



**Quality Policy of the Academic Unit for the Development
and Improvement of the Distance-Learning Joint Foreign-
Language Postgraduate Studies Programme
“Humanitarian Action and Inclusive Management of
Public and One Health Challenges”**



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The primary objective of the Joint Foreign-Language Postgraduate Studies Programme “Humanitarian Action and Inclusive Management of Public and One Health Challenges” is, from its establishment, to provide an excellent quality of studies through the creation of a supportive, student-friendly and effective learning environment for postgraduate students. The strategy and policy of the Programme focus on the high-quality implementation of its scientific and teaching mission through the continuous monitoring of its organisation, implementation and evaluation by postgraduate students, as well as by the competent administrative bodies.

The Internal Evaluation of the Programme is a process that requires the collaboration of all participating stakeholders and calls for sound organisation and planning. For the coordination of this process, the Internal Evaluation Group (IEG), in cooperation with the Coordinating Committee and with the support of all instructors, shall serve as the communication and information channels for the collection of the data to be evaluated.

Procedure for the annual internal evaluation of the Joint Foreign-Language Postgraduate Studies Programme “Humanitarian Action and Inclusive Management of Public and One Health Challenges”

The annual internal evaluation of the Programme is coordinated by the Internal Evaluation Group (IEG) of the Lead Department of Veterinary Medicine, in accordance with the guidelines defined by the Hellenic Authority for Higher Education (HAHE) and described annually by the Quality Assurance Unit (QAU) of the Institution, taking into account any amendments introduced each year. The quality assurance procedures of the University of Thessaly for Foreign-Language Postgraduate Studies Programmes primarily concern the following criteria:

- Teaching work and the educational process.
- Research activity.
- Services.

The courses and instructors of the Joint Foreign-Language Postgraduate Studies Programme “Humanitarian Action and Inclusive Management of Public and One Health Challenges” are evaluated annually by postgraduate students through the information system developed by the Institution.

In addition, postgraduate students may submit their views on the Programme in writing or orally either to their Academic Advisor, to the Coordinating Committee and the Director of the Programme, or to the Assembly of the Lead Department through their representative.

Procedure for the reassessment, revision and updating of the course content of the Joint Foreign-Language Postgraduate Studies Programme “Humanitarian Action and Inclusive Management of Public and One Health Challenges”

The procedure for the reassessment, revision and updating of course content includes the following:

Student evaluation of each semester course. Evaluation is conducted for each course through the course-evaluation information system developed by the software development team of the Quality Assurance Unit (QAU) of the University of Thessaly. It includes the evaluation of: (a) the course; (b) the assignments; (c) the instructor; (d) the laboratory; and (e) students’ comments.

Postgraduate students may submit their views and proposals throughout the academic year to their Academic Advisor, to the Coordinating Committee and to the Director of the Programme “Humanitarian Action and Inclusive Management of Public and One Health Challenges”. Through their representatives, they may also submit their views and proposals to the Departmental Assembly.

Information is provided on student performance on the basis of the official grade records for each course, as generated through the central information system of the University of Thessaly. Discussion takes place within the Coordinating Committee of the Programme when the proportion of students with low grades is high. In such cases, the causes that led to this outcome are investigated.

During the process of updating course content, the comments of postgraduate students and the results of students’ course evaluations are taken into account. Furthermore, instructors revise and update the content of the courses they teach, taking into consideration: (a) research data produced through their own research activity; and (b) findings and recent developments in international research published in reputable international scientific journals or other publications relevant to the subject matter of their course and to the Programme “Humanitarian Action and Inclusive Management of Public and One Health Challenges”. This process is essential for improving the educational process and enhancing students’ understanding of course content, while also contributing to the more effective education of postgraduate students by providing knowledge that will be useful in their subsequent professional careers.

Feedback mechanisms for the Programme’s quality strategy and objectives and related decision-making procedures (postgraduate students, external stakeholders)

The main feedback mechanisms for the quality strategy and objectives of the Joint Foreign-Language Postgraduate Studies Programme “Humanitarian Action and Inclusive Management of Public and One Health Challenges”, as well as the associated decision-making procedures, are the following:

The Programme ensures that it collects, analyses and uses the necessary data for the effective management of the curriculum and its activities.

The Coordinating Committee and the Director of the Programme systematically monitor and, where required, revise the curriculum in order to ensure that it achieves the objectives set and responds to the needs of postgraduate students and society.

Postgraduate students provide adequate feedback on the effectiveness of teaching methods through their participation in the Programme evaluation process.

The results of course evaluations are analysed in depth by the Coordinating Committee of the Programme, with the aim of continuously improving the curriculum.

Postgraduate students meet regularly with their Academic Advisor and report their views on the operation of the Programme.

The Academic Advisor of each postgraduate student informs the Coordinating Committee and the Departmental Assembly of any problems reported by postgraduate students that relate to the educational process and to the operation of the Programme as a whole.

Results of the annual internal evaluation of the Programme by the Quality Assurance Unit

The annual internal evaluation of the Joint Foreign-Language Postgraduate Studies Programme “Humanitarian Action and Inclusive Management of Public and One Health Challenges” is carried out by the Quality Assurance Unit (QAU) of the University of Thessaly, and preventive and corrective actions are proposed where required.

Procedure for the organisation of the external evaluation

The principal purpose of External Evaluation is to improve the educational and research processes through feedback, both at the level of the Programme and at the level of the Lead Department of the University of Thessaly and the Collaborating Departments of the University of Thessaly and Columbia University in general, by providing the information necessary for their continuous enhancement.

The external evaluation of the Joint Foreign-Language Postgraduate Studies Programme “Humanitarian Action and Inclusive Management of Public and One Health Challenges” will take place within the time frame determined by the Hellenic Authority for Higher Education and will be conducted by a committee of independent experts. The committee prepares the external evaluation report following a visit to the academic unit/Programme under evaluation and after discussions and meetings with members of the Coordinating Committee, teaching and administrative staff, students and social partners. Upon completion, the evaluation report will be submitted to the competent Vice-Rector and to the Quality Assurance Unit of the University of Thessaly, and will be posted on the Department’s website.

The conclusions of this process will be discussed both by the Coordinating Committee of the Programme “Humanitarian Action and Inclusive Management of Public and One Health Challenges” and by the Quality Assurance Unit of the University of Thessaly, with the aim of upgrading the quality of the Programme so that it can fulfil its expected objectives, while simultaneously safeguarding the quality policy of the Lead Department of the University of Thessaly and of the Collaborating Departments of the University of Thessaly and Columbia University. The Committee’s recommendations will be examined thoroughly by the Coordinating Committee of the Programme, which, taking into account the observations of the Quality Assurance Unit of the University of Thessaly, will recommend the necessary improvement actions and interventions to be implemented.

The alignment/compliance of the Joint Foreign-Language Postgraduate Studies Programme “Humanitarian Action and Inclusive Management of Public and One Health Challenges” of the Department of Veterinary Medicine and the Collaborating Departments of the University of Thessaly and Columbia University with the recommendations of the committee of external evaluators and the requirements of the Hellenic Authority for Higher Education is important, as it ensures, on the one hand, the scientific and academic orientation of the Programme and the Collaborating Departments through high-quality studies and services and, on the other hand, aims to improve the position and competitiveness of the Programme within the international community.

Finally, the monitoring of the implementation and progress of improvement actions related to the recommendations that will have been formulated will be supervised by the Coordinating Committee of the Programme, which will also take the relevant decisions. At University level, the overall process is supervised by the Quality Assurance Unit of the Institution. The entire process will also be monitored through the submitted internal evaluation reports of the Department of Veterinary Medicine.