



ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ  
HELLENIC REPUBLIC



Εθνική Αρχή  
Ανώτατης Εκπαίδευσης  
Hellenic Authority  
for Higher Education

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Αθήνα, 04-09-2025  
Αρ. πρωτ. QA\_2087

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**Θέμα: Πιστοποίηση του νέου Προγράμματος Μεταπτυχιακών Σπουδών «Ολοκληρωμένες Διεργασίες Κυκλικής Βιο-οικονομίας στη Βιομηχανία Τροφίμων» του Τμήματος Επιστήμης Τροφίμων και Διατροφής του Ανθρώπου του Γεωπονικού Πανεπιστημίου Αθηνών**

Αξιότιμε κύριε Πρύτανη,  
Αξιότιμε κύριε Πρόεδρε της ΜΟΔΙΠ,  
Αξιότιμε κύριε Πρόεδρε του Τμήματος,

Είμαστε στην ευχάριστη θέση να σας πληροφορήσουμε ότι το Συμβούλιο Αξιολόγησης και Πιστοποίησης (ΣΑΠ) της ΕΘΑΑΕ, κατά τη Συνεδρίαση 52η/03-09-2025, αποφάσισε τη χορήγηση πιστοποίησης στο νέο Πρόγραμμα Μεταπτυχιακών Σπουδών «Ολοκληρωμένες Διεργασίες Κυκλικής Βιο-οικονομίας στη Βιομηχανία Τροφίμων» του Τμήματος Επιστήμης Τροφίμων και Διατροφής του Ανθρώπου του Γεωπονικού Πανεπιστημίου Αθηνών με διάρκεια ισχύος πέντε ετών, από 03-09-2025 έως 02-09-2030.

Το Συμβούλιο έκανε δεκτή την Έκθεση της Επιτροπής Εξωτερικής Αξιολόγησης & Πιστοποίησης, βάσει της οποίας το νέο Πρόγραμμα Μεταπτυχιακών Σπουδών «Ολοκληρωμένες Διεργασίες Κυκλικής Βιο-οικονομίας στη Βιομηχανία Τροφίμων» του Ιδρύματός σας συμμορφώνεται πλήρως με τις αρχές του Προτύπου Ποιότητας για την Πιστοποίηση των Νέων Προγραμμάτων Μεταπτυχιακών Σπουδών της ΕΘΑΑΕ και τις Αρχές και Κατευθυντήριες Οδηγίες για τη Διασφάλιση Ποιότητας στον Ευρωπαϊκό Χώρο Ανώτατης Εκπαίδευσης (ESG).

Θα θέλαμε να επισημάνουμε ότι το Τμήμα θα πρέπει να λάβει συστηματικά υπόψη και να αξιοποιήσει με τον καλύτερο τρόπο όλες τις συστάσεις της Επιτροπής Εξωτερικής Αξιολόγησης & Πιστοποίησης για τη συνεχή του βελτίωση, σύμφωνα με τις προβλέψεις του Οδηγού Πιστοποίησης.

Δεχθείτε, τέλος, τα συγχαρητήριά μας για την άριστη ανταπόκριση του Τμήματος και του Ιδρύματός σας στη διαδικασία πιστοποίησης του εν λόγω ΠΜΣ.

Συνημμένα σας αποστέλλουμε:

- α) την Έκθεση Πιστοποίησης
- β) την Απόφαση του Συμβουλίου Αξιολόγησης και Πιστοποίησης της ΕΘΑΑΕ

Με εκτίμηση,  
Ο Πρόεδρος της ΕΘΑΑΕ

Καθηγητής Περικλής Α. Μήτκας



Με τη συγχρηματοδότηση  
της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης



Πρόγραμμα  
Ανθρώπινο Δυναμικό και  
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Αθήνα, 04-09-2025

Αρ. πρωτ. QA\_2062

## ΑΠΟΦΑΣΗ ΠΙΣΤΟΠΟΙΗΣΗΣ

### Το Συμβούλιο Αξιολόγησης και Πιστοποίησης της Εθνικής Αρχής Ανώτατης Εκπαίδευσης (ΕΘΑΑΕ)

Έχοντας υπόψη:

1. Τις διατάξεις του Ν. 4653/2020 (ΦΕΚ 12/Α'/24-01-2020) «Εθνική Αρχή Ανώτατης Εκπαίδευσης. Ειδικοί Λογαριασμοί Κονδυλίων Έρευνας Ανώτατων Εκπαιδευτικών Ιδρυμάτων, Ερευνητικών και Τεχνολογικών Φορέων και άλλες Διατάξεις», όπως ισχύει.
2. Την υπ' αριθμ. 18135/Ζ1/7-2-2020 Απόφαση της Υπουργού Παιδείας και Θρησκευμάτων (ΦΕΚ 94/τεύχος ΥΟΔΔ/7-2-2020), περί διορισμού του Προέδρου του Ανώτατου Συμβουλίου της Εθνικής Αρχής Ανώτατης Εκπαίδευσης (ΕΘΑΑΕ), την υπ' αριθμ. 16384/Ζ1/15.02.2024 απόφαση του Υπουργού Παιδείας, Θρησκευμάτων και Αθλητισμού (ΦΕΚ 137/τ. ΥΟΔΔ/19-02-2024), περί παράτασης της θητείας του Προέδρου του Ανώτατου Συμβουλίου της ΕΘΑΑΕ, καθώς και την υπ' αριθμ. 88986/Ζ1/1.08.2024 απόφαση του Υπουργού Παιδείας, Θρησκευμάτων και Αθλητισμού (ΦΕΚ 846/Υ.Ο.Δ.Δ/7.8.2024) περί της ανανέωσης της θητείας του Προέδρου του Ανώτατου Συμβουλίου της Εθνικής Αρχής Ανώτατης Εκπαίδευσης (ΕΘΑΑΕ).
3. Την υπ' αριθμ. 15650/23-04-2020 Απόφαση του Προέδρου της ΕΘΑΑΕ (ΦΕΚ 329/τ. ΥΟΔΔ/04-05-2020) «Ορισμός των μελών του Συμβουλίου Αξιολόγησης και Πιστοποίησης (ΣΑΠ) της Εθνικής Αρχής Ανώτατης Εκπαίδευσης (ΕΘΑΑΕ)», όπως ισχύει.
4. Την υπ' αριθμ. ACC001635/01-08-2025 Έκθεση Πιστοποίησης της Επιτροπής Εξωτερικής Αξιολόγησης & Πιστοποίησης του ΠΜΣ «Ολοκληρωμένες Διεργασίες Κυκλικής Βιο-οικονομίας στη Βιομηχανία Τροφίμων» του Τμήματος Επιστήμης Τροφίμων και Διατροφής του Ανθρώπου του Γεωπονικού Πανεπιστημίου Αθηνών.
5. Την 52η/03-09-2025 συνεδρίαση του Συμβουλίου Αξιολόγησης και Πιστοποίησης, θέμα 2 «Έγκριση εκθέσεων πιστοποίησης- Χορήγηση πιστοποίησης».

## ΠΙΣΤΟΠΟΙΕΙ ΟΤΙ

το νέο Πρόγραμμα Μεταπτυχιακών Σπουδών

### Ολοκληρωμένες Διεργασίες Κυκλικής Βιο-οικονομίας στη Βιομηχανία Τροφίμων του Τμήματος Επιστήμης Τροφίμων και Διατροφής του Ανθρώπου του Γεωπονικού Πανεπιστημίου Αθηνών

συμμορφώνεται πλήρως με τις αρχές του Προτύπου Ποιότητας για την Πιστοποίηση των Νέων Προγραμμάτων Μεταπτυχιακών Σπουδών της ΕΘΑΑΕ και τις Αρχές και Κατευθυντήριες Οδηγίες για τη Διασφάλιση Ποιότητας στον Ευρωπαϊκό Χώρο Ανώτατης Εκπαίδευσης (ESG), για το επίπεδο σπουδών 7 του Εθνικού και Ευρωπαϊκού Πλαισίου Προσόντων.

Η διάρκεια ισχύος της πιστοποίησης ορίζεται για πέντε έτη, από 03-09-2025 έως 02-09-2030.

Ο Πρόεδρος της ΕΘΑΑΕ



Καθηγητής Περικλής Α. Μήτκας



Με τη συγχρηματοδότηση  
της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης



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# Accreditation Report

## for the New Postgraduate Study Programme of:

Circular Bioeconomy Processes in the Food Industry

Department: Food Science and Human Nutrition

Institution: Agricultural University of Athens

Date: 12/07/2025



Με τη συγχρηματοδότηση  
της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης



Πρόγραμμα  
Ανθρώπινο Δυναμικό και  
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Report of the Panel appointed by the HAHE to undertake the review of  
the New Postgraduate Study Programme of Circular Bioeconomy  
Processes in the Food Industry of the Agricultural University of Athens  
for the purposes of granting accreditation.

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

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

The Panel responsible for the Accreditation Review of the new postgraduate study programme of Circular Bioeconomy Processes in the Food Industry of the Agricultural University of Athens comprised the following five (5) members, drawn from the HAHE Register, in accordance with Laws 4009/2011 & 4653/2020:

- 1. Alexandrou Athanasios (Chair)**  
*(Title, Name, Surname)*  
California State University - Fresno  
*(Institution of origin)*
  
- 2. KAZANTZIS DEMETRIOS**  
*(Title, Name, Surname)*  
University of Rhode Island  
*(Institution of origin)*
  
- 3. TSIAMI AMALIA**  
*(Title, Name, Surname)*  
University of West London, UK  
*(Institution of origin)*
  
- 4. VLAHOS IOANNIS**  
*(Title, Name, Surname)*  
Hellenic Mediterranean University, School of Agricultural Sciences  
*(Institution of origin)*
  
- 5. ΠΕΡΔΙΚΑΡΗ ΜΑΡΙΑ**  
*(Title, Name, Surname)*  
University of the Peloponnese  
*(Institution of origin)*

## II. Review Procedure and Documentation

*Brief reference to the Panel preparation for the new postgraduate study programme review, as well as to the documentation provided and considered by the Panel. Dates of the review, review schedule, meetings held and any additional information regarding the procedure.*

The members of the External Evaluation and Accreditation Panel (EEAP) for the review of the new postgraduate study programme (PSP) Circular Bioeconomy Processes in the Food Industry of the Agricultural University of Athens were appointed by the Hellenic Authority for Higher Education (HAHE) from the Register of Independent Experts on 3rd of July 2025, in accordance with Laws 4009/2011 and 4653/2020. The EEAP reviewed all the supplied documents (which we, as panel members, had pre-read and listed below in tabulated form) and agreed on the key questions and issues to focus on during our evaluation. The evaluation was based on the documents provided and the discussions held during the evaluation and took place remotely.

A0. Table of Contents

A1. Proposal for the Academic Certification

A2. Academic Senate Decision to Establish Postgraduate Programme

A3. MODIP Report

A4. Institution Strategy for the Development of the Postgraduate Programmes A5. Feasibility and viability studies

A6. Academic Unit Quality Policy

A7. Academic Unit Quality Indicators

A8. Course Study Guide

A9. Course Outline

A10. Teaching Staff

A11. Internal Regulation of the New Programme of Studies

A12. Regulation Regarding Studies, Practical Training, Mobility, Assignment Writing A13 Regulations for the Operation of the Students' Complaints and Objections Management Mechanism A14. Regulations for the Operation of the Institution of Academic Councillor A15

Regulations of the Ethics and Research

A16. Diploma Supplement Template in Greek and English language

A17. Summarised Information on the Academic Staff Achievements

A18. N/A

A19. Budget

The first day of the online meeting began on Monday, 7 July, 2025, at 16:00 (all times are in Greek time) with a private session of the EEAP members. During the meeting, the committee members were introduced, discussed the submitted file, and assigned responsibilities. Next day, Tuesday, 8 July, 2025, at 15:00 the panel met with the following administrators:

- Professor Emmanouil Flemetakis, Vice – Rector & President of MODIP
- Professor Apostolos Koutinas, Director of the PSP
- Professor Ioanna Mantala, Head of the Department,
- Mrs. Alexandra Ntouka, MODIP Supervisor

They provided a brief yet comprehensive overview of the new postgraduate program,

including its academic profile, status, strengths, and potential areas of concern, and they responded to the committee's questions. During the meeting, the panel was shown a PowerPoint presentation, which was also emailed to the panel members. At 16:00 the EEAP met with faculty members. The panel discussed with them professional development opportunities, mobility, competence and adequacy of the teaching staff to ensure learning outcomes, workload, projects and research interests. The participants included:

- Professor Seraphim Papanikolaou
- Associate Professor Theofania Tsironi
- Professor Efstathios Panagou
- Assistant Professor Dimitrios Ladakis
- Professor Argyro Bekatorou
- Associate Professor Panagiotis Kandylis
- Assistant Professor Dimitra Dimitrellou
- Associate Professor Fani Mantzouridou

At 17:00 the panel met with administrative staff members, teaching staff members of the programme to evaluate facilities and equipment. The participants included:

- Professor Apostolos Koutinas, Director of the PSP
- Dr. Ourania Kalantzi, Laboratory Teaching Staff
- Mr. Emmanouil Anagnostaras, Laboratory Teaching Staff
- Mrs. Dora Kommata, Secretary of the PSP

At 18:00, the committee met with the following employers and social partners of the new postgraduate programme.

- Dr. Stella Adamidou, R&D Manager, Philosofish S.A.
- Mr. Dimitris Mandis, R&D Manager, Matrix Pack Group, Chairman of the Association of the Greek Manufacturers of Packaging & Materials
- Dr. Sofia Tsakona, Founder & CEO, Qadvisors
- Dr. Dimitris Sabanis, Innovation & Sustainability Director, Georgiou Flexible Packaging SA Flexia
- Dr. Stergios Pilitsis, Manager, R&D and Refineries Transformation, HELLENIQ PETROLEUM S.A.
- Mr. Vasilis Stenos, Founder & CEO, Solmeya
- Dr. Konstantina Karydi, R&D Manager, CHIMAR HELLAS SA
- Mrs. Anna Papadimitriou, Executive Director, ELLA-DIKA MAS
- Dr. Ferran Martí Ferrer, R&D Manager, AIMPLAS (Spain)

After a private meeting during which the EEAP members discussed the outcomes of the virtual visit, the EEAP held a meeting to discuss several points with representatives from the department, the Director of the program, and representatives of MODIP. The participants included:

- Professor Emmanouil Fliemetakis, Vice – Rector & President of MODIP
- Professor Apostolos Koutinas, Director of the PSP
- Professor Ioanna Mantala, Head of the Department,
- Mrs. Alexandra Ntouka, MODIP Supervisor

The entire process was conducted in a spirit of excellent collaboration. The faculty, staff, administrators and social partners were helpful and transparent about the issues concerning the new programme, and they were highly willing to provide any additional information we

requested. The Department was very responsive and forthcoming in providing the panel with additional material.

### III. Postgraduate Study Programme Profile

*Brief overview of the new postgraduate study programme with reference to the following: history, academic remit, duration of studies, qualification awarded, employment opportunities, orientation challenges or any other key background information. Short description of the home Department and Institution, with reference to student population, campus, or any other related facts.*

The Agricultural University of Athens (AUA), originally established in 1920 as the Higher Agricultural School of Athens, is the third-oldest university in Greece. In 1989, it was renamed the Rural University of Athens, and in 1995, it adopted its current name, the Agricultural University of Athens (AUA). The Agricultural University of Athens is located in Athens and, as of 2022, has approximately 8,000 students enrolled, including 7,000 undergraduates and 1,000 postgraduates, with nearly 450 at the doctoral level. It employs about 200 faculty members. The university is organized into six schools and fourteen academic departments. Its main campus is in Votanikos, with additional farms located in Aliartos, Boeotia (100 hectares), Oropos (2.7 hectares), and Yalou in the municipality of Loutsas–Artemida (35 hectares).

The Postgraduate Study Programme (PSP) in Circular Bioeconomy Processes in the Food Industry is part of the Department of Food Science and Human Nutrition within the School of Food and Nutritional Sciences. Established in February 2025 by a decision of the university's Academic Senate (Decision 623/14.02.2025), the PSP aims to provide advanced training in food science, industrial biotechnology, and the circular bioeconomy.

The programme spans three academic semesters, with seven courses taught in each of the first two semesters and a thesis and practical training completed in the third. It will enroll 4–20 students annually following a competitive selection process, with tuition fees set at €4,000 for the programme. The postgraduate programme admits graduates from Greek or recognized foreign institutions in sciences, health sciences, or related fields. It will be taught in Greek and delivered in-person. The curriculum is designed to deliver contemporary, high-value content using the most up-to-date methods and tools. Furthermore, the program contributes to the training and development of specialized and competent postgraduate-level scientists capable of meeting the modern demands of the bioeconomy and food industry communities.

The postgraduate programme was designed to address current demands in food science and circular bioeconomy. It utilizes diverse resources, teaching styles, techniques, and modern laboratory equipment, reflecting the university's dynamic environment. The objectives of the postgraduate programme are as follows:

- To promote scientific knowledge in sustainable food production and processing, circular bioeconomy, and industrial biotechnology, emphasizing economic sustainability and reduced environmental impact.
- To train specialized scientists capable of advancing these fields and working in public and private sectors.

The programme adopted the quality assurance policy of the university. The purpose of the quality policy at the Agricultural University of Athens is the continuous and systematic

assurance, improvement, and strengthening of quality within the institution.

## PART B: COMPLIANCE WITH THE PRINCIPLES

### Principle 1: Strategy, Quality Assurance Policy and Quality Goal Setting for the New Postgraduate Study Programmes

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD INCLUDE IN THEIR STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT THE DEVELOPMENT, ORGANISATION, AND IMPLEMENTATION OF NEW POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES (PSP) IN SPECIFIC SCIENTIFIC FIELDS AFTER INVESTIGATING THEIR FEASIBILITY AND SUSTAINABILITY.

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD APPLY A QUALITY ASSURANCE POLICY FOR THE NEW POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES AS PART OF THEIR STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT.

THIS POLICY SHOULD EXPAND AND BE AIMED (WITH THE COLLABORATION OF EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS) AT THE PSP OF THE INSTITUTION AND THE ACADEMIC UNIT. THIS POLICY SHOULD BE PUBLISHED AND IMPLEMENTED BY ALL INTERESTED PARTIES.

*By decision/s of the Institutional Senate, the Institutions should adapt their strategy to allow for the provision of postgraduate study programmes, in addition to attending to the profile, vision, mission and strategic objectives of the Institution. In this strategy, the Institutions should anticipate the potential benefits, difficulties or risks from the implementation of new postgraduate study programmes and plan all the necessary actions to achieve their goals. The Institution's strategic choices should be documented through specific feasibility and sustainability studies, especially for new postgraduate study programmes.*

*In the case of PSP delivered by distance methods, the Institution prepares and applies an e-learning strategy. The Institution's e-learning strategy is integrated into its overall strategy and identifies educational goals while keeping up to the rapid technological changes and to the developments in pedagogical models. The Institution should include in its strategy the justification and feasibility as to why e-learning has been selected as the appropriate learning strategy for the particular programmes of study where it is applied.*

*In the context of e-learning, innovation strategies, the possibility of programme revision, the linking between learning and research (requiring knowledge of the latest innovations in order to select the most appropriate means to achieve the learning outcomes) should be taken into account.*

*The quality assurance policy of the academic unit for postgraduate study programmes should be in line with the Institution's strategy and must be formulated in the form of a public statement, which is implemented by all stakeholders. It focuses on the achievement of special goals related to the quality assurance of the postgraduate study programmes offered by the academic unit. Indicatively, the quality policy statement of the academic unit includes its commitment to implement a quality policy that will promote the academic profile and orientation of the postgraduate study programme (PSP), its purpose and field of study; it will realise the programme's goals and it will determine the means and ways for attaining them; it will implement appropriate quality procedures, aiming at the programme's continuous improvement.*

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

- a. the suitability of the structure and organisation of postgraduate study programmes*
- b. the pursuit of learning outcomes and qualifications in accordance with the European and National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education - level 7*
- c. the promotion of the quality and effectiveness of teaching at the PSP*

- d. *the appropriateness of the qualifications and the availability of the teaching staff for the PSP*
- e. *the drafting, implementation, and review of specific annual quality goals for the improvement of the PSP*
- f. *the level of demand for the graduates' qualifications in the labour market*
- g. *the quality of support services, such as administrative services, the libraries, and the student welfare office for the PSP*
- h. *the efficient utilisation of the financial resources of the PSP that may be drawn from tuition fees*
- i. *the conduct of an annual internal review and audit of the quality assurance system for the PSP through the cooperation of the Internal Evaluation Group (IEG) with the Institution's Quality Assurance Unit (QAU)*

### **Documentation**

- *The Institutional strategy for postgraduate studies, which includes a special strategy for e-learning, as long as it is applied to the Institution's PSP*
- *Feasibility and sustainability studies for the new PSP*
- *Quality Policy of the academic unit for the development and improvement of PSP*
- *Quality Targeting of the academic unit for the PSP*

### **Study Programme Compliance**

#### **I. Findings**

The Department of Food Science and Human Nutrition follows and implements the quality policy of the Agricultural University of Athens (AUA). It has also developed and implements a quality assurance policy for the new PSP "Circular Bio-economy Processes in the Food Industry" in accordance with the decision of the AUA of its 609th session (29.12.23) which aims to utilize the experience of the teaching staff, the infrastructure, the international connections and the research experience thus providing high - level studies in connection with society and the economy. The overall aim of the University is to develop PSPs in direct relation to the Dublin descriptors for Level 7.

The PSP "Circular Bio-economy Processes in the Food Industry" was established following a series of successive meetings of staff and was designed considering strong and weak points of previously run PSPs and after constructive discussions with Department graduates, alumni and stakeholders.

The goal of the proposed PSP under accreditation is to provide graduates with specialized knowledge in the area of integrated processes of the circular bio-economy in the food industry. The PSP has taken into consideration the needs of the Greek market and society thus providing its graduates with necessary skills for the labor market, for research and for academic activities in the related areas.

The decision for the direction of the PSP was also based on the fact that there are no similar PSPs offered in other Universities in Greece that combine thoroughly the subjects of food processing, industrial biotechnology and the circular bioeconomy. Similar programmes, however, are offered in several universities in Europe and other countries.

The PSP is supported by experienced faculty members from the Department of Food Science and Human Nutrition as well as from other departments of the AUA and other Academic Institutions. The University has excellent building infrastructure (auditorium, teaching rooms and research laboratories) that can adequately support the programme. For the sustainability of the new PSP, tuition fees of 4000 euros are imposed and there are provisions for scholarships as well.

The Quality Assurance Policy of the PSP is harmonized with the strategic objectives of the Department and adheres to the standards set by the Hellenic Authority of Higher Education (HAHE). The quality policy of the Department is aimed at the improvement of the quality of education and research and is supported actively by all parties involved in the educational process. The Quality Policy of the proposed PSP as presented in the submitted proposal for accreditation defines the goals and objectives set for the academic character and orientation of the present programme.

The implemented quality policy defines the actions and the methods to be employed for achieving continuous improvements, promoting communication and cooperation among members of staff, students, and external stakeholders. The PSP closely collaborates with the University's Quality Assurance Unit (MODIP) thus effectively ensuring the achievement of the set goals and enhancing the overall quality process of the programme.

The commitments set by the PSP define the processes and procedures to be used for monitoring the quality and continuous improvement of the PSP. These procedures include:

- a. Well- structured post graduate study programmes
- b. Development of skills and abilities in order to address up to date professional challenges
- c. Timely graduation and ability of graduates to respond to changing work environment
- d. Use of various teaching methods in line with international good practices
- e. Promoting quality and effectiveness in teaching and selection of highly qualified teaching staff
- f. Promoting high level research through collaborations and dissemination of results to benefit society
- g. Promotion of excellence, innovation and participation in mobility programmes
- h. Allocation and management of resources, infrastructure and equipment

PSP courses will be taught face-to-face in Greek; however, if attended by international Erasmus students, the lectures will be provided in English. Courses, PSP thesis and a two month practical training are completed in 3

semesters with 30 ECTS allocated in each semester totalling 90 ECTS required for graduation.

The Quality Policy of the proposed new PSP is disseminated to all interested parties, academic and administrative staff, students and stakeholders so that all parties are committed to following the Quality Policy of the PSP and the Department.

The Quality policy is made available in Greek in the PSP website (<http://cbfi.aua.gr>) and that of the Department (<http://fst.aua.gr/en>)

## **II. Analysis**

The Quality Assurance policy of the PSP follows the quality assurance policy of the Department in accordance with that of the AUA which is accessible on the website and in compliance with the standards set by the HAHE.

The proposal for accreditation submitted to HAHE is complete, covering all aspects of the six principles. The implementation of quality policy by the PSP and the Department is very clearly documented.

There is clear evidence and planning for the realization of the goals set by the PSP which aim at a continuous improvement during its lifecycle.

There is commitment from the Department and the PSP for annual internal evaluations and auditing of the quality assurance system with the close cooperation and support of the Internal Evaluation Unit (OMEA) of the Department and the Quality Assurance Unit (MODIP) of the University. The curriculum of the PSP, the learning outcomes, duration of study periods and ECTS allocation are all aligned with the quality assurance policy and the strategic goals of the University. The PSP administration may consider the reallocation of ECTS between the thesis and the period of internship, increasing the number of ECTS to the latter.

The Diploma Supplement is to be given both in Greek and English, however only the Greek version was provided in the proposal for accreditation. Furthermore, the context of the DS should be less wordy, eliminating unnecessary information, especially in Sections 4 (4.2, 4.4) and 6 (6.1) complying with the sample of the Europass/EU links.

The EEA Panel held an interview with ten stakeholders who all expressed their approval and satisfaction with the curriculum of the proposed PSP and stressed the need of such a postgraduate programme that will cover needs in sustainable technologies, such as the extension of food sustainability, the development of innovative bioprocesses, and the application of molecular technologies in the study and optimization of biotechnological processes.

All stakeholders interviewed were affiliated in some ways with the Department and faculty informed the EEA Panel that they were informed in advance about the establishment of the new PSP and had a positive opinion about the necessity of the proposed PSP; however, their active participation in the drafting of the programme was not verified and several stakeholders were not aware of the proposed curriculum. It was suggested that it would be more meaningful and

rewarding for both parties if the internship period was extended to 3 months instead of the proposed 2 month period to allow the students, immersing into the job experience and processes within the company.

It was clear that the contacts of the interviewed stakeholders with the Department were based on an individual and personal basis. The EEA Panel recommends that a formalized way of communication should be established between all present and future stakeholders and the PSP/Department. The PSP has the ability to provide students with sufficient resources, specialized teaching staff from the Department, the University and other Institutions along with well- equipped teaching and laboratory facilities.

It is recommended that part of the tuition fees be allocated and provided for supporting research of students, participation in conferences and publications.

It is stated that candidates may come from different educational backgrounds; therefore, their foundational knowledge of or skills in subjects taught in the PSP may differ. Remedial or introductory courses might be necessary to address possible gaps, ensuring all can engage with the program's curriculum effectively. The EEA Panel considers that the tuition fees for the programme, with appropriate distribution of resources, will be sufficient to support students with scholarships, contribute to laboratory consumables and maintenance of infrastructure. However, efforts should be made to ensure an adequate number of candidates so that a steady income of resources will ensure the long-term sustainability of the programme.

Some key performance indicators (KPIs) presented in the Proposal of the PSP are set at modest levels and are not considered fully satisfactory. It is understandable that during the first years some performance indicators may not be achievable. The PSP should establish more specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and timely goals regarding KPIs that can be monitored annually. The graduates' dropout rate; the grade point average of graduates; and percentage of postgraduate students who continued for doctoral studies, should be included in the KPIs. Additionally the programme should set higher targets for participation of postgraduate students in research; number of publications with postgraduate students as co-authors; and number of conferences in which postgraduate students participate.

The PSP should proceed with the creation of a well- designed website in Greek and English and disseminating its activities through social media for attracting candidates from professional and alumni associations in the food industry.

It is concluded that maintaining and promoting the quality of teaching and services offered in the PSP would require continuous efforts, evaluations, and development of processes to achieve a well organized PSP with academic excellence and sustainability.

### **III. Conclusions**

The EEA Panel concludes that the PSP "Circular Bioeconomy Processes in the Food Industry" is substantially compliant with the commitments and

requirements for the implementation of an adequate quality policy in accordance with the regulations of the HAHE and of the AUA. Furthermore, it is evident that the PSP administration is committed to supporting and promoting a new post graduate programme of studies with a distinctive profile in the field of circular bio economy in the food industry.

### Panel Judgement

<b>Principle 1: Strategy, Quality Assurance Policy and Quality Goal Setting for the New Postgraduate Study Programmes</b>	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	<b>X</b>
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

### Panel Recommendations

R1.1. Increase the number of targets (KPIs) set by the PSP as well as the degree of achievement.

R1.2. Consider reallocation of ECTS for internship and thesis.

R1.3. Improve the current website in Greek and create one in English.

R1.4. Establish a formalized way of communication between present and future stakeholders and alumni.

### Principle 2: Design and Approval of New Postgraduate Study Programmes

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

*The academic units develop their postgraduate study programmes following a well-defined procedure. The academic profile and orientation of the programme, the research character, the scientific objectives, the specific subject areas, the specialisations, the expected learning outcomes, the structure, the courses, the teaching and assessment modes, the teaching staff and the necessary resources are described at this stage.*

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

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

*In addition, the design of PSP must consider:*

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

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

### **Documentation**

- *Senate decision for the establishment of the PSP*
- *PSP curriculum structure: courses, course categories, ECTS awarded, expected learning outcomes according to the NQF, internship, mobility opportunities*
- *Labour market data regarding the employment of graduates, international experience in a relevant scientific field*
- *PSP Student Guide*
- *Course and thesis outlines*
- *Teaching staff: teaching assignments per subject area and per course*

### **Study Programme Compliance**

#### **I. Findings**

The new Postgraduate Study Programme (PSP) titled "Circular Bioeconomy Processes in the Food Industry" is a postgraduate programme of the Agricultural University of Athens (AUA). The programme was developed following a well-defined, transparent and participatory process, as outlined in the documentation submitted for accreditation.

The program involves faculty from the Agricultural University of Athens (AUA)

and other Greek institutions, including visiting faculty from universities across Greece. It includes 10 faculty members and 2 support staff, with 5 faculty members and 2 support staff from AUA, 1 faculty member from the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, 2 from the Ionian University, 1 from the University of Patras, and 1 from the University of Athens. This collaboration supports student learning across Greek universities.

The proposal for academic certification and the justification report by the Quality Assurance Unit (ΜΟΔΙΠ) demonstrate that the development process involved all relevant institutional bodies, including faculty members, the programme development committee, ΜΟΔΙΠ, and ultimately the Senate. The feasibility and viability study provides substantial justification for the programme based on academic, economic, and labour market grounds. These documents collectively establish the programme's academic profile, research orientation, scientific objectives, and specialisation streams, fully in line with the institution's postgraduate education strategy. The programme's structure and content are described in detail in the Study Guide and the Syllabus, including:

- A modular structure consisting of core and elective courses
- A strong research component, including a Master's thesis
- Internship and mobility opportunities
- A workload of 90 ECTS over three semesters, aligned with Level 7 of the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) and the National Qualifications Framework (NQF)
- Learning outcomes mapped according to Dublin Descriptors and the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS)

The expected learning outcomes are clearly defined, publicly available, and evaluated through specific criteria using various assessment methods, including written examinations, coursework, practical assignments, presentations, and research work. These outcomes correspond to Level 7 of the European Qualifications Framework.

The Master's Programme "Circular Bioeconomy Processes in the Food Industry" aims to provide advanced specialization in food science, industrial biotechnology, and circular bioeconomy. It equips graduates with the knowledge and skills to develop innovative and sustainable food production and processing systems, promote efficient resource use and waste valorisation, and apply modern biotechnological methods. The programme prepares highly qualified professionals able to support the competitiveness of the food industry by producing high-quality, safe, and environmentally friendly products while connecting academic knowledge with applied research and industry needs.

Evidence of multilevel consultation during programme design includes the following:

The programme was developed through structured discussions within the Agricultural University of Athens's Department of Food Science and Human Nutrition, aligned with the department's strategic plan. Its design was approved by Departmental Assemblies and the University Senate.

Quality Assurance Unit (MODIP) Involvement:

- The programme proposal was reviewed and validated by the Quality Assurance Unit to ensure compliance with national and European standards for programme quality, relevance, and sustainability.
- The Feasibility and Sustainability Study, included in the MODIP report, confirmed the programme's alignment with labor market needs and departmental research strengths.

External Stakeholders and Labor Market Feedback:

- Input was gathered individually from external stakeholders, including food industry professionals and alumni networks, regarding trends in food processing, sustainability, and circular bioeconomy needs.
- The feasibility study confirmed demand for graduates with expertise in sustainable production systems, innovative processing methods, packaging solutions, and waste valorization, all critical to industry competitiveness.

Student Involvement and Workload Alignment:

- The programme structure and learning outcomes align with the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) and the European Qualifications Framework (Level 7), ensuring balanced student workload, skill development, and transparency.
- Provisions for student feedback and ongoing programme evaluation are integrated into the Quality Assurance System and internal evaluation processes. The Senate's approval endorses the programme, while the Quality Assurance Manual outlines procedures for programme approval, review and revision. Finally, the programme's structure and relevant information are published in the PSP Student Guide and are also reflected in the Diploma Supplement template, which includes details on objectives, structure, language of instruction (Greek and English), assessment methodology, and learning outcomes.

## II. Analysis

The design and approval of the MSc in Circular Bioeconomy Processes in the Food Industry exhibit a systematic, evidence-based and standards-aligned approach. The programme integrates:

- Academic and professional relevance, reflecting institutional strategy, scientific trends, and market needs
- The programme supported by an extensive group of highly qualified members of faculty from the AUA as well as from other universities across the country. There are five Professors, three Associate Professors, and two Lecturers. Notably, the department maintains strong collaborative links with other universities within the country, whose academic staff contribute to teaching and supervision activities that support the PSP.
- The PSP is governed by transparent academic structures, including formal approval by the Senate and oversight by the Internal Quality Assurance Unit (MODIP).
- The curriculum incorporates research-led teaching, project-based learning, and includes opportunities for student mobility and internships, thereby fostering

both academic excellence and employability. Each course includes clearly defined learning outcomes and assessment criteria, with diverse and appropriate evaluation methods tailored to specific learning objectives.

- The course includes three Seminars, one in each semester, which have clear learning outcomes and are equivalent to 2 ECTS units. In order to achieve those outcomes should be tested and it is not clear the way that the students would pass or not those units. It appears that is pass or fail, however such a case would have an impact on the final grade system as they are part of the assessed courses.
- The timetable and the delivery of the programme was not clear as the department did not provide the relevant information (it was not decided yet). The programme will be delivered in Greek and if there is an interest from the international community to enroll to the programme, then the delivery will be in English partially in Greek. Greek academic staff can translate their teaching materials into English.
- The institution’s internal quality assurance mechanisms ensure that the PSP complies with national legislation and internal rules.

### III. Conclusions

The design process aligns with institutional strategy and QA requirements, ensuring research integration, clear workload, and appropriate student support. Monitoring is embedded through MODIP and stakeholder feedback. The MSc Circular Bioeconomy Processes in the Food Industry Fully Complies with Principle 2.

### Panel Judgement

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

### Panel Recommendations

R2.1. Enhance formal student involvement in future revisions, by incorporating structured student consultation or representation on programme committees.

R2.2. Provide more explicit allocation of teaching responsibilities per course to ensure clarity

for students.

R2.3. Clarify the assessment methodology that the learning outcomes would be achieved for the three provisions of Seminars (one in each semester). Specify how the grade will be achieved as it will count on the final degree classification.

R2.4. Clarify the laboratory practicals that would be provided at the course outline.

R2.5. Develop a systematic alumni tracking system to monitor graduate employment and inform future curriculum adjustments.

R2.6. Continue monitoring and updating the Programme Guide to reflect any curriculum changes and ensure they remain accessible.

### **Principle 3: Regulations for Student Admission, Progression, Recognition of Postgraduate Studies, and certification**

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

*The Institution should develop and publish the internal regulations prescribed by law which, among other things, should regulate all issues of postgraduate studies from the beginning to the end of the studies.*

*Indicatively:*

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

*In case that the PSP is offered through distance learning methods, the Institution should have in place a regulation for e-learning, including in particular the following issues:*

- *Services of the Institution to support e-learning*
- *Methodology for the development and implementation of courses*
- *Ways of providing teaching and variety of teaching and assessment modes*
- *General standard of course structure*
- *Student support system*
- *Support of faculty/teachers with mandatory e-learning training for new staff members*
- *Technological infrastructures made available by the Institution*
- *Student identity confirmation system (student identity check, assignment and exam writing process, security and certification issues).*
- ❖ *The Institution should establish rules for the provision of appropriate access and for the assurance of the participation of students affected by disability, illness, and other special circumstances.*
- ❖ *Ethical issues, such as those concerning data protection, intellectual property rights and rules for protection against fraud are governed by the e-learning regulation.*

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

#### **Documentation**

- *Internal regulation for the operation of the postgraduate study programme*
- *Special regulation for the implementation of e-learning if the PSP is delivered through distance methods*
- *Research Ethics Regulation*

- *Regulation of studies, internship, mobility, and student assignments*
- *Degree certificate template and Diploma Supplement template*

## **Study Programme Compliance**

### **I. Findings**

The Post-Graduate Study Program "Circular Bioeconomy Processes in the Food Industry" of AUA is fully integrated into the Department of Food Science & Human Nutrition and with complete relevance to the activities of the Laboratory of Food Engineering and Processing Food and the Laboratory of Microbiology and Food Biotechnology.

Students are invited to study and acquire knowledge in the Greek language, through mandatory face-to-face education and seminars, available in each semester.

Upon commencement of the PSP program, each postgraduate student is assigned an Academic Advisor.

Assessment criteria, types of assessment, grading scale, course structure and content as well as course timetable are published in advance.

A procedure for managing and addressing educational complaints from students is in place, applicable to all active students and covers the entire educational process.

Scholarship eligibility and mobility regulations are essential components of the study guide.

The PSP includes an internal evaluation and quality control of the curriculum, conducted according to the procedures and criteria established by the AUA Quality Management System (QMS).

### **II. Analysis**

AUA has implemented an integrated e-learning system (platform to enhance learning) designed to support learning, enables the digital organization and distribution of educational material for courses and offers communication tools for students and lecturers, facilitating the smooth and effective conduct of lessons. Postgraduate students, through the student-centered approach and the design of the educational program, can develop their skills, fulfill the requirements of the PSP program and resolve any issues affecting their progress in collaboration with the Academic Advisor and the support of the teaching and administrative staff. The Academic Advisor, designated by the Coordinating Committee, provides information, assistance, and guidance for their studies.

Postgraduate students attend required courses and seminars led by specialists from academia, research centers, the food industry, and international organizations.

AUA and ETDA faculty provide full infrastructure and specialized staff for the

PSP's Program. Graduate students receive healthcare and transportation benefits, with program resources managed by the AUA's Special Research Account under current regulations.

Greek postgraduate students who meet specific academic excellence and financial criteria can apply for tuition fee exemptions. Additionally, students can participate in mobility programs such as Erasmus+ if this transition does not interfere with their participation in the program's educational activities.

Infrastructure and services for student support related to the MSc are available to facilitate students' interaction with the Department and the Institution.

The independent office of the "Student Advocate" at AUA mediates between postgraduate students and professors or administrative services of the Institution. The Student Advocate ensures legality within the framework of academic freedom, addresses administrative issues, and maintains the institution's proper functioning. Postgraduate students may contact the Academic Advisor of the program on issues related to their studies.

Assessment criteria (oral and written exams) and methods are published in advance in the course outline, ensuring transparency and clarity for students regarding expectations and evaluation processes.

At the end of each semester, postgraduate students may have the opportunity to evaluate the courses by completing a questionnaire that addresses the content of each course, the teaching and examination methods of the instructor, and provides observations for improvement. Specifically, the evaluation by postgraduate students of the MSc program is conducted electronically through course evaluation forms. After accessing the Quality Management System (QMS), postgraduate students can only see the courses they are eligible to evaluate on their personal webpage.

### III. Conclusions

The committee considers that the current structure of the postgraduate program empowers students to actively engage in the educational process efficiently and foster mutual respect between the students and lecturers. Assessment criteria and methods are published in advance and a formal procedure for student appeals is in place.

### Panel Judgement

<b>Principle 3: Regulations for Student Admission, Progression, Recognition of Postgraduate Studies, and certification</b>	
Fully compliant	<b>X</b>

Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

**Panel Recommendations**

The committee has no recommendations for this section.

## Principle 4: Teaching Staff of New Postgraduate Study Programmes

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

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

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

### **Documentation**

- *Procedures and criteria for teaching staff recruitment, policy for attracting highly qualified staff, and PSP Obligation Regulation*
- *List of the intended for recruitment teaching staff including subject areas, employment relationship, Institution of origin, Department of origin and relevant individual achievements*

### **Study Programme Compliance**

#### **I. Findings**

The new PSP Program "Circular Bioeconomy Processes in the Food Industry" is delivered by an experienced and highly qualified academic team from the Agricultural University of Athens (AUA), with strong alignment between teaching duties and expertise in the subject matter.

The postgraduate program is supported by 7 faculty teaching and research staff members and 5 visiting professors, all possessing the necessary scientific and teaching qualifications to meet program requirements.

Faculty members and visiting professors bring interdisciplinary expertise spanning food engineering, industrial biotechnology, food microbiology, biomolecular engineering, bioprocess engineering, food packaging, and bio-refinery development/design in the circular bioeconomy era.

Teaching assignments are approved through formal processes (Department Assembly), ensuring that they are aligned with each instructor's specialization and contribute to balanced average weekly teaching workloads.

Student course feedback surveys are conducted online before the end of each semester to maintain quality standards.

A strategic development plan for academic staff includes potential additional financial support (from the PSP program and/or the Institution) for academic personnel participating in mobility schemes and the establishment of teaching excellence awards.

## **II. Analysis**

High educational standards and timely updates to educational materials are maintained through faculty members' extensive publications and citations, active research activities, participation in competitive projects, industry interactions, monitoring of field developments, conference participation, and collaboration with global and local research teams.

Teaching staff at the AUA may be invited through direct assignment, provided they have prior experience in relevant subjects and have received positive evaluations from students in previous educational cycles. For external collaborators, teaching duties may be assigned through a documented application submitted to the Coordinating Committee of the PSP, presenting arguments that justify the candidate's suitability. Alternatively, a public announcement may be posted on the MSC's website to attract teaching staff.

The academic unit promotes faculty growth through knowledge updates, research expansion, teaching improvement, and technology adoption, with emphasis on industry collaboration and emerging skills. The PSP program funds training, research, conferences, and publications while

building food industry partnerships to enhance academic excellence and global engagement. Financial support for academic staff mobility is available through two sources: formal ERASMUS office procedures at the AUA and partial travel expense coverage from the PSP program's dedicated budget.

## **III. Conclusions**

The committee, after careful consideration of the key findings and analysis outlined above, concludes that the PSP Program "Circular Bioeconomy Processes in the Food Industry" represents a well-designed, strategically planned, and effectively implemented postgraduate program that successfully integrates academic rigor with industry relevance. The comprehensive faculty development strategy, robust quality assurance mechanisms, and strong financial support framework position the program for sustained excellence and continued growth in the rapidly evolving field of circular bioeconomy.

## Panel Judgement

<b>Principle 4: Teaching Staff of New Postgraduate Study Programmes</b>	
Fully compliant	<b>X</b>
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

## Panel Recommendations

The committee has no recommendations for this section.

## Principle 5: Learning Resources and Student Support

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD HAVE ADEQUATE FUNDING TO COVER THE TEACHING AND LEARNING NEEDS OF THE POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES. 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, CAREER AND SOCIAL POLICY SERVICES ETC.).

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

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

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

### Documentation

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

### Study Programme Compliance

#### I. Findings

The new Postgraduate Program of Science (PSP) in Circular Bioeconomy Processes in the Food Industry utilizes information systems, infrastructure, services, and facilities of the Department of Food Science and Human Nutrition of the University of Athens.

The new Master's programme is designed to reflect the broader strategy of the department of Food Science and Nutrition, with the aim of contributing to the development of the Greek economy, and the scientific advancement of new food scientists.

The University and the Department of Food Science and Human Nutrition have the facilities to support the Postgraduate study program. It has auditoriums, lecture and teaching rooms, research laboratories, and laboratories for carrying out laboratory exercises. Specifically, it has six classrooms with a total capacity of 200 students, while the laboratories have spaces for conducting research and educational workshops. The classrooms are sufficient for teaching needs, as well as supporting distance learning courses. Teaching is supported by the library and information Center of the Agricultural University of Athens. All postgraduate students will obtain a University e-mail account, through which they receive updates regarding the actions and decisions of the University, as well as issues related to their education. All coursework of the Programme is managed through the Openclass platform, through which they receive educational material through updates on individual course topics.

## **II. Analysis**

The new PSP includes two faculty members from the Laboratory of Food Engineering and Processing and two faculty members of the Laboratory of Food Microbiology and Biotechnology of the Department of Food Science and Human Nutrition of the University of Athens. All faculty members are able researchers and professors in various institutions at home and abroad. The laboratories are fully equipped with over 65 instruments that include spray drying processes, a microfiltration device with ultrafiltration and reverse osmosis membranes, a homogenizer, pumps, a fluidized bed, etc. The space in the laboratory consists of a room that is 120 m<sup>2</sup> and the 350 m<sup>2</sup>. There is a Liaison office that develops actions that support Mobility, Practice exercise and job search. There is also a European Programme Office of Erasmus and an office of Innovation, Entrepreneurship, and Technology Transfer of the Greek Academy of Science.

A restaurant where free meals are provided to eligible students. A clinic for students and staff, a Gym and other sports facilities on campus and cultural groups, i.e. music group, dance group, theatre group, film and photography workshop and art group. Also, an Agricultural museum. The University (AUA) does not have a student dormitory.

The PSP will be supported by the Department's Graduate Programs Secretariat and in addition will offer other services related to the support and information of students regarding issues, such as student care and academic career.

The Secretariat provides access to comprehensive digital tools, including Microsoft and OneDrive, integrated into the MSc program's digital infrastructure. The tuition fees are 4,000 Euros per student for their entire duration of their studies. The fees can be paid in three installments, the first upon registration in the first semester of studies. Scholarships are awarded according to specific socioeconomic criteria. Funds are also allocated for travel expenses for visits to industries, participation in conferences or workshops and activities. Expenses of laboratory analyses in laboratories outside the University are also included in the budget. Faculty members act also as academic advisors in the programme, and

are assigned to each postgraduate student for counseling, guidance, and support.

**III. Conclusions**

The above principle 5 has met all requirements for a fully compliant judgement according to the directives by HAHE.

**Panel Judgement**

<b>Principle 5: Learning Resources and Student Support</b>	
Fully compliant	<b>X</b>
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

**Panel Recommendations**

The committee has no recommendations for this section.

## **Principle 6: Initial Internal and External Evaluation and Monitoring of New Postgraduate Study Programmes**

**INSTITUTIONS AND ACADEMIC UNITS SHOULD HAVE IN PLACE AN INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM, FOR THE AUDIT, INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL EVALUATION OF THE NEW POSTGRADUATE PROGRAMMES, THUS ENSURING COMPLIANCE WITH THE PRINCIPLES OF THE PRESENT STANDARDS. ANY ACTIONS TAKEN IN THE ABOVE CONTEXT SHOULD BE COMMUNICATED TO ALL PARTIES CONCERNED.**

*The internal evaluation of the new PSP includes the assessment of the accreditation proposal, as well as the documentation in accordance with the Principles of the present Standards and the quality procedures of the Institution's Internal Quality Assurance System (IQAS). The internal evaluation of new postgraduate study programmes also aims at maintaining the level of educational provision and creating a supportive and effective learning environment for students. The Institution, through its Quality Assurance Unit (QAU) and the corresponding academic units, organise and support the external evaluation procedures of the new PSP, according to the specific guidelines and directions provided by HAHE.*

*The above comprise the assessment of:*

- the objectives, content, and structure of the curriculum, the knowledge offered and the level of science and technology in the given discipline, thus ensuring that the PSP is up to date, according to the relevant documentation listed in the decisions of the pertinent bodies*
- the entailed students' workload for the progression and completion of postgraduate studies*
- the satisfaction of the students' expectations and needs in relation to the programme*
- the learning environment, support services, and their fitness for purpose for the PSP in question*

*Postgraduate study programmes are designed and established in accordance with the provisions of the Institution's internal regulations, involving students and other stakeholders.*

### **Documentation**

- The Quality Assurance Unit (QAU) procedure for verifying whether the requirements of the Standards for Quality Accreditation of New PSP are met, as well as the procedure for organising and supporting their external evaluation procedures*
- Assessment and feedback mechanisms of the PSP strategy and quality targeting, and relevant decision-making processes (students, external stakeholders)*

### **Study Programme Compliance**

#### **I. Findings**

The AUA has a comprehensive Internal Quality Assurance System (IQAS) in place, which is formally documented through its Quality Assurance Policy and implemented via the Quality Assurance Unit (ΜΟΔΙΠ). The programme proposal

and the supporting reports confirm that both the initial internal evaluation and the steps for external accreditation were fully aligned with HAHE guidelines.

The programme was thoroughly assessed internally by the Programme Committee, the Department Assembly, and the ΜΟΔΙΠ, as evidenced in the Senate Decision and Strategic Approval. The Feasibility Study includes a needs assessment, stakeholder consultation, and international benchmarking, ensuring that the curriculum is scientifically current and aligned with labour market trends. Student workload and progression are clearly addressed through the Programme Guide and the Curriculum Regulations, which detail the distribution of credits, modules, and learning outcomes.

The learning environment is supported by appropriate infrastructure, research facilities, and access to qualified academic staff. Mechanisms for collecting student feedback and handling complaints or appeals are described in the Operational Regulation and the dedicated Complaints Procedure.

Support services, including academic advising, the structure for addressing student concerns, and continuous monitoring by ΜΟΔΙΠ, contribute to a supportive learning environment.

## **II. Analysis**

The programme demonstrates a high degree of compliance with the principle of continuous internal and external evaluation:

- The IQAS includes clear procedures for initial programme audit, accreditation, and ongoing monitoring.
- The internal evaluation process assessed the objectives, content, and scientific level, using labour market data and trends.
- The structure of the curriculum, student workload, and the alignment with Level 7 ECTS standards are verified.
- The Student Guide and Diploma Supplement ensure that students and employers have access to up-to-date information on learning outcomes, structure, and expectations.
- The student feedback and appeal systems provide a channel for continuous improvement.
- The involvement of external stakeholders and periodic external review are outlined in the Strategic Plan and Feasibility Study.

A notable strength is that the programme's monitoring framework is not static but designed to be adaptive, using feedback loops from students, external partners, and quality bodies to adjust its academic and operational aspects when needed.

## **III. Conclusions**

The new PSP Circular Bioeconomy Processes in the Food Industry demonstrates a robust initial internal and external evaluation and monitoring framework. There is clear evidence that the University has embedded a quality culture and effective mechanisms to ensure that the programme remains relevant, current,

and supportive of students' needs.

### Panel Judgement

<b>Principle 6: Initial Internal and External Evaluation and Monitoring of New Postgraduate Study Programmes</b>	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

### Panel Recommendations

- R6.1. Maintain regular follow-up reviews to ensure that the student workload remains balanced as the programme evolves.
- R6.2. Continue to strengthen systematic communication of evaluation outcomes to students and stakeholders.
- R6.3. Consider enhancing the tracking of graduate professional development to support the continuous alignment of the curriculum with market needs
- R6.4. Encourage regular training for staff involved in internal evaluations to ensure consistent application of QA standards.
- R6.5. Publish annual summaries of programme improvements resulting from internal and external reviews to demonstrate accountability and foster stakeholder trust.

## **PART C: CONCLUSIONS**

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

- Faculty and staff are knowledgeable, enthusiastic, and dedicated to the PSP's mission.
- Stakeholders and social partners strongly support the PSP and recognize a clear demand for its graduates.
- The PSP has the necessary procedures for monitoring quality assurance and continuous improvement which align with the strategic objectives of the Department and the University.
- Infrastructure and other resources are adequate for the successful operation of the new PSP.
- A mandatory internship is required to complete the degree, ensuring students gain practical experience.
- The department receives strong support from the university's administration.
- Postgraduate students who meet specific academic and financial criteria can apply for tuition fee exemptions.
- The provided documentation was clear, comprehensive, and fully met the requirements of the Hellenic Authority for Higher Education (HAHE). The Quality Assurance Unit (MODIP) staff were supportive and promptly provided additional requested materials.

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

The postgraduate programme admits graduates from diverse related fields, including sciences, health sciences, and other relevant disciplines.

The proposed minimum number of students to be admitted is deemed insufficient.

No formal involvement of external stakeholders or alumni occurred during the design of the PSP.

### **III. Recommendations for Follow-up Actions**

Increase the number and ambition of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to enhance program outcomes.

Align course learning outcomes with the European Qualifications Framework Level 7.

Adjust the ECTS workload for the internship and thesis to better reflect the time invested in the internship.

Enhance the existing Greek website and develop an English version to improve accessibility.

Define a clear assessment methodology to ensure seminar learning outcomes are achieved.

Consider introducing support measures, such as remedial courses, to address diverse

student backgrounds.

Consider establishing an informal advisory board to provide feedback on programme development.

Consider implementing a computerized tool for food cost analysis to support new and existing food and beverage product development.

Consider adding a course on food and beverage cost analysis and purchasing to the curriculum.

#### IV. Summary & Overall Assessment

The Principles where full compliance has been achieved are:

2, 3, 4, 5, 6.

The Principles where substantial compliance has been achieved are:

1

The Principles where partial compliance has been achieved are:

None

The Principles where failure of compliance was identified are:

None

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

## The members of the External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel

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