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ΑΝΩΤΑΤΗΣ ΕΚΠΑΙΔΕΥΣΗΣ

HELLENIC REPUBLIC

H.Q.A.A.

HELLENIC QUALITY ASSURANCE AGENCY

FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

EXTERNAL EVALUATION REPORT

DEPARTMENT: Library Science and Information Systems

TEI: Alexander Technological Educational Institute of Thessaloniki

November 2011

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External Evaluation Committee

The Committee responsible for the External Evaluation of the Department of Library Science and Information Systems of the Alexander Technical Educational Institute (ATEI) of Thessaloniki consisted of the following four (4) expert evaluators drawn from the Registry constituted by the HQAA in accordance with Law 3374/2005:

1. Dr. Sirje Virkus, Institute of Information Studies, Tallinn University, Estonia (Coordinator)
2. Professor Miguel Angel Sicilia, Department of Computer Science, University of Alcalá, Spain
3. Professor Amanda Spink, Department of Information Science, Loughborough University, UK
4. Dr. Filippos Tsimpoglou, Director of the Cyprus University Library, Cyprus

Introduction

The External Evaluation Committee (EEC) met from 21st November to 25th November 2011 to evaluate the Department of Library Science and Information Systems (LSIS) of the Technological Educational Institute of Thessaloniki (TEITH).

The EEC first met on the morning of November 21st for a briefing by Dr. Louisa Loukopoulou at the Hellenic Quality Assurance Agency (ADIP) in Athens to discuss the framework and procedures followed by the Agency. The EEC then flew to Thessaloniki and met TEITH Vice President Professor Panagiotis Tzionas and a member of the Internal Evaluation Committee of the LSIS Department Professor Stella Korobili. Vice President Tzionas introduced the EEC to facts and numbers regarding TEITH, including the general conditions of the Institution and its transitional status until the full implementation of the new Law for the Higher Education in Greece.

On November 22nd the EEC visited the TEITH Campus in Sindos, 17 km from the centre of Thessaloniki, for the site visit.

After a short welcome meeting with TEITH President Professor Pavlos Karakoltsides, the EEC visited the LSIS Departmental library and met the LSIS academic staff and students. All LSIS academic staff participated in the meeting and four students were also present. After a welcome by the Department Head Professor Elisabeth Kastrinou-Pitilaki, the LSIS academic staff presented an overview of the Department. Three students presented their theses, one adjunct staff member discussed her thesis and the technical officer presented the Department's current network and software facilities. A discussion between the EEC and the Department staff followed the presentations.

On November 23rd the EEC formed two groups. One group had three separate meetings: the first with Departmental non-permanent staff, the second with students and the third with alumni.

Two EEC members accompanied by an academic staff member visited:

- TEITH Central Library for a staff presentation on the Central Library and their collaboration with the Department
- Departmental Secretariat for a demonstration of the automated system student's registration, including their grades and courses taken, and the printed archive.
- Four Classrooms were visited during class time where EEC members saw lecturing and the dialogue between lecturers and students, and held discussions with both.
- One laboratory with 20 personal computers
- One multimedia laboratory with 20 personal computers
- Offices of LSIS academic staff

Documents were given to the EEC, including:

- Internal Evaluation Report. Academic Year 2009-2010 previously been sent the EEC.
- Printouts of some departmental presentation slides
- CD-ROM titled "Library Research" a tool for self learning library research
- Pamphlets describing the Department and the Central Library.

The documentation provided to the EEC by the Department included data and facts about the activities undertaken by the Department. Access was given to the EEC to any systems, rooms, facilities, or spaces when requested. Questions posed by the EEC were answered either during presentations or during meetings. The EEC garnered a more complete view of the Departmental activities during the site visit.

A. Curriculum

APPROACH

The goals of the LSIS undergraduate curriculum can be summarized as providing students with required theoretical and practical competencies to enable them to become information professionals, including a required work experience program. These curriculum goals are in line with Library and Information Science (LIS) programmes worldwide. As commented below, these general goals are also stated in the Greek national educational regulations for Greek Departments of Library Science.

The Department presented the EEC with short-term and mid-term curriculum development plans. No long-term plans were presented. The Department's short-term curriculum development plan includes small curricular changes, and the mid-term curriculum development plan includes the organization of a postgraduate programme and a lifelong learning programme. Other proposed curriculum changes include new teaching methods and increasing student participation in research, are further discussed later in this report as they are not directly connected with curricular issues.

The short and mid-term curriculum development plans would most likely be enhanced by the eventual provision of a postgraduate programme that would require reform of the undergraduate program. The establishment of a postgraduate program is a key driver for Departmental development, the LSIS curriculum and the Greek information profession. The Departmental efforts should be focused on opening opportunities to fulfil the demand for post-graduate studies that were identified by students, staff and alumni.

Based on the Greek national regulations, the Department through a Committee and approved by the General Assembly, devised more specific curriculum objectives and course structure. The Department has not previously been able to establish a post-graduate program due to TEI regulations. Also, the Department cannot establish a Ph.D. program due to the national regulations.

In addition to national regulations regarding courses, the Department considered professional practice, and scientific and technological trends in the development of the curriculum.

The Department has not formally compared their curriculum with international curricular best practices or curricula of other universities and institutes in other countries. However, the general goals of the undergraduate curriculum are in line with existing LIS programs in the EU and worldwide. However, there is no evidence of an explicit mapping of the curriculum general objectives to the learning outcomes for each course. The course competencies should be explicitly mapped to curriculum competencies. Course learning outcomes are correctly expressed in terms of competencies; however, there is no explicit link with the broader curriculum objectives.

The Department has made a good effort to integrate trends in the information profession, including the use of information technology (IT) and the Web, into the curriculum. The Departmental course content seems to be in line with current LIS trends, and students and alumni interviews confirmed this. However, the Department has not conducted any formal consultation with internal (within the institution but outside the Department) or external stakeholders about curriculum. Students and alumni are consulted regularly on an informal basis by the Departmental staff members regarding curriculum changes.

The internal report mentions that 42.9% of alumni surveyed reported that their current jobs were not directly related to their LIS studies. This survey finding needs further analysis to

determine its relation to the deteriorated Greek labour market or the LIS curriculum and specializations.

The Department has a dedicated Committee for the task of curriculum revision, but no formal procedures exist to revise the curriculum systematically.

IMPLEMENTATION

The curriculum is a good balance of theory and practice. The curriculum objectives include research skills that are more appropriate for post-graduate curriculum. The inclusion of research skills in the undergraduate curriculum may be due to the lack of post-graduate offerings. This issue should be reconsidered in the mid-term planning of the Department and reconsidered for a future post-graduate program.

The curriculum is appropriate for a LIS program. However, the curriculum should offer tracks or specializations, such as a generalised track, academic libraries track. Offering curriculum tracks based on specialisations would make the curricular structure more understandable and useful for students.

RESULTS

Given the alumni employment rates and the challenging Departmental working conditions, the Departmental results are good. The evidence from student and alumni interviews together with the internal assessment report indicates that the degree objectives are generally achieved.

The Departmental staff are conscientious in actively tracking their alumni's professional development. In addition, the Department surveys current students to gather formal feedback on some aspects of the curriculum. As mentioned previously, a missing aspect in this process is the lack of formal engagement by students and other stakeholders in assisting the Department in curriculum revision and assessing the changing labour market.

IMPROVEMENT

The Department proactively updates the curriculum and has constantly introduced changes. Informal feedback from Departmental students is gathered by teaching staff and is brought for discussion by the Department.

The EEC interview with students revealed the positive value of the curriculum updates introduced, even though the students are not formally asked for their opinions and feedback. However, in some particular cases the students did not understand the reasons for changes (e.g., the inclusion of a new course). This points to a need to more involve students in the process of Departmental curriculum revision as another source of inputs for the process.

The Department plans to continue a proactive updating of the curriculum to integrate new scientific and technological developments. However, there is no strategic plan for the curriculum and no procedures for a traceable and systematic curriculum revision process.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Develop post-graduate studies in the short term, either by creating a new degree or in collaboration with other European institutions. Post-graduate studies will encourage student research involvement and provide a path for collaboration with external institutions at the PhD level.
- Establish formal procedures for curriculum updating and revision.
- Provide an explicit mapping of the general curriculum objectives to the concrete learning outcomes of each course.
- Include all stakeholder views formally when updating of the curriculum, including

the private and public sector, students, alumni, and other Departments in the institution.

- Develop a strategic view for the evolution of the curriculum including the development of post-graduate studies as a key initiative, but also the following areas:
 - Compare the curriculum with the curricula of other LIS Greek Departments and quality LIS programs in Europe and the world.
 - Analyse the Greek and EU LIS labour market for specializations that bring added value to student's employability.

B. Teaching

APPROACH

The Department has developed teaching and learning objectives. However, the Department has no strategic document that explicitly provides a pedagogic policy with regard to teaching approach and methodology.

Since 2009 the Department has had 6473 student admissions and the staff/student ratio is 1/158. Some laboratory courses include groups of 20-25 students with two faculty members per group or a ratio of 1 staff member per 12 students. The academic staff teaching workload is high and this creates problems for the provision of effective student support, conducting quality research, conducting programme developments, staff attendance at scientific conferences and continuing staff professional development (e.g., academic mobility). For the Department to function more effectively, further staffing or a reduction in staff teaching hours is required.

In addition, the ratio of permanent to non-permanent staff is clearly unbalanced, specially given the problematic situation of the adjunct lectures, who are hired on a six-month basis. This ratio requires a re-balance and an urgent need for measures to enhance stability, giving temporary staff two year contracts would contribute better to the objectives of the curriculum.

A variety of teaching and learning methods are used to provide students with an appropriate mixture of theoretical and practical knowledge. Traditional instructional methods are combined with active learning/teaching methods (e.g. problem-based learning) and ICT-based methods supported by virtual learning environments, such as Blackboard and Moodle. The student comments on the quality of teaching methods, learning activities and assessment were positive.

However, the Department stated that their teaching hour assignment is constrained by Greek national regulations that stipulate the number of teaching hours per staff member. The issue of high teaching hours requires government reconsideration as the curriculum objectives can be met by less teaching hours, and using active pedagogies and self-regulation of student learning. Reconsideration would have a positive impact and increase teaching staff flexibility to engage in more research or administrative activities.

Teacher/student collaboration is good and students are satisfied with academic staff accessibility and the student-friendly atmosphere. However, the intensity of teacher/student collaboration varies across different faculty members.

The ATEI central library is well organized and provides sufficient access to both printed and electronic resources to support Departmental students and staff. In addition, the Departmental library contains additional resources to support learning and teaching.

Information and communication technologies (ICT) are used to support teaching and learning. The Departmental ICT infrastructure is sufficient and good quality, and virtual learning environments (Blackboard, Moodle) as well as other software such as DSpace, Koha and access to special tools such as Classification Web and OCLC WebDEWEY are used to support learning and teaching. The Department Web portal reports the Departmental education and professional activities. However, the Departmental Webpages are only in Greek and do not provide sufficient information to support international collaboration and enhance Departmental visibility. The examination system is dictated by the Greek state regulations. A student's final grade is based on a good range of assessments including

individual assignments, collaborative project work, intermediary tests and final examinations (oral or written). Some courses use continuous assessment methods, but this is not a Departmental requirement. A continuous assessment policy would extend the benefits of early feedback and monitoring consistently across the curriculum.

Students expressed no concerns regarding the fairness and accuracy of grading.

IMPLEMENTATION

The quality of teaching procedures was assessed positively by students. A range of instructional methods (lectures, exercises, individual assignments and collaborative group work) are used and supported by ICTs.

The Department members qualifications are adequate for an LIS curriculum and provide the necessary interdisciplinary background for some specialized courses.

Teaching materials and resources are sufficient to provide quality learning and teaching experiences. The TEITH central library provides access to sufficient printed and electronic resources and the TEITH ICT infrastructure adequately supports instructional activities.

Departmental courses include adequate reference texts and lecture notes, and many provide reading lists and selected resources through the virtual campus facilities. The Department produces a significant amount of lecture notes currently offered free to students and at a low cost to the institution and the nation, and are also continuously revised and updated. This Departmental practice should be encouraged as its more economical and sustainable, and if applied systematically in the mid-term would solve problems associated with the lack of Greek language textbooks. The best approach would be to offer these resources openly under an open access license, such as Creative Commons, as a first step towards the Department's strategic engagement in an open courseware initiative. The Department has an adequate culture to support this and a strategic decision in that direction would allow the Department to be leaders in offering open educational resources that may also have an institutional impact. Course materials are updated regularly.

There is some evidence that research is linked with teaching; for example, several staff research publications are included in course reading lists. The staff also supervised research-based thesis projects both with practical and theoretical orientations.

Academic staff and students mobility is modest and mainly influenced by economic constraints. The Departmental participation in the ERASMUS mobility scheme is limited.

Teaching quality, course content and study materials are assessed positively by students. The Department has gathered feedback from students to improve the instructional methods and resources. However, student feedback on teaching is not always sufficiently communicated to adjunct instructors.

RESULTS

The interviewed students were positive regarding the quality of teaching efficacy (teaching methods, learning activities, assessment, academic support) and garnering advice from the academic staff. The alumni also reported good relations with the faculty for garnering professional and academic advice.

Any discrepancies in the success/failure rate between courses were not identified.

Only 1.2% of Department graduates complete their degree in the normal duration time for studies in the Department (4 years). Some 11% of Departmental graduates complete their degree within 5 years and 15% obtain its degree in 6 years. The Departmental graduation rate is affected by the previous open ended approach within Greek higher education to student graduation time limits.

IMPROVEMENT

The Department updates instructional methods regularly by developing online teaching and learning support methods and resources, and incorporate active learning approaches.

However, the Department has no systematic approach to improving teaching methods.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Increase the number of permanent academic staff or if possible given the Greek national regulations, reconsider the high number of face-to-face teaching hours to allow for an increase in staff research activities.
- Correct the ratio of permanent to non-permanent staff and provide a contractual framework for adjunct lecturers to provide a minimum level of stability.
- Continue the process of ICT-based learning support.
- Continue the student feedback system and communicate the feedback to all teaching staff, including adjunct instructors.
- Extend the continuous assessment methods to all courses in the curriculum
- Develop a Departmental policy to improve lecture notes as richer and more complete resources and deliver them as Open Educational Resources. This would have a long-term positive effect in high quality resources overcoming the limitations of current textbook offerings and also becoming candidate resources for other Greek institutions.

C. Research

APPROACH

The Department has no research policy and strategy document with goals, aims and objectives. The Department does have a research approach stated in their internal evaluation report. The main element of the Department's research approach includes:

- Research activity in the Department is driven by individual faculty research interests.
- The primary focus of Departmental research is on the following areas:
 - Users of Greek academic libraries
 - Use of information resources
 - Information retrieval and use
 - Information literacy
 - Information behaviour and needs
 - Digital libraries

The EEC sought evidence of research activities from the internal evaluation report, meetings with staff and examining staff curriculum vitae.

IMPLEMENTATION

The Department does not have a process for research promotion and assessment. Research within the Department is driven by the individual research interests of the staff. Projects are generally undertaken in collaboration with other staff members, library staff or students. Field studies or Departmental facilities, such as the computer classrooms or the Departmental Library, are generally used by staff to gather research data, but no research laboratories currently exist. The progress of all Departmental research projects is listed on the Institutional Repository of ATEITH.

RESULTS

Some 60% of the Department's permanent faculty members and 40% of the Department's contract staff are research active. Collaboration between Departmental staff members, staff members and the institutional librarians, and staff members and adjunct staff, has produced an increasing number of publications.

The Department's research activity from 2006-2011 produced:

- Research projects and grants.
- Scientific publications in the form of journal articles, book chapters and conference papers.
- Scholarly outputs such as conference presentations and invited lectures.
- Scholarly achievements such as citations, participation on conference committees and editorial boards, and applied results, including implementation of new information and library products and services.

Many individual faculty members have ongoing research agendas, research projects, research grants and scientific publications in development.

From 2006 to 2011, the Departmental faculty members conducted many research projects. Currently, some 15 research projects are being undertaken in the department, including:

- Level of information literacy self-efficacy in library users
- Information seeking behaviour of Greek undergraduate students
- Accessibility of museum Websites

- Knowledge sharing in the workplace

Some Departmental faculty members have been awarded research funds through competitive grants. Since 2006, the competitive grant funds awarded to Departmental staff totals 1,619,000 Euros across 4 research projects, including projects related to:

- Open source digital libraries
- Europe's new libraries
- Cultural heritage
- Scientific publications

From 2006 to 2011, the 9 Departmental faculty members produced 82 scientific publications, including 3 monographs, 41 peer-reviewed journal articles, 9 book chapters and 28 peer-reviewed conference papers.

From 2006 to 2011, the Department's contract staff (based on the 25 curriculum vitae provided) produced 104 scientific publications, including 3 monographs, 22 peer-reviewed journal articles, 8 book chapters and 71 peer-reviewed conference papers.

From 2006 to 2011, the 9 Departmental faculty members made 21 invited presentations and the 25 contract Departmental staff made 49 invited presentations.

Since 2004, the Department's permanent staff have garnered a total of 64 citations and the contract staff 110 citations to their scientific publications.

Many Departmental faculty members have scholarly achievements such as:

- Participation in national and international conference committees, scientific workshops, conferences and invited lectures.
- Serving as advisors and evaluators for libraries, archives, museums, government departments and companies.
- Guest editing peer-reviewed journal special issues
- Serving on the editorial boards of scientific journals
- Serving in the Board & as Chair of the Hellenic Academic Libraries Link
- Serving as members of National Steering Committees
- Serving as National Representative of Europeana, the European Digital Library.

Faculty members have strong collaboration with the Library of ATEITH in EU structural funded projects. Faculty members and ATEITH librarians, working in the framework of the EU funded project for the "Modernization of the ATEI Central Library", developed various tools for the training of LIS students and the support of LIS professionals. Examples of these are: "The Catalog of Greek Current Periodicals", listing around 600 titles, the "Index to Greek Current Periodicals" indexing 26 titles, based on students' thesis projects of LSIS Department, the online Information Literacy Program "Orion" and the "Catalog of Greek Subject Headings".

IMPROVEMENT

The Department is looking towards the development of various initiatives that would potentially lead to research improvement, including developing a postgraduate program, increasing student participation in research and seeking further funding opportunities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To improve research within the Department, the EEC recommends the following:

- Each individual Departmental faculty member develop a 5-year research plan
- Departmental staff develop a 5-year research strategy document
- Quality Departmental research achievements are rewarded and highlighted within the Department, TEITH and the community.

A Departmental Research Strategy encourages the:

- Development of individual and collaborative research projects
- Submission of grant proposals to appropriate funding agencies
- Publication of research project outputs in high quality conferences papers and journal articles
- Further research training of staff in research grant writing and scholarly publication writing
- Examine the implementation of a research mentoring scheme
- Establish monthly research seminars for the presentation and discussion of research projects and publications

D. All Other Services

APPROACH

The TEITH provides a good level of administrative support to the Department. Additionally the Web version of this system is used by all students for course selection and renewing their registration every semester.

The Department has a computer support group and is also supported by the TEITH Department of Informatics who provide computer support. Wi-fi is offered campus-wide and in all teaching and laboratory areas for use by students and staff.

The TEITH through the Central and the Departmental library provide the Department with access to more than 14,000 e-journals and 30,000 e-books through nationwide licence agreements within HEAL-link (Hellenic Academic Libraries Association). In addition, the Departmental Library provides a collection of 2,500 LIS books and is one of the biggest collections of LIS books in Greece. The library collections are managed adequately through the Virtual/VTLS software and Web patron functions are also available.

The Department provides permanent staff with office facilities. No offices are provided to the adjunct lecturers, the lack of available space make students consultation an uncomfortable event.

IMPLEMENTATION

The Department is managed by the Head of Department and has secretariat services for staff and students.

The Department provides academic services and advising services for students.

The Department provides access to a Departmental Library with a LIS collection for staff and students.

The Department provides personal computers in 5 computer classrooms.

RESULTS

The Department's administrative, computer and library services are adequate and functional. Despite the restricted number of Departmental secretarial staff, the Department tasks is significantly supported by TEITH administrative and the computerised student record system.

IMPROVEMENTS

Improvements to the Departmental services and infrastructure are limited by financial constraints.

The Department is planning to improve the electronic services of the secretariat, create infrastructure for e-learning in 1 or 2 classrooms, and create a research laboratory.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Given the restricted availability of relevant textbook in the Greek language, the EEC encourage staff members of the Department to apply for funding for the production of appropriate textbooks and e-textbooks.

Collaboration with social, cultural and production organizations

The Department has contacts within social, cultural and production organisations.

E. Strategic Planning, Perspectives for Improvement and Dealing with Potential Inhibiting Factors

National level

The main inhibiting factor at the national level is the lack of ability to achieve a better balance between permanent and non-permanent staff, the working conditions of temporary staff and the excessive teacher workload.

The situation could be overcome with measures including the following:

- Facilitate the acquisition of new permanent staff, replacing contract staff.
- Hire contract staff for longer periods, e.g. for at least two years.
- Reduce the level of face-to-face classes required per ECTS that is higher than in other EU country's.

In addition, contract staff representatives should be included in the decision making bodies of the University, i.e. Departments, Faculties or councils, as they represent an important part of the workforce of the institution and are able to provide value to the overall processes.

Institutional level

At the institutional level, the main inhibiting factor is the lack of office space for contract staff. This is a severe and serious impediment to the development of teaching activities e.g. student counselling and advising. This must be considered as a priority by the academic authorities as it is a serious breach of teaching process quality. A temporary solution could be the provision of shared offices for the contract staff.

Departmental level

At the Departmental level, the establishment of strategic planning, procedures and measurable outcomes need to be given priority.

The ad hoc procedures for course assignment require improvement to ameliorate cases in which teachers are moved from one course to other too many times. A reasonable measure could be having a minimum of three consecutive years of teaching the same course.

Short-term goals have been established by the Department in the following areas:

A. Small scale curriculum reform

This goal reflects the proactivity of the Department in updating the curriculum. However, as commented before in this report, the approach is ad hoc and informal, and lacks the necessary formal procedures to build a systematic and reliable practice. The development of procedures must become a first priority, together with establishing some form of measurement of the degree of success of curricular reform, e.g. surveys of students and/or professionals or comparison with other curricula in Greece or abroad.

B. Increasing staff and student participation in research

This goal should be aligned with the mid-term goal of establishing the post-graduate programme and less stressed within the undergraduate program.

C. Introduce new teaching methods, especially in theoretical courses

This goal is important and the Department has demonstrated cases of good practice including: the use of learning management systems, offering courses on learning theories and on practical skills related to organizing on-line learning. The EEC

encourages the Department to introduce measurement procedures to compare existing and new teaching methods.

D. Seek research funding opportunities

The EEC encourages the establishment of a Departmental goal to increase grant proposal submissions, which are currently based on individual efforts.

E. Create infrastructure for e-learning in 1-2 classrooms

The Department plans to implement an e-learning program for the graduate students in the frame of continuous education and in close collaboration with the TEITH Office of Life Long Learning.

The mid-term goals are summarized in the following points:

A. Organize a postgraduate programme

This is of a critical importance for the development of the Department and must be given priority with the benefits for the development of the research activity within the Department.

B. Organize a lifelong learning programme

Whilst this is an important goal, its implementation should not interfere with the priority implementation of a postgraduate programme.

C. Organize a research laboratory

This should be considered together with the additional national and EU funding planned, so that the resources are effectively used as Departmental research project activity increases.

D. Expand the Erasmus programme

This is a critical objective that should be regularly measured.

E. Promote students and faculty exchange within the Erasmus scheme.

This is a critical objective that should be regularly measured.

F. Develop a strategic plan for the academic development of the Department.

Finally, this goal is critical to the development of the Department, as the current good practice in several areas in the Department is at risk of not becoming regular and systematic.

There is no explicit plan for improvement in the Department beyond the statement of short and medium term goals. However, the Department has in place informal practices for curricular update and informal consultation activities that should be formalised.

The Department proposes a “vision” as an strategic/academic plan with the overall aims of developing the educational programme, attracting high quality students and increasing reputation and competitiveness. However, there is no strategic planning process in place, and improvements are based on ad hoc, short or mid-term improvements decided without a formal continuous improvement cycle and clear key performance indicators.

The vision of the Department should be complemented with long-term, measurable and concrete objectives that can be compared against actual performance.

F. Final Conclusions and Recommendations of the EEC

Based on the LSIS Internal Evaluation Report and the site visit, the EEC believes that the curriculum is in line with current LIS trends and the Department prepares graduates with knowledge and skills comparable to that in other European LIS schools.

Good practice

- The current curriculum is comparable to that in other European LIS schools.
- The Department is proactive in updating the curriculum and has introduced changes in the recent years.
- According to the documentation provided and evidenced during the site visit, the Departmental permanent and contract staff are well qualified.
- The quality of teaching and supervision is good according to discussions with students and alumni.
- The virtual learning environments are efficiently used to facilitate teaching and learning.
- Teacher/student collaboration is good and students are satisfied with the accessibility of academic staff and the student-friendly atmosphere as evidenced by EEC interviews with the students.
- Some staff members are involved in several EU funded research and development projects.

Weaknesses

- Lack of strategic planning in curriculum development, research and academic development.
- Low participation by permanent staff in research projects and low levels of publishing in highly ranked international journals.
- Lack of Postgraduate studies and students.
- Low student completion rate.
- Heavy teaching load for Departmental staff and poor staff/student ratio.
- Modest student and academic staff mobility (through ERASMUS and conference participation).

The Department's readiness and capability to change/improve

The ECC is concerned about the Departments mixed readiness to adapt to the necessary changes. The Department should be encouraged to implement a change management program to ensure all staff is able to accept the necessary changes.

The EEC suggests the Department channel their efforts into research without affecting the quality of teaching and learning.

The Department's quality assurance

The ECC was not provided with evidence of a Departmental quality assurance process. The Department is encouraged to implement improved processes to collect, analyze and present relevant data to assess course content, student workload, teaching, assessment and student

support to improve the quality of learning and teaching.

Conclusions and suggestions

The EEC offers the following suggestions for further improvements

1. Implement an annual strategic planning process covering curriculum development, student learning, research and external relations. This plan should set targets, performance indicators and allocate resources.
2. Increase the numbers of permanent academic staff.
3. To accurately reflect the Department's teaching, research and consultancy activities, change the Department's name to LIS.
4. Enhance the process of curriculum update with systemic practices.
5. Encourage the development of Postgraduate Programmes in collaboration with other institutions or independently.
6. Continue the process of developing lecture notes and consider to engage in the creation of Open Educational Resources.
7. Create structures for research, particularly permanent research groups to encourage collaboration.
8. Develop a change management process to ensure all staff understand the need for improvement and change.

The Members of the Committee

Name and Surname	Signature
1. _____	
2. _____	
3. _____	
4. _____	
5. _____	