



ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ
HELLENIC REPUBLIC



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Accreditation Report
for the Undergraduate Study Programme
(Integrated Master) of:

Architecture

Institution: National Technical University of Athens

Date: 12 June 2021

Report of the Panel appointed by the HAHE to undertake the review of the Undergraduate Study Programme (Integrated Master) of **Architecture** of the **National Technical University of Athens** for the purposes of granting accreditation

Abbreviations

NTUA	National Technical University of Athens
ECTS	European Credit Transfer System
EEAP	External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel
EDIP / ΕΔΙΠ	Laboratory Teaching Staff
EEC2014	External Evaluation Committee of 2014
ΕΤΕΡ / ΕΤΕΠ	Laboratory Technicians
HAHE	Hellenic Authority for Higher Education
HNARIC	Hellenic National Recognition and Information Centre
IQAS (ΕΣΔΠ)	Internal Quality Assurance System
ARCH/NTUA	School of Architecture at National Technical University of Athens
MODIP	Quality Assurance Unit (ΜΟΔΙΠ)
ΟΜΕΑ	Internal Evaluation Groups/School's Internal Evaluation Committee
QA	Quality Assurance

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Part A: Background and Context of the Review	5
I. The External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel.....	5
II. Review Procedure and Documentation	6
III. Study Programme Profile	9
Part B: Compliance with the Principles	11
Principle 1: Academic Unit Policy for Quality Assurance.....	11
Principle 2: Design and Approval of Programmes	15
Principle 3: Student- centred Learning, Teaching and Assessment.....	19
Principle 4: Student Admission, Progression, Recognition and Certification	22
Principle 5: Teaching Staff	24
Principle 6: Learning Resources and Student Support	27
Principle 7: Information Management	30
Principle 8: Public Information	32
Principle 9: On-going Monitoring and Periodic Internal Review of Programmes	33
Principle 10: Regular External Evaluation of Undergraduate Programmes.....	35
Part C: Conclusions	39
I. Features of Good Practice	39
II. Areas of Weakness	39
III. Recommendations for Follow-up Actions	40
IV. Summary & Overall Assessment	41

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 (Integrated Master) of **Architecture** of the **National Technical University of Athens** comprised the following four (4) members, drawn from the HAHE Register, in accordance with Laws 4009/2011 & 4653/2020:

1. Professor Loukas N. Kalisperis (Chair)

Pennsylvania State University, University Park, Pennsylvania, USA

2. Assoc. Professor Marilena Kourniati

École Nationale Supérieure d'Architecture Paris - Val de Seine, Paris, France

3. Professor Marios C. Phocas

University of Cyprus, Nicosia, Cyprus

4. Professor Petros Petsimeris

Université Paris 1, Panthéon-Sorbonne, Paris, France

II. Review Procedure and Documentation

The **External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel (EEAP)** reviewed the material submitted by the School of **Architecture (ARCH)** of the **National Technical University of Athens (NTUA)** in advance of its *virtual visit* (via tele-conference) and *virtual* briefing. The Director and staff of HAHE briefed the members of the EEAP on its mission and standards, as well as the guidelines for the review process and the national framework of the higher education institution in Greece. The EEAP met, in private, to discuss the programme review report for the School of Architecture of the National Technical University of Athens, allocate tasks and list the issues for the site *virtual visit*.

The visit was conducted via online conference meetings (*Zoom*) due to COVID-19 travel restrictions and took place on 8 & 9 June 2021. The EEAP wrote the report in the following days (10-12 June 2021) through collaborative meetings, held via the Zoom platform. The EEAP would like to express its appreciation for the efforts that the School's academic staff, administrative staff, students, alumni and HAHE took for the *virtual visit* to be a productive and effective experience. Although the EEAP was able to collect enough information for an understanding of the program, the *virtual visit* was **not as effective and rewarding** as an in-person evaluation, and the School's oral presentation of the programme was not very precise and succinct. It is advised that HAHE resumes in-situ visits as soon as the conditions permit. In this particular case, it is suggested that an additional *in situ* visit is organized soon, at the most appropriate time, in order to verify the strengths and weaknesses on a more objective basis and appreciate the degree of the declared improvements that have been challenged by a number of students, users and the previous external review.

The EEAP met initially with the School's Dean, Rector, and the Vice-Rector of Academic Affairs of the National Technical University of Athens, on 8 June 2021, for an introductory meeting in which initial oral presentations of the National Technical University of Athens and the Architecture School took place. The School's Dean and the Vice-Rector of Academic Affairs gave a brief oral overview of the University and the School of Architecture, regarding its history, vision, mission, status, strengths, and academic profile. Further oral presentations provided some information about the School of Architecture's strengths and areas of concern. The afternoon/evening meetings continued with an in-depth discussion with representatives of the Quality Assurance Unit (MODIP), and the Internal Evaluation Group (OMEA), which did not provide any succinct and thorough presentation of the educational programme or the School. During these meetings and later with some of the teaching staff members, the EEAP was able to collect information through comprehensive questioning allowing a fuller understanding of the programme and its vision, mission, current status, strengths, and academic profile. During these meetings the EEAP was given the opportunity to ask detailed questions, to better facilitate the Panel's knowledge of the curriculum, internal evaluation review process, adequacy of resources and possible areas of strengths and weaknesses. Additional necessary information, requested by the EEAP, about the program, the various activities of the school vis-a-vis the curriculum, academic and administrative/support staff, student body, and research activities, were provided after the conclusion of the *virtual visit*. The EEAP would like to express their appreciation for the immediate response of the School's Secretariat in providing the panel with all the absent necessary and crucial information. EEAP reflected on the discussions and prepared

for the next day's sessions of the '*virtual visit*', during which it met with teaching staff members and student representatives. The first day of the *virtual visit* was concluded with a brief meeting of the EEAP, in order to evaluate the accomplishments of the day and plan the activities and meetings of the following day.

The second day, 9 June 2021, started with representatives from the student body meetings. The students provided the members of the EEAP with very valuable information about their study experience, curriculum, and facilities. They discussed their priority issues concerning student life, mobility, research, and career opportunities. The students were very hospitable, enthusiastic, and helpful. They conducted themselves admirably and were excellent ambassadors of a good educational Institution.

The second day continued with an oral presentation of the facilities and a discussion with the administrative and technical staff of the School, in order to address EEAP members' many questions. The *virtual visit* concluded with an extensive discussion between the EEAP and the School's staff to further elucidate some of the concerns and points that EEAP was interested in pursuing in its subsequent discussions.

The second day of the *virtual visit* was continued with a teleconference of EEAP with alumni of the School of Architecture, in order to assess their experience and identify how well their studies are serving them in their current work environment. The alumni with whom we spoke, many of whom work or study abroad and some in academic positions in other universities, spoke highly of the value of their experience noting that in addition to architectural design, the programme prepared them for other design-related career paths. The alumni of the School of Architecture appreciated the close working relationship that they had with the academic staff. The day continued with a meeting of employers, social partners, and external stakeholders, representing very impressive professional offices and organizations, enterprises and national authorities. During the meetings the EEAP was able to hear their experiences either during their studies at the School of Architecture and/or their relations with the School. It was also able to address the readiness of the graduates for the market and identify areas of cooperation between the School of Architecture and employers. All participants spoke very enthusiastically of the School of Architecture at the National Technical University of Athens and their affiliation with it. It was evident that the School is held in a very high regard by its external stakeholders and the representatives of the national authorities, which fully appreciate the support provided to them by the faculty members of the School.

Concluding the second day meetings the EEAP met with the academic and administrative staff working on the Programme Review Report, MODIP & OMEA, the Dean of the School and the Vice-Rector, in which a quick summary of the visit was also provided. During the meeting the EEAP was able to further clarify several key points, request additional substantial information needed, and engage in a detailed discussion on the curriculum and facilities. EEAP received additional information about the School of Architecture, administrative, buildings and resources, library, external relations and the electronic systems for student satisfaction and student records. The EEAP presented to the NTUA Vice-Rector their grave concerns about the dramatic reduction (over 40%) of the academic staff over the last 20 years and the need for immediate increase of the numbers of staff teaching and researching within the School of Architecture.

Both the current students, alumni and external stakeholders and employers spoke very highly about the *heroic* devotion of time and energy invested by the faculty members and support staff, extending the teaching hours long after the official completion of the meeting period for each course, which safeguards the high level of the course quality. It is imperative that the central NTUA administration understands the different teaching requirements that are embedded in architectural education and the increased resources that are needed, in order to successfully complete an architectural education. The EEAP highly appreciates this devotion, but it notes that the very low numbers of teaching staff coupled with the foreseeable *burn-out* of the current members will no doubt be detrimental in the future development of the School.

The EEAP would like to point out that a representative from the Technical Chamber of Greece (TEE) was not appointed on the EEAP, despite the persistent efforts of the HAHE and the requests from the Panel. The EEAP was surprised to realize that the appropriate professional association did not express its views about the oldest programme in Greece.

The EEAP met via tele-conference, for the remainder of the “virtual visit”, in order to complete the report and submit it to HAHE on Saturday, 12 June 2021.

We note that this report in its entirety and all of its parts is unanimous.

III. Study Programme Profile

The School of Architecture of the National Technical University of Athens is the oldest architecture school in Greece offering high quality, tuition-free education to young architects set within a historic environment and with an important and celebrated history. The 'Metsovion Polytechnion' was established in 1837 as an academic institution for the tertiary education of architect engineers, civil engineers, and mechanical engineers. The School of Architecture offers a 5-year integrated Master's undergraduate program, in which students are required to complete a total of 47 courses (9 of which are Required Design Studios) – 38 Required and 9 Required Electives - along with the completion of the Diploma Design Thesis (*Διπλωματική*) and a Research Project (*Lecture-Διάλεξη*). Some students also complete a Practical Training (Internship) experience. The programme has an equivalency of 300 ECTS. A Practical Training course was established last year. Students do not identify any concentration areas in which they select their courses and or complete their Diploma Design Thesis (*Διπλωματική*) in similar thematic areas. In 2018, after a two-year re-evaluation process of the programme of study by the Curriculum Committee and in open discussions with faculty and students, the School approved and implemented a new curriculum.

The School is now organized in 4 Divisions (Τομείς) that do not constitute vertical specializations but concentrate on specific scientific backgrounds, offering students a more comprehensive and multifaceted design and scientific background that covers most of the spectrum of Architecture. The programme constitutes the common required general education for all the students, after which students select areas of interest and complete a small number of design studio experiences in diverse thematic areas (since there are no specializations provided by the study programme of the School). The 7th and 8th semesters of student's experience is marked by an interdivisional course in which faculty from the different Divisions (Τομείς) work together on a design project. The 9th semester is focused on *Architecture in the City* and on the completion of a Research Project (*Lecture-Διάλεξη*). The 10th semester is solely devoted to the Diploma Design Project (*Διπλωματική*).

Course syllabi are available for all courses taught online in the web page of the School. Students are given the opportunity to evaluate the courses they attend.

Graduates of the programme obtain the title of Architectural Engineer and can become members of the Technical Chamber of Greece (TEE). Graduates can be employed in both the private and public sector and most of the graduates have been successfully placed in both sectors after their graduation, in addition to completing post-graduate studies, either in Greece or overseas. Throughout the academic year, seminars and lectures are held with professionals working in the field that provide additional information and exposure to different work environments. The newly established Practical Training (Internship), although not required, provides graduates with an opportunity to explore job prospects, gain some work experience and make contacts. Students and alumni spoke highly of the practicum experience (5A) in the 5th semester in which students work, in a multidisciplinary environment and *in-situ*, on the survey and reconstruction of a traditional settlement. The School supports diverse and extensive student educational experiences through the *Erasmus+*, and *Erasmus Mundus* programmes, with several students participating in this programme over the years. The academic staff of the School is also engaged in four (4) different post-graduate programs and an *Erasmus Mundus*

programme on *Architecture, Landscape and Archaeology*, in addition and as an overload to their undergraduate programme responsibilities, and with the support of Emeritus Professors and special teaching staff.

There are 56 academic staff members who support the educational and research activities of the programme and most have doctoral degrees from Institutions abroad or in Greece. Four new faculty have been elected and are in the process of being appointed by the Ministry. There are 12 *special teaching staff members (ΕΔΙΠ)* as well as one *ΕΕΠ* member. Additionally, currently there are four *Temporary Term teaching staff (ΠΔ 407/80)*. The School is supported by 20 administrative staff, 5 of which are permanent. An issue of grave concern is the dramatic reduction of academic staff, as well as the Technical Support staff, over the last 10 years (reduced from 105 in 2001-02 to 56 in 2020-21) and the inability to replace the vast number of staff that have already retired or not renewed in order to ensure continuity of the program. Additionally, a point of concern is the disproportionately very small number of *special teaching staff members (ΕΔΙΠ)* members and the very small number of *Technical Support staff (ΕΤΕΠ)*.

The School maintains 22 different laboratories, as well as four interdivisional research labs. Some of the laboratories are very active and available to the students at the school while others are not functional or with very limited operations. There is a lack of homogeneity of resources, both physical and human, for the laboratories with some of them seriously understaffed and/or not supported with state-of-the-art equipment.

The School has a commendable number of publications and extensive research activities, both in projects and funds. The School was evaluated in 2014 through an External Evaluation Committee and some of the recommendations of the report have been addressed or are in the process of been addressed.

The School is considered a very large academic entity in the number of students, as there are 1844 registered undergraduate students (1443 students currently active), 220 post-graduate students, 177 doctoral candidates and others in a post-doctorate engagement, with ratio of faculty to students of around 1 to 27. Additionally, there is a disproportionate number of students that are transferred to the School of Architecture at the NTUA from other Departments within Greece. It is indicative that for the last three academic years the number of transfer students exceeds the number of students entering based on their scores in the National Entrance Exams. Such problem was also identified by the EEC2014, which stated, "*The inability of the School of Architecture to control any aspect of student enrolment causes serious problems in teaching staff assignments, facilities and equipment allocation and student matriculation through the program. Transfer-students from programs as diverse as technical schools and other university programs particularly aggravate this.*" The student-to-teaching staff ratio of the School is more than double than that of other Architecture Departments. Also, the number of students or student teams per required studio is up to 40, which is considered very high as the average number in many European countries is 15 students in studio course. The number of academic staff is critically low proportionally to the size of the programme and the diverse activities of the academic staff.

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 School of Architecture has instituted a quality assurance body of faculty members that is responsible for reviewing the quality of the structure and organization of the programme of studies, internationalization issues, teaching and research activities, supporting services, students' participation in evaluation procedures and the operation of the School and its Divisions, the transparency of activities and decisions, and the public presence of the programme and the School.

The structure and contents of the programme of studies built upon the multidisciplinary character of architecture through implementation of interdivisional collaborations and related thematic integrations within the design process as well as related knowledge and skills

provision. The School of Architecture is fully compliant with the European and the National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education in terms of learning outcomes and qualifications. As the School states, the programme of studies trains the students to become scientists and professionals of architecture with a structured vision of the discipline and the profession, an in-depth understanding of the social field to act within, as well as the required technical knowledge and the capability to fully respond to the developments of architectural concepts and the society. It provides its students with strong integration skills, in obtaining the ability of interdisciplinary co-operations and understanding their responsibility towards the society for the creation of a high-quality humanistic environment, which will fulfil aesthetic, functional, cultural, technological and ecological requirements. In achieving these goals, a good balance exists between interdivisional synergies in teaching and research and independence of knowledge and skills' provision. In this framework, the curriculum is design-based with appropriate cross links to theory and history, new technologies and environmental aspects of the profession and the interdisciplinary nature of architectural education and research. The quality assurance body monitors the operation of the programme on a regular basis. Revisions in the programme of studies were made, in the academic year 2018-19, in order to further improve the profile of the programme of studies and adjust the number of individual courses offered within and the students' workload, in compliance also with the high reduction of the number of faculty members that took place over the last years. Furthermore, a number of courses have been merged and redefined as reflected by the contemporary international advancement of the discipline in terms of new technologies, sustainability and ecology.

The academic staff is highly qualified, enthusiastic, devoted to the mission of the programme and motivated. There is also a very good and productive collaboration and teamwork that ensures, despite the very low teaching staff / student ratio, a very good result in terms of quality of the School's alumni. The EEAP finds that there is a highly committed faculty among whom a strong sense of community exists. The faculty is respected by the students and individual faculty members often act as role-models to the students. The reduction by approximately 40% of the number of faculty members over the last 20 years despite a constant high student body, acts disadvantageously in preserving the unique profile of the School, the high level of teaching and the advancement of research activities by the faculty members.

The School of Architecture has given more importance to linking teaching to practical applications rather than research as such. This has given commendable results in terms of visibility, collaborative projects, alumni placement and important service to the community, society, and profession. Thus, research output, mainly in terms of applied research, is directly associated with the particular conditions of the School of Architecture (small number of staff, nature of output often suitable for exhibitions/built projects, real case-study investigations, rather than scientific publications). The School has its own Research Committee as well as relying on the services of the Research Committee of the National Technical University of Greece. The evaluation criteria for promotion of the faculty members are extended and adapted to include accomplishments in multifaceted creative activities beyond research and measures of public recognition of creative work in architecture. Furthermore, the integration skills conveyed to the students throughout their studies has led to excellent results in the placement of its alumni in the labour market, in Greece and abroad, as well as at renowned Institutions abroad for post-graduate studies and doctoral research. The internationalization of the

programme through participation in *Erasmus+*, European networks of education and research, organization of international conferences and workshops in Athens are noted.

The quality of the support services is strongly influenced by the extremely reduced number of administrative staff; this increases the everyday difficulties and limitations inherent in the School's size. An immediate increase of the administrative personnel and lab assistants is imperative. A strategic planning of the lab infrastructure of the School through merging of labs and redefinition of related research activities within, will act positively on the further development of the School. The structure of the School, the programme of studies and the teaching and research activities by the faculty are well documented on the web sites of the School.

In conclusion, the School's QA policy is fully compliant with the HAHE policy and guidelines and also the EU QA standards on Higher Education. Its curriculum has a unique profile by promoting interdivisional collaborations at different levels and integration of disciplines within the design process, while also providing solid knowledge and skills in architecture. Nevertheless, due to economic constraints, presently there is very limited financial support by the University or the government for the School's operation and the faculty's research activities. The EEAP is not aware of a formal mechanism for renewal and development of the faculty body through hiring new colleagues or external collaborators, or ΕΔΙΠ and ΕΤΕΜ staff.

Panel Judgement

Principle 1: Academic Unit Policy for Quality Assurance	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

R1.1 The EEAP recommends a review of the School of Architecture identity, vision and goals, through an independent advisory board, ad-hoc expert panels and/or a dedicated international workshop. Annual internal reviews need to be further institutionalized by the School, as well as external evaluations, organized by the School itself every four years. This will help to constantly revise and further promote the profile and mission of the

School, as well as to set up long-term development aims and policies at multiple levels of operation.

- R1.2** The updating of the curriculum and the programme should be perceived as a continuous and dynamic internal evaluation process that involves a number of constituents including faculty, students, alumni, and external partners. This committee should include, in an advisory capacity all stakeholders, and should have a tight time schedule of meetings and consultations with the aim of a comprehensive proposal to be discussed and approved by the faculty. The central administration should facilitate such endeavours.

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 School of Architecture of the National Technical University of Greece has been operating since 1837 and initially, since 1843, as School of Fine Arts. The most recent external evaluation of the programme of studies took place in 2014. The programme of studies was further updated in 2018. The update of the programme aimed at further improving the profile of the curriculum, reducing and redefining a number of courses as a result of a significant decrease of the number of faculty that predominantly took place since 2010. The programme of studies also includes an integrated Master's degree within the 5-year Diploma. The programme is approved at European Union level as to the 11 points of reference of the EU directive 2005/36/EC article 46.

The programme's specific contents, objectives and aims comply with the academic and scientific guidelines set by the University. The programme is oriented towards an integrated approach to design within the multidisciplinary area of architecture and the provision of knowledge and skills for the practice of the profession and the persuasion of research, given the increased demands of today's globalized, competitive profession, nationally as well as internationally. In this framework, architectural education covers all areas of scientific knowledge at various scales, and it cultivates interdisciplinary synergies within architectural design. Furthermore, a wide

range of related subjects in arts, theory, history, technology and sciences is covered that support the provision of theoretical background, cultivation of research and their integration within the design process at different scales and levels of complexity. In achieving this, the programme of studies is structured in five modules of courses, according to their content and topics: courses on architectural design and theory, history-theory, visual expression and representation, urban planning and spatial design and architectural technology. The four Divisions of the School contribute to the expansion of their disciplinary areas, the connection of the content of the areas of teaching and the substantial upgrade of the courses of other scientific areas of mainly specialized technical content, and their integration within the core area of studies. The programme of studies is based on progression through semesters, with gradual increase in the design complexity and depth (from the scale of the building and the object to the scale of the city), transition from required courses in the first years to required elective courses in the upper semesters, gradual introduction of cross-disciplinary collaborations and the theoretical and design-driven research extensions through the research 'Lecture' in the 9th semester and the Diploma Design Project in the 10th semester. Throughout the studies, a good balance exists between interdivisional synergies in teaching and research and independence of knowledge and skills' provision. Even within this highly structured educational progression in the curriculum, a certain degree of flexibility is offered regarding the individual required elective courses' selection and area of possible concentration. At the same time, the last stage of studies acts as integral component of the 5-year programme of study, and is clearly formulated with regard to the integrated Master's component.

The quality assurance body and the faculty as a whole support the identity of the programme as formulated above. The EEAP believes that this identity is presently unique in Greece, and adequately and convincingly reflected in the structure of the programme of studies. Presently, the sequence of the main courses in architectural design are clearly defined regarding the contents, levels of advancement, integration of disciplines and pedagogical objectives. The individual courses in each semester act synergistically to the practice of design. In addition, the practical internship counts within the required 300 ECTS to complete the programme of studies. Further improvements and alternative approaches for the programme of studies refer to an increase of experimentation in design, design-driven research activities and new technologies and material courses that could be introduced in the last four semesters of the curriculum. The profile of the School should be preserved and further enhanced through consideration of new trends in contemporary practice and research in architecture.

The programme reflects the interests and specializations of the faculty. The majority of the faculty has a strong design profile and an area of specialization; an effective synergy between research, creative practice and teaching is demonstrated. In all cases, the faculty should be commended for addressing the high number of the student body at a time of multiple crises and reduction of positions by preserving through personal efforts a programme's organization that still corresponds to a much higher number of faculty members and a demanding profile of cross-divisional collaborations in many courses of the curriculum and applied research activities. In ameliorating the extremely high ratio of approximately 1:27 (faculty members to students or even student groups of two to three members in the studio courses) and the quality of education, an expansion of the faculty is imperative. This should take place through hiring of new faculty members, adjunct and visiting faculty. The announcement of new positions (in

addition to the four prospective announced or allocated ones) in the next few years should primarily address cross-disciplinary areas of design-based research and teaching, rather than traditional ones. The expansion of the faculty will contribute to the future development and sustainability of the programme and can be a mechanism to forge the emerging identity of the School.

The labs in the School provide support of the educational activities, the acquisition and execution of research projects, and the achievement of potential for interdisciplinary research activities. The hands-on experience in model making is equally acknowledged in architectural education by the faculty with the automated fabrication of models and prototypes. The research infrastructure and equipment are disadvantageously utilized due to the extremely low number of administrative staff in charge; this increases the everyday difficulties and limitations inherent to the School's size. An immediate increase of the administrative personnel and lab assistants is imperative. A strategic planning of the lab infrastructure of the School through merging of labs and redefinition of related research activities within will act positively on the further development of the School.

The School delivers on the stated intention of creating a solid educational programme and providing its graduates integrative skills within the multidisciplinary nature of architecture, while also enabling research and practice of the profession within renowned international circles in academia and practice. The course syllabi support this direction through both project and bibliography. The alumni with whom we spoke, many of whom work abroad and have significant activities in practice and research since graduation, spoke highly of the value of their experience noting that the programme prepared them to be integrative, interdisciplinary and resilient in acquiring new knowledge and design skills in traditional and new environments along with the profession evolution.

There are procedures and regulations for the revisions of the programme, and the EAAP was made aware that the programme has been internally monitored and assessed periodically. External consultations and collaborative activities with the private and civil sector are realized in systematic way. The student representatives are involved and included in the School's meetings and contribute to curriculum revisions. We would encourage further use of virtual platforms/social media to enhance student participation and engagement.

The student guide is complete and appropriate. The School's web site is updated and well-structured with regard to the courses' syllabi, the academic personnel information, research and networking activities of the School. A placement of design studio results in addition to the final diploma design projects, on a prominent location on the School's web site would definitely further enhance the visibility and quality of the work accomplished at the School throughout all stages of the programme of study. This will allow the students and other stakeholders to access efficiently both, the academic and non-academic resources of the programme and the University.

Panel Judgement

Principle 2: Design and Approval of Programmes	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

The External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel agrees that this Programme leads to a Level 7 Qualification according to the National & European Qualifications Network (Integrated Master)	YES	NO*
	X	

Panel Recommendations

- R2.1** The updating of the curriculum should be perceived as a continuous and dynamic process that involves several entities including faculty, students, and external participants. The internal evaluation committee (OMEA) should include, in an advisory capacity all stakeholders, and should have a regular time schedule of meetings and consultations with the aim of continuous related improvements to be discussed and approved by the faculty. The central administration should facilitate such endeavours.
- R2.2** The programme of studies needs to be further improved through increase of experimentation and alternative modes in design, design-driven research activities and new technologies and material courses in the last four semesters of the curriculum.
- R2.3** An advanced component and the possibility of concentration of the students' education in the final year should be further provided. The interdependence of the 9th semester courses, especially of the Research Project (*Lecture-Διάλεξη*) with the Design Diploma Project (*Διπλωματική*) is expected to act positively on the achievement of a research by design process development and the completion of studies by the end of the 10th semester.
- R2.4** A strategic re-evaluation of the School's lab infrastructure, through merging of labs and redefinition of related research activities within will act positively on the further development of the School.
- R2.5** Student work from design studios, in addition to the final diploma design projects, should be located in a prominent position on the School's web site in order to further enhance the visibility and quality of the work accomplished at the School throughout all stages of the programme of study. This will allow the students and other stakeholders to access efficiently both, the academic and non-academic resources of the programme and the University.

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

During the last 100 years, the School of Architecture has shaped a creative professional and research character, in contact with the spirit of modern architecture, and has brought out the interdisciplinarity in architectural education focusing on the city, the history, the environment, the arts, the technologies, and the heritage protection.

The programme of studies at the School of Architecture is developed over 10 semesters integrating a Master's degree within the 5 years Diploma (300 ECTS) and consists of lecture courses, seminars and design studios. With the contribution of various disciplines and the collaboration of the four divisions, the programme covers all scales -from the design of an object

to the territorial and landscape scale- and introduces the students to the various professional fields and practices.

The design studios with integrated theory courses are the main pillar of the studies and occupy the largest share in the curriculum. From the 5th to the 9th semester, they are carried out through interdivisional collaboration promoting Interdisciplinarity. In parallel, required courses ensure the autonomy of the various disciplines (visual expression and representation, urban and spatial planning, history, construction, technology, and arts), and from the 4th semester onwards, students can progressively choose between required elective courses. During the nine semesters of studies, students are obliged to attend 38 required courses and 9 required elective courses, as well as one foreign language (English or French). Students are free to take more optional courses, but without their attendance being recognized in the diploma.

The last year of the studies is almost exclusively devoted to the Lecture, a research dissertation presented publicly to a three-member committee, and the final Diploma project, an integrated design proposal presented publicly to a five-member committee composed by the representatives from the divisions and the student's supervisor. In both cases, students select a Professor or a team of Professors as supervisor(s) and decide together the frequency of follow-up meetings.

The content, skills and methods of delivery and assessment are described in the course guide. Presentations of students' work in the courses are announced on the School's website and are open to the entire academic community (students, lecturers and laboratory staff of the School). The Diploma defence sessions (3 per day during the final exam week) are very important moments of exchange for the whole community of students and Professors.

The practical training (internship), although is not compulsory, it is promoted and from the year 2021-2022 will be integrated in the curriculum.

Graduates and students recognize the strength and robustness of their training and the high level of commitment of the majority of the teaching staff. Students conduct individual projects in the first year and then form small groups of two to three students. Due to the decrease in staff, the number of students per design studio has increased exponentially and can reach 40 students or even groups, per professor, which complicates the review and correction of the project. However, the students, as well as the alumni, place emphasis on the importance of learning to work collectively and collaboratively, which proves invaluable in their future careers. The required courses were reduced in time, in order to lighten the overall workload of students and also to cope with the decrease in teaching staff.

A student survey system exists, and students can evaluate the quality of courses through questionnaires online, but students' participation is very low. This abstention is due to both ideological reasons and a mistrust of online anonymity.

The representatives of the students have the opportunity to participate in the Undergraduate Studies Committee, where they can submit oral or written complaints, requests and proposals, which are discussed at the General Assembly of the School, in order to take decisions in the presence of student representatives. There is a special faculty committee to handle complaints concerning issues of academic ethics, personal ethics, and infringement of rights or violation of personal data.

Despite the large number of students entering the programme and the significant reduction of the teaching force, the professor-student relationships are still very interpersonal. Students and graduates form a community and are aware of the identity of their school.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

- R3.1** The EEAP recommends the urgent increase in teaching staff members to lower student to faculty staff ratio, especially in the design studios, and to increase elective courses.
- R3.2** The EEAP encourages the renewal of the digital technologies courses as well as the increase of the variety of architectural approaches, especially experimental ones. Additional Technical Support personnel is severely needed.
- R3.3** In order to overcome the lack of participation in evaluation, the EEAP suggests that the administration and faculty work with students in implementing their suggestions and to request from the students to fill the survey anonymously during the course while in class.

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 reception of incoming, first-year students is held by the Dean of the School on the first day of the winter semester in the Ceremonial Hall 'Kaftantzoglou'.

In all courses of the first semester, introductory lectures and presentations are held, in order to support students and gradually introduce them to the educational process. The School of Architecture provides the students with all the necessary information about the curriculum and the teaching units of the courses. Undergraduate students in the School of Architecture have access to the awards and scholarships of the NTUA which are listed in detail¹. Student progress is not monitored. However, if requested, it is possible to check the status of students through the student record book (NTUA Secretariat Programme).

The final educational process of the studies is composed of the Research Project (*Λecture-Διάλεξη*), which is the first experience of integrated research work and the Diploma Design Project (*Διπλωματική*), which is the final integrated synthetic subject of architectural studies and has a research character. Their preparation is carried out in personal cooperation between the students and their supervisors. The results are presented publicly, and transparency in the examination process is ensured through the composition of the Evaluation Committees.

No Diploma Supplement is foreseen for graduates of the School of Architecture graduates in application of the general policies of the NTUA.

The Scholl of Architecture encourages student mobility and promotes international collaborations. All students who have completed the first two years of the curriculum are eligible to participate in the Erasmus Exchange Program. The optimum time is considered to be the

¹ https://www.ntua.gr/files/odigos_vraveiwn_ypotrofiwn_2020-2021.pdf

fourth year in the five-year study cycle. The student mobility in the framework of Erasmus is constantly increasing, not only for studying abroad (77 outgoing, 94 incoming students 2018-2019) but also for practical training in architectural offices abroad (40 students 2016-2017; 26 students 2017-2018). The Architecture school had most of the *Erasmus+* practical training applications among the NTUA (40/83 2016-2017, 26/60 2017-2018). It is worth noting that a very significant number of graduates go abroad either for postgraduate studies or to work in well-known architecture offices. In this context, a special Erasmus Office has been operating since 2000 at the School of Architecture, in close cooperation with the Central Office for European Educational Programmes of the NTUA. From the start of the 2021-2022, the practical training is integrated to the curriculum.

The School of Architecture welcomes students of the highest calibre, but an excessively high number of transfer students from other institutions, apart from those entering through the system of national examinations, is "forced" upon the School, doubling the number of students (101 students admitted through the national examination system, 190 total first year registered after transfers in 2018-2019). In addition to the large increase in the number of students (1844 registered / 1443 active undergraduate students), the teaching staff is rapidly decreasing (56 academic staff members) due to retirements with no foreseen replacement.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

- R4.1** The EEAP recommends the urgent increase of the teaching staff and the reduction of the incoming students particularly through transfers, to maintain the level of studies.
- R4.2** In view of the large number of graduates going abroad, it is recommended to issue a Diploma Supplement which is useful when applying for jobs or recognition of qualifications.
- R4.3** Although beyond the School control, the current State *policy for student transfers* is increasing the number of students to a level that goes beyond the capacity of the staff and jeopardises educational attainment.

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 School of Architecture currently has 56 tenure-track teaching staff (31 men and 25 women) with high quality and varied specialisations that can offer a structured and articulated study programme. In addition, there are 12 non-tenured special teaching staff members. They are distributed as follows: 12 Professors (8 men and 4 women), 23 Associate Professors and 21 Assistant Professors. The last two categories are gender balanced. The teaching staff represents a vast range of academic and professional backgrounds in terms of teaching, research, and expertise, and consists of active members of four disciplinary divisions of vastly different size:

- Division of Architectural Design,
- Division of Urban and Regional Planning,
- Division of Architectural Language, Communication and Design,
- Division of Architectural Technology.

There are also 22 laboratories that support teaching and research activities, most of which are seriously understaffed (working extra hours on a voluntary basis), with major deficiencies in instrumentation and/or maintenance and consumables.

Current students, and social and professional partners expressed their satisfaction with the teaching staff in terms of time, dedication, and quality of teaching.

Most faculty members are actively involved in research that supports and complements the delivery of the study programme and teaching of the courses. There is evidence that faculty members relate and translate their research activities in their courses.

Many faculty members are involved in national and international research programmes (including COST actions). They also have international recognition and collaborations by means of visiting professorships, and the organisation of international conferences and exhibitions. The

quality of the staff is reflected in their having obtained prestigious international prizes, and the prizes and distinctions of a significant number of students in national and international competitions.

Although the number of teaching staff may seem high in comparison with other schools of architecture in the country, it is important to underline the substantial recent erosion due to the economic crisis and retirement without substitution of teaching staff. This has occurred alongside an increase in the number of students, that goes beyond the capacity of places proposed by the faculty (through transfers from other faculties or abroad).

Faculty members are encouraged to participate in programmes of international mobility. 14 faculty members in one year (13 teaching staff mobility Erasmus+ and one for research) participated in Erasmus+ teaching mobility exchanges. Many staff members take part in international exchanges by means of research programmes, collaborative activities and conferences. Each faculty member receives funding from the Erasmus+ budget and other sources according to the destinations and criteria of the budget.

The use of electronic platforms and e-classes for teaching and administration confirm that the school promotes the use of new technologies. The faculty and students view such platforms as integral to enhancing both the teaching and learning experience. The faculty successfully addressed the transition to e-teaching during the COVID-19 crisis. This was mainly due to the commitment and dedication of the staff.

The faculty promotes an anonymised evaluation of the lecturers by the students. The results are elaborated but not published. They are, however, communicated to each lecturer concerned and the dean of the faculty. The weak participation by the students in the survey should be noted. This may in part be attributed to the students' sense that the survey is not 'anonymised'.

Recruitments and promotions of the academic staff follow the criteria and the procedures established by the Greek Ministry and appropriate legislation, but they are not sufficient to fill the teaching needs.

Discussions with alumni highlighted the solid basis of their studies in NTUA but at the same time insisted on the importance of openness, modernisation and active participation in architectural innovation

The new hiring constitutes a strategic issue for the development and the attractiveness of the faculty. This can contribute to faculty's openness, internationalisation, modernisation, increasing experimentation, critical theory and better curricula for the students.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

- R5.1** The EEAP recommends the definition of a clear strategic plan for the medium and long term for faculty recruitment in order to fill the current and future gaps. Future faculty positions should be at the level of Professor and Associate Professor in order to allow the faculty to better compete at an international level.
- R5.2** The EEAP recommends a strategic plan to rationalise the laboratories and the hiring of staff in order to make them more functional, operational and accessible to undergraduate students. This may also assist in creating synergies between divisions.
- R5.3** The School of Architecture is encouraged to establish periodic self-assessment procedures for its members, in order to have a global visibility and attract internationally recognised teaching staff for its renewal in terms of specialisation, openness, diversity and gender balance.
- R5.4** The EEAP advises a return to a system of course evaluation based on an anonymised paper copy or with the definition of incentives, to provide substantial data that will help with teaching staff improvement.

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

Due to the existing COVID-19 crisis, an on-site visit was not possible. Thus, the EEAP relied on distance-based means to gain information concerning the facilities of the School and the University. All of the members of the EEAP had visited the School relatively recently and have a picture of the situation. EEAP members were also provided with information by means of a promotional video presented by the Dean of the School and the Directors of the four Divisions. The picture was completed by discussions with the users (teaching staff, administration and students). The prestige of the buildings and Athens campus (*Patision*), its centrality and high symbolic value were noted. At the same time, several maintenance problems were highlighted. Unfortunately, the EEAP was not provided with a succinct and complete virtual presentation of all the facilities in the *Patision* campus. Most of our observations are based on the verbal descriptions of the facilities by the staff, students, alumni, and some photographic evidence later presented upon request.

The School of Architecture occupies a prestigious, central and highly symbolic set of buildings, some dating from the 1860's. The campus was developed in various phases and housed many faculties of the NTUA. Since the relocation of the other departments and schools to the Zografou campus, the majority of the buildings in the central Athens campus are currently occupied by the School of Architecture.

The *Patision* campus has several classrooms and lecture halls as well as spaces where the four Divisions and their 22 laboratories are housed. Almost all faculty members have their own office

and there is an important number of amphitheatres and lecture halls of various shapes and sizes. This abundance of space in a context of huge budget restrictions presents problems of maintenance and improvements in order to face the contemporary needs of students and staff. Although important work has been achieved in terms of refurbishment on some parts of the campus, some buildings have problems of wi-fi access, areas for student-work before and after the lectures, appropriate design tables for students (some of them have been vandalised), functioning central heating and air conditioning, functioning of the lifts after 4 pm, etc. It is also important to underline some problems resulting from decay and abandonment in one or two amphitheatres and some areas that are not accessible for student and staff.

There is one large and one small computer laboratory and a total of (65) aging personal computers. Although the computers quickly become outdated, this is no longer considered a serious problem given that the vast majority of students have their own laptops and the required licenses and use these to do much of their work.

From the discussion with the students the need for places to effectuate their work and meetings in the time between lectures became very evident.

In terms of facilities, the School of Architecture has an important library specialised in architecture and recently enriched by important donations from Doxiadi's and Psomopoulos' legacies (books and the archives of the review *Ekistics*). Despite this wealth, several alumni pointed out the need to update the library with new books and reviews in the fields of theory and history of architecture.

The secretarial office offers support to the students and within the campus there is a student restaurant. Limited accommodation is offered in student housing in Athens to a few eligible students.

Panel Judgement

Principle 6: Learning Resources and Student Support	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	X
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

- R6.1** The EEAP recommends that NTUA central administration and Government provides the necessary funding for the maintenance of the historic buildings and campus, in order to be fully utilized by the staff and students at the School of Architecture and for the wellbeing (appropriate environment to work for students and staff), accessibility and safety. The abandonment of the historic buildings will lead to further deterioration and diffusion of decay to the campus and total lack of use.
- R6.2** The EEAP recommends improving and updating the resources of the library and the other support laboratories that should be open and accessible to all undergraduate students.
- R6.3** The EEAP recommends establishing specific areas on this vast campus with equipment and facilities that are necessary for the students and faculty to perform their work.

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 analysing information and planning follow-up activities.

Study Programme Compliance

The information management of the programme of studies and related activities of the students and the faculty in teaching and research takes place at the levels of the Ministry of Education, NTUA, and the School. In particular, through application of respective information technology services provided by the University (e.g., MyCourses, information system of quality assurance body, students' practice experience), an acceptable information system of data collection and recording has been developed with regard to the overall operation of the institution. The data refer to the academic faculty, the administration, and the students. Further data have been collected by the research financial services and the library. Some relevant data are presented on the web sites of the School, including related announcements, the repository of courses, quotations of the faculty members' and the students' work. The information obtained from the satisfaction surveys by the students and the graduates databank is limited.

The EEAP became aware of serious concerns that students and teaching staff expressed with the electronic platform delivery of courses (MyCourses - <https://mycourses.ntua.gr>) and the lack of appropriate mechanisms for electronic management and administration of student records. There is ample evidence for the immediate need of additional resources necessary for the operation of the Secretariat and the digital and network operation of the School.

The School evaluates the data collected and presents some of the results in quantifiable measures in terms of the programme of studies, performance indicators – grades, duration of study – completion and dropout, and comparative conclusions of indicators with previous academic years. The data assist in the preparation of internal evaluation reports and related improvement proposals. The evaluation criteria of the faculty members have been successfully extended and adapted to include information beyond research accomplishments, such as artistic and architectural recognition measures, which are included in the accomplishments of the faculty members’ database.

Panel Judgement

Principle 7: Information Management	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	X
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

- R7.1** The EEAP believes that the school has made noticeable efforts, to achieve students’ participation in the evaluation of the teaching staff. Unfortunately, the level of participation is very low after the transition to electronic questionnaires. Additionally, the EEAP feels that there should be further incentives and measures that would apply to all students in the School, in order to collect a strong and representative sample of feedback.
- R7.2** The School should formalize the organizing of alumni via platforms of social media. A representative databank regarding various career paths followed by the graduates is extremely useful for prospective and current students, other graduates, stakeholders, and the community, in general.
- R7.3** The EEAP recommends that the University re-evaluates the electronic platform for delivery of coursework and enhances the School’s resources for upgrading the network and electronic record keeping systems.

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

The basic communication channel between the School and students is the official website of the institution. The review was conducted via tele-conferencing and as a result the EEAP did not see any evidence of other type of published material, such as periodicals or leaflets. Yet within the facilities of the school, we reached digitally a great variety of posters, concerning periodical lectures of invited architects. The new website, currently under development, is well-structured, and the information is clearly conveyed in a smart and effective way. As far as the information for the programme of studies and the CVs of the faculty members is concerned, the presentation is adequate and functional. There are no issues regarding missing recent information, but the English version of the website is currently not equally well organized. The School plans to upgrade the English version soon.

Panel Judgement

Principle 8: Public Information	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

- R8.1** Given the excellent presentation format of students' research work and theses, available as part of the programme study, the EEAP would recommend that the School enhances its electronic presence through a more visible presentation of all mentioned above at a more central level of the navigation.
- R8.2** Additionally, the EEAP noticed the emerging presence of the School on social media, concerning communication groups of old graduates that should be strengthened.

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 School has in place a process for periodic evaluation of the curriculum through support by the University mechanisms for Quality Assurance, the internal evaluation committee (OM.E.A.), the programme of studies committee and the General Assembly meetings. The Panel is not aware of any formal process of consistently and periodically evaluating the programme. The last internal evaluation was in 2019 and the previous external evaluation was conducted in 2014. Moreover, there is an annual evaluation process of faculty and course content by the students and an evaluation of the support services and learning environment by the faculty. Students' evaluation of courses and instructors is in place but unfortunately students do not engage in the process (only 1.5 % on average respond positively). The statistical data are collected through a series of questionnaires developed by the Quality Assurance Unit (QAU) of the University. Due to the extremely low participation of the students in the course evaluations, any individual concerns that may arise are directly handled by the faculty and appropriate actions are initiated.

A revision of the programme of studies was made in 2018 in response to the external evaluation of the programme of studies conducted. In the revision, the holistic approach to the design was strengthened, as well as the interdisciplinarity through collaborations in teaching from different divisional areas of the School. Furthermore, a number of courses were merged or redefined and contemporary subjects with regard to sustainability and ecology were introduced from the 5th semester, as well as two new required elective courses in algorithmic design and digital morphogenesis. Thus, the revision made in 2018 was aimed at an improvement of the profile of the programme of studies based on interdivisional collaborations in teaching, a reduction of the courses required throughout the diploma studies, from 59 to 50, an adjustment to the reduced

number of faculty members that took place over the last years and the introduction of subject areas in architecture as related to the contemporary international advancement of the discipline and changing needs of the society.

The internal evaluation of the programme of studies conducted in 2018 addressed a small number of preventive and corrective issues, with regard to the internship to be conducted in architectural offices and the construction industry (something that has been affected only recently) and the extroversion of the School through emphasis in teaching, research and its wider scientific work.

The School engages in continued communication with its students and graduates. A database and formal, through social media, connections to the School's student body are in place. This allows for close relationships with the courses they are working and provides an opportunity for the School to engage further with its alumni, future employers and establish collaborative activities to address professional aspects, community needs, or common projects.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

- R9.1** The School should engage in a formal and consistent evaluation process of the programme of studies and activities. In the short term the extremely low ratio of faculty members to students needs to be improved and the duration of studies, controlled according to international standards for Schools of Architecture. Furthermore, the programme needs to be enriched with visiting faculty. Latest research trends and changing needs of the society should be included as driving components for the future development of the School.
- R9.2** The School should consider, as part of its programmatic evaluation, the trends of emerging cross-disciplinary research and practice in architecture in strategically addressing future faculty hires. The Panel is concerned that the School's faculty members and administrative personnel are overextended in teaching and multiple administrative duties.

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

The School was evaluated in February 2014 by an international external evaluation committee (EEC2014). Part of the external evaluation recommendations were considered in the final formulation of the revised programme of studies, and in the update that followed in 2018. The revisions made referred to a restructuring of the curriculum based on a reduction of courses, and the redefinition or recombination of architectural design courses in some semesters to directly relate to individual thematises and scales, design-based and theoretical research from the subject areas defined within the four divisions of the School. This mode of operation succeeds in providing inter- and cross-disciplinary design environments, as already commented upon in the external evaluation. The administration and faculty should also consider the recommendation made the 2014 External Evaluation Committee (EEC2014) *“The ninth semester research associated dissertation project provides the opportunity to significantly enhance the Diploma Project either by direct linkage or by an exploration that informs the sophistication of the student.”*

The EEAP recommends further discussions on consolidation and restructuring of the research laboratories and support units of the School, in order to address contemporary issues of the society and the profession, enhance its emerging identity and maintain the future development and sustainability of the programme given the drastic reduction of the number of faculty members in the last decade. Similar concerns were expressed by EEC2014 *“...recent staff terminations have had a detrimental effect on the ability to maintain research laboratories thereby further aggravating the efforts to successfully grow research initiatives”*. The Divisions of the School should account for the broader contemporary context of the discipline, with reference to theory, communication media, social and environmental sustainability, digital computation and fabrication, technology design, inter- and cross-disciplinary design-based

research. The required expansion of faculty through the announcement of new positions (additionally to the four positions already filled) in the next few years should address such cross-disciplinary areas of design-based research and teaching, rather than the traditional ones.

The EEAP shares the comment made in the external evaluation regarding the successful implementation of the post-graduate programs. At the same time, effective synergies are not evident, between the post- and undergraduate programme of studies. The concern expressed by the external evaluation (EEC2014), *“At the same time, it is hesitant to recommend establishment of more than the current five post-graduate programs, as too many may overburden the resources of the Department, especially given the recent reductions in teaching personnel.”* applies even more critically today with regard to the existing four post-graduate programs given the extremely high teaching load of the faculty members and ratio of almost 1:27 of faculty members to undergraduate students, despite the fact that, the faculty is highly diverse, energetic, and innovative with a strong sense of community.

The EEAP is concerned with the currently, extremely low number of faculty, high teaching load of the faculty members and ratio of faculty members to students. The negative implications of a heavy teaching load in conducting research by the faculty are clearly evident and become increasingly critical for the future development and sustainability of the program. The School must increase the number of people involved in teaching responding to the recommendation made by the EEC2014 *“Faculty and staff appointments are to be characterized by an open transparent process, balanced among assistant, associate and full professors, and mindful of the need for a professional school to have a mixture of tenured members, active professionals and visitors from abroad.”*

The EEAP is also concerned with the efficiency of the teaching spaces and the lack of support for the upgrade and maintenance of current facilities, which was strongly stated in the 2014 EEC report, *“The EEC is very concerned about National budget practices that have had substantial detrimental effect on key infrastructure elements such as the library, computer laboratory and general facilities and equipment. Such budget shortfalls threaten even the most basic ability to conduct coursework. The continuation of these practices such as a woefully inadequate, zero budget, allocation for either the library subscriptions and acquisitions or the updates of software and hardware in the information technology areas and important facilities management threatens the very essence of a university.”*

The EEAP is strongly suggesting that the School evaluates the strong suggestion to develop a strategic plan made by the EEC2014, as stated *“The School did not demonstrate that a comprehensive strategic plan exists. Such a strategic plan could accommodate a pluralistic attitude in curricular development. Toward this end the School must adopt a strategic posture that clearly articulates the assessment and decisions to guide the delivery of electives, the distribution of resources, and the difficult choices regarding course development, recombination and elimination. This is not only required because of the economic exigencies of the time but it is a mark of a vital organization. It is a fact that even the healthiest trees must be pruned for their continued health. An open and vigorous strategic planning process best undertakes such an endeavour. The School is burdened by courses and practices that have accumulated over time. Strategic planning will provide the School the opportunity to address curricular change with a*

greater understanding of goals and objectives that both respect the culture of the place and plant ideas that will inspire the future.”

There have been no other evaluation efforts outside of the single review sponsored by HAHE. However, the School implements the procedures set forth by the University Quality Assurance Unit, collects and analyses the required data periodically, and provides their results to the QAU.

Faculty and staff recognize the importance of the external evaluation and value the past and future recommendations. They all believe this helps the School achieve its goals and purpose, help them improve, and engage in meaningful discussions about the future of the programme and the changing educational demands placed by a diverse set of social and professional issues. Unfortunately, the School does not have the financial means to implement its own external evaluation process. A possible solution might be the establishment of an advisory professional board whose members volunteer their services for the benefit of the School.

The EEAP had the opportunity to interact not only with some of the faculty and staff members, but also with current students at the School, as well as graduates. All showed a great level of enthusiasm and professionalism as well as commitment in supporting and aiding the EEAP in any manner and request made. The administration, faculty and staff of the School were very eager and accommodating to the needs and requests of the EEAP. The slightly negative current comments presented in **this** Principle could be ameliorated by implementing the suggested recommendations by both external reviews.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

R10.1 The School should continue their efforts to fully respond to the comments and recommendations provided in the External Evaluation Committee report of 2014, some of which are present in this report as well.

R10.2 The School should take further steps in discussing, consolidating and restructuring its Divisions and laboratories, in responding to the external evaluation reports and in order

to address contemporary issues of the society and the profession, enhance its emerging identity and maintain the future development and sustainability of the programme given the drastic reduction of the number of faculty members in the last two decades.

R10.3 The School should implement its own external evaluation process. A possible solution might be the establishment of an advisory professional board whose members volunteer their services for the benefit of the School.

PART C: CONCLUSIONS

I. Features of Good Practice

- The School exhibits a strong profile in collaborative experiences among the different actors, specialties and knowledge areas. The comprehensive design approach is at centre of the pedagogical experience.
- The structure and contents of the curriculum provide for a solid preparation in architecture and prepare the students for the profession. Additionally, the School prepares the students for excellent placement in professional offices and further studies in prestigious academic institutions globally.
- The School provides an excellent education that goes beyond the professional nature of architecture and prepares the students with a general education that opens to a vast range of practices, skills and knowledge. The high level of excellence at the School is due to the attraction of high level of students and the opportunities that are provided to them as part of the studies.
- The faculty are highly committed individually and demonstrate a spirit of dialogue and collaboration, thus contributing to a most positive atmosphere of learning.
- A significant number of faculty, staff and students should be praised for their resilience and commitment. They have managed to maintain the quality and momentum of the programme and create an environment, both human and physical, which is remarkably positive despite budgetary, facilities and other limitations.

II. Areas of Weakness

- The panel was concerned that the MODIP/OMEA committees and the School's administration (governance) did not undertake the evaluation processes and procedures with the appropriate approach and possibly confused it with other forms of communication such as informal discussions, and promotional/marketing video.
- There is a significant overcrowding of students in the last semester of studies with almost 50 percent of the students registered at the Diploma Design Project. Furthermore, most students require more than the 5 years of the prescribed duration of studies, even longer than N+2.
- The disproportionately large number of transfer students entering the School of Architecture is seriously affecting the quality of education.
- There is a lack of necessary funding for the maintenance of the historic buildings and campus. This prevents them from being fully utilized by the staff and students at the School of Architecture and raises issues as concerns the wellbeing, accessibility and safety of the students and staff. The abandonment of the historic buildings will lead to further deterioration and diffusion of decay of the campus.
- The current situation of the School, especially in terms of the reduction in the number of staff members, operational facilities and available resources, may jeopardise the historic and prestigious heritage and standing of the School.

III. Recommendations for Follow-up Actions

- The School should continue their efforts to fully respond to the comments and recommendations provided in the External Evaluation Committee report of 2014, some of which are present in this report as well.
- The updating of the curriculum and the programme should be perceived as a continuous and dynamic internal evaluation process and should be continued through the increase of experimentation and alternative modes in design, design-driven research activities and new technologies and material courses in the last four semesters of the curriculum.
- The EEAP recommends the definition of a clear strategic plan for the medium and long term for faculty recruitment, laboratories, support staff and facility improvement.
- The EEAP recommends the urgent increase in teaching staff members and reduction of transfer students to improve staff-to-student ratio, especially in the design studios.

IV. Summary & Overall Assessment

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

The Principles where substantial compliance has been achieved are: **6 and 7.**

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

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

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

The External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel agrees that this Programme leads to a Level 7 Qualification according to the National & European Qualifications Network (Integrated Master)	YES	NO
	X	

The members of the External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel

Name and Surname

Signature

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