



ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ
HELLENIC REPUBLIC



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

Fine Arts

Institution: Athens School of Fine Arts

Date: 3 April 2021



Επιχειρησιακό Πρόγραμμα
Ανάπτυξη Ανθρώπινου Δυναμικού,
Εκπαίδευση και Διά Βίου Μάθηση
Με τη συγχρηματοδότηση της Ελλάδας και της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης



Report of the Panel appointed by the HAHE to undertake the review of the Undergraduate Study Programme (Integrated Master) of **Fine Arts** of the **Athens School of Fine Arts** for the purposes of granting accreditation

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Part A: Background and Context of the Review	4
I. The External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel.....	4
II. Review Procedure and Documentation	5
III. Study Programme Profile	7
Part B: Compliance with the Principles	8
Principle 1: Academic Unit Policy for Quality Assurance.....	8
Principle 2: Design and Approval of Programmes	10
Principle 3: Student- centred Learning, Teaching and Assessment.....	13
Principle 4: Student Admission, Progression, Recognition and Certification	17
Principle 5: Teaching Staff	19
Principle 6: Learning Resources and Student Support	21
Principle 7: Information Management	23
Principle 8: Public Information	24
Principle 9: On-going Monitoring and Periodic Internal Review of Programmes	26
Principle 10: Regular External Evaluation of Undergraduate Programmes.....	28
Part C: Conclusions	20
I. Features of Good Practice	30
II. Areas of Weakness	31
III. Recommendations for Follow-up Actions	31
IV. Summary & Overall Assessment	33

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 **Fine Arts** of the **Athens School of Fine Arts** comprised the following four (4) members, drawn from the HAHE Register, in accordance with Laws 4009/2011 & 4653/2020:

- 1. Assoc. Prof. Paschalis Paschalis,**
University of Nicosia, Nicosia, Cyprus, (Chair)

- 2. Dr. Stella Baraklianou,**
University of Huddersfield, Huddersfield, United Kingdom

- 3. Prof. Chrysa Damianaki,**
University of Salento, Lecce, Italy

- 4. Prof. Anna Tahinci,**
The Glassell School of Art, Houston, USA

II. Review Procedure and Documentation

The External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel (henceforth “the Panel”) visited virtually through teleconferencing the Undergraduate Programme (intergraded Master) of Fine Arts of the Athens school of Fine Arts on the 30th and 31st of March 2021. They were greeted upon connecting to the virtual conference room by the Rector, the President of MODIP and Vice-rector, the head of the Department.

The Panel then met with OMEA and MODIP representatives where a fruitful discussion took place with regards to the compliance of the programme to the quality standards for accreditation. The initial introduction by the programme representatives encouraged useful and elaborate discussions on all aspects related to the programme of study.

On the first day of the virtual visit the Panel also met with the teaching staff members where everyone was given the opportunity to introduce themselves and talk about their educational background, research interests and activities, and their classes. The following teleconferencing session of the same day involved a meeting with current students where everyone was given the chance to discuss their educational experience, their interests and interaction with the department’s facilities and faculty members of the programme.

On the 31st of March, the second and final day of the virtual evaluation visit, the Panel had a teleconference with the Rector of the School, and administrative staff and was taken through a virtual tour of the School’s facilities, art studios, the theatre, the cafeteria and the library. The virtual tour, which was facilitated by members of the programme with live footage from the mobile devices and assisted by a detailed commentary by the Rector, encouraged a fruitful discussion on the facilities of the programme, involving the actual studio spaces and equipment that is available for students to use.

The Panel then met with graduates of the programme and had another effective discussion regarding their follow up studies and career paths. The Panel was presented with both recent graduates as well as graduates from the earlier years. The following teleconferencing session involved a meeting with employers, academic institution and social partners showcasing the many and significant professional connections of the programme. During the meeting all partners were given the opportunity to elaborate on their relation to the programme and the valuable contribution of its students and graduates to their businesses and organizations.

The day and virtual evaluation visit ended with a teleconference with OMEA and MODIP representatives through a fruitful discussion on the Panel’s findings as well as discussions on several points that needed clarification. All meetings were well organized and provided valuable information to the members of the Panel generating open and rewarding discussions.

The Panel was provided in advance with the internal evaluation report created by the Department and extensive additional information and electronic copies of the presentations delivered to the Panel. In addition, the Panel requested and received further material including

admissions statistics and student portfolios. Overall, the Panel is pleased with the welcoming and openly cooperative attitude of the programme, Department and University, who made every effort to ensure that the Panel had ample and open access to all related materials.

III. Study Programme Profile

The Undergraduate Programme is a five year - 10 semester (300 ECTS) programme and awards its graduates with a post-graduate (intergraded master) level-7 degree. The UP consists of three divisions; the painting division operating 13 workshops, the sculpture division with 3 workshops and the Engraving division with 2. The UP's curriculum also includes elective studio and lecture courses offering a student centric, interdisciplinary approach to art education, blending disciplines such as Graphic Arts, Multimedia and Video Art, Photography and Stage Design with more traditional mediums. It has approximated 1200 students, admitting 100 new students per year following classifying examinations, and 40 full time teaching and research faculty members. The School has a long history with its founding dating all the way back to 1836. Initially the School operated only on Sundays and bank holidays, admitting students regardless of age and educational level and without any selection procedure, with the first "proper" art course being introduced in 1840. The Athens School of Fine Arts is synonymous with the modern Art history of Greece and it can arguably be considered as the most important and prestigious Art School in the country, with outstanding reputation both locally and internationally.

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 Athens School of Fine Arts offers a 5-year (300 ECTS) undergraduate programme (intergraded master) in Fine Arts which comprises of three divisions; the painting division which operates 13 workshops, the sculpture division with 3 workshops and the engraving division operating 2 workshops. The programme's curriculum also includes elective studio and lecture courses offering students the opportunity to learn, combine and inform their main area of focus with complimentary areas such as Graphic Arts, Multimedia and Video Art. More specifically the Painting Division offers Drawing, Elements of Painting, Fresco and Portable Icons Technique, Mosaic, Multimedia-Hypermedia and Video Art, and Stage Design, the Sculpture Division offers the Bronze casting – Plaster working, Ceramic and Elements of Sculpture, and the Printmaking

Division offers Elements of Printmaking, Graphic Arts, Typography and the Art of Book, and Photography: Forms of the analogue and digital photographic image in contemporary art.

The addition of the multidisciplinary electives to the curriculum, which is a subsequent change following the recommendations of the 2013 accreditation of the programme, clearly demonstrates the student centric, interdisciplinary approach to art education that the school has adopted as well as their flexibility, ability and willingness to make efficient changes to promote the quality and effectiveness of teaching.

The Panel's meetings with students and graduates of the programme clearly demonstrated an overall satisfaction from their studies and professors which is also evident from the appropriateness of the qualifications of the academic staff who, in most cases, are both commended academics and acclaimed practitioners.

It was also evident from the discussions with the academic staff that their own artistic research, experience and experimentation is continuously informing their teaching and it is therefore transferrable to their students.

Students confirmed that the Faculty is easily approachable and always available to assist them even in cases where they do not belong to their classes, but they also mentioned that it is sometimes difficult and time consuming to have access to administration services.

With regards to the qualifications of the graduates, the programme's social partners confirmed that the programme's students and graduates are of high educational level and for this reason they were very pleased with their ongoing collaborations.

In conclusion it is important to mention that the department has established a well-defined Quality Assurance policy that is appropriate for the programme's mission and activities. The implementation of the policy is carried out successfully by two committees, OMEA and MODIP, who confirmed that they meet and discuss matters on a regular basis.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

It has been identified through the meetings with students and graduates that it can sometimes be difficult and time consuming for current students to have access to administration services. The Panel suggests that an online appointment-booking system is put in place for easier and more efficient student access to such services.

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

Since 2013, the Athens School of Arts was reinstated from its historical predecessor, into The School of Fine Arts, comprising of the Visual Arts Department and the Art Theory and History Department.

The Department of Fine Art Undergraduate Programme is structured around the historical model of the European art Academy, organised around three strands of: Painting, Sculpture and Engraving. The core and compulsory classes that are taught are further structured into Art Workshop Directions, specifically these consist of 13 painting workshops, three sculpture workshops and two engraving workshops. The naming of each individual workshop is historical, as it appears that the taught content has significantly moved on from the traditional art classes. For example, Painting Workshop I has an emphasis on New Media, whilst Engraving Workshop B is structured around graphic design, illustration and digital design. The compulsory elective courses are also structured around the Art Workshops, where students can deepen their knowledge with a particular area of artistic practice. As optional electives, students are allowed to pursue Art History and Theory modules, compulsory for those who wish to continue onto arts education.

Upon completion of the undergraduate programme, which is five years, students are granted the Integrated Masters' Degree. This is compliant with the European ECTS points system.

The Department's emphasis is on producing contemporary artists, and this is evident from the examples of the work submitted. The overall strategy was also explained to us by the Dean of the School as one that intends to nurture the next generation of Greek artists.

From our discussion with staff and students, it is evident that the design of the curriculum has undergone significant transformation and over the past ten or more years, adopting video art, new media, photography, alongside the traditional fine arts, like painting, sculpture and engraving. New modules have been introduced, like Art in Context, that provides with a contextualisation and framework of contemporary art practice alongside theoretical texts as well as Studio of Performance, that is about performance in contemporary art. The interdisciplinary nature of the courses on offer is evident in that students are allowed to explore a variety of artistic disciplines and methods and are not asked to rigidly adhere to one specific workshop or style.

The links between the Department and public engagement is evident in the presentations we had with external stakeholders. Opportunities are provided through links with Athens galleries, like Alma Gallery of Contemporary Art that visit the Degree shows and nurture new artistic talent. Students can gain work experience, if they wish, with the National Museum of Contemporary Art, Athens, as well as with the Children's Museum in Athens.

The School of Fine Art was instrumental in providing support in the form of infrastructure and exhibition spaces during the renowned Documenta, an international exhibition of contemporary art that takes place every five years. Whilst Documenta is usually held in its hometown of Kassel, in Germany, in Documenta 14 was split between Kassel and Athens. Furthermore, the impact that Documenta has had on the wider cultural map of Athens has been extremely significant, as Athens is now considered a laboratory for the production of contemporary art.

The School of Fine Art has built significant collaborations on a European level, through the Erasmus programme. There are 79 bilateral agreements between the School of Fine Art with other art institutions in the EU and the EEA. During presentations the Panel had the opportunity to hear from the exchange with the Faculty of Fine Arts in Lisbon, Portugal as well as the Higher Institute of Fine Arts, Besançon and other collaborations.

In terms of research and teaching, in the case of Fine Arts, academic staff members are established practitioners whose practice and engagement with the contemporary art scene, in Greece and abroad, directly or indirectly feeds into the curriculum. From discussions with staff members and students, it is also evident that students can suggest or bring ideas for further exploration into the taught workshops.

It is notable that the more traditional practices that have remained in the workshops, like marble carving or ceramics, as well as Byzantine iconography, are unique to the School and attract a high number of students, both nationally, as well as internationally. With few marble carving workshops remaining worldwide, these are unique and precious crafts that bring a significant value to the School need to be maintained.

The School has undertaken important steps towards transforming and aligning with new media and introducing digital arts as well as performance studies. However, it also retains a unique link with the traditional arts and crafts, like painting, sculpture and ceramics and marble carving. It is something that the School needs to find a balance between the old and the new and further chart its place on the map of international artistic development.

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

The Panel's suggestion is the better presentation of the various Workshops, through documentation of past and present student's work, as well as of the profiles of staff members. By providing a digitised platform in both English and Greek, this wealth can become accessible to the wider public.

Principle 3: Student- centred Learning, Teaching and Assessment

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

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

The student-centred learning and teaching process

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

In addition :

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

Study Programme Compliance

The student-centred learning and teaching process is a core attribute of ASFA, and it is one of the pillars of its teaching philosophy. ASFA is a workshop-based art school, where the students are expected to individually work in the painting, sculpture and printmaking workshops; they are also supposed to produce a substantial personal body of work. Therefore, teaching is inevitably student-centered and tailored to fit every students' needs.

The ASFA candidates often come from different life paths. These create a background identity for many of them but once ASFA students, they become completely aware of their mission and try to evaluate best the new opportunities and grasp new and professionally useful skills. Many

students are graduates from other universities such as Architecture, Physics, Literature etc., and a lot of them have to work full time or part time during the five-year courses at ASFA. Thus, the teaching process is flexible enough to accommodate every students' life choices. As to employment opportunities for the ASFA graduates, these are difficult to gauge but a survey recently conducted by the Department indicates that a good number of students secured employment after graduation. Details of their employment were not gathered or were not presented to the Panel.

There is a great variety of pedagogical approaches in ASFA. This is largely due to the fact that each professor impresses his/her teaching with his or her own personality, views and artistic achievements. Thus, one could say that the "atmosphere" from one studio to the other can be quite distinct.

The curriculum of studies at ASFA has sensibly been updated and designed to meet student needs. Students are free to choose elective courses, either in painting, sculpture or etching, which meet their specific needs and interests. Discussion with a number of ASFA students, the majority of which however followed the painting course offered by Prof. Antonopoulos, demonstrated that by doing so, students become capable of redesigning their curriculum of studies and acquire multiple knowledge in different mediums and techniques including formal artistic knowledge. Moreover, ASFA students are invited to take optional classes in Art Education I and II, History of Art I and II, and Art History Teaching I and II, whereas classes in Pedagogics and in Psychology of Education are compulsory. The knowledge and skills acquired gained through artistic training and art history courses enable them, once graduated, to pursue a teaching career in Greek High Schools (see "Φοιτητοκεντρική Μάθηση, Διδασκαλία & Αξιολόγηση", p. 28). To this end, the Panel recommends that students assume the compulsory task to write short papers (not more than 5000 words) on subjects treated in their theoretical classes, so that they become acquainted with writing style, especially thinking and effective writing style, and formal verbal expressions. These educational procedures may reinforce the students' mental faculties and capacity of producing quality judgments. Regrettably, entering the ASFA does not require interview tasks or any other task involving writing an essay, and one may come across ASFA students who can hardly prepare a formal speech or a paper, or even express themselves in a clearly objective verbal way. Yet, these skills are substantial, and they are highly required when ASFA graduates are to be appointed in High Schools.

Students are actively encouraged by their professors and teaching staff to suggest improvements in teaching and additions to the taught material. Indeed, students are expected to act as independent artists, completely responsible for the presentation and documentation of their artwork. They are also encouraged to promote themselves and their art as well as participate in exhibitions and similar events. By the end of their studies, they should have the theoretical background and the writing skills to produce a structured and documented written statement about their work. This is especially important during the presentation of their final thesis project, where they must be able to defend it in the presence of the professors and staff.

The student-teacher relationship often becomes a mentoring one, even a friendly one. In the context of the currently much-debated artistic freedom of expression, boundaries are often put aside, and students and teachers can find themselves in a more collaborative and equal relation. This is definitely a characteristic of a studio-based learning process and a distinct characteristic of ASFA.

ASFA welcomes feedback from its students. On these valid grounds, the Panel would suggest that the Department adopts the method of using the feedback gathered from such complaints positively to help improve the services offered and to enhance the teaching experience for all students.

In a modern educational system of putting the learner at the centre, the skills required on the teacher's part are essential in order to measure the progress and performance of individual students, plan further steps for the improvement of teaching and learning and share information with colleagues and students. During the interview of March 30, 2021 held with the academic and other staff of the ASFA, the Panel got the impression that all members of the OMEA of ASFA discuss fairly well the governance of students' internal assessment, assessment procedures and instruments and the use of assessment results for different purposes. The Panel also realized that the quality of its job has greatly been improved since the last Accreditation Report for the Internal Quality Assurance System (IQAS) of December 2018. Summative and formative assessments of recent times are actually carried out in a more satisfactory way. The Panel would suggest, therefore that the internal assessment carried out by OMEA is well designed by the teachers also because it is often in collaboration with the students themselves within lessons or at the end of a teaching unit, year level or educational cycle. As to the function of the ASFA Annexes (Σταθμοί) in Delphi, on the islands of Hydra, Crete, Lesvos and elsewhere, the Panel would suggest that their upgrading could be attained through a more active participation of art students and teachers to the artistic activities of local municipalities, such as volunteer work in Galleries which are closed due to lack of working staff or Museum guide lectures. In addition, volunteering work by art students, while on holidays at the ASFA Branches, could be envisaged as lifelong learning artistic programmes offered to local people.

Criteria, such as, the content of studies, the standard required to meet the objectives in artistic practice and education, as well as the methods by which the ASFA can obtain the benefits of the students' high efficiency may be published in advance. Assessing the students' participation in art classes/workshop work is also valuable and, to the Panel's mind, it should be highly considered.

Feedback is often provided not only by the teaching staff but also by fellow students. All students are required to attend the assessment as they can learn a lot from their fellow students as well as contribute to the assessment process.

Assessment of the studio work and other classes is provided by the professors and teaching staff. In the studio assessment the presence of all students is obligatory. There is no doubt that the circumstances can impact on individuals in different ways. Any Higher Education School

should produce guidance that provides examples of the different types of mitigating circumstances. If a student has a long-term chronic condition or disability and he/she thinks that he/she may need on-going support arrangements, he/she should be eligible to declare it in the person-in-chief. Conversely, circumstances such as the employment or other types of external work, travel disruption, pressure of academic workload, and the like, do not normally relate to the assessment period.

The student-focused policy of the ASFA was confirmed by the students themselves in the Panel of the 30th of March 2021. In the undergraduate students meeting discussion focused on learning procedures, personal experience of the school teaching and teacher guidance, mutual influences during *atelier*-based creative work, as well as facilities offered or missing. Students declared that assessment is consistent as much by their teachers, as by the School's personnel dealing with internal assessment. They also marked that the ASFA assessment policy is justly applied to all students and it is meant to enhance experiences of artistic practice and learning.

ASFA regularly reviews and updates its regulations and policies, including the student appeals procedure. Accordingly, some changes have been made from the Appeals Procedure in place during the 2018 Accreditation Report. A formal procedure for students' appeals seeks first clarification by a board like the Appeals Review Board.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

None.

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

Because of the special character and nature of the artistic scope of the Athens School of Fine Arts (based on the model of a “Grande Ecole”), the entrance exams are not governed by the general Entrance Exams system. The School holds special in person entrance exams, in accordance with the decision of the **Minister of Education, No Φ.151/2995/B6/13.1.2010 (GG 55/2010 issue. B’)**. The entrance exams are traditionally held the first Monday in September, and there are currently discussions to move the exams in late August. There are usually around 900 applicants for in between 90 and 110 positions. The applicants are usually separated in two groups of around 450, and more recently because of social distancing during the COVID pandemic to 6 groups of around 120. Each applicant’s submission is associated with a number to secure their anonymity. The decision process takes the form of a discussion between the 18 professors of the committee and in order to get admitted an applicant needs 16-17 positive assessments.

Incoming students’ mobility is encouraged, and students can change workshops after spending at least two semesters in a workshop. Practical training is in place and the School has developed a substantial network including social, cultural, and productive bodies to support this component. Practical training is deemed as a valuable part of the programme, in terms of developing both job-specific and broader skills.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

A Thesis Handbook with a set of quality requirements, guidelines and expectations for the students' thesis is recommended.

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

All academic staff, permanent and contractual, are esteemed visual artists, painters, sculptors with a national and international exhibition record. During the academic year 2018-19, there were: 32 permanent full-time academic members, of which 16 with the title of Professor, 10 Associate Professors, 5 Assistant Professor and 1 Lecturer. There are also a further 7 part-time academic teaching staff and 29 specialist workshop technicians as well as 7 further contractual workshop technicians.

As practitioners in the field of visual arts, they bring an area of expertise for exploring a particular sub-area of contemporary artistic practice. This is in line with many similar art institutions in Europe and the US, whereby studio practices are aligned with a particular set of concerns, like modernism and post-modernism in art, materiality, identity, relationship with the body alongside the more traditional arts and crafts. In the case of the School of Fine Arts Visual Art's Department, there is a clear correlation between the Departmental Workshops and the area of expertise of each academic member of staff.

The appointment of academic members of staff follows from a procedure whereby the international and national recognised body of work and record of exhibitions and artistic practice stands in lieu of a PhD, as is the case with artistic practices. However, this does not cancel the appointment members with higher qualifications, as it is becoming more common to have an MA or PhD in the arts in recent years. Candidates for the positions of permanent academic staff are required to present their work in a public exhibition context, prior to the interview process.

The teaching curriculum and outline of individual workshops is presented on the School's webpages, which is available in Greek and English, where specific information pertaining to the taught content of the Workshops can be found.

As mentioned, the level of expertise and quality of the academic members of staff is extremely high, with notable participations at the Venice Biennale (Professor Nikos Navridis, Zafos Xagoraris, Panos Charalambous) as well as many other international art fairs. Many members of academic staff also have gallery representation, which is a key part for the linking of artistic practice with the wider public as well as bringing students closer to the contemporary art scene.

From discussions the Panel had with the relevant teaching staff, there are plans for expanding the curriculum into areas of 3D printing and digital design, with the further purchase of specialist 3D printers and CNC machines. This is a very welcome aspect, demonstrating that the School is willing to update their equipment and align with recent developments in the production and fabrication of art works.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

Whilst the extremely high quality of works produced by academic members of staff is evident through their individual websites, there is no clear link to their practice via the Institutional website. Perhaps this should be highlighted so as to forge better links for externalisation and raise the overall profile of the School at international standing.

Another aspect that transpired during conversations, is that the extremely high quality of collaboration or engagement that individual workshops have, either through organising guest lectures, guest workshops or other events, there is a certain fragmentation regarding the dissemination of this information. The traditional hierarchy of Workshop leadership needs to be balanced out with a holistic approach to the goals of the School and especially the Department of Visual Art.

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

As it has been discussed in the Teleconference meetings of the 30th and 31st of March 2021, in accordance with members of OMEA and MODIP, great efforts have been made and are still made so that all teaching material, namely computers for students' use, projectors, digital cameras and laptops, as well as many other useful machines may be acquired to facilitate academic and artistic learning.

The New Library of ASFA is a well-equipped building that fully complies with high quality European standards of library function. It fulfils all needs for simple undergraduate research work and also for high level postgraduate research work, as it contains many hundreds of books covering all sorts of fields of visual arts and art historical academic texts. Importantly, the brand-new building of the Library is unique in Greece and may also be regarded as an example of a successful private sponsoring made to a State University: it was financed by the renown Niarchos Foundation that has greatly benefited the Greek state, Athens in particular. Hopefully, this ASF new Library may open up new avenues towards a strategic implementation of different funding schemes whence private funding would not substitute but complement public resources.

Seemingly, the shift towards a model of student-centred learning, as well as the adoption of flexible modes of learning and teaching will be further developed and consolidated. Admittedly, support activities and facilities are already better organised, also due to the good institutional context. As essential part of the University's student policy framework, the internal quality of assurance fully meets the requested standards, and all resources are appropriate, adequate,

and fully accessible to the students. This contributes to the School's supportive and fair learning environment, and is fully consistent with the principles of European Schools of Art.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

The Panel got the impression that administrative staff may need to further improve their knowledge and skills in digital administration. This would be greatly helpful in the School's increasing tendency towards a more updated model of digital communication and teaching as has been the case for the last and the current academic year 2020-2021. Modern digital methods and techniques, such as the recently introduced digital enrolment, and the successful implementation of online teaching, would greatly be improved.

Principle 7: Information Management

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

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

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

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

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

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

Study Programme Compliance

The School is collecting data regarding student body, teaching methods, student progression, employability and career paths of graduates. A database of the alumni of the School is in progress.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

A lot of the data presented to the Panel should also be on the ASFA website. The data collected should be properly presented in graphs, demonstrating trends and allowing direct interpretations and comparisons.

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 Department of Visual Art publishes all information via the website of the School of Fine Arts. All relevant information about the programme, the course work on offer, information about the Workshops, key academic dates as well as taught content are published. The Erasmus page and weblinks are extremely thorough, providing with all necessary information for home students who wish to study in another European university or for those wishing to come from abroad and study at the Department of Visual Arts in Athens.

The website is available in Greek and English and contains valuable links to the wider community as well as support offered for disabled students, student welfare and other useful information. Through the main website links to the Announcements blog provide with more detailed information regarding the entry exam requirements, the results of the entry exams, Open Calls and exhibition opportunities, continuation of studies at MA and PhD level as well as applying for scholarships and funding. Opening hours for the library and administrative contact times are also available. Budgets and financial details are also published on this blog site.

The social media presence of the School and Department has been expanded through the addition of a YouTube channel, showcasing virtually and offering tours of the facilities at Peiraios Street as well as examples of artistic works. This is a step in the right direction and more activities like this will allow for dissemination of information.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

What was noted during the discussions is that the current website is in transition, and a new website is being designed. There appear to be two different websites belonging to the School of Fine Art, which alongside the Announcements blog, can create some confusion.

Older webpage: askt.ismart.gr [ΑΝΩΤΑΤΗ ΣΧΟΛΗ ΚΑΛΩΝ ΤΕΧΝΩΝ \(ismart.gr\)](http://askt.ismart.gr/ΑΝΩΤΑΤΗ ΣΧΟΛΗ ΚΑΛΩΝ ΤΕΧΝΩΝ (ismart.gr))

Newer webpage: asfa.gr [ΑΝΩΤΑΤΗ ΣΧΟΛΗ ΚΑΛΩΝ ΤΕΧΝΩΝ \(asfa.gr\)](http://asfa.gr/ΑΝΩΤΑΤΗ ΣΧΟΛΗ ΚΑΛΩΝ ΤΕΧΝΩΝ (asfa.gr))

An integrated and designated web site would be ideal for integrating all information in one place. There is primarily a lack of dedicated administrative and technical staff that can assist with the sharing of information for the wider public. Whilst the transition to a new website is welcome, the Department needs a dedicated team of administrative staff that will assist with quantitative and qualitative collection of data and be able to publish information about of the numbers of graduates for example. A team of IT support and technical staff is highly recommended, one that will be part of the Department infrastructure on a permanent basis, instead of hiring private companies from public tender for short term projects.

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

Despite numerous external factors and financial difficulties, the Department offers valuable graduate members to the society, community, national and international art world. The meetings with MODIP and OMEA representatives, current students and alumni confirmed the impression that both the Athens School of Fine Arts and the Department are in compliance with Principle 9, though there is some room for further improvement.

Electronic questionnaires are completed by students to assess the teaching of faculty in the department. QAU (Quality Assurance Unit) also uses questionnaires to assess academic units, address labour market needs, and the quality of academic personnel. The outcomes of this self-assessment process are recorded in minutes of QAU/MODIP meetings and reports, which are submitted to the Senate. It is commendable that ASFA has established a Review Committee, which reviews the self-assessment reports submitted by QAU/MODIP and oversees the actions necessary to improve it when necessary. This committee meets annually and reports its findings to the Senate. The Senate may decide to change the related policy and strategy.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

The Department should ensure that the self-assessment results should be shared among all members of the academic unit (including faculty, students, and non-teaching staff). Additionally, the department should create an action plan with aims, objectives and goals of both short and long-term goals based on the feedback obtained by the involved stakeholders (students, external social partners, external evaluator(s) or Programme review committees etc.).

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 current accreditation review is the second external review of the Programme, following the first one of 2013 which led to a substantial update of the Programme.

The first review was positive with some constructive recommendations, which for the most part have been implemented, demonstrating the Department's commitment to the spirit and the processes of quality assurance.

Based on the information gathered during the online presentations and discussions, it appears that the faculty, administrative staff and students are aware of the importance of the internal and external review process and its contribution to the improvement of the Programme and the Department. As they pointed out during the meetings, it helps them become better by enabling them to identify any problematic areas and to find suitable solutions.

All stakeholders of the Programme, including the current undergraduate students and alumni, were actively engaged in the current review. During the meetings, the staff members demonstrated that they are fully aware of the importance of external review and the positive effects that can result from it. Students and graduates confirmed that they are satisfied with their university experience and praised the efforts of the Department, and its faculty members and staff. Indeed, both faculty and staff seem to be passionate about their work, displaying a great team spirit.

Panel Judgement

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

Panel Recommendations

None.

PART C: CONCLUSIONS

I. Features of Good Practice

The addition of the multidisciplinary electives to the curriculum clearly demonstrates the student centric, interdisciplinary approach to art education that the school has adopted as well as their flexibility and willingness to make efficient changes to promote the quality and effectiveness of teaching.

The appropriateness of the qualifications of the academic staff who, in most cases, are both commended academics and acclaimed practitioners.

The academic staff's artistic research, experience and experimentation is continuously informing their teaching and it is therefore transferrable to their students.

Faculty is easily approachable and always available to assist students.

The programme's students and graduates are of high educational level which has a positive effect in the programme's ongoing collaborations.

The department has a well-defined Quality Assurance policy that is appropriate for the programme's mission and activities, implemented successfully by OMEA and MODIP.

The Department's emphasis is on producing contemporary artists, and this is evident from the examples of the work submitted.

The inter-disciplinary nature of the courses on offer is evident in that students are allowed to explore a variety of artistic disciplines and methods and are not asked to rigidly adhere to one specific workshop or style.

The links between the Department and public engagement is evident in the presentations we had with external stakeholders.

Academic staff members are established practitioners whose practice and engagement with the contemporary art scene, in Greece and abroad, directly or indirectly feeds into the curriculum.

The School of Fine Art has built significant collaborations on a European level, through the Erasmus programme

Incoming students' mobility is encouraged, and students can change workshops after spending at least two semesters in a workshop.

Practical training is in place and the School has developed a substantial network including social, cultural, and productive bodies to support this component.

All academic staff, permanent and contractual, are esteemed visual artists, painters, sculptors with a national and international exhibition record.

The School is collecting data regarding student body, teaching methods, student progression, employability and career paths of graduates.

The Department of Visual Art publishes all information via the website of the School of Fine Arts.

The Erasmus page and weblinks are extremely thorough, providing with all necessary information for home students who wish to study in another European university or for those wishing to come from abroad and study at the Department of Visual Arts in Athens.

The website is available in Greek and English and contains valuable links to the wider community as well as support offered for disabled students, student welfare and other useful information.

Electronic questionnaires are completed by students to assess the teaching of faculty in the department.

A Review Committee has been established which reviews the self-assessment reports submitted by QAU/MODIP and oversees the actions necessary to improve it when needed. This committee meets annually and reports its findings to the Senate. The Senate may decide to change the related policy and strategy.

II. Areas of Weakness

1. Lack of ease of student access to administration services
2. Lack of adequate public access to student work and staff profiles
3. Lack of a thesis handbook
4. A lot of the data presented to the Panel should also be on the ASFA website
5. There appear to be two different websites belonging to the School of Fine Art, which alongside the Announcements blog, can create some confusion.
6. Lack of dedicated administrative and technical staff that can assist with the sharing of information for the wider public
7. Lack of IT support and technical staff
8. Lack of transparency regarding the self-assessment results

III. Recommendations for Follow-up Actions

It has been identified through the meetings with students and graduates that it can sometimes be difficult and time consuming for current students to have access to administration services. The Panel suggests that an online appointment-booking system is put in place for easier and more efficient student access to such services.

The Panel's suggestion is the better presentation of the various Workshops, through documentation of past and present student's work, as well as of the profiles of staff members. By providing a digitised platform in both English and Greek, this wealth can become accessible to the wider public.

A Thesis Handbook with a set of quality requirements, guidelines and expectations for the students' thesis is recommended.

Whilst the extremely high quality of works produced by academic members of staff is evident through their individual websites, there is no clear link to their practice via the Institutional website. Perhaps this should be highlighted so as to forge better links for externalisation and raise the overall profile of the School at international standing.

Another aspect that transpired during conversations, is that the extremely high quality of collaboration or engagement that individual workshops have, either through organising guest lectures, guest workshops or other events, there is a certain fragmentation regarding the dissemination of this information. The traditional hierarchy of Workshop leadership needs to be balanced out with a holistic approach to the goals of the School and especially the Department of Visual Art.

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The Department should ensure that the self-assessment results should be shared among all members of the academic unit (including faculty, students, and non-teaching staff). Additionally, the department should create an action plan with aims, objectives and goals of both short and long-term goals based on the feedback obtained by the involved stakeholders (students, external social partners, external evaluator(s) or Programme review committees etc.).

IV. Summary & Overall Assessment

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

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

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

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

Overall Judgement	
Fully compliant	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

- 1. Assoc. Prof. Paschalis Paschalis,**
University of Nicosia, Nicosia, Cyprus, (Chair)
- 2. Dr. Stella Baraklianou,**
University of Huddersfield, Huddersfield, UK
- 3. Prof. Chrysa Damianaki,**
University of Salento, Lecce, Italy
- 4. Prof. Anna Tahinci,**
The Glassell School of Art, Houston, USA