



**ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ**  
HELLENIC REPUBLIC



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# Accreditation Report for the Undergraduate Study Programme of:

**Medicine**

**Institution: University of Crete**

**Date: 20 February 2021**

Report of the Panel appointed by the HAHE to undertake the review of the Undergraduate Study Programme of **Medicine** of the **University of Crete** for the purposes of granting accreditation

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

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

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

- 1. Prof. Aristidis Veves (Chair)**  
Harvard University, Massachusetts, USA
  
- 2. Prof. Nickandros Bouras**  
King's College London, London, UK
  
- 3. Prof. Barbara Papadopoulou**  
Université Laval, Quebec, Canada
  
- 4. Prof. Charalabos Pothoulakis**  
University of California, Los Angeles, USA
  
- 5. Dr. Haris Vavouranakis**  
Member of the Panhellenic Medical Association, Greece

## II. Review Procedure and Documentation

The programme review was accomplished via zoom teleconferences due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Despite the limitations associated with remote meetings, and the overall desire for in person meetings by all participants, the reached consensus was that the review was well planned, able to efficiently discuss and evaluate all required topics and resulted in a very successful outcome.

The EEAP received emails from HAHE prior to the review meetings that contained detailed information regarding the standards for quality accreditation, quality indicators, programmes of teaching and the policy for quality for the last five years. In addition, the report of the 2010 evaluation was included. Overall, the Panel was satisfied with the provided information, which was deemed to be accurate, detailed and well organized.

Prior to the review, HAHE organized a teleconference with members of Panels for various Greek University Schools on January 28, 2021. The meeting included a presentation regarding the scope and the procedures of academic accreditation of study programmes and was followed by a discussion where questions from the Panel members were addressed.

The accreditation meeting started on Monday, February 15, 2021 with a private meeting of the EEAP members. This was followed the next day, February 16 with, first, a teleconference with Prof. Georgios Kosioris, Vice-Rector of Academic Affairs, Head of MODIP of the University of Crete and Prof. George Kochiadakis, Dean of Medical School and, next, with a teleconference with OMEA and MODIP representatives. On February 17, teleconferences took place with faculty members, students, administrative staff and teaching staff members. Meetings continued on February 18 with teleconferences with Programme graduates, employers and social partners. Meeting concluded the same day with teleconference with OMEA and MODIP representatives and Profs. Georgios Kosioris and George Kochiadakis. The Panel had private meeting on February 19 and 20 and completed their report to HAHE.

The consensus among the Panel members was that the quality of the presentations was outstanding and provided ample information on all relevant topics. In addition, all representatives of the University and the Medical School engaged in a very open and constructive dialogue that was made in a friendly and understanding manner. It is the Panel's opinion that this attitude was instrumental in conducting a very thorough and accurate evaluation of the programme. The Panel noticed very favourably the sense of pride and devotion of the faculty and staff to their mission and the positive attitude despite the current Covid-19 and financial crises. Overall, the EEAP believes that the officials from the programme under review made a very strong effort towards a frank and collegial approach.

As two Panel members had also participated in the 2010 evaluation Panel, comparisons were made. It was extremely encouraging to notice that significant shifts have occurred not only in the acceptance by the whole academic community of the need of external evaluation but also by the improvements that have taken place since then, at least partly as a result of the evaluation. The Panel has no doubts that similar improvement will be the norm for the coming years and hopes that this report will be helpful toward this direction.

### III. Study Programme Profile

The Medical School of the University of Crete was established in 1977 and started accepting students in 1984. In 1989, the School moved in a brand-new campus that also includes the University Hospital. The School is also in closed proximity with the Institute of Molecular Biology and Biotechnology of the Foundation for Research and Technology Hellas (IMBB-FORTH). There is close collaboration between the two Institutions, which has greatly benefited the School and allowed it to be a leading basic research institution in Greece.

The study duration is 12 semesters, each of which consists of 30-34 ECTS and the graduates are awarded a Diploma in Medicine (Ptychion Iatrikis). The School, although originally designed to admit 65 students per year, admits more than 130 per year during the last five years. The vast majority is admitted based on the Panhellenic exams but a smaller number from additional groups is also included. There are currently 1005 undergraduate students (excluding Erasmus students), 668 postgraduate students and 119 faculty members (ΔΕΠ). The School also accepts around 40 students per year from foreign universities, mostly from Europe, who complete part of their studies according to the Erasmus programme.

The vast majority of the students completes its studies well within the appropriate study time and the average duration of study is around 6.5 years. The graduates do not have any serious problem in being admitted in residency programmes of their choice. Upon completion of residency, there are no problems of employment and the graduates can work either in the Greek National Health System or in private practice without facing any serious unemployment problems. In addition, a considerable portion of the graduates, especially the last ten years, have migrated to other countries, either in EU or USA where they work as medical doctors. The success of the graduates is a strong testament to the high quality of training provided by that Medical School.

The School belongs to the University of Crete, a relatively new but dynamic University with two main campuses, one at Herakleion and one at Rethymnon. As the Panel was not able to visit in person due to the Covid-19 pandemic, a video was available to the EEAP regarding the facilities of the Medical School while in addition, teleconferences were held with faculty at their respective labs. The Panel concluded that the facilities were modern, adequate and contained all required equipment.

## **PART B: COMPLIANCE WITH THE PRINCIPLES**

### **Principle 1: Academic Unit Policy for Quality Assurance**

**INSTITUTIONS SHOULD APPLY A QUALITY ASSURANCE POLICY AS PART OF THEIR STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT. THIS POLICY SHOULD EXPAND AND BE AIMED (WITH THE COLLABORATION OF EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS) AT ALL INSTITUTION'S AREAS OF ACTIVITY, AND PARTICULARLY AT THE FULFILMENT OF QUALITY REQUIREMENTS OF UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMMES. THIS POLICY SHOULD BE PUBLISHED AND IMPLEMENTED BY ALL STAKEHOLDERS.**

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

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

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

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

### **Study Programme Compliance**

The first four years focus almost exclusively on preclinical medicine. The teaching is based on lectures and practicums at the lab. The classical structure is mainly followed, which consists of teaching of anatomy and physiology in the absence of disease (basic cycle). A major recent

change is the addition of pathophysiology that aims to help the students conceptualizing changes related to various diseases, something that paves a smooth transition to the teaching of clinical medicine (preclinical cycle). This is achieved during the last two years, during which the students spend all their didactic time at various clinics of the hospital. Internal medicine and surgery attachments occur during the 5<sup>th</sup> year while attachments in other fields follow during the 6<sup>th</sup> year. Although the classical system of teaching is mainly applied, elements of system-based teaching, which involves the teaching of anatomy, physiology and pathophysiology also exist. The teaching model is reviewed and updated regularly. Overall, the Panel's opinion is that the structure and organization of the curriculum is appropriate.

The School has modern facilities, which will soon include a new Anatomy facility. This allows in person and remote teaching and adequate lab experience during the preclinical years. There are also plans for equipping the surgical operating rooms with audio visual equipment that will allow remote teaching of surgical techniques. The Panel verifies that the pursuit of learning outcomes and qualifications are in accordance with the European and the National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education.

A student-centric model is followed. Efforts are made to evaluate the quality of the teaching through evaluations by the students. One problem, common with other medical schools, is the low rate of student participation in these surveys which raises questions whether the received responses are representative of the student body. In response to this, additional methods are applied, such as focus groups, informal discussions with the students and exit evaluation by recent graduates. Nonetheless, the student evaluation data that was presented to the Panel was very encouraging, not only because it was overwhelmingly positive but also because it showed a continuous improvement trend during the last five years.

The teaching is mainly performed by the School faculty members. However, given the considerable contraction of the faculty due to the financial crisis and the increased number of admitted students, currently double to the original one on which the School organization was based, there is considerable stress on the system and additional teaching alternatives have been explored. These include the employment of members of the teaching staff (EDIP), doctors of the National Health System (ESY) and undergraduate, graduate and postgraduate students who are enrolled in the various programmes of the School. Programmes currently exist and are constantly improved that aim to teach the teachers and improve the overall teaching quality.

One major strength of the School is its research programme. The School mainly appoints well qualified faculty, the majority of whom have extensive training and working experience in major institutions abroad. Furthermore, they closely collaborate with the Institute of Technology of Crete which is based adjacent to the Medical School and is a well-recognized world class research institute. This results in a highly qualified faculty that conducts high quality research work that is published in major scientific journals. Impressive statistics were presented regarding the number of faculty members with high citation numbers and h indexes. In addition, not surprisingly, according to well respected international evaluations, the Crete Medical School is ranked well ahead of the remaining Greek Schools.

There is a strong effort to involve students in research. Students have access to labs where they can be exposed to various types of research, including basic research, epidemiology etc. There is a non-obligatory topic (mathima) in the curriculum, named 'Basic Research in Medicine' that interested students can select during the seventh semester.

Graduate students have no difficulty to join the labour market either in Greece or abroad. The Panel had the opportunity to meet with graduates from the School who have already finished their postgraduate training and are in clinical practice or they are currently involved in various residence programmes both in Greece and in highly prestigious institutions abroad. One common feeling from all graduates was the sense of pride they shared for being graduates of the School. They all felt that the School had provided them all required knowledge and experience that allowed them to have very successful careers. In addition, they spoke highly of their professors, some of whom were very instrumental in helping them to get in contact with foreign Institutions, complete internships there and subsequently continue their postgraduate training.

The students have access to the University Library. There is also an appropriate programme for the students' welfare. There are also well-organized administrative services that help students to initially adjust and then manage student life.

Annual review and internal audit procedures are appropriate. In addition, the collaboration of the Internal Evaluation Group (IEG) with the Institution's Quality Assurance Unit (QAU) was judged to be appropriate.

Finally, promoting excellence, otherwise also known as *Aristia*, should continue to be one of the most determining policies of the School. This includes the appropriate ranking of the students, offering them every help to achieve their highest potential, the encouragement of taking risks and putting the strongest effort and, even more important, providing meaningful rewards to those who are willing to take the risk, put the effort and succeed in the clinical, teaching and or research tracks. These rewards should be the main criteria for promotion, space and personnel allocation and other honours the School can bestow to its members.

### Panel Judgement

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

### Panel Recommendations

Overall, the quality of the Medical School was deemed outstanding, not only meeting but also exceeding European and National requirements.

Despite the above, the Panel felt that the School carries a high potential to act as a leader not only in the region, but also at a national level and greatly improve the standing of Greece

internationally in medicine and research. In order to allow the School to fulfil its potential, the Panel recommends the following policies, that can be easily accomplished without major financial or other burden, especially to the Greek State, which is currently the main sponsor of the School.

- One major problem is the limited faculty, which cannot accommodate the ever-increasing number of annually admitted medical students. In addition, there is an inverted pyramid with disproportionately higher senior faculty and limited junior faculty. Given the fact that the current financial crisis has resulted in further faculty reduction, alternative options should be urgently considered. One option can include the establishment of endowment Chairs and also the hiring of faculty using research funds that are available to the School. The same policies that are employed in highly respected European and USA Universities can be applied, something that can easily guarantee high ethical standards.
- Establishing the system of Adjunct or Visiting Professors will provide the School the opportunity to attract well established scientists from foreign renown institutions and initiate collaborative work. One major benefit of the current Covid-19 pandemic is the realization that current technologies can allow successful completion of highly complicated scientific projects without the need of in-person meetings and the proximity of collaborating labs. Taking advantage of this, the School can establish long distance collaborations that have the potential to lead to joined grant applications to prestigious funding bodies, such as the EU Horizon programme and the USA NIH.
- Achieving closer collaboration with the doctors who are employed by the National Health System (ESY) and work at the University Hospital can be an additional very promising plan. As most of these doctors have additional postgraduate degrees, the ones who fulfil appropriately defined strong teaching and research criteria can be selected by impartial and transparent methods and be given a special status in the University. This status can be based on clinical professorship tracks (the USA paradigm) or the Honorary University appointments for NHS doctors (the British paradigm).
- Faculty members who retire but continue to have funding for their research should be allowed to keep their labs and be fully active in research and teaching activities without any financial obligations from the School.
- Teaching in other languages, preferably English, should be allowed, at least for various postgraduate programmes. This has the potential to attract students from abroad who will be charged appropriate fees that can be used to fund new faculty positions.
- As research is one of the strongest points of the School, additional efforts should be made to strengthen its impact:
  - A review, preferably external by an organization with appropriate knowhow, should be performed to identify the most prominent research fields in which the School can compete internationally. The school should make every effort to organize core facilities and other infrastructure projects, such as allocation of research space and assisting personnel, that can further support researchers in these fields.
- The School should actively promote extroversion and reward outlooking faculty members who establish collaborations with high quality foreign institutions.

- Further to the above, the policy of hiring faculty according to high standards, with special emphasis on preference of candidates who have been not only trained but also distinguished themselves in high quality foreign institutions should be continued. Distinguished School graduates can provide a very good pool that can be considered for future promotions.
- Emphasis should be given to mentoring junior faculty by distinguished members of the senior faculty. Efforts should be made for structured mentoring, using as an example the NIH system in USA.

## Principle 2: Design and Approval of Programmes

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

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

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

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

### Study Programme Compliance

The Medical School places emphasis on a combined educational 6-years programme that includes a high level of basic science courses leading to a preclinical and clinical practice curriculum. In response to previous comments included in the 2010 external evaluation, the School improved the curriculum by adding several elective courses which help bridge the basic and pre-clinical knowledge to the clinical courses. The recent inclusion of the "Introduction to Basic Research" course in the basic science curriculum, also adds early laboratory exposure and understanding of the value of basic science in biomedical sciences. The obligatory courses included in the curriculum, together with the elective courses and laboratory work clearly improves the focus and educational objectives of the School. The emphasis in basic sciences is clearly stated and supported by strong educational rationale based on well-accepted international standards, while its educational value is clearly underscored by the School's

graduates. Particular emphasis for the success of each course is placed on student questionnaires, which provide input for the effective delivery of the different topics.

The School follows closely educational outcomes that students should manifest by the time they enter the next period and ensure smooth and timely flow of graduation from the one to the next cycle, as well as the time for final graduation. The large number of students pursuing a Masters or a Ph.D. (which is quite high in the Medical School of Crete) is also an additional positive parameter.

Each and every study programme is supported by a clear programme rationale that is well articulated as it relates to its goals and educational methods of delivery.

There is a system in place for the approval and the revisions of the content of each individual course that takes into account the opinion of the faculty, the students' representatives, as well as students who can freely participate in the School's assembly.

Although there is clear evidence for the participation of both faculty and students in curriculum revisions, whether external experts and graduates play a role in these revisions is not clear.

The School's philosophy for excellence in medical education and research, as well as clinical practice is clearly delineated in the Study Guide. Emphasis in the Study Guide is also placed on the continuous effort of the School to periodically renew the content of the basic, pre-clinical, research, and clinical courses to adapt to new knowledge in the field.

### Panel Judgement

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

### Panel Recommendations

- As was also mentioned in the report of the 2010 evaluation, there appears to be inconsistent attendance to the various lectures, which, however, seems to be improved in recent years.
- Another lingering issue is the very small number of students who respond to the relevant questionnaires to help evaluate whether the educational goals of each subject have been achieved in terms of both content and quality of delivery. This needs to be addressed as a priority.

### **Principle 3: Student- centred Learning, Teaching and Assessment**

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

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

*The student-centred learning and teaching process*

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

*In addition :*

- *the academic staff are familiar with the existing examination system and methods and are supported in developing their own skills in this field;*
- *the assessment criteria and methods are published in advance;*
- *the assessment allows students to demonstrate the extent to which the intended learning outcomes have been achieved. Students are given feedback, which, if necessary is linked to advice on the learning process;*
- *student assessment is conducted by more than one examiner, where possible;*
- *the regulations for assessment take into account mitigating circumstances;*
- *assessment is consistent, fairly applied to all students and carried out in accordance with the stated procedures;*
- *a formal procedure for student appeals is in place.*

#### **Study Programme Compliance**

The Medical School has developed and implemented over the years a modern, high-quality undergraduate programme studies of international standards. This programme covers a wide range of basic, preclinical/laboratory and clinical subjects offering high level scientific education and clinical skills to students. In addition, the School proposes additional training activities of international scope that allow the participation of undergraduate students in research and development programmes. It is without saying that the long-standing culture of scientific research excellence of the School greatly contributes to the high quality of undergraduate

education and the attraction of international students and trainees, as well as to the overall national and international visibility of the programme.

The School has continuously increased its efforts to offer students a high-quality study programme at the cutting edge of knowledge comparable to the best medical institutions in Europe and around the world. The recent reform of the curriculum, further demonstrates the programme alignment with international standards encouraging a student-centered learning, the development of critical thinking and sense of autonomy and the improvement of clinical skills. In line with this scope, the School combines traditional forms of teaching methodology (e.g., lectures, seminars, tutorials) with a variety of innovative teaching methods that better align with modern educational trends stimulating the active participation of students in the learning process. Efforts have been made to include the problem-based learning, the broader utilization of IT technologies for online teaching, virtual laboratories and virtual patient examination, small working groups, and the participation of advanced students as instructors in laboratory exercises or research protocols. Accordingly, the School has recently established a continuing education programme (Training of trainers programme) for Faculty members and staff to expose them to newer methods of teaching and knowledge transmission.

The organization of the programme studies in three cycles of 2 years each - basic (1<sup>st</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> semester), pre-clinical (5<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> semester) and clinical (9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> semester) - integrates well theory and concepts with clinical practice. As acknowledged by all students and graduates, the programme of basic and preclinical studies is of high standards and central to their training as it prepares them superbly well to their clinical learning but it also constitutes a wealth of basic knowledge that is very useful to the rest of their training and professional career. The students acknowledged, however, that the workload of these two programme cycles is high and it requires good skills of organization and intensive work from their part. The direct consequence of this workload is that certain students who experience some more difficulties or manage less optimally their time fail or postpone passing all courses and transfer a percentage of them to the last 2 years, which compromises to some extent the quality of their clinical training and delays their progression. Despite the continuous efforts made from the School and Faculty members to innovate in teaching methods and to balance as much as possible the density and intensity of the basic and preclinical programme, there is still room for improvement. Mentoring of the students during this period has to be strengthened and additional efforts should be employed to better coordinate lectures with laboratory work and in smaller groups, when possible, to increase student attendance in the courses and to involve more students in the learning process. The training of trainers programme, as well as the institution of the Academic Advisor could be very helpful in improving this process.

The School takes care of ensuring and highlighting the quality of its educational and research work on a regular basis. There is a consensus from students and graduates that Faculty members and teaching staff are of high calibre and they master the subject of the course, which is often in direct relation with their clinical expertise or research programme. Several Faculty teach the same subjects in preclinical and corresponding clinical courses, which creates more links between students and teachers and facilitates merging between theoretical courses and clinical training. Students, through their two last years of studies, are exposed to well defined core clinical training sessions and have also the possibility of optional practice in a large number of clinics (specialties and sub-specialties). The vicinity of the School with the University Hospital is undoubtedly an advantage and expedites clinical training. The coordination between the School and the University Hospital seems also to be excellent. Equally important, Faculty members are

easily accessible, they help and accommodate students and are attentive to their requests. Relationships between students and Faculty are excellent and seem to be mutually cordial and respectful. This deserves to be emphasized as it clearly creates a healthier and more enjoyable learning environment. It has been mentioned by both students and academic staff on several occasions and in different contexts that the School is like a ‘big family’. However, the high student/Faculty ratio in recent years may compromise this beneficial and desired proximity and impact on the quality and effectiveness of teaching. Students and graduates are proud of being part of this Institution, they have a strong sense of belonging and they consider themselves very well equipped to undertake a specialty and to do well as medical doctors. They acknowledged not only having received an excellent training but also guidance and support from several Faculty members following their graduation to pursue careers within Greece and especially abroad.

The Medical School respects the diversity of students and takes the appropriate measures to address any special learning issue and other needs to facilitate student’s learning, laboratory work, course examinations and progression through the action and responsibility of the Undergraduate Studies Committee. Moreover, the School has established the institution of the Academic Advisor for the educational supervision, counselling and guidance of students on an individual basis. This applies mostly to the 1<sup>st</sup> year students, but this collaboration can be continued throughout their studies. The School set up also mechanisms for managing complaints or any objections, and a formal procedure for student appeals is in place although the student’s ombudsman at the Institution level needs to be reinforced.

The School, through secretarial services, web platforms and the newsletter, provides students with all relevant and detailed information regarding the curriculum, the course of studies, the clinical practice, and the participation in different educational programmes within Greece and abroad. Students have easy access to all lecture material electronically through the e-learning platform. The laboratory courses are carried out in well-equipped laboratory areas from highly qualified technical staff. In the majority of courses, the assessment of student performance is carried out with written examinations at the end of the semester. The examination system is transparent and public and common to all students. Complementary/alternative forms of examination and failure management mechanisms with re-examination periods are offered to accommodate students. There are well documented and appropriate assessment criteria and methods in place to ensure that the undergraduate programme is delivered in a way that encourages students to actively participate in the learning process. Operational mechanisms are also in place for modifying programmes and educational methods after feedback from students. Courses and student’s satisfaction are generally evaluated at the end of each semester through online questionnaires approved by the Quality Assurance Unit (MODIP) of the University. However, the percentage of students who respond to those surveys remains very low and therefore prevents greater objectivity and retrospectivity of student’s opinions on the subject. Additional efforts and mechanisms should be employed by the Faculty and the School to optimize this process and build student’s confidence in the assessment process of the programme.

## Panel Judgement

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

## Panel Recommendations

Significant efforts have been made over the past years by the School to implement new and better adapted teaching strategies, link basic to clinical training, stimulate a student-centered learning and increase active participation of all students in their study programme. However, there is still a need for better coordination of teaching and mentoring activities and the introduction of measurables of how this works in practice in order to increase learning effectiveness and to better balance the high workload, especially in basic and preclinical studies.

Mentoring of the students throughout the duration of their studies has to be strengthened and additional efforts should be employed to render the role of the Academic Advisor more visible and efficient. Coaching students of how better managing their time and effort between lectures, laboratory work, and examination periods would also be helpful. The School should also continue efforts to encourage training of the academic staff in innovative teaching methods and tools.

Increase the percentage of students who complete and participate in the evaluation of the different courses and preclinical and clinical activities. Efforts should be employed by the School and the academic staff to optimize and simplify this process and to build student's confidence in the assessment process of the programme. The programme evaluation by students of the 6th year, recently established by the School, is extremely important for improving the curriculum and clinical exercises as it covers the whole educational programme and learning in the clinics.

The function of ombudsman at the Institution level needs to be reinforced.

## Principle 4: Student Admission, Progression, Recognition and Certification

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

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

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

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

### Study Programme Compliance

The admission criteria to the Medical School of the University of Crete are established by the Ministry of Higher Education and Religions. Students from Greece (~110/y) are admitted following a highly competitive national exam. There is also a smaller number of foreigners, Greeks from abroad, and other minorities (~30/y) who are also added to the list every year. Efforts are being employed by the Medical School to attract talented students from Greece and abroad. It is encouraging that in recent years, 60% of the students have chosen the Medical School of the University of Crete among their 1-3 priorities, which testifies the excellent reputation of the School with respect to its basic/clinical training and research activities. Admitted students have access to all relevant information regarding the curriculum, clinical exercises, and the different educational facilities and study material through central electronic platforms. The administrative staff of the central School's secretariat coordinates all these activities and is very responding to any of the student's requirement. The Undergraduate Studies Committee monitors the success rates of students in each course and proceeds with appropriate actions where and when problems arise. The Committee of undergraduate studies also records in detail the development and progress of students for the transition from the 2<sup>nd</sup> to the 3<sup>rd</sup> cycle, where prerequisite courses are required.

Undergraduate studies at the School last a total of six years and the programme is divided into 3 cycles of basic, preclinical and clinical studies. The programme includes compulsory (55), optional compulsory (41) and laboratory courses (16) that constitute the core of basic medical knowledge in the first two cycles and 10 clinical exercises in the last cycle of studies that aim to provide clinical knowledge on specific subjects. Courses that highlight the social role of a modern physician and cultivate skills towards the multidimensional approaching for patients are also offered. Transition of the students from the basic and preclinical cycles to the 3<sup>rd</sup> cycle of clinical training requires general and specific prerequisite courses. Although close to 80% of the

students are able to successfully start their clinics on time, this may add some additional stress to the already intense curriculum of the first 4 years and the overall workload. However, this is necessary and largely explains the excellent numbers of the School in study duration (average of 6.35 years) and graduation, which placed it in the 1<sup>st</sup> rank in this matter among other Medical Schools or Departments in Greece. The validity of each course is declared in European Credits (ECTS). A student's workload corresponds to a maximum number of 34 ECTS per semester. Students have to complete 360 ECTS for obtaining the Diploma Supplement. The majority of students obtain a mark of 7.54/10 for their diploma, which is another indication of the high level of training offered by the School and of the quality of trainees.

The clinical exercise lasts 64 weeks and it involves training in a core of clinics/specialties and the possibility of optional practice in a large number of specialties and sub-specialties. The close vicinity of the School to the University hospital greatly facilitates and optimizes the practical clinical training and allows students developing appropriate level of clinical skills. Students are exposed to well defined clinical training sessions that cover from history and examination, diagnosis, presentation of the clinical case, treatments and alternatives, emergencies and laboratory tests. Together with the participation in rounds at the regular clinics and individual units, students are also attending common programme of courses, clinical discussions and seminars. Information technologies and newer teaching methods are also utilized for their clinical training (e.g., the OSCE method in the clinical practice). In clinical practice, students work with specialist physicians (ESY doctors) and medical staff of high level of scientific training and clinical experience, under the supervision of faculty members who play a central role in the education of students. Students and graduates acknowledged the high quality of medical and academic staff, but the limited faculty members vs. the high number of students to be trained along with time constraints of Faculty and medical staff, mostly in clinical disciplines, compromise optimal training organization and delivery of clinical knowledge. As a testimony, the last evaluation of clinical practice by the students through questionnaires (2013-2020) stated the clinical experience as "satisfactory" or "very good" (62%-64%) and the skill acquisition for diagnostic access and treatment at 57%-59%. This further indicates that there are concerns with the quality, variety and organization of clinical exercises. From the discussion the Panel had with the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> year students and graduates it was made clear that students have to play a more active role in clinical exercises and that the management of these training sessions need to be improved. It has also been mentioned that exposure of students to intensive care patients was suboptimal and that training with seriously ill patients with multi systems failure was essential. It is recognized that strengthening the clinics with new faculty members and offering ESY doctors the possibility of an educational and academic recognition for their contributions will contribute to the further improvement of clinical training.

The School actively achieves the mobility of its students through exchange programmes in Crete, within Greece and abroad. The School encourages the international orientation of the Study Programme cultivating extroversion and gaining experience in different standards medical education and health systems. A significant number of students at the School through mobility programmes (ERASMUS, Boston programme, HELMSIC exchange programme) have the possibility to practice in big hospitals abroad in the context of clinical exercises. The Boston programme (1-month laboratory in 3<sup>rd</sup> year and 1-month clinical exercise 6<sup>th</sup> year) at top Universities such as Harvard University, MIT and Tufts offers great opportunities to selected students for short research and clinical training. Through these well-implemented international opportunities and due to the high number of connections/collaborations of the academic staff

with several internationally renowned Universities, a significant number of graduates continue the next stages of their careers in the US and in various European countries. The School offers also clinical training opportunities to students in other hospitals in Crete and the rest of Greece. The School aims at educating students in research methodology and encourages their participation in research projects. In line with this scope, it proposes a relevant elective course in the curriculum, where students are invited to carry out research projects.

Despite the limitations of public institutional funding, the School recognizes and promotes excellence of its students through a number of excellence awards for highly performing students and financially supports students participating in ERASMUS or other exchange programme. The institution of an auxiliary teaching programme in the context of laboratory exercises to undergraduate students ("Teaching Auxiliary Project for Undergraduate Students" or DEPROFOIT), although it is considered as honorary, it increases the motivation for excellent academic performance which is constant goal of the School.

### Panel Judgement

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

### Panel Recommendations

The School needs to find ways and evaluation mechanisms to help students whose progression to the 3<sup>rd</sup> cycle of clinical training is delayed due to the instauration of prerequisite courses and the heavy load of the basic and preclinical courses.

As there were some concerns on whether students have acquired appropriate level of knowledge and experience regarding basic practical skills and procedures after completing their clinical education, this issue should be revisited during the Study Guide update. The Panel recommends a more structured clinical teaching and more active involvement by the students in patients care. The USA student clerkship was proposed by one of the graduates and seemed reasonable to the Panel.

The School needs to revisit the structure and procedures of clinical training, especially in surgery and intensive care units, to better define the role of students in clinical exercises, to promote a more active participation, and to improve management and organization of clinical learning.

## Principle 5: Teaching Staff

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

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

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

### Study Programme Compliance

The standards of academic staff are of high quality and compatible with National, European and International requirements for qualifications and experience. A considerable number of staff are appointed from well recognized academic institutions from abroad. The promotion of academic staff is regulated by the Central Government, some additional transparent prerequisites are added by the School. There are very good opportunities for promotion and the professional development of the teaching staff.

Innovation in teaching methods and the use of new technologies is strongly encouraged as well as strengthening the links between learning, teaching and research. A particular strength of the School is the high percentage of qualified faculty who carry out high quality research and the strong links with the Institute of Technology and Research (ITE), the Institute of Molecular Biology and Biotechnology and other relevant organizations.

## Panel Judgement

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

## Panel Recommendations

- It was noticed that there is a decline in the numbers of tenure academic staff mostly of not replacing or delaying filling in vacancies, that creates an extra burden on the existing staff. Similar issues were also raised by the administrative staff. The School should continue to develop policies to attract highly qualified academic staff externally as well as internally.
- A more systematic way to train the teaching staff will be beneficial including the introduction of a systematic mentoring for newly appointed staff.
- A more equal distribution of gender among the top levels of tenure staff is advisable. More recommendations on these issues have been expanded in the previous Principles.

## Principle 6: Learning Resources and Student Support

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

*Institutions and their academic units must have sufficient funding and means to support learning and academic activity in general, so that they can offer to students the best possible level of studies. The above means could include facilities such as libraries, study rooms, educational and scientific equipment, information and communications services, support or counselling services.*

*When allocating the available resources, the needs of all students must be taken into consideration (e.g. whether they are full-time or part-time students, employed or international students, students with disabilities) and the shift towards student-centred learning and the adoption of flexible modes of learning and teaching. Support activities and facilities may be organised in various ways, depending on the institutional context. However, the internal quality assurance ensures that all resources are appropriate, adequate, and accessible, and that students are informed about the services available to them.*

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

### Study Programme Compliance

The School has modern building facilities and is in short proximity with the University Hospital while can use the State Hospital and the Primary Care Centre. The EEAP was impressed by availability of a state-of-the-art wide range learning facilities including educational and scientific equipment, labs, study rooms fully-equipped for online teaching, computer rooms, information and communications services, libraries, and support services. There is a counselling service in operation for psychological support to students who face difficulties with their studies, intrapersonal and social life as well as psychosomatic problems and mental health issues. Furthermore, there is an active career guidance service and a function of ombudsman for conflict resolutions. It was highly praised the long-standing exchange of students with Professor Vasilis Zannis in Boston. Plenty of computers are available and several programmes of remote learning are in operation using current technology. Modern electronic systems are also used for administrative functions and support.

## Panel Judgement

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

## Panel Recommendations

The School has a strong, modern, and functional system of learning support and should continue maintaining these high standards.

## Principle 7: Information Management

**INSTITUTIONS BEAR FULL RESPONSIBILITY FOR COLLECTING, ANALYSING AND USING INFORMATION, AIMED AT THE EFFICIENT MANAGEMENT OF UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMMES OF STUDY AND RELATED ACTIVITIES, IN AN INTEGRATED, EFFECTIVE AND EASILY ACCESSIBLE WAY.**

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

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

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

- *key performance indicators*
- *student population profile*
- *student progression, success and drop-out rates*
- *student satisfaction with their programme(s)*
- *availability of learning resources and student support*
- *career paths of graduates*

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

### Study Programme Compliance

It is clearly evident that all the systems mentioned above are in place, including a StudentWeb system, as well as a Classweb system for final scoring of the different subjects. Computer systems for teaching methods of each subject, websites with the actual content of the course and a website to help communicate with the School's graduates and follow future employment are also in place. There is an obvious close communication between faculty and students regarding employability and career mentoring highlighted by students and graduates alike during our remote visit.

Detailed student and staff satisfaction surveys for all subjects are evaluated at the end of the six-month semester, as well as at the end of each laboratory course. This is more than adequate.

The information obtained from the surveys is classified and analysed, and results are distributed to the faculty. These data are also discussed by the appropriate faculty committees and action towards improvement is taken by the School body. This is an excellent approach for gathering, dissemination, and improvement of the educational goals of each subject. The only concern as mentioned in previous Principles is to work out mechanisms to encourage a higher participation of students in this evaluation process.

Multiple websites and IT facilities are in place for availability and accessibility of various recourses. There appears to be a high level of continuous communication of the items indicated above.

Graphical data interpretation is evident for the various activities of the Medical School allowing both clear interpretation of findings and comparisons at multiple levels and trends.

### Panel Judgement

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

### Panel Recommendations

Participation of the students in the evaluation of the courses, in terms of delivery, understanding, and evaluations of faculty are, at best, inconsistent among different courses, laboratories and clinics. This needs to be seriously discussed among the faculty and corrective measures need to be taken.

## Principle 8: Public Information

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

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

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

### Study Programme Compliance

There is a strong interaction of the School with the local community across the whole island of Crete. It is without saying that the local community greatly benefits from the School, its graduates who chose to stay in the island and all the services provided through clinical and research activities of the School. The School is involved in a variety of educational, cultural, and social activities involving local organizations and groups of people. The School also links with the private sector, including the private medical sector, and several of its graduates work in private health outlets. The School also interacts with representatives of patient associations and help them through their research programmes.

There is a strong link between Faculty, services and society which becomes apparent though the excellent collaboration of the local city-hospital, clinical doctors and students. This is also evident in the collaboration of other local state hospitals in other towns and villages or other private hospitals in the city. The local community (tourism industry, local clinics, primary health care, social workers, high-risk patients) hailed the targeted effective and timely support and guidance provided by the School of Medicine in the effort to combat Covid 19.

The School has also an important international component through a very active ERASMUS exchange programme and other international collaborations, mostly in research-related activities that greatly contribute to the local economy.

The School has its own group of alumni and there are plans to set up an alumni group for the whole University.

Of importance is the Museum of Medicine with a collection of very rich health and medical artifacts and subjects that provides a substantial hub of history and knowledge. Facilities like the Museum of Medicine also seems to strengthen the link between society and the University and could be further encouraged to support School of Medicine Open Days that involve all local community stakeholders.

A Newsletter is published regularly.

### Panel Judgement

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

### Panel Recommendations

Continue the current activities and expand further with stronger involvement and presence in the local communities. Efforts should be made to reach out the other ethnic groups in the island of Crete and support the local economy.

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

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

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

*The above comprise the evaluation of:*

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

*Programmes are reviewed and revised regularly involving students and other stakeholders. The information collected is analysed and the programme is adapted to ensure that it is up-to-date. Revised programme specifications are published.*

### Study Programme Compliance

The content of the programme is state-of-the-art and seems to be research-focused. Student workload is demanding in the first four years, yet it fully equips students with adequate skills in order to pursue postgraduate or research career pathways. Despite the workload, current student and graduate student satisfaction and expectations are very high with a firm sense of belonging and a strong drive towards excellence regarding education and research standards.

The completion rate is very high as the students of Medicine enter the School following high-stake exams. There is minimal drop-out rate mainly due to a low percentage of students that the state allows for entry with the aim of social inclusion.

Faculty strive to use a variety of methods to render the learning environment more enticing and increase student attendance through small-group projects and problem-based learning (PBL). There is also transparency when it comes to course design and assessment modes.

Support systems and services effectively respond to the needs of students as online platforms are used either for education or dissemination purposes well before COVID-19.

## Panel Judgement

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

## Panel Recommendations

The School could increase their local and global outreach by promoting targeted activities during open days inviting local citizens, secondary school students and companies that might have a vested interest of collaborating, studying or investing in the School of Medicine.

An effort should be made to let students understand early in their studies the need for the increased preclinical workload. The School may also discuss with them alternatives for a better distribution of the workload without reducing its content.

## Principle 10: Regular External Evaluation of Undergraduate Programmes

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

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

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

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

### Study Programme Compliance

This is the second external evaluation review of the School of Medicine undergraduate programme. It seems that all stakeholders supported by the Undergraduate study committee and Committee of internal Quality assurance took into account the previous accreditation comments and introduced a series of curriculum changes including reducing the overlap of content taught in the first four years of study, setting pre-requisites between the basic and the clinical part of the programme and incorporating new pedagogical methods such as PBL.

The Medicine programme at the University of Crete is outstanding as it is of high quality, completion rates are high, and the Faculty are highly dedicated and well-established in International and European associations and institutions as well as within Greece.

The procedure of ensuring the quality of academic education between the School and the University is rigorous as all stakeholders involved are highly dedicated to the improvement of students learning and education. Fully aware of their competitive advantage, the Panel advocates the need for a direct link between external evaluation and state funding. This was supported by students' accounts, lab personnel's expertise and Faculty's high impetus for competitive international programmes which encourage setting up start-ups and facilitate the collaboration between academia and industry overcoming bureaucratic state barriers.

### Panel Judgement

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

### Panel Recommendations

Future development of a “University of Crete Medical Technology Development Group” in collaboration with business schools around the country could stimulate innovation, entrepreneurship and research and may provide an important platform for generation of start-up companies affiliated with the Medical School.

## **PART C: CONCLUSIONS**

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

The EEAP concludes that the School is fully compliant and successfully fulfils its mission to train highly qualified medical doctors.

Major strengths of the School include:

- Appropriate infrastructure that is mainly composed of relatively new and well-kept buildings. The teaching and lab equipment is also appropriate.
- The faculty is highly qualified and includes a considerable number of internationally recognized members. The moral of the faculty is also high. Overall, the quality of the faculty is one of the major strengths of the School.
- The School demonstrates a high level of extroversion and offers a large number of opportunities to the students for international training and exchange.
- The vast majority of the students is admitted via national exams and is of high quality. There is also excellent communication and collaboration between the faculty and the students.
- The curriculum is of high standards. Preclinical and clinical teaching are appropriate and result in strong knowledge foundations that allow graduate students successfully compete with their peers at national and international level.
- The format of the curriculum is appropriately reviewed and revised over regular time periods.
- The research quality of the School is of international standards and is one of its most prominent achievements. This has resulted in generating an excellent funding record.
- Students are successfully introduced and participate in research activities.
- The format of the curriculum is appropriately reviewed and revised over regular time periods.
- The response to the 2010 external evaluation report was comprehensive and addressed the majority of raised criticisms.

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

- The size of the faculty has been reduced due to the crisis. Even more important, there is an inversion of the faculty pyramid with more senior faculty and less junior faculty. This is probably the most serious weakness of the School.
- The number of admitted students is increased by the State without full consultation with the School. Efforts should be made to be reduced at a level the School feels competent to provide appropriate training without any stress to the system that can affect other activities, such as research or clinical care.

- There is a limited number of women at the top of the academic ladder (senior faculty) that needs to be acknowledged and rectified.

### III. Recommendations for Follow-up Actions

The Panel has already submitted recommendations for the observed weaknesses in each Principle. In addition, the Panel felt the need to emphasize the following general recommendations:

- Urgent action is required to address the limited faculty situation. Although ample State funding would be the ideal solution, the EEAP fully understands that this may not be possible under the current circumstances. However, the EEAP also strongly believes that the alternatives proposed in Principle 1 can be very helpful to considerably improve the situation without any considerable cost to the State. It should also be emphasized that the proposed principles are standard practice of the leading Universities worldwide. As a result, this may be a very good opportunity to test the efficacy of these principles in one of the most advanced Greek academic units. Gain experience and subsequently adopt them in other Greek Universities.
- Intensify the efforts to train the trainers with the best-adapted and most modern teaching methods.
- Establish a broader connection with the alumni, especially with those who live and distinguish themselves in foreign Institutions.
- Develop fund raising mechanisms that will target the local society and the Greek diaspora.

### IV. Summary & Overall Assessment

The Principles where full compliance has been achieved are: **1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10.**

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

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

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

Overall Judgement	
Fully compliant	<b>X</b>
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

## The members of the External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel

**Name and Surname**

**Signature**

- 1. Prof. Aristidis Veves (Chair)**  
Harvard University, Massachusetts, USA
- 2. Prof. Nickandros Bouras**  
King's College London, London, United Kingdom
- 3. Prof. Barbara Papadopoulou**  
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- 4. Prof. Charalabos Pothoulakis**  
University of California, Los Angeles, USA
- 5. Dr. Haris Vavouranakis**  
Member of the Panhellenic Medical Association, Greece