; it will realise the programme's goals and it will determine the means and ways for attaining them; it will implement appropriate quality procedures, aiming at the programme's improvement.

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

a) the suitability of the structure and organisation of postgraduate study programmes
b) the pursuit of learning outcomes and qualifications in accordance with the European and National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education - level 7
c) the promotion of the quality and effectiveness of teaching at the PSP
d) the appropriateness of the qualifications of the teaching staff for the PSP
e) the drafting, implementation, and review of specific annual quality goals for the improvement of the PSP
f) the level of demand for the graduates' qualifications in the labour market
g) the quality of support services, such as the administrative services, the libraries and the student welfare office for the PSP
h) the efficient utilisation of the financial resources of the PSP that may be drawn from tuition fees
i) the conduct of an annual review and audit of the quality assurance system of the PSP through the cooperation of the Internal Evaluation Group (IEG) with the Institution's Quality Assurance Unit (QAU)

Documentation

▪ *Quality Assurance Policy of the PSP*
▪ *Quality goal setting of the PSP*

Study Programme Compliance

I. **Findings**

Quality Assurance Policy of the Department and the PSP Critical Illness.

The Quality Policy of the PSP Critical Illness is fully harmonized with the quality assurance policy of the University of Thessaly (Decision of the Rector's Council, meeting 168/12-10-2021), and the Quality Policy of the Department of Medicine of the School of Health Sciences for the Undergraduate Program of Studies.

The policy of the PSP Critical Illness is made public and disseminated to its members, so that its academic and administrative staff as well as its students take responsibility for quality assurance according to their role.

In particular, the PSP Critical Illness is committed to offer high quality education and to promote knowledge and research in the areas related to its subjects. The PSP Critical Illness is committed to fulfilling its educational and research purpose with ethical rules that serve the needs of society and contribute to the formation of a free academic environment, the conduct of high-level research, the assurance that the teaching staff has the highest possible level of teaching and research as well as the formation of a culture of collaborations with National and International educational and research institutions.

The PSP Critical Illness is committed to the implementation of a quality policy, which supports the academic profile and orientation of its Program of Study, sets, implements and monitors quality goals, determines the means, actions and ways of achieving them, and applies the appropriate internal and external quality procedures with the ultimate goal of continuous improvement. https://www.med.uth.gr/pmsDABP/politiki-poiotitas/

Implementation of Quality Policy (QP)

For the implementation of the quality policy of the Postgraduate Programs, a prerequisite is the implementation of quality procedures that ensure:

- continuous improvement of the quality of the Programme of Study, educational, research and administrative work.

- the appropriateness of the structure and organization of the Curriculum of the PSP.

- the pursuit of learning outcomes and qualifications in accordance with the European and National Higher Education Qualifications Framework.

- the interconnection of teaching with research, integrating the needs of the labour market.

- the creation of an Alumni Network of the MSc "Critical Illness" to enhance the profile of the Program and its footprint in the Market and Society.

- the promotion of the quality and effectiveness of teaching work.

- the promotion of the quality and quantity of the research work of the teachers in the PSP Critical Illness.

- the appropriateness of the qualifications of the teaching staff.

- the provision of modern, quality and digitally developed services.

- the conduct of the annual internal evaluation of the PSP, within the framework of the Internal Quality Assurance System (IQAS) in collaboration with the OMEA of the Department of Medicine and the MODIP of the Institution.

Quality goal setting of the PSP

The PSP in Critical Illness was established 2019 (198 / τ.Β / 1-2-2019), by the Government Gazette Regulation (2978 / τ.Β / 19-7-2019) and was modified by decision of the Senate No. Prot: 8803/24/ΓΠ 29-04-2024.

The Quality objectives of the of PSP Critical Illness are:

- the provision of high-level Postgraduate Studies
- the provision of knowledge according to modern views on the "Critical Illness"
- The offer of specialization
- contribute to reducing unemployment and shortages of qualified personnel
- the training of executives of high scientific level
- further training of executives
- broadening communication between scientists
- the promotion and development of qualitative research in health sciences
- the creation of scientists with the required skills in research

The aim of postgraduate program "MSc in Critical Illness" is to provide a high level of specialization in the management of patients, who have a serious illness or are in a period of rehabilitation after a serious illness. The present PSP programme aims to provide strong scientific background, experience and know-how in modern issues of managing the critically ill for a successful professional career in the private and public sector.

The PSP in Critical Illness applies the European Credit System (ECTS) and has a duration of two (2) academic years and is divided into 4 semesters. The successful completion of the programme includes the attendance and examination in nine (9) courses equivalent to 90 ECTS, a course of practical training of 10 ECTS and the preparation of a Master's Degree Thesis of 20 ECTS. The total number of credits (ECTS) required for the award of the Diploma of Postgraduate Studies is 120 ECTS.

The PSP-Critical Illness, register a maximum of 40 students each year. The tuition fees amount to 750 euros for each semester of study, total 3,000 euros: https://www.med.uth.gr/pmsDABP/en/tuitionfees/

The language of instruction and dissertation of the Postgraduate Programme is Greek or English.

Study guide for the current academic year (2024-2025) of the postgraduate program M.Sc. In Critical Illness, is described in detail in Appendix A5 and in the PSPs Website: https://www.med.uth.gr/pmsDABP/, https://www.med.uth.gr/pmsDABP/en/eng/

Teaching facilities

The PSP-Critical Illness, register a maximum of 40 students each year. The tuition fees amount to 750 euros for each semester of study, total 3,000 euros. The PSP includes studies lasting four (4) academic semesters, of which three (3) concern the attendance of Thematic Units (courses) and one (1) the preparation of a postgraduate thesis and the implementation of an internship. The teaching of the Thematic Units (courses) takes place in person or remotely, in accordance with the applicable legislation and what is defined in Article 7 of the Program's operating regulations. In addition, hybrid teaching is supported to facilitate students.

Prospects of employment of Postgraduate students are, International and National Organizations and Services related to Critical Illness Management issues, teaching in Public

Health Schools and Higher Technological Institutes, as well as in Secondary Education and employment in knowledge-intensive works.

The lectures of courses take place at the premises of the Department of Medicine of the University of Thessaly, which is also available for the operation of the Postgraduate Programmes (four (4) classrooms with a capacity of sixty (60) persons and two (2) auditoriums with a capacity of one hundred (100) persons each). Under certain conditions, auxiliary rooms and amphitheatres provided at the University General Hospital of Larissa that can be also used, especially for PSPs lectures in clinical subjects.

Total 87 teachers are involved in teaching at PSP Critical Illness (according to Appendix A7), 20 faculty members (ΔΕΠ) of the School of Medicine, University of Thessaly and 4 faculty members from outside the University of Thessaly. While the rest are external collaborators of various specialties and ranks with recognized scientific work in their majority.

The Institution and the Department provide support or counselling services to students.

The PSP Critical Illness, offers information of the PSP programme to students, stated on the website in Greek and English https://www.med.uth.gr/pmsDABP/, https://www.med.uth.gr/pmsDABP/en/eng/, as well as on Social Media where relevant information is posted https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100063467323677.

II. Analysis

The Quality Assurance Policy (QAP) of the PSP seems to be in line with the Quality Assurance Policy of the Institution and the Department and is formulated in the form of a public statement. The QAP of PSP is published and implemented with the participation of faculty members and administrative employees as well as students. It is communicated to Uth's MODIP. PSP's quality policy commitments are made public on website.

The QAP statement of the Department includes commitments that implement a quality policy in order to promote the academic profile, the orientation of the PSP Critical Illness, and the purpose and field of study.

The structure of the Curriculum is in accordance with the "Single European Qualifications Framework", while the presence of the Internship as it is conducted make the Programme particularly attractive.

The PSP provides also a website in both Greek and English language, with the pursuit of learning outcomes and programme information and the Quality Policy that is only in Greek language.

The Department of Medicine of UTh demonstrates good teaching facilities, and a very good capacity of involved teachers with adequate qualifications to run the PSP of Critical Illness. The PSP and the Department of Medicine demonstrated to have established some national collaborations linked to the PSP.

The Institution and the Department provides sufficient of facilities, logistical infrastructure, administrative satisfactory support and/or counselling services to prospective students.

III.   Conclusions

The panel considers that the PSP and the department of Medicine, fulfil the requirements and commitments required for the implementation of the adequate education quality policy in accordance with HAHEs regulation and is fully in line with the department's and institution's quality assurance policy and the quality objectives for to run the PSP in Critical Illness.

Panel Judgement

Principle 1: Quality assurance policy and quality goal setting for the postgraduate study programmes of the institution and the academic unit	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

The website of PSP needs to be supplemented with additional programme information in both Greek and English, as "Subject", "Purpose", "Learning Outcomes", "Synergies" as well as the "Quality Policy", can be easily accessible also to partners and companies from abroad.

Knowledge of ethical rules governing research is mentioned in the Learning Outcomes, but it is not highly present in the course content. The panel recommends an amendment to the curriculum with a visible short introduction in Bioethics, expected to be at the level of a Master of Science degree, and relevant in the field of Medical Science.

The panel proposes to the steering group to expand the degree project requirement up to an equivalent of 30 ECTS credits, so that the PSP becomes is closer to the majority of similar Master of Science courses in Europe.

Although the PSP has a satisfactory number of lectures with invited speakers from abroad, the PSP should be strengthened in a wider field of collaborations (synergies) with institutions and laboratories in Greece and abroad, including engagement with social partners and societal groups.

PRINCIPLE 2: DESIGN AND APPROVAL OF POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD DEVELOP THEIR POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES FOLLOWING A DEFINED WRITTEN PROCESS WHICH WILL INVOLVE THE PARTICIPANTS, INFORMATION SOURCES AND THE APPROVAL COMMITTEES FOR THE POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES. THE OBJECTIVES, THE EXPECTED LEARNING OUTCOMES AND THE EMPLOYMENT PROSPECTS ARE SET OUT IN THE PRORAMME DESIGN. DURING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES, THE DEGREE OF ACHIEVEMENT OF THE LEARNING OUTCOMES SHOULD BE ASSESSED. THE ABOVE DETAILS, AS WELL AS INFORMATION ON THE PROGRAMME'S STRUCTURE ARE PUBLISHED IN THE STUDENT GUIDE.

The academic units develop their postgraduate study programmes following a well-defined procedure. The academic profile and orientation of the programme, the research character, the scientific objectives, the specific subject areas, and specialisations are described at this stage.

The structure, content and organisation of courses and teaching methods should be oriented towards deepening knowledge and acquiring the corresponding skills to apply the said knowledge (e.g. course on research methodology, participation in research projects, thesis with a research component).

The expected learning outcomes must be determined based on the European and National Qualifications Framework (EQF, NQF), and the Dublin Descriptors for level 7. During the implementation of the programme, the degree of achievement of the expected learning outcomes and the feedback of the learning process must be assessed with the appropriate tools. For each learning outcome that is designed and made public, it is necessary that its evaluation criteria are also designed and made public.

In addition, the design of PSP must consider:

- *the Institutional strategy*
- *the active involvement of students*
- *the experience of external stakeholders from the labour market*
- *the anticipated student workload according to the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) for level 7*
- *the option of providing work experience to students*
- *the linking of teaching and research*
- *the relevant regulatory framework and the official procedure for the approval of the PSP by the Institution*

The procedure of approval or revision of the programmes provides for the verification of compliance with the basic requirements of the Standards by the Institution's Quality Assurance Unit (QAU).

Documentation

- *Senate decision for the establishment of the PSP*
- *PSP curriculum structure: courses, course categories, ECTS awarded, expected learning outcomes according to the EQF, internship, mobility opportunities*
- *Labour market data regarding the employment of graduates, international experience in a relevant scientific field*
- *PSP Student Guide*
- *Course and thesis outlines*
- *Teaching staff (name list including of areas of specialisation, its relation to the courses taught, employment relationship, and teaching assignment in hours as well as other teaching commitments in hours)*

Study Programme Compliance

I.   Findings

The panel reviewed the submitted documentation in line with HAHE guidance for EEAP/Panel reviews. The document set for the review was complete and well-presented. The Panel discussed details of the Programme with the Course Director, the MODIP members, the UTH Senior Management team, associate academics and fellow teaching staff as well as students and alumni. Feedback was sought from external stakeholders. Preliminary conclusions were discussed with the Course Director, MODIP and UTH Senior Officers at the close-out meeting.

The Senate decided on the establishment of the Programme on 21-January-2019 taking into consideration the recommendation (21-December-2019) of the Assembly of the UTH Medical School. In its current form, the Programme design adheres to HAHE principles, the European standards for Quality Assurance in the EHEA, and the UTH strategic development plan.

The Programme maintains a high standard through a comprehensive curriculum structure, which effectively integrates a wide range of educational activities. The learning objectives are well-defined and focused, helping students to meet their educational and professional needs.

The expected volume of work follows the standards of the EU ECTS system (level 7). The total number of ECTSs is 120 with a course layout that spans over 4 semesters. Each ECST credit translates to approximately 25-30 hours. The workload breakdown is included in Appendices A5 and A6.

Prospective students are required to attend classes, tutorials, and laboratory practicals. Teaching is conducted in person as well as remotely. The "MSc in Critical Illness" qualification is awarded following successful participation in lectures and tutorials, and upon completion of a research project and a presentation of the dissertation. In this Programme, marking ranges from 1-10. The "pass" overall mark is not explicitly specified in the course guide.

The Course is taught primarily in Greek and English. The course outline is comprehensive and well-structured, providing a clear understanding of the curriculum and its requirements. The student guide is clear and detailed. Both documents are written in Greek. The guidance document serves as an introduction to new students/applicants and as a navigation tool for prospective students. The modules are presented in great detail.

The classes are designed to form a dynamic learning environment for individuals who wish to develop their knowledge, skills and competencies further in this field. Principles in research methodology are taught in the third semester. Ethical considerations and relevant Greek and EU legislation are taught, in this module.

Active involvement of students is incorporated. Prospective students are encouraged to start a research project in the area each individual is interested in. Assisted by teaching staff, the students choose a topic to focus on, and agree to work collaboratively to complete their project and dissertation in time.

The Programme has set up an interactive feedback mechanism in which students are encouraged to express their needs freely. Combined with outcome-heavy metrics (attendance rates, success rates in exams, and successful employment outcomes beyond the end of the

studies), the Course Director-students interaction evolves in a constructive and informative way for the benefit of all parties involved.

The Programme offers mobility opportunities (primarily within Greece), providing students the ability to gain practical experience outside UTH. In response to unmet students' professional needs, the Programme encourages students to gain work experience in Greece and abroad and to be well-aware of the job market landscape in the academic world, the Greek national health system, and the private industry sector. External stakeholders have shown a significant interest in the Programme. This includes the possibility for third parties to support academically led research, the possibility to indirectly support eligible students to attend conferences and congresses, and the possibility to offer job opportunities to future graduates.

The international experience (with visiting students from abroad and/or with home students engaging in research projects abroad) is somewhat limited in this Programme. Yet, the Course Director has invested in connecting the Programme with experts in the field, primarily with eminent clinicians and researchers who practise abroad.

Interviews with prospective students showed that the majority of them, if not all, are genuinely interested in pursuing a bright career with a key mobility element in it. Inspiration and motivation are reinforced, largely, by teaching staff. The Programme includes a list of highly qualified teaching staff covering various areas of specialisation. The Course Director feels confident that communication between the teaching staff, administrators, and students is most effective.

II.   Analysis

Overall, the course guide is well-structured and comprehensive. If there is one area where the Programme might develop, and the Course Director and Panel have shared this view, it would be in making a few minor adjustments to assist students understand: [i] the difference between what is taught and learnt (i.e. emphasis on the teaching process from an educational point of view), and [ii] where their research outcomes fit in the "big picture" i.e. in response to global public health affairs relating to those who are not experts in the field (including healthcare professionals, policy-makers and lay people). This comment is offered in the spirit of supporting development rather than a criticism.

At the end of the studies, graduates should also have a sound understanding of the principles of ICH Good Clinical Practice, the Greek and EU law for human use of medicines and medical devices for research and in clinical practice, the role of the Greek competent authority (ΕΟΦ) and the role of the European Medicines Agency, relevant to clinical research, as well as that of the WHO, FDA, MHRA and other major authorities, in leading change in global medical affairs. Combined with basic knowledge in the framework for animal studies and the regulations for research tissue banks, and research databases, students are expected to know the basics for data protection and information governance including EU GDPR and relevant Greek law.

III. Conclusions

The Programme is well-designed and structured. A few changes are recommended to develop certain areas further. The aim is to support students and ensure optimal learning experience.

Panel Judgement

Principle 2: Design and approval of postgraduate study programmes	
Fully compliant	**X**
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

The panel recommends minor changes in the content of teaching material to include ICH principles and regulations for the use of medicines and medical devices in humans including the role of the Greek competent authority (ΕΟΦ). Combined with basic knowledge in the framework for animal studies and the regulations for research tissue banks, and research databases, students are expected to know the basics in data protection and information governance including EU GDPR and Greek law. The Panel recommends the title of the "Research Methodology" module to change to "Research Methodology, Ethics, and Statistics". The Panel recommends this module to move to the first semester to prepare students best in conducting their research project at the fourth semester.

Please specify in the course guide, briefly, the Programme's policy for absence (all types) and planned leave.

Please rectify the typo in the course title to "Critical Illness". The panel recommends a new English title that is closer to the Greek title e.g. "Critical Illness - Management and Rehabilitation".

PRINCIPLE 3: STUDENT-**C**ENTRED **L**EARNING, **T**EACHING, **A**ND **A**SSESSMENT

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD ENSURE THAT POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES PROVIDE THE NECESSARY CONDITIONS TO ENCOURAGE STUDENTS TO TAKE AN ACTIVE ROLE IN THE LEARNING PROCESS. THE ASSESSMENT METHODS SHOULD REFLECT THIS APPROACH.

Student-centred learning and teaching plays an important role in enhancing students' motivation, their self-evaluation, and their active participation in the learning process. The above entail continuous consideration of the programme's delivery and the assessment of the related outcomes.

The student-centred learning and teaching process

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

In addition
- *The academic staff are familiar with the existing examination system and methods and are supported in developing their own skills in this field.*
- *The assessment criteria and methods are published in advance. The assessment allows students to demonstrate the extent to which the intended learning outcomes have been achieved. Students are given feedback, which, if necessary is linked to advice on the learning process.*
- *Student assessment is conducted by more than one examiner, where possible.*
- *Assessment is consistent, fairly applied to all students and conducted in accordance with the stated procedures.*
- *A formal procedure for student appeals is in place.*
- *The function of the academic advisor runs smoothly.*

Documentation

- *Sample of a fully completed questionnaire for the evaluation of the PSP by the students*
- *Regulations for dealing with students' complaints and appeals*
- *Regulation for the function of academic advisor*
- *Reference to the teaching modes and assessment methods*

Study Programme Compliance

I.   Findings

The Program "Critical Illness" of the Medical School at the University of Thessaly offers a well-established student-centred educational process using various teaching methods.

Since many students are health care workers as doctors, nurses, and physiotherapists, who are employed either in Larissa or in other cities all over Greece, the program is flexibly offered

concerning the in-person lessons and lectures. Although students are highly encouraged to attend the in-person lectures, hybrid teaching is also supported to facilitate students working outside Larissa. Lectures take place one weekend per month. All presentations as well as the accompanying material (bibliography, videos, etc.) are available online.

The duration of this program is 4 semesters. Students are evaluated at the end of the first three semesters. The evaluation methods reported are written works or multiple-choice online tests. During the 4th semester, the students must conduct an original research master's thesis, as well as workshops and practical training.

The teaching staff of the program currently consists of 20 members from the Medical School of the University of Thessaly, 4 from other Universities, as well as external collaborators with great experience in teaching at the master's level. Most of them are distinguished scientists with many publications in their field.

After a discussion with the students, the panel had a very positive impression that the institution of the Academic Advisor works very well in this PSP. Every student can turn to their mentor for any issue that may arise during their studies, for guidance, advice, and support. Each mentor-tutor is responsible for guiding some students.

There is an internal evaluation system by both the students and the instructors. The students evaluate the courses through anonymous online questionnaires which include questions about the courses, the teachers, and the workshops. Although a short number of students seem to respond to these questionnaires, there is a desire on their part for more workshops.

II.   Analysis

The post-graduate program "Critical Illness" at the University of Thessaly uses diverse teaching methods including both in-person and online lectures, workshops, and practical training. Student evaluations are also diverse, including written examinations, writings, or multiple-choice online tests. Students must conduct a research thesis and practical training during the last semester.

The curriculum of this postgraduate program includes a wide range of courses covering current issues in the field of Critical Illness. The contribution of the Academic Advisor is crucial and effective since the advisors provide the students' guidance, advice, and support as well. Communication between the teaching staff and the students seems to be direct and excellent. Thus, teaching becomes a completely student-centred process.

Teaching staff and their methods are assessed by the students with anonymous questionnaires. However, low numbers of students are involved in this process.

III. Conclusions

The post-graduate program "Critical Illness" offers an in-person and diverse way of teaching. It complies with transparency through its predefined rules and regulations. Further improvement, based on greater students' engagement in the evaluation process, can be achieved.

Panel Judgement

Principle 3: Student-centred learning, teaching, and assessment	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

Spreading the lessons on more weekends might be a strong motivation to improve the student's learning outcomes and their continuous contact with the subject.

The participation of more students in the evaluation procedure would be very helpful for the improvement of the program.

PRINCIPLE 4: Student Admission, Progression, Recognition Of Postgraduate Studies, And Certification

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

All the issues from the beginning to the end of studies should be governed by the internal regulations of the academic units. Indicatively:

- *the student admission procedures and the required supporting documents*
- *student rights and obligations, and monitoring of student progression*
- *internship issues, if applicable, and granting of scholarships*
- *the procedures and terms for the drafting of assignments and the thesis*
- *the procedure of award and recognition of degrees, the duration of studies, the conditions for progression and for the assurance of the progress of students in their studies*
- *the terms and conditions for enhancing student mobility*

All the above must be made public in the context of the Student Guide.

Documentation

- *Internal regulation for the operation of the Postgraduate Study Programme*
- *Research Ethics Regulation*
- *Regulation of studies, internship, mobility, and student assignments*
- *Degree certificate template*

Study Programme Compliance

I.   Findings

The Program "Critical Illness" was established in 2019 and has a 4-semester duration (30 ECTS per semester) with tuition fees of 750€ per semester. Scholarships are available to be attributed to students with specific economic or social needs. The admission to this program takes place transparently and objectively after the announcement of available places by the Department. All announcements are available on the website of the Program, both in Greek and in English.

The selection of the applicants is based on their study scores, English language diplomas, relevant professional experience, recommendation letters, research experience, interviews, etc. These procedures are clearly described in the required supporting documents. On average 30-40 students are admitted each year (who are ~80% of the total number of applicants). Most of them are nurses and doctors while some of them are physiotherapists.

The PSP is offered using a hybrid teaching procedure. Both in-person and online lectures take place one weekend per month so that those working in areas outside of Larissa can also participate. Attendance of all lectures and workshops is compulsory.

Students are evaluated in diverse ways at the end of the 3 first semesters. During the fourth semester, they must conduct a research thesis and their practical training. Practical training can take place in various rehabilitation centres or hospitals, both in Greece and abroad. The students appear to require some additional time to finish their PSP.

Although terms and conditions for students' Erasmus+ mobility and Erasmus+ traineeships are described in the related documents of the University of Thessaly, the opportunities for mobility offered by Erasmus+ are not used.

Upon completion of their studies, the students are awarded a diploma certificate which shows their academic achievement. This can be used for further studies or future careers. This program helps graduates to advance professionally and salary-wise in healthcare facilities. It also allows them to further develop their knowledge in the field by applying what they have learned to their daily work.

II.   Analysis

The unique characteristic of the Program "Critical Illness" is that it connects the University with healthcare facilities, such as hospitals and rehabilitation centres, thus fulfilling the major need of the staff for further education and professional development. According to the opinion of current students and recent graduates, this Program offers them enhanced opportunities to acquire scientific knowledge in the field and to further develop their professional skills.

Alongside their studies, most of the students are already working. Undoubtedly, online lectures are an alternative that helps many students attend this program. However, the Committee suggests more in-person sessions and workshops.

The length of PSP studies (4 semesters) is appropriate. The conduction of a research thesis is mandatory. The courses are delivered in Greek.

Enhancing students' mobility through Erasmus+ and Erasmus+ Traineeships is an issue to be considered. Although the difficulties are reasonable, PSP staff should explore and harness any opportunity to promote students' mobility.

III.   Conclusions

The Programme "Critical Illness" offers a great opportunity to join the Health Care facilities with the Universities and provide postgraduate studies to professionals who wish to improve their academic and employment competencies. The research level of the teaching staff is high. The students expressed high satisfaction regarding the Programme, the teaching staff, the knowledge achieved, and their professional benefits.

The panel suggests providing more in-person workshops and promoting students' mobility.

Panel Judgement

Principle 4: Student admission, progression, recognition of postgraduate studies and certification	
Fully compliant	**X**
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

The possibility of carrying out an internship or an Erasmus+ mobility would be a very beneficial addition to the Program.

PRINCIPLE 5: TEACHING STAFF OF POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD ASSURE THEMSELVES OF THE LEVEL OF KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS OF THEIR TEACHING STAFF, AND APPLY FAIR AND TRANSPARENT PROCESSES FOR THEIR RECRUITMENT, TRAINING AND FURTHER DEVELOPMENT.

The Institution should attend to the adequacy of the teaching staff of the academic unit teaching at the PSP, the appropriate staff-student ratio, the appropriate staff categories, the appropriate subject areas, the fair and objective recruitment process, the high research performance, the training- development, the staff development policy (including participation in mobility schemes, conferences, and educational leaves-as mandated by law).

More specifically, the academic unit should set up and follow clear, transparent and fair processes for the recruitment of properly qualified staff for the PSP and offer them conditions of employment that recognise the importance of teaching and research; offer opportunities and promote the professional development of the teaching staff; encourage scholarly activity to strengthen the link between education and research; encourage innovation in teaching methods and the use of new technologies; promote the increase of the volume and quality of the research output within the academic unit; follow quality assurance processes for all staff (with respect to attendance requirements, performance, self-assessment, training, etc.); develop policies to attract highly qualified academic staff.

Documentation

- ▪ *Procedures and criteria for teaching staff recruitment*
- ▪ *Employment regulations or contracts, and obligations of the teaching staff*
- ▪ *Policy for staff support and development*
- ▪ *Individual performance of the teaching staff in scientific-research and teaching work, based on internationally recognised systems of scientific evaluation (e.g. Google Scholar, Scopus, etc.)*
- ▪ *List of teaching staff including subject areas, employment relationship, Institution of origin, Department of origin*

Study Programme Compliance

I.   Findings

The Programme is appropriately staffed to support students acquire new knowledge and skills in a high number of technical and research topics in critical illness.

The teaching staff is formed by a large group of experts (87+). Individually, the group members have a track record of teaching in higher education. As well as supporting students to develop new skills and knowledge, the teaching staff of this Programme foster up-to-date educational and teaching methods, assisted by Edutech and laboratory resources.

Evidence for success in this area stems from notes in the submitted documentation, and from the points made in the discussions with the teaching staff including the course Director, the partners, the students in the current year and the alumni.

In this Programme, teaching staff (as a group) have been actively involved in several academic and educational activities. This point reflects the departmental approach to continuous professional development for staff, and the ability of individual tutors and researchers to maintain a strong network in the department, and with peers from the wider academic community. The network is led/maintained, largely, by the Course Director.

Based on the information that has been presented to the Panel (on paper, and through the live sessions), the recruitment of teaching staff for the requirements of this Programme is based, broadly, on the following criteria: [i] technical expertise in one (or more) scientific areas, [ii] substantial teaching experience in higher education, [iii] active role in the design, resource management, and conduct of high-quality research, [iv] proven ability to drive success and support peers, junior staff, administrators, and students, [v] the ability to foster strong collaborations and partnerships in academia and beyond, and [vi] the ability to promote departmental and institutional reputation nationally and internationally. This approach is in line with the departmental Strategy and the Institutional Policy. A comprehensive list of publications outlines the areas teaching staff have expertise in, and the positive impact of this work on the research and educational ecosystems.

Teaching and research staff highlight the need for infrastructure upgrades (as and when needed) and access to Programme-specific allocated resources.

II.   Analysis

Teaching staff demonstrate their ability to support students throughout the learning process, by being present, accessible, and informed. This is covering both the delivery of teaching (knowledge) and the development of (new) skills with students for the conduct of research.

In general, teaching staff allow students to meet their personal educational and academic needs to a great extent. Perhaps, further guidance may be needed from a mentoring/coaching point of view with a focus on how to plan their careers, considering the challenges to work in this niche area of care in both the national health system and privately. The aim is to help students see the 'big picture' (e.g. to be aware of the cost implications of owning a sustainable and up-to-date specialist centre) and the impact of their choices on their finances, but also on the critical illness community, the Greek society and beyond.

III.   Conclusions

Overall, the Programme is adequately staffed to offer high-quality educational and research work in this field.

Panel Judgement

Principle 5: Teaching staff of postgraduate study programmes	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

The panel recommends mediation with the Department and the UTH for optimal resource management including changes for increased access to infrastructure, finance, and human resources. The panel suggests the strategic appointment (or secondment as a start) of administrative and technical/operational staff, as a high priority, in response to the unmet managerial needs. The suggestion aims to support teaching staff and the Course Director to deliver their work even more effectively. This point is here as a suggestion for staff who are busy with other commitments (external to the Programme), including time-consuming administrative tasks.

PRINCIPLE 6: LEARNING RESOURCES AND STUDENT SUPPORT

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD HAVE ADEQUATE FUNDING TO COVER THE TEACHING AND LEARNING NEEDS OF THE POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMME. THEY SHOULD –ON THE ONE HAND- PROVIDE SATISFACTORY INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES FOR LEARING AND STUDENT SUPPORT, AND – ON THE OTHER HAND- FACILITATE DIRECT ACCESS TO THEM BY ESTABLISHING INTERNAL RULES TO THIS END (E.G. LECTURE ROOMS, LABORATORIES, LIBRARIES, NETWORKS, NETWORKS, CAREER AND SOCIAL POLICY SERVICES ETC.).

Institutions and their academic units must have sufficient resources and means, on a planned and long-term basis, to support learning and academic activity in general, so as to offer PSP students the best possible level of studies. The above means include facilities such as the necessary general and more specialised libraries and possibilities for access to electronic databases, study rooms, educational and scientific equipment, IT and communication services, support and counselling services.

When allocating the available resources, the needs of all students must be taken into consideration (e.g. whether they are full-time or part-time students, employed students, students with disabilities), in addition to the shift towards student-centred learning and the adoption of flexible modes of learning and teaching. Support activities and facilities may be organised in various ways, depending on the institutional context. However, the internal quality assurance proves -on the one hand- the quantity and quality of the available facilities and services, and -on the other hand- that students are aware of all available services.

In delivering support services, the role of support and administration staff is crucial and therefore this segment of staff needs to be qualified and have opportunities to develop its competences.

Documentation

- *Detailed description of the infrastructure and services made available by the Institution to the academic unit for the PSP, to support learning and academic activity (human resources, infrastructure, services, etc.) and the corresponding firm commitment of the Institution to financially cover these infrastructure-services from state or other resources*
- *Administrative support staff of the PSP (job descriptions, qualifications and responsibilities)*
- *Informative / promotional material given to students with reference to the available services*
- *Tuition utilisation plan (if applicable)*

Study Programme Compliance

I.   Findings

Funding for this PSP comes from the tuition fees and covers primarily administrative and technical support fees, scholarships for students with specific social or financial needs, and expenses for travel. The PSP is part of a larger University Department, and this is helpful in the effort to find some additional resources from the overall resources of the Department.

Students enrolled in the Program have access to both digital teaching resources tailored to the curriculum and current online library services. Both synchronous (lectures) and asynchronous (videos, paper, etc.) teaching approaches are used, to improve the enhancement of the learning process. Students are given analytical information about the facilities and services that are available, as well as how to get support and assistance during their studies.

The teaching procedure takes place in one of the 4 available classrooms of the Department for the postgraduate course with a capacity of 60 persons or in one of the 2 auditoriums with a capacity of 100 persons. When in-person attendance is not possible, students can access class

remotely. Major teaching activities are also delivered in the University Hospital of Larissa. Additionally, during the last semester, students have the possibility to conduct their training in other facilities of the Greek health system.

Additional resources accessible to PSP students include the Department's library, secretariat, and computer terminals. The emphasis is on cutting-edge medical technology and equipment, guaranteeing that students are exposed to the most recent developments in the field of critical illness technology and expertise.

The highly qualified personnel, both at the hospital and the Medical School, support the research and teaching efforts in this program. Their duties encompass anything from managing student registration to offering academic counselling and administrative assistance to both teachers and students.

Even though the position of the Academic Advisor is a relatively new addition in Greek Universities, its role is effective in this PSP.

II. Analysis

The infrastructure of this PSP is at a very high level, and the care given to the students during their studies is excellent. The communication between students and tutors, both during and after the completion of their studies, is impeccable. As of right now, the PSP grads lack an alumni association and a structured method for staying in touch with the program. Nonetheless, there are many exchanges between alumni and academics.

It is evident from all the documentation the panel reviewed and from the answers provided during the meetings, the students enrolled in the PSP are aware of both, the academic requirements of the coursework and their post-graduation job prospects.

III. Conclusions

Overall, the Program "Critical Illness" provides an excellent environment for post-graduate studies and is adequately structured to support students and teaching staff during the whole educational procedure.

Panel Judgement

Principle 6: Learning resources and student support	
Fully compliant	**X**
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

- The panel suggests considering establishing a formal Alumni association.
- The panel considers that it would be very beneficial to find more financial resources to support students to do internships abroad.

PRINCIPLE 7: INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

INSTITUTIONS BEAR FULL RESPONISBILITY FOR COLLECTING, ANALYSING AND USING INFORMATION, AIMED AT THE EFFICIENT MANAGEMENT OF POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES AND RELATED ACTIVITIES, IN AN INTEGRATED, EFFECTIVE AND EASLILY ACCESSIBLE WAY.

Institutions are expected to establish and operate an information system for the management and monitoring of data concerning students, teaching staff, course structure and organisation, teaching and provision of services to students.

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

The information collected depends, to some extent, on the type and mission of the Institution. The following are of interest:

- *key performance indicators*
- *student population profile*
- *student progression, success, and drop-out rates*
- *student satisfaction with their programmes*
- *availability of learning resources and student support*

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

Documentation

- *Report from the National Information System for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (NISQA) at the level of the Institution, the department, and the PSP*
- *Operation of an information management system for the collection of administrative data for the implementation of the PSP (Students' Record)*
- *Other tools and procedures designed to collect data on the academic and administrative functions of the academic unit and the PSP*

Study Programme Compliance

  I.   Findings

The Programme has set up an electronic information management system for the management and monitoring of data concerning students, teaching staff, the core of the course and the quality of services to students.

Data input is ensured by in-house developed questionnaires, self-evaluation and assessment forms. Combined with e-class teaching material, and statistical data on pre-defined key performance indicators, the Programme Leads are able to discuss the profile of their student cohort, to assess performance, to measure success and periods of low productivity for both students and staff. Quality assurance data are processed internally; outputs are deposited in the internal e-information management system for review and reflection. The Course Director discusses the evaluation report with the Programme Leads to ensure compliance, adherence to the strategic plans of the programmes and to make amendments, as needed. The most recent evaluation report was signed in 01/2023 (available in Appendix A8).

The findings that introduce corrective and preventative actions introduce strengthening of the international face of the programme by promoting active participation of students and teaching staff to international conferences and meetings of special interest.

II.   Analysis

Overall, the Programme has a reliable system in place for collecting and processing relevant information. Prospective students and alumni shared positive views (individually and as groups) for their experience. The volume of work and the expectations being set are reported as realistic. Data acquisition and data analyses systems are simple, focused, and effective.

III.   Conclusions

In this Programme, the information management system is well-structured and effective.

Panel Judgement

Principle 7: Information management	
Fully compliant	**X**
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

The panel recommends further analyses aiming to better understand the expectations of students and the end-of-course timelines. In return, the panel expects a clear action plan to support students at risk for delay to complete their studies closer to the original 24-month milestone.

PRINCIPLE 8: PUBLIC INFORMATION CONCERNING THE POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD PUBLISH INFORMATION ABOUT THEIR TEACHING AND ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES RELATED TO THE POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES IN A DIRECT AND READILY ACCESSIBLE WAY. THE RELEVANT INFORMATION SHOULD BE UP-TO-DATE, OBJECTIVE AND CLEAR.

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

Therefore, Institutions and their academic units must provide information about their activities, including the PSP they offer, the intended learning outcomes, the degrees awarded, the teaching, learning and assessment procedures applied, the pass rates, and the learning opportunities available to their students. Information is also provided on the employment perspectives of PSP graduates.

Documentation

- *Dedicated segment on the website of the department for the promotion of the PSP*
- *Bilingual version of the PSP website with complete, clear and objective information*
- *Provision for website maintenance and updating*

Study Programme Compliance

I.   Findings

Information about the academic unit and the postgraduate programme is available online.

The PSP offers:

• website at the address *https://www.med.uth.gr/pmsDABP/*

• as well as a group on a Social Networking medium where relevant information is posted *https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100063467323677*

The website provides information about the duration of the postgraduate programme, the necessary documents for the admission of students, the schedule of lectures. The academic units' Policy for Quality Assurance is also available online. All courses taught in the PSP, have a website on the e-class platform of the UTH, with useful educational material (slides, exercises, notes, etc.), which is addressed to the students of the Department. These websites are updated and enriched by the lecturers on an annual basis. At the same time, the website provides the study guide, which is easily accessible to students. The study guide provides a list of lecturers by name and a brief analysis of each module taught. The course outlines are not very explanatory. The website, for the time being, is in Greek where all reading of the latest announcements is available. The program is indicated also in English (https://www.med.uth.gr/pmsDABP/en/eng/) but is not completed.

II.   Analysis

The information available online satisfies the requirements of Principle 8. Furthermore, in order to facilitate the students' search for a thesis, it would be useful to add a short biography (CV) of the faculty associated with the programme and also changes related to the program, or a link directing the students to the CVs on the website, thus giving the most recent research interests of the potential supervisors.

III.   Conclusions

Considering that providing the above-mentioned public information in Greek and English is essential, the panel can only award a substantially satisfied mark.

Panel Judgement

Principle 8: Public information concerning the postgraduate study programmes	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	**X**
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

The website of PSP needs to be supplemented with additional programme information in both Greek and English.

It is recommended to add further details on the course outlines; please consider upgrading, and updating the information that you share in this guidance.

Addition of a short biography (for each member of the teaching staff) publicly accessible online would be highly advantageous for applicants, partners, and other academics.

PRINCIPLE 9: ON-GOING MONITORING AND PERIODIC INTERNAL EVALUATION OF POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES

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

The regular monitoring, review, and revision of postgraduate study programmes aim at maintaining the level of educational provision and creating a supportive and effective learning environment for students.

The above comprise the evaluation of:

a) *the content of the programme in the light of the latest research in the given discipline, thus ensuring that the PSP is up to date*
b) *the changing needs of society*
c) *the students' workload, progression and completion of the postgraduate studies*
d) *the effectiveness of the procedures for the assessment of students*
e) *the students' expectations, needs and satisfaction in relation to the programme*
f) *the learning environment, support services, and their fitness for purpose for the PSP in question*
Postgraduate study programmes are reviewed and revised regularly involving students and other stakeholders. The information collected is analysed and the programme is adapted to ensure that it is up-to-date.

Documentation

- *Procedure for the re-evaluation, redefinition and updating of the PSP curriculum*
- *Procedure for mitigating weaknesses and upgrading the structure of the PSP and the learning process*
- *Feedback processes concerning the strategy and quality goal setting of the PSP and relevant decision-making processes (students, external stakeholders)*
- *Results of the annual internal evaluation of the PSP by the Quality Assurance Unit (QAU), and the relevant minutes*

Study Programme Compliance

I.   Findings

The postgraduate programme (PSP) "The postgraduate program "MSc in Critical Illness" aims to provide a high level of specialization in the management of patients who have a serious illness or are in a period of rehabilitation after a serious illness. The present PG aims to provide strong scientific background, experience and know-how in modern issues of managing the critically ill for a successful professional career in the private and public sector. Management and rehabilitation" have in place an Internal Quality Assurance System that audits and reviews the program on an annual basis.

At the end of each academic year, the coordinating committee evaluates the content of the courses, ensuring their relevance, and plans accordingly the adjustment of the educational and teaching related activities as required.

The department has established a continuous Internal evaluation process, through the students' questionnaires, in order to improve its overall operation and achieve the stated

goals. The learning environment and support services are well suited to the purpose of the PSP in question. Students' needs seem to be considered when designing the programmers' curriculum, as the majority of the postgraduate students and the recent graduates appear very content.

II.   Analysis

The requirements of the Principle 9 are satisfied.

III.   Conclusions

The programme fully complies with principle 9.

Panel Judgement

Principle 9: On-going monitoring and periodic internal evaluation of postgraduate study programmes	
Fully compliant	**X**
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

None

PRINCIPLE 10: REGULAR EXTERNAL EVALUATION OF POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES

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

HAHE is responsible for administrating the PSP accreditation process which is realised as an external evaluation procedure, and implemented by panels of independent experts. HAHE grants accreditation of programmes, based on the Reports delivered by the panels of external experts, with a specific term of validity, following to which, revision is required. The quality accreditation of the PSP acts as a means for the determination of the degree of compliance of the programme to the Standards, and as a catalyst for improvement, while opening new perspectives towards the international standing of the awarded degrees. Both academic units and Institutions must consistently consider the conclusions and the recommendations submitted by the panels of experts for the continuous improvement of the programme.

Documentation

- *Progress report of the PSP in question, on the results from the utilisation of possible recommendations included in the External Evaluation Report of the Institution, and in the IQAS Accreditation Report, with relation to the postgraduate study programmes*

Study Programme Compliance

    I.   Findings

The postgraduate programme "MSc in Critical Illness" has not been subjected to an external accreditation and evaluation process.

    II.   Analysis

No comparison can be made with previous accreditation of the postgraduate programmes as this is the first accreditation of the programme. In any case, the professors and the director of the PSP were more than willing to participate in the accreditation process. They promptly provided the necessary paperwork and were very detailed and honest during the questioning. The faculty agreed with the committee's observations and were cheerful about correcting any reported failures to improve the graduate program's quality.

    III.   Conclusions

The programme fully complies with principle 10.

Panel Judgement

Principle 10: Regular external evaluation of postgraduate study programmes	
Fully compliant	**X**
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

None

PART C: CONCLUSIONS

I.   Features of Good Practice

The panel notes that the programme is unique in Greece as it involves a multi-disciplinary approach, and it is addressed to a diverse group of healthcare professionals. This approach supports individuals with a special interest in critical illness offering them the opportunity to gain expertise (relative to the MSc level) and the ability to collaborate effectively with peers.

The programme is directly linked with current clinical practice, thus becoming attractive for jobseekers as well as for professionals with niche research interests.

Prospective students, alumni, faculty, and external social partners, all had an overall positive experience.

The structure of the Curriculum is in accordance with the "Single European Qualifications Framework" while the presence of the Internship as it is conducted make the Program particularly attractive.

II.   Areas of Weakness

The panel notes that knowledge of ethical rules governing research is mentioned in the Learning Outcomes, but it is not visible highly in the course content.

The panel felt that continuous advances in technology could be challenging from a teaching point of view, as future graduates are expected to have a different level of knowledge in this field, as compared (arguably) to those who completed the course first. This is a general limitation of tech-heavy postgraduate programmes. The panel recognises that the Course Director is aware.

The panel notes that the hybrid approach in teaching (in-person and remote) can be challenging especially for individual students who have zero previous empirical experience in the ICU environment and in rehabilitation equipment. The Course Director recognises the limitations of remote teaching and appreciates that if they would have to choose between in-person and remote, they would opt in for a hybrid solution that is as inclusive as possible.

III.   Recommendations for Follow-up Actions

The website of PSP needs to be supplemented with additional programme information in both Greek and English, as "Subject", "Purpose", "Learning Outcomes", "Synergies" as well as the "Quality Policy", can be easily accessible also to partners and companies from abroad.

Knowledge of ethical rules governing research is mentioned in the Learning Outcomes, but it is not highly present in the course content. The panel recommends an amendment to the curriculum with a visible short introduction in Bioethics, expected to be at the level of a Master of Science degree, and relevant in the field of Medical Science.

The panel proposes to the steering group to expand the degree project requirement up to an equivalent of 30 ECTS credits, so that the PSP becomes is closer to the majority of similar Master of Science courses in Europe.

Although the PSP has a satisfactory number of lectures with invited speakers from abroad, the PSP should be strengthened in a wider field of collaborations (synergies) with institutions and laboratories in Greece and abroad, including engagement with social partners and societal groups.

Spreading the lessons on more weekends might be a strong motivation to improve the student's learning outcomes and their continuous contact with the subject.

The active participation of more students in the evaluation procedure would be very helpful for the improvement of the program.

The possibility of carrying out a small project as an internship or an Erasmus+ mobility project would be very beneficial to students and for the Programme.

The Panel considers that it would be very beneficial to find more financial resources to support students to do internships abroad.

The panel proposes to the steering group to expand the degree project to 30 credits, so that the PSP becomes more equivalent to most Master's Degrees in Europe.

The panel recommends minor changes in the content of teaching material to include ICH principles and regulations for the use of medicines and medical devices in humans including the role of the Greek competent authority (ΕΟΦ). Combined with basic knowledge in the framework for animal studies and the regulations for research tissue banks, and research databases, students are expected to know the basics in data protection and information governance including EU GDPR and Greek law. The Panel recommends the title of the "Research Methodology" module to change to "Research Methodology, Ethics, and Statistics". The Panel recommends this module to move to the first semester to prepare students best in conducting their research project at the fourth semester.

Please specify in the course guide, briefly, the Programme's policy for absence (all types) and planned leave.

Please rectify the typo in the course title to **"Critical Illness"**. The panel recommends a new English title that is closer to the Greek title e.g. "Critical Illness - Management and Rehabilitation".

The panel recommends mediation with the Department and the UTH for optimal resource management including changes for increased access to infrastructure, finance, and human resources. The panel suggests the strategic appointment (or secondment as a start) of administrative and technical/operational staff, as a high priority, in response to the unmet managerial needs. The suggestion aims to support teaching staff and the Course Director to deliver their work even more effectively. This point is here as a suggestion for staff who are busy with other commitments (external to the Programme), including time-consuming administrative tasks.

The panel recommends the establishment of a bespoke network of affiliated with the Programme ICUs and rehabilitation centres (from the Greek national health system, the private sector and abroad) that would act as host institutions for fixed-term training placements. This regards training for a short period of time (e.g. a month) for all students to increase visibility, to promote collaborations, and to enhance the international profile of the programme. The panel notes that the Course Director as well as prospective students and alumni and external stakeholders are in principle happy to accommodate. The panel recommends optimal planning and effective resource management to ensure success.

The website of PSP needs to be supplemented with additional programme information in both Greek and English.

It is recommended to add further details on the course outlines; please consider upgrading, and updating the information that you share in this guidance.

Addition of a short biography (for each member of the teaching staff) publicly accessible online would be highly advantageous for applicants, partners, and other academics.

IV. Summary & Overall Assessment

The Principles where full compliance has been achieved are: **1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, and 10.**

The Principles where substantial compliance has been achieved are: **8.**

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

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

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

The members of the External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel

Name and Surname   **Signature**

1. **Prof. Nikolaos Venizelos (Chair)**
   Örebro University, Örebro, Sweden

2. **Prof. Panagiotis Karanis**
   University of Nicosia, Nicosia, Cyprus

3. **Dr Andreas A. Roussakis**
   Imperial College London, United Kingdom

4. **Ms. Valentini Tzimogianni, PhD Candidate**
   School of Medicine, University of Patras, Patras, Greece