



ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ  
HELLENIC REPUBLIC



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**Accreditation Report**  
**for the New Postgraduate Study Programme of:**  
**Erasmus Mundus joint Masters postgraduate programme “Resilience in**  
**Educational Contexts”**  
Institution: **University of Crete**  
Date: **28/02 to 05/03/2023**

## **NOTES**

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Report of the Panel appointed by the HAHE to undertake the review of the New Postgraduate Study Programme of ***Erasmus Mundus joint Masters postgraduate programme “Resilience in Educational Contexts”*** of the ***University of Crete*** for the purposes of granting accreditation

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

### **THE EXTERNAL EVALUATION & ACCREDITATION PANEL**

The Panel responsible for the Accreditation Review of the **Erasmus Mundus joint Masters postgraduate programme “Resilience in Educational Contexts”** of the **University of Crete** comprised the following four (4) members, drawn from the HAHE Register, in accordance with Laws 4009/2011 & 4653/2020:

1. Prof. Leonidas Kyriakides (Chair),  
University of Cyprus, Nicosia, Cyprus
2. Prof. Emer. Athanasios Gagatsis,  
University of Cyprus, Nicosia, Cyprus
3. Prof. Emer. Stelios Georgiou,  
University of Cyprus, Nicosia, Cyprus
4. Prof, Themistoklis Apostolidis,  
Aix Marseille Université, Aix-en-Provence, France

## REVIEW PROCEDURE AND DOCUMENTATION

The accreditation of the Erasmus Mundus joint Masters postgraduate programme “Resilience in Educational Contexts” of the University of Crete was conducted fully in a remote mode, using the Zoom teleconferencing tool. The Hellenic Authority for Higher Education (HAHE) provided the External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel (EEAP) members with a packet of materials ahead of the review process. The EEAP members, after accepting the invitation to participate, downloaded this material and reviewed it carefully. More specifically, in order to investigate the program’s compliance with the *quality assurance* principles and the principles established by HAHE, the EEAP reviewed all available documents at the following HAHE Cloud link: <https://docs.ethaae.gr/s/5WPmttPng68Jj5W>. The EEAP had also access to the following link of the University of Crete: <https://en.uoc.gr>, and to the following link the Department of Early Childhood Education: [ptpe@edc.uoc.gr](mailto:ptpe@edc.uoc.gr). All material was found to be very well organized, structured and informative. Generally, the members agreed that all the necessary information could be easily located in the submitted files.

All the members participated in an orientation meeting offered by Dr Christina Besta in which clarifications were asked and queries were answered. It is noted that a detailed presentation of the information and supporting material under each one of the six principles was provided. This presentation was very informative, emphasizing the University's commitment to quality improvement in teaching, research and community outreach. Following this, the EEAP members had several meetings via Zoom in which responsibilities about preparing the final Report were divided among them and initial discussions about the evaluation process were made. The EEAP members have all agreed upon the evaluation of each principle and prepared the Final Report.

## STUDY PROGRAMME PROFILE

The Erasmus Mundus Joint Master in *Resilience in Educational Contexts* is a two-year full-time program (from now on the Program) that seeks to address the need to provide a meaningful, relevant and balanced education for children growing up in adverse and marginalised circumstances, by focusing on their strengths and building their assets within protective contexts. It aims to build the capacity of educators and practitioners in creating resilience enhancing contexts which equip children and young people with the necessary resources and competencies to deal effectively with the challenges in their education and development.

The Program is offered by the University of Crete and a number of other Universities, such as the University of Malta (leading partner), the University of Lisbon, Portugal, and Stefan Cel Mare University, Suceava, Romania. The Program is supported by six other associated partners, namely Dalhousie University, Canada; University of Rijeka, Croatia; University of Pretoria, South Africa; Orebro University, Sweden; University of Sao Paulo, Brazil, and the European School Psychology Training Centre.

The Program is new and therefore it has no history in terms of students or graduates. It is expected to be offered for the first time in October 2023, with three mobilities at three different Universities. The last semester will be offered online or face to face at one of the four participating universities and during this semester students are expected to complete their dissertation. The language of instruction is English.

The Program consists of 120 ECTS spread over 4 full-time semesters of 30 ECTS each. These include a number of compulsory taught study units, a number of elective taught study units, a practice placement/internship, a dissertation, and an optional (zero credit) summer school. It incorporates the latest developments in the theory, research and practice of resilience in educational contexts, exposing students to a broad based, evidence informed, and multidisciplinary study of the field. The Program is informed by a systemic perspective to resilience, giving particular emphasis on how educational communities, in collaboration with families and other partners, may operate as resilience-enhancing, inclusive social systems.

The University of Crete is a 40-year-olds, multi-disciplinary, research-oriented public educational institution, with 16 Departments organized in five Schools. The international orientation of the University is reflected in its track record of collaborations with many leading research and educational institutions in Europe and worldwide as well as active promotion of mobility and exchange programmes. It is the first Greek University to have signed the EU Charter and the Code for the recruitment of researchers, and forms part of the European network for the mobility of researchers (EURAXESS). During the last five years, the University of Crete has participated in more than 4.000 R&D programmes, of which more than 450 were European competitive ones. Further, it has developed a wide range of collaborative agreements with more than 500 universities and research institutions worldwide. Through the Psychology Lab and the Research Unit of School Psychology at the University of Crete, a number of projects have materialized over the last six years which promoted research and practice work in resilience focusing on students, parents and educators. This qualifies the University and the Department in particular to participate in the Program under examination.

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

### **PRINCIPLE 1: QUALITY ASSURANCE POLICY AND QUALITY GOAL SETTING FOR THE NEW POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES**

**INSTITUTIONS SHOULD HAVE INCLUDED IN THEIR STRATEGY THE DEVELOPMENT, ORGANIZATION, AND IMPLEMENTATION OF NEW POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES IN SPECIFIC SCIENTIFIC FIELDS AFTER INVESTIGATING THEIR FEASIBILITY AND SUSTAINABILITY.**

**INSTITUTIONS SHOULD IMPLEMENT A QUALITY ASSURANCE POLICY FOR THE NEW POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES AS PART OF THEIR STRATEGIC PLANNING.**

**THE QUALITY POLICY SHOULD BE DEVELOPED AND SPECIALIZED (WITH THE PARTICIPATION OF EXTERNAL BODIES) IN THE POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES OF THE INSTITUTION AND THE ACADEMIC UNIT. THIS POLICY SHOULD BE PUBLISHED AND ENFORCED BY ALL INTERESTED PARTIES.**

*By decision/s of the Senate, the Institutions should include in their strategy the issues of development of new postgraduate study programmes, which support the character, vision, mission, and strategic objectives of the Institution. The Institutional strategy should identify the potential benefits and possible difficulties or risks for the establishment of new graduate study programmes and plan all the necessary actions to achieve the goals as set. The Institution's strategic choices should be documented by specific feasibility and sustainability studies, especially for new postgraduate programmes.*

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

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

*The academic unit's quality policy for new postgraduate programmes is harmonized with the Institution's strategy and is formulated in the form of a statement, which is made public and implemented with the participation of all interested parties. It bears the pursuit of specific goals, related to the assurance and improvement of the quality of the postgraduate study programmes offered by the academic unit. Indicatively, the academic unit's quality policy statement includes its commitment to the implementation of a quality policy, which will promote the academic character and orientation of the new postgraduate study program, its purpose and objectives, implement the goals and determine the means and the ways of achieving them, and will apply the indicated quality procedures, with the final aim of its continuous improvement.*

*For the implementation of this policy, the academic unit undertakes to implement quality procedures that will demonstrate:*



- a) *the appropriateness of the structure and organization of new postgraduate study programmes*
- b) *the pursuit of learning outcomes and qualifications in line with the European and National Higher Education Qualifications Framework level 7.*
- c) *the promotion of the quality and effectiveness of the teaching work at the PSP.*
- d) *the suitability of the qualifications and the availability of the teaching staff for the PSP.*
- e) *the drafting, implementation, and review of specific annual quality objectives for the improvement of PSP.*
- f) *the level of demand for the acquired qualifications of the graduates in the labour market.*
- g) *the quality of support services, such as administrative services, libraries, and student welfare services for the PSP.*
- h) *the efficient utilization of the financial resources of the PSP that may come from tuition.*
- i) *carrying out the annual internal evaluation and review of the quality assurance system for PSP with the cooperation of OMEA and MODIP of the Foundation.*

#### **Relevant 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**

#### **▪ Findings**

The EEAP was provided with documents which refer to the strategy for postgraduate studies of the University of Crete (see appendix A4), the feasibility and sustainability studies for the new program of study (see appendix A5). In addition, the EEAP had access to the quality policy of the Department of Pre-Primary Education of the university of Crete for the development and improvement of PSP (see appendix A6). Finally, the Department of Pre-Primary Education has set clear quality indicators to evaluate the achievement of the main aims of the academic unit that is responsible to offer the Erasmus Mundus joint Masters postgraduate programme "Resilience in Educational Contexts" of the University of Crete (see appendix A7).

#### **▪ Analysis of judgement**

The Department of Pre-Primary Education implements a quality assurance policy that is in line with the Strategic Objectives of the University of Crete. This quality assurance policy is available to the public (i.e., through the website of the Program, website of the University of

Crete, international and national conferences where the Program is presented, and flyers distributed to the University), and it is implemented with the participation of all interested parties.

The Program has been developed on the basis of a systemic and interdisciplinary approach to educate professionals at a postgraduate level and has been based on a previous Erasmus Plus project called «Enhancing Resilience Through Teacher Education (ENRETE 2016-2018)». The existing collaborative relationships between the four partners of the Program ensure the high quality of education and training required by the Erasmus Mundus Joint Masters as they offer multiple mobility opportunities for students. These opportunities promote the personal and professional development of people in Europe and internationally in a specific area with high educational importance and high demand.

The Department, in the context of the quality target setting for the postgraduate programmes, has formulated specific objectives related to the quality assurance of the Program, which are mainly oriented in a student-centered direction, while strengthening both the academic development and the recognition of the Program. The definition of these objectives in combination with the planned actions, that will be taken to achieve the expected results, ensure the continuous improvement of the quality of Program. More specifically, the fact that this Program targets to children who are under risk (in relation with their development, health and general well-being), makes it amongst the most appropriate within the Erasmus Mundus Joint Masters Programs, as the students who will participate will come from countries and regions where children are at greater risk. One of the important features of this postgraduate Program is experiential learning, the dimension of integration and inclusion where the whole school community, parents and the local community will be involved. On the other hand, it is important to note that all the above aspects of the Program can also be considered as challenges since it targets specific students which have the flexibility to travel for the purposes of the Program.

The Department has developed a feasibility study that identified the specific goals of the Program (following the international training standards of psychologists and teachers), the teaching sources, the academic, administrative and technological support of the Program as well as the financing of the Program from 2022 until 2028. Lastly, the Department has set up clear indicators of success of the Program (see Appendix 7) including specific actions and timetables for each indicator.

## ▪ **Conclusions**

The quality assurance policy and quality goal setting of the Department for the specific postgraduate Program moves along the axes:

- Delivering of a high-quality program based on continuous assessment and quality assurance.

- Utilization of the research infrastructure of the University of Crete for the training of its graduate students.
- Exploiting the cultural and social contribution of the University and integrating the relevant knowledge and experience into postgraduate knowledge.
- Emphasising the interdisciplinary approach to knowledge.
- Exploiting, and further strengthening, the international position of the University for the development of synergies in postgraduate programs with foreign institutions and attracting foreign students.

Taking all the above into consideration, the EEAP agrees that the Program is fully compliant in all aspects of this principle, and no recommendations are made.

### Panel Judgement

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

### Panel Recommendations

None

## PRINCIPLE 2: DESIGN AND APPROVAL OF NEW POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD DEVELOP THEIR NEW 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 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, and specialisations 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. courses 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. For each 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 of 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).

### **Relevant documentation**

- Senate decision for the establishment of the PSP.
- PSP curriculum structure: courses, course categories, ECTS awarded, expected learning outcomes according to the EQF, internship, mobility opportunities.

## Study Programme Compliance

### ▪ Findings

"Resilience in Educational Contexts" is an Erasmus Mundus master's degree Program that will be implemented with the synergy of 4 European Universities gathered around the FLOURISH consortium (University of Crete, University of Lisbon, University of Malta, University Stefan Cel Mare) and the contribution of 6 others international Universities (associate partners). This new postgraduate programme is fully and coherently in line with the strategy of the University of Crete (official approval and positioning of the Master diploma within the framework of the training and internalization developments) and is labeled and supported by the European Commission's (Erasmus+ program 2022-28). The structure, content and implementation of the program have been the subject of an official agreement between the partner universities for delivering a double/multiple joint degree.

The Program aims to train teachers, psychologists, and other *school professionals* to strengthen resilience of vulnerable children and adolescents in marginalized environments for improving the socio-emotional skills of the key actors of the school context (students, parents, teachers). The Program is completed within two years (the minimum number of semesters required to obtain the degree is four), with a variety of courses spanning most of the typical spectrum found in postgraduate programmes across Europe. During its two-year implementation, the Program will involve ten partners in a study program of 120 ECTS, which includes courses, field internship and a research thesis. The teaching methods are based on a student-centered education model (e.g., mixed methodology, which includes an experiential and participatory approach, making use of collaborative student-centered activities as well as personalized learning strategies). Students will be trained with interdisciplinary knowledge and research-based interventions. Depending on the semesters, students will be required to complete their course in the different Universities of the Consortium (each batch of students will make four trips to at least three partner universities to complete the program).

The study course extends to four semesters corresponding to 120 ECTS, of which 60 are equivalent with mandatory courses, 30 with a Master thesis, 20 with elective courses and 10 with Practical Training. The academic content of the study programme will be implemented through live teaching methods at the four partners Universities. Areas of Concentration include numerous courses (e.g., resilience in human development, pedagogy and research methods in resilience education, implementation of resilience programs, positive psychology, behavior management and change in schools). Courses evidence a variety of enriching learning/teaching methods that promote engagement and active learning in context. The Program also includes an optional summer school in an associate partner country.

The Program is original (e.g., joint international master's degree, integrated student mobility and academic socialization in several universities, articulate field research in different socio-cultural contexts on resilience skills with the teaching of educational interventions). The courses that are offered each year, cover all the important aspects for deepening the relevant knowledge in the related scientific field (resilience, educational practices, interventional research, cultural contexts). The Program aims to introduce a new form of education for postgraduate students that adopts a cross-cultural approach and relies on the skills of

different partners in the same field of research and teaching. This results in a more comprehensive and thorough preparation at the research and pedagogical level for the students in the program. The students will develop a critical approach to the implementation of interventions to promote resilience skills considering the cultural and social context of the school and educational community. They will learn to develop research questions and compile literature to design interventions and research projects that will result in tangible findings about the effectiveness of interventions in promoting resilience in the classroom and in the school community. Furthermore, the training aims to offer the necessary learning skills and qualifications that allow autonomy and self-reliance for doctoral studies.

The structure of the curriculum is presented in detail and seems appropriate for achieving the scientific and learning objectives (e.g., balance between research, teaching and clinical practice and theory; completion of the thesis based on the practice of a research approach; student mobility system between the different partner universities during the two years of the course). From all the submitted documents, it is evident that the curriculum is fully harmonized with the European and National Standards of qualification (e.g., ECTS Application, 60 ECTS per year; student-centered training; linking teaching with research; providing different academic and cultural experience to students; promoting inclusive practices and diversity).

#### ▪ **Analysis of judgement**

The academic profile and the orientation of the programme are fully in compliance with the requirements of the European Standards. The PMS is clearly connecting with the scientific strategy of the Department and the institutional strategy of the University. This international PMS could bring another culture of cooperation and synergy to higher education in Greece and offers the opportunity for the University of Crete to play a leading role in this direction.

#### ▪ **Conclusions**

The Erasmus Mundus master's degree "Resilience in Educational Contexts" is a promising new international programme which aims to provide excellent training through research, cross-cultural enrichment, and openness to socio-educational issues. Labeling and funding of the programme by Erasmus+ gives prestige and substance to the whole project. The design and the content of the Program promote important skills in conducting scientific-based interventions in the school context and the offered courses are well balanced and cover an interdisciplinary and practical training on resilience and educational interventions.

### **Panel Judgement**

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

### **Panel Recommendations**

The only recommendation that the Panel can make is for the FLOURISH consortium to continue promoting a more systematic strategic planning effort for the implementation of this innovative and ambitious inter-university training and a more intensive collaborative research strategy between members of the partner universities.

### **PRINCIPLE 3: STUDENT ADMISSION, PROGRESSION, RECOGNITION OF POSTGRADUATE STUDIES, AND DEGREE AWARD**

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

The Institution should have drawn up and published the internal regulations prescribed by law which, among other things, should regulate all matters of postgraduate studies from the beginning to the end of the studies.

Indicatively:

- Students' selection procedures and required supporting documents.
- The rights, obligations, and monitoring of student progress.
- Internship matters (if applicable) and scholarship matters.
- The procedures and conditions for preparing theses and dissertations.
- The process of awarding and recognizing degrees, the duration of studies, the conditions for promotion and ensuring the progress of students in their studies.
- The terms and conditions for enhancing their mobility.

In the case of offering the PSP with distance learning methods, the Institution should have a regulation for e-learning, which includes in particular the following topics:

- Services of the Institution to support e-learning.
- Course development and implementation methodology.
- Ways of providing the teaching work and variety of forms of teaching and assessment of the students
- General standard of course structure.
- Student support system.
- Supporting faculty/teachers with mandatory e-learning training for new staff members.
- Offered technological infrastructures of the Foundation.
- Student identity confirmation system (student identity check, assignment and exam writing process, security, and degree award issues).
- The institution should establish rules to provide appropriate access and ensure the participation of students affected by disability, illness, and other special circumstances.
- With the regulation on e-learning, ethical issues are regulated, such as those of protecting data privacy or intellectual property rights and rules to deal with fraud.

All of the above must be made public in the context of the Study Guide.

#### **Relevant documentation**

- Internal regulation for the operation of the Postgraduate Study Programme.
- Special regulation for the implementation of e-learning if the PSP is offered by distance methods.
- Research Ethics Regulation.
- Regulation of studies, internship, mobility, and student assignments.
- Degree award template.



## Study Programme Compliance

### ▪ Findings

Student admission, duration of studies, student progression and mobility are clearly presented. The intended selection criteria for student admission are transparent and of a high standard (bachelor's degree in educational, psychological, or social sciences, English language proficiency). The general structure of the PMS applies the ECTS system (30 ECTS/semester) which allows easy transfer among European universities, student mobility, and process of recognizing degree. The template of the degree certificate will be in Greek and in English. An official study guide will present the conditions for the realization of the master's thesis and the internship (e.g., transparency in the process of awarding and examining the thesis). The student support services, and the international students' office will provide adequate support and facilities to students during their mobilities.

A grant mechanism is planned to encourage student recruitment at the international level (e.g., Application and Scholarship Selection Committee). The funding obtained by the Erasmus+ program allows the establishment of an ambitious system for awarding grants (2023-28). For the 1st year (October 2023), the planned allocation of scholarships will be for the Consortium countries: 3 scholarships; for the Partner Countries: 11 scholarships; for Targeted regions: 4 scholarships (from 8 regions, particularly Sub-Saharan Africa, Latin America, and Asia (least developed countries). Preference will be given to outstanding, excellent students. There is a maximum of 10% of total scholarships for students from the same nationality (does not apply for targeted regions). Students who have previously obtained an Erasmus Mundus scholarship are not eligible to apply for an additional scholarship. A flowchart will be prepared by the partners for the implementation of the project's dissemination strategy (e.g., program website, information seminar), with the key internal and external stakeholders to be targeted concerning student recruitment.

This Program will have a Program Management Board (PMB). This board is composed by the project coordinator and the project manager from the coordinating partner, and by two representatives from each full partner. PMB will be responsible for the project management and performance including marketing recruitment, selection of students and scholarships, allocation and supervision of dissertations, management of student mobility periods, the practice placement/internship, the summer school, management of staff mobility, quality assurance, and dissemination and sustainability of the project. The coordinator will maintain a central administration database accessible to all Parties, for keeping Student records, including their personal data, first- and second-year study plan, first- and second-year transcript of records, study progress monitoring information, dissertation topic and supervisor assignment and any other necessary information.

The maintenance of academic standards and the management and enhancement of both procedures for quality assurance and control are the collective responsibility of the Consortium partners. Quality Assurance will include feedback from students, self- evaluation by each of the degree awarding HEIs regarding implementation and quality indicators of the EMJM, and external evaluations. Quality Assurance measures that are to be implemented centrally, such as regular surveys among students, are implemented by the coordinator. From

all the submitted documents, there is an assurance of compliance with academic and ethical rules.

All courses will be implemented in physical presence, but there will be the possibility of distance learning (at most 50% of the total teaching time for each semester course). The programme will benefit from all the infrastructures of the University of Crete and the partner universities (e.g., webinar of the program in May 2023, support e-learning).

Furthermore, the Consortium cares about the needs of special populations. Students and staff with individual educational needs will be provided with the necessary benefits, services, and support according to their needs. All four-university campus are fully accessible for people with physical and sensory disabilities and has implemented policies and guidelines for students and staff with individual educational needs.

#### ▪ **Analysis of judgement**

The structure of the study programme (three study semesters in the partner universities) and the allocation of scholarships promote the recruitment of students internationally, and more particularly outside Europe, and the socialization of students in different European universities.

#### ▪ **Conclusions**

The joint Master "Resilience in Educational Contexts" offers an internationally recognized and innovative training. Procedures concerning student admission and progression, student mobility, internship and thesis realisation, teaching methods, technological infrastructures offered, are clearly presented and are totally compliant with the required European standards. Responsibilities for the implementation of these procedures are subject to a contractual distribution between the partner universities. The structure of the study program allows for an internationalized training and promotes the achievement of the target learning outcomes.

### **Panel Judgement**

<b>Principle 3: Student Admission, Progression, Recognition of Postgraduate Studies, and Degree Award</b>	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

### **Panel Recommendations**

1. Ensure the acceptability for students of the mobility system between partner universities during the program.

2. Reflect on the viability of the strategy for promoting and recruiting self-funded students, especially those coming from partner universities given the tuition fee of the program.
3. Prospect for future funding of the program and its structure, particularly regarding scholarships, beyond Erasmus+ funding.

## **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 of the teaching staff of the academic unit teaching at the PSP, the appropriate staff-student ratio, the appropriate staff categories, the appropriate subject areas, the fair and objective recruitment process, the high research performance, the training, and 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.

### **Relevant documentation**

- Procedures and criteria for teaching staff recruitment and retention, and obligations of the teaching staff.
- List of teaching staff including subject areas, employment relationship, Institution of origin, Department of origin.

## **Study Programme Compliance**

### **▪ Findings**

The Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Programme "Resilience in Educational Contexts" is a new two-year Postgraduate Program. The purpose of the joint MSc (Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degree) is to promote Applied Psychology and Education Sciences and to promote research in innovative fields of knowledge with the aim of highlighting young researchers, scientists, professionals in the fields of Prevention Science, design, implementation and evaluation of preventive and mental health programs. The Project (during its two-year implementation) will apply a 120 ECTS curriculum, which include courses, field internships and a research diploma thesis.

Students of the Program will acquire knowledge and skills to support the mental health and well-being of vulnerable and marginalized children in the implementation of the curriculum,

in the promotion of a positive climate of the classroom and the school community. They will work collaboratively with students, colleagues, parents and the local community, while taking care of their own mental health and mental resilience. The Program is thus designed with a philosophy of inclusion, inclusion and participatory development of mental resilience, and involves the "Whole", the entire school community, parents and the local community, with empirically documented interventions and with sensitivity to the local school context.

The University of Crete has developed a very important staff support and development policy. Through the action of its Center for Teaching and Support of Learning it also promotes the development and training of its teaching staff. By promoting an open educational culture, teachers have the opportunity to improve their teaching practices, to be informed about new technologies and tools that increase student participation as well as to achieve the learning objectives of the course they teach. Also, the University of Crete holds the quality logo "**Human Resources Excellence in Research**" since 2012, as a recognition of the commitment and implementation of the principles of the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers through the HRS4R process. With the main objective of attracting, educating and maintaining a high level of research potential, the University has incorporated these principles into its overall strategy. Open, Transparent and Values-Based Recruitment (OTM-R) is a central pillar of the Charter and the Code. The basis of the OTM-R system is to attract the most suitable person for the job, with recruitment procedures based on the principles of equal opportunities for all candidates. This includes improving the sources of information available on existing career opportunities and ensuring selection procedures based on equity and merit. The teaching staff of the Program will be under the supervision of the scientific coordinator and will be evaluated by all students of the Program. Based on the evaluations, the scientific coordinator will provide targeted feedback for the further development of the teaching staff, so that all objectives are achieved based on the international standards of the Program. There may also be group training on various issues that will arise based on the recording of teachers' needs.

#### ▪ **Analysis of judgement**

The Department follows the current legislation on the recruitment and promotion processes of faculty members. Specifically, all procedures of announcement, selection, promotion, and recruitment are posted on the information system APELLA. The details of these processes are accessible to candidates and members of the evaluation committee, ensuring transparency and securing a meritocratic result. The faculty of the Department continues to develop academically, and a significant number of faculty members publish their research work in international scientific refereed journals. A significant number of monographs and edited volumes have been published. Moreover, faculty members organized and participated in national and international conferences bringing more visibility to the Department and their research work.

#### ▪ **Conclusions**

The EEAP members confirmed through their review of the relative documents that the University has adopted all the relevant rules and has taken all measures to monitor the adequacy of the teaching staff of the academic unit teaching at the Program, the appropriate staff-student ratio, the appropriate staff categories, the appropriate subject areas, the fair and objective recruitment process, the high research performance, the training, and staff development policy.

### Panel Judgement

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

### Panel Recommendations

Faculty members of this Department have the skills and expertise and therefore should be offered the opportunity to run this postgraduate Program and provide professional development opportunities on new pedagogical trends to colleagues from other Departments. This will help them find ways to strengthen faculty-student engagement and improve their teaching and assessment practices.

## PRINCIPLE 5: LEARNING RESOURCES AND STUDENT SUPPORT

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD HAVE ADEQUATE FUNDING TO COVER THE TEACHING AND LEARNING NEEDS OF THE POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMME. 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, 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, 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 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 organized 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.

### **Relevant 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

- Findings

The University and particularly the Department of Early Childhood Education, has adequate teaching spaces, classrooms, auditoria, laboratories, and other facilities, all of which will be used as required for this new Program. Furthermore, the Library and the Information Technology centres will be available to faculty and students of the Program. Moreover, through the offered mobilities to the other three participating Universities, the students will enjoy access to infrastructure of teaching and learning facilities of these well-established Universities. The students of the Program will be registered at the four Universities at all times during their course of study. Thus, they will enjoy the privileges and have access to facilities and resources at the respective universities as full-time students, including library services, IT services, student associations and representation on the various boards and committees of the programme. In all cases, they will need to comply with the requirements of the respective universities with regards to documentation for registration procedures and documentation for visa purposes.

In terms of funding, this is guaranteed for the first six years of operation. After this, tuition fees will be charged.

▪ **Analysis of judgement**

Based on the above findings, the Panel unanimously judges that all the issues included in this Principle (5) are dealt with in a satisfactory manner.

▪ **Conclusions**

The evaluated institution (University of Crete) and the particular academic unit that has applied for Program accreditation (Department of Early Childhood Education) have sufficient resources and means, on a planned and long-term basis, to support learning and academic activity. The above means include facilities such as the necessary teaching and learning facilities, 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. A strong element of the Program is the possibility that student will have for mobility among the four participating Universities, which will give them the chance to benefit from a variety of state-of-the-art higher education opportunities.

**Panel Judgement**

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

**Panel Recommendations**

None



## **PRINCIPLE 6: INITIAL INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL EVALUATION AND MONITORING OF NEW POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES**

**INSTITUTIONS AND ACADEMIC UNITS SHOULD HAVE AN INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM, IN WHICH THEY WILL INSTIGATE THE INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL EVALUATION OF THE NEW POSTGRADUATE PROGRAMMES, SO AS TO ENSURE COMPLIANCE WITH THE QUALITY REQUIREMENTS OF THE PRESENT STANDARD. IN THE CONTEXT OF THE ABOVE ACTIONS IT IS NECESSARY TO INFORM ALL INTERESTED PARTIES.**

The internal evaluation of the new PSP includes the evaluation of the certification proposal as well as the documentation material in accordance with the requirements of this Standard and the quality procedures of the Institution's Internal Quality Assurance System.

The internal evaluation of new postgraduate degree programmes also aims to ensure the quality level of educational services and to create a supportive and effective learning environment for students.

The Institution, through its Quality Assurance Unit, and the corresponding academic units organizes and supports the external evaluation procedures of the new PSP according to the specific instructions and directions of the HAHE.

The above includes:

- The objectives, content, and structure of the curriculum, the knowledge offered and the level of science and technology in the subject, to ensure the modern nature of the PSP, in accordance with the relevant documentation listed in the decisions of the competent bodies.
- The evaluation of the workload for the development and completion of postgraduate studies.
- The satisfaction of student expectations and needs from their study programme.
- The learning environment, support services, and their appropriateness for the mentioned PSP.

Postgraduate study programmes are designed and established in accordance with the provisions of the Institution's internal regulations and with the participation of students and other interested parties.

### **Relevant documentation**

- The Quality Assurance Unit (QAU) procedure for checking the requirements of the Standard for the quality of new PSP as well as a procedure for organizing and supporting their external evaluation procedures.
- Assessment and feedback mechanisms of the PSP quality strategy and targeting and relevant decision-making processes (students, external bodies).

## Study Programme Compliance

### ▪ Findings

The University of Crete has an Internal Quality Assurance System (IQAS Government Gazette-FEK B' 4656/8.10.2021 and FEK B' 5320/27.11.2018), certified until 09.09.2024. The internal evaluation of new MSc includes the evaluation of the accreditation proposal of the Postgraduate Program and documentation in accordance with the requirements of the HAHE standards. In the context of the Process 4: Internal Evaluation of the IQAS, the MODIP at its meeting no. 41/8-2-23 implemented the Procedure for Compliance with the Essential Requirements of the Certification Standard MSc in HAHE. In particular, the process for the reassessment/adjustment and updating of the MSc is defined in Article 20 of the Regulation of Postgraduate Programs of the University of Crete (Decision Senate 496/16.02.2023). In the context of Process 7: External Evaluation of the IQAS, the University of Crete, through the MODIP, and the Department of Early Childhood Education organize and support the processes of the external evaluation of the new Postgraduate Programme in accordance with the specific instructions and guidelines of the University.

The self-assessment of the Institutions will be based on some mutually agreed procedures by the respective partners concerning the implementation of the curriculum and quality indicators of the entire program and will focus on data collected through a common evaluation form in all Institutions. It will be carried out by each of the respective Institutions and each group of incoming students. An annual internal evaluation report based on the reports of the four Institutions will be prepared by the Quality Assurance Committee and communicated to its partners consortium and the Project Board of Directors, so that any modifications can be made to occur as soon as possible. The formal evaluation of the content of the courses by the students and the teaching in individual study modules will be obtained through anonymous questionnaires that will be distributed to students.

On the other hand, the standards and the procedures for quality assurance of the Program will follow the *European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programs* (<https://www.egar.eu/kb/joint-programmes/>) and will be compatible with the standards and guidelines for quality assurance of the ESHA (European School Heads Association). The 4 Institutions of the Project are recognised as higher education institutions training by the authorities of their respective countries and are entitled to award a higher Education degree. The intended learning outcomes of the Program will be aligned with the corresponding level in the Qualifications Framework for Qualifications in the European Higher Education Area (FQEHEA) as well as with the applicable national framework qualifications, while the structure and content of the curriculum (including teaching methodology and assessment) is designed to allow students to achieve the intended learning outcomes. Quality Assurance and its related procedures will include evaluative comments from postgraduate students and a self-evaluation by each of the participants Institutions. The evaluation of the of the proposed Programme will provide comprehensive information demonstrating the compliance with the Quality Assurance Specifications for the Joint Postgraduate Programs of the European Association (Standards for Quality Assurance of Joint Master Programmes of the European Union). The Teaching, Learning and Quality Assurance Committee will review standards and

practices of each of the partners awarding degrees annually and will make recommendations to the Partnership Board of Directors to ensure standards compatibility.

At the end of the four-year period, an external evaluation of the overall Programme is foreseen by a European Union committee. The proposals of the external evaluation will be announced and discussed in the framework of the Consortium's Committee of Directors for further reflection and possible actions that each participating University must implement. When the external evaluation of the University of Crete is completed and the accreditation report on the Program is submitted, the Scientific Coordinator (CR) will study the progress report for the proposed MSc and will make the best use of any recommendations that will be submitted for its operation as well as will communicate them to the Senate and the Rector's Council of the University of Crete. These recommendations will be brought to the attention of the consortium and discussed in order to approve and adopt any actions at the level of the 4 main partners co-signing the Programme and always in cooperation with the coordinating University of Malta. Finally, the coordinator for the University of Crete will announce the results and the proposed actions after the external evaluation to the administration of the University of Crete and to all the services involved for the Program as well as to the teachers. Moreover, a specific plan of improvement actions will be agreed to attract new students in the future.

#### ▪ **Analysis of judgement**

The EEAP believes that the partners of the Project have adopted some mutually agreed procedures concerning the implementation of the curriculum and quality indicators of the entire program and will focus on data collected through a common evaluation form in all Institutions. It will be carried out by each of the respective Institutions and each group of incoming students. As regards to the University of Crete, the Program will be regularly internally reviewed and revised with the participation of students and faculty members. The information collected will be analysed and the program will possibly be modified according to the internal and external evaluation data. It is obvious that the Postgraduate students' evaluations will be a major part of the quality monitoring procedure.

#### ▪ **Conclusions**

The EEAP members confirmed through their review of the relative documents that the University of Crete and the Department of Early Childhood Education have in place the competent bodies and the mechanisms to review essential aspects of program delivery regularly. Some of these aspects concern the objectives, the content, and the structure of the curriculum, the knowledge offered and the level of science and technology in the subject, to ensure the modern nature of the Program. We strongly believe that this practice ensures the highest quality supportive, and effective learning environment for students of all the Institutions of the Project.

## 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

1. The EEAP encourages the Department to obtain feedback concerning the new Program formally from external stakeholders (e.g., alumni, employers, social agency directors) by operating an “alumni-external partners” committee.
2. The Department could explore ways of including members of excluded/marginalized communities systematically as stakeholders.

## **PART C: CONCLUSIONS**

### **I. FEATURES OF GOOD PRACTICE**

- a) The Program is theory-driven and can benefit from the many available research projects examining the parameters of resilience in educational settings.
- b) The design and the content of the programme promote important skills in conducting scientific-based interventions in the school context and the offered courses are well balanced and cover an interdisciplinary and practical training on resilience and educational interventions.
- c) The international orientation of the Program (instruction in English, attracting international students and lecturers) is also a strength.
- d) Labeling and funding of the programme by Erasmus+ gives prestige and substance to the whole project.

### **II. AREAS OF WEAKNESS**

The student opportunity to move between the four participating Universities is both a strength of the Program and a weakness. It is a strength because it offers students the chance to benefit from different learning environments. It is a weakness because not all students have flexible life conditions that would allow them to take advantage of this. Therefore, the pool of possible new students may decrease in size.

### **III. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FOLLOW-UP ACTIONS**

- a) Ensure the acceptability for students of the mobility system between partner universities during the program.
- b) Reflect on the viability of the strategy for promoting and recruiting self-funded students, especially those coming from partner universities given the tuition fee of the program.
- c) Prospect for future funding of the program and its structure, particularly regarding scholarships, beyond Erasmus+ funding.
- d) The FLOURISH consortium should develop a more systematic strategic planning effort for the implementation of this innovative and ambitious inter-university

training and a more intensive collaborative research strategy between members of the partner universities.

- e) The EEAP encourages the Department to obtain feedback concerning the new PSP formally from external stakeholders (e.g., alumni, employers, social agency directors) by operating an “alumni-external partners” committee.
- f) The Department could explore ways of including members of excluded/marginalized communities systematically as stakeholders.

#### IV. SUMMARY & OVERALL ASSESSMENT

The Principles where full compliance has been achieved are: **1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6**

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 members of the External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel

**Name and Surname**

**Signature**

Prof. Leonidas Kyriakides (Chair)

Prof. Emeritus Athanasios Gagatsis

Prof. Themistoklis Apostolidis

Prof. Emeritus Stelios N. Georgiou