



**ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ**  
HELLENIC REPUBLIC



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Ανώτατης Εκπαίδευσης**  
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# Accreditation Report

## for the Undergraduate Study Programme of:

**Dentistry**

**Institution: National & Kapodistrian University of Athens (NKUA)**

**Date: 15 May 2021**

Report of the Panel appointed by the HAHE to undertake the review of the Undergraduate Study Programme of **Dentistry** of the **National and Kapodistrian University of Athens** for the purposes of granting accreditation

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

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

The Panel responsible for the Accreditation Review of the Undergraduate Study Programme of **Dentistry** of the **National and Kapodistrian University of Athens** comprised the following five (5) members, drawn from the HAHE Register, in accordance with Laws 4009/2011 & 4653/2020:

- 1. Prof. Efthimios Mitsiadis (Chair)**  
University of Zurich, Switzerland
  
- 2. Prof. Georgios Belibasakis**  
Karolinska Institute, Sweden
  
- 3. Prof. Nikolaos Donos**  
Queen Mary University of London, United Kingdom
  
- 4. Prof. Nikolaos Silikas**  
University of Manchester, United Kingdom
  
- 5. Dr. Athanasios Yfantis**  
Member of the Hellenic Dental Association, Greece

## II. Review Procedure and Documentation

The Hellenic Authority for Higher Education (HAHE) formed an external and independent Panel of experts to conduct an assessment of the compliance of the study program of Dentistry of the National & Kapodistrian University of Athens (NKUA) in accordance with the HAHE Quality Assurance requirements (laws 4009/2011 & 4653/2020). The assessment was conducted through document reviews and online interviews. The method used was an evidence-based process centred on a sampling of the School's activities and it was aimed at evaluating the fulfilment of the HAHE requirements of the relevant Quality Standard of the Undergraduate Study Program and commenting on its compliance, effectiveness and applicability for the scope of the requirements. The information provided by the School of Dentistry (hereinafter "School") was assumed to be factually correct.

Due to the unprecedented circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic, the entire evaluation and accreditation exercise did not include a site visit of the School in Goudi, Athens but was carried out remotely using the Zoom platform.

On April 7, 2021 the External Evaluation and Accreditation Panel (EEAP) received from HAHE the Accreditation support material from the HAHE Cloud link, which contained the following:

### 1. Dentistry – National & Kapodistrian University of Athens (NKUA) Material, consisting of the documents:

- B0. Contents
- B1. Proposal of Academic Accreditation
- B2. Quality Policy of Undergraduate Study Program
- B3. Study Guide
- B4. Regulations
- B4.1-B4.8 Governmental & Ministerial decisions
- B4.9 Regulation of Biomaterials Department
- B4.10 Regulation of Library
- B4.11 Regulation of Practical Exercise of the Undergraduate Students
- B4.12 Earthquake Security Instructions
- B4.13 Field Work Instructions
- B4.14 Hazard Material Handling
- B4.15 Reimbursement of Damaged Material and Infrastructures
- B4.16 Instructions and Evacuation Plan for Underground Spaces and Laboratories
- B4.17 Instructions and Evaluation Plan in case of fire
- B4.18 Regulation of Patient Care
- B4.19 Regulation and Patient Care Policy
- B4.20 Governmental & Ministerial decision
- B5. Course Content and Outlines
- B6. Quality Targeting
- B7. Model Questionnaires to Students for Course Evaluation and Results
- B8 Internal Evaluation
- B9. Quality Data OPESP
- B10. Supplement Material (Press Releases, International Rankings, Ministerial & Governmental laws, Dental Museum, Exhibitions, Distinctions, Congratulatory Letters – a total of 25 files)

## 2. HAHE Material, containing the documents:

- NKUA-Dentistry External Evaluation Report 2010
- Accreditation Guide
- P12a. Guidelines for the EEA Panel
- P13. Mapping Grid
- P14. Template for the Accreditation Report
- Standards for Quality Assurance of Undergraduate Programs
- Quality Indicators Dept Dentistry 2015-2016
- Quality Indicators Dept Dentistry 2016-2017
- Quality Indicators Dept Dentistry 2017-2018
- Quality Indicators Dept Dentistry 2018-2019
- Quality Indicators Undergraduate Program Dentistry 2015-2016
- Quality Indicators Undergraduate Program Dentistry 2016-2017
- Quality Indicators Undergraduate Program Dentistry 2017-2018
- Quality Indicators Undergraduate Program Dentistry 2018-2019
- Abbreviations

On Thursday April 8, 2021, an orientation meeting via Zoom was organized by HAHE's Director General Dr. Christina Besta addressing the procedures to be followed during the virtual site visit and subsequent report drafting. During this meeting, a thorough presentation was made on the quality assurance (QA) mission and guidelines of the accreditation process were given.

In view of getting to know each other and establishing a *modus operandi* regarding the exercise of accreditation, the EEAP members met remotely on Monday May 10, 2021, from 15:30 to 17:30 (Athens time), before their scheduled EEAP review meeting.

On Monday May 10, 2021, started formally the scheduled EEAP review of the Dentistry undergraduate study program (UP) meeting via Zoom at 18:30 (Athens time). In the first part of this virtual meeting, the vice-rector and president of MODIP Prof. Dimitris Karadimas and the Dean Prof. Phoebus Madianos familiarised the Panel with the School of Dentistry of NKUA facts and figures. The Dean Prof. Madianos gave an overview of the School's and UP's origins, evolution, and current status. The different aspects of compliance with the accreditation principles (A1-A10) were presented by OMEA Chair Prof. A. Kossioni and discussed with her and other OMEA members of the School, including Prof. D. Halazonetis, Prof. E. Kitraki, Prof. N. Nikitakis, Assoc. Prof. W. Papaioannou, Assoc. Prof. S. Zinelis, Assoc. Prof. X. Dereka, Ms M. Sakelliou (OMEA administrative support), with the presence and supporting data from MODIP secretary Mr K. Bourletidis plus MODIP staff Ms K. Katsouyanni (MODIP administrative committee member) Ms S. Krousaniotaki (MODIP administrative support) and Ms K. Founti (MODIP administrative support).

The following day, Tuesday May 11, 2021, starting at 16:00, the EEAP had a teleconference with selected faculty members who have distinct roles in the School that included four Professors (G. Eliades, M. Georgopoulou, I. Karkazis, V. Panis), two Associate Professors (S. Gizani, C. Rahiotis) and four Assistant Professors (G. Bobetsis, A. Sarafianou, K. Lygidakis, A. Mitsea). Thereafter, at 17:00, the EEAP met with 10 undergraduate students, representatives of the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, and 5<sup>th</sup> years. At 18:30, the EEAP had an on-line tour of classrooms, lecture halls, library, laboratories,

and other facilities including discussions with the Dean Prof. P. Madianos, Prof. I. Tzoutzas, Assoc. Prof. S. Zinelis, Assist. Prof. M. Antoniadou and administrative staff members Mrs P. Katsouli-Sakelliou (secretary) and Mr A. Bakas (IT support). The EEAP had been previously given the links to access the videos on the School's facilities (video embedded on the website).

The next virtual meeting took place Wednesday May 12, 2021, starting at 16:30. The EEAP discussed with nine graduates (Dr E. Achilleos, Dr E. Basdekis, Dr A. Gkatzonis, Dr A. Korakaki, Dr M. Koufatzidou, Dr G. Lamprou, Assist. Prof. D. Michelogiannakis, Dr V.I. Theofillou and Dr C. Tsirigoni). Thereafter, at 17:30, the EEAP discussed with seven social partners and employers of the study program's graduates: Dr A. Doulgeraki (Head of the Department of bone and mineral metabolism at the Institute of child health, Athens), Dr D. Kletsas (Director of the laboratory of cell proliferation & ageing at Dimokritos Centre, Athens), Assoc. Prof. P. Koulouvaris (supervisor of the "mobile medical units" program by Stavros Niarchos Foundation), Prof. A. Lazaris (Department of Pathology of the Medical School, NKUA), Dr I. Melakopoulos (President of the Greek Stomatological Society, member of the Hellenic Dental Association), Dr P. Saraki (Relations Manager "Proctor & Gabel" in Greece) and Mr Y. Tsepas ("Ivoclar Vivadent" Manager). Lastly, after a short debriefing among EEAP members in private, the Panel discussed several points of the assessment with the representatives of OMEA (Professors A. Kossioni, D. Halazonetis, E. Kitraki, N. Nikitakis, Assoc. Professors W. Papaioannou, S. Zinelis, X. Dereka and Ms. M. Sakelliou) and MODIP (Mr K. Bourletidis, Ms K. Katsouyanni, Ms S. Krousaniotaki, Ms K. Founti). Thereafter, the Panel provided an informal overview of their preliminary impressions and assessment of the School of Dentistry undergraduate program to the NKUA Vice-Rector Prof. D. Karadimas, the Dean of the School of Dentistry Prof. P. Madianos and the representatives of OMEA and MODIP and discussed with them their major findings and recommendations. The Vice-Rector Prof. Karadimas acknowledged the work, perspicacity, and dedication of the EEAP and the President of EEAP Prof. Mitsiadis thanked all participants for their help and enthusiasm for the good achievement of the accreditation procedure and their friendly attitude.

Upon completion of the three days of virtual meetings at NKUA-Dentistry, the EEAP was glad to note a positive atmosphere and a willingness of the School of Dentistry to cooperate and support the University's QA policy at all levels with a commitment to maintaining and further upgrading the quality standards of the School of Dentistry and the University in compliance with HAHE. The EEAP would like to thank the School of Dentistry and University Administration as well as all Faculty members for their cooperation and fruitful discussions.

During the following three days (May 13-15, 2021), the EEAP members had remote online meetings for the completion of the draft Accreditation Report (AR).

The EEAP requested additional materials: 1. The Power point presentation of the Dean Prof. Madianos; 2. The Power point OMEA presentation; 3. A list of 5 last years' publications and honours of the Faculty members; 4. The Power point presentation of the responsible for the UP Prof. Nikitakis; 5. A list of the 5 last years' budget allocated by National and International organizations for research purposes. These documents were delivered by the School in time for the material to be considered during the writing of the AR.

### III. Study Programme Profile

The School of Dentistry is part of the School of Health Sciences of the NKUA and is located in Goudi (Athens). It was founded in 1911 (director Dr L. Kokkoris). The undergraduate study program is designed with the aim of offering high-quality comprehensive studies in Dentistry at all levels of dental specializations. The program covers a broad range of areas within Biology, Medicine and Dentistry and its sub-disciplines. It aspires to provide the students with both a strong theoretical background and clinical training in all fields of Dentistry. The program amounts to a total of 300 ECTS over 5 years (10 semesters, 30 ECTS per semester) and upon completion (92 courses in basic sciences, biomedical and dental) it leads to a Diploma in Dentistry (upon examination in 59 courses) in accordance with EU regulations. The undergraduate study program starts with basic dental and medical courses (most of them in common with the Faculty of Medicine) the first 4 semesters and continues with specialisation courses in the remaining 6 semesters, where the students can follow all the different clinical orientations given by the School. These studies are carried out together with clinical or basic research activities.

The great majority of the ~150 incoming students per year are admitted with high qualifications following the national entry examination. The average actual duration of their studies to obtain the diploma is 5 years (80% to 94% of students obtain their diploma during this time period) with an average grade of 7.4 (out of 10), 20% having a grade superior to 8. There were 701 registered undergraduate students actively pursuing their studies in the academic year 2020-2021, 64 doctoral candidate students and 146 dental specialisation students. 153 students gained entrance in the 1<sup>st</sup> year in 2020, compared to 110-114 students for the years 2010-2012. It is worth noting that the number of students requested by the School is 60 for 2019 and 2020 and was 80 to 70 for the years 2010-2012.

Since its previous external evaluation in 2010, the School of Dentistry has shown a good academic progression as evidenced by the increasing number of research publications and corresponding citations, participation in competitive research programs and good international rankings. During the same period, however, the School has suffered a significant decrease in Faculty members (~50% decrease) together with a major decrease of the financial support (for three consecutive years the allocated budget was equal to zero!) from the State because of the recent economic crisis of Greece.

The students graduating from the Dentistry study program are well qualified and can be self-employed immediately or find employment in academic and health institutions (mostly abroad), research centres for post-graduate training (in Greece or abroad) and other organisations in the public and private health sectors both in Greece and abroad. Finally, the School of Dentistry at NKUA offers advanced studies, such as postgraduate programs (11 dental specialisations exist, 690 specialised dentists were formed to date), doctoral studies (495 PhD were attributed to date) as well as post-doctoral research in all the above-mentioned fields.



The School facilities reside in two buildings (one old, the other more recent) in Goudi with classrooms, clinics, offices, teaching and research laboratories, secretariat, and allocated space for a library and a museum. The School is in the process of creating an additional building with modern facilities (the required budget is assured, and the works of construction will start soon). Clinics, classrooms as well as teaching and some of the research laboratories are generally adequate and contain up-to-date equipment. However, other sparse research spaces require improvement and redesign in view of evolving needs. There is a plan in merging all research activities in one floor of the additional building (once ready and functional).

The School is composed of 73 Faculty members (73 Teaching and Research Staff: 68.5% men, 31.5 % women), 7 technical laboratory staff (ΕΤΕΠ), 15 instructors with contact, together with 81 administrative and support employees. A very large number (72) of volunteer instructors, various teaching affiliates, as well as postgraduate and doctorate students participate in the clinical education of the undergraduate students. The current demographics of the Faculty members attest to a very experienced human resource. In addition to their clinical and teaching duties, the Faculty are engaged in research and outreach service to society. Similarly, the School of Dentistry participates, together with the Hellenic Dental Council, in the Continuous Education program.

The School, supported and helped by the NKUA, aspires to strengthen its links to a range of societal and industrial partners through targeted initiatives of alumni-driven social networks such as the *Athens Dental School Association*. The Vice-President of NKUA affirmed that the promotion of these social links is one of the priorities of the University. The undergraduate students are encouraged to participate in a number of scientific and social events as well as to participate in acts of dental prevention.

The postgraduate program of Paediatric Dentistry of the NKUA figures between the three best programs in Europe, while the Orthodontic Department delivers one of the 24 recognized by NEBEOP postgraduate courses of this discipline.

According to the QS ranking for the years of 2019-2021 the School was classified between the 40 and 60 places of all Dental Institutes worldwide (79,3-84,5 h-index). The School of Dentistry occupies the 1<sup>st</sup> place between all Departments of the NKUA according to the 2021 QS ranking.

## 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 structure and organization of the study program appears suitable to the focus of the School's program objectives. The learning objectives, outcomes and qualifications are in accordance with the European and the National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education. There are considerable efforts and big enthusiasm by the Faculty members to promote high

quality and effectiveness of teaching, with the ultimate goal of equipping graduates with skills allowing them to be successful in their careers and workplace as well as in their further graduate training. Within each course the program appears to be dynamic with attention paid towards incorporating material on new trends and developments in the various dental fields. External Faculty members with related academic backgrounds have undertaken educational efforts in several courses (adjusted according to the needs of Dentistry) and clinical training.

All Faculty members indicated consistent efforts to promote quality and effectiveness of the theoretical and clinical teaching. The School hosts seminars and workshops open to Faculty members and students. The Faculty members encourage project-based approaches that allow students to work in groups. This enhances the critical thinking, self-confidence, and communication skills of the students.

Attendance to most of the theoretical lecture courses is not mandatory. Attendance in clinical courses is mandatory.

Larger core classes largely rely on a single final examination. Incorporation of midterms evaluations or other assignments is valuable in allowing a more even and fair distribution of the grade.

The School has not attained high performance in attracting funds from competitive national and international organizations for research programs. However, this discrepancy could rely to the low interest of National and International Research Foundations towards dental-related research. Successful fundraising will guarantee further visibility of the School and the participation of students in experimentally based dental research-related projects. The equipment in few research laboratories is modern, of high standards, allowing exposure and training of undergraduates in state-of-the-art instruments and analytic procedures. However, other departmental laboratories are not well equipped and fully functional. A plan exists for the near future to incorporate all research facilities in a common space in the already accredited to the School new building, resolving thus these issues. The research programs are effectively linked with the undergraduate teaching and training program.

A good part of the graduates pursues further postgraduate education and many appear to have excelled in their subsequent academic or industry-based placements (within Greece and abroad).

Faculty members and administrators of the School appeared enthusiastic and strongly committed to ensure high quality of student support training and services. The students receive information about their first professional steps through newly established courses. Advice is also provided at an *ad hoc* basis and when a student expresses the need for academic and professional guidance.

Services are readily available and actively monitored to ensure that students receive all necessary documents (diplomas and transcripts) by the administration without unnecessary delays. An effort started to be produced by the NKUA to provide some transcripts and Diplomas translated in English.

There are well-established procedures to address student welfare issues, such as legal staff for students' consultation in case of extenuating or troubling circumstances.

Annual review procedures and internal audit of the quality assurance system of the NKUA undergraduate program are being managed collaboratively with the OMEA and MODIP. Students (every year has at least one representing student) are involved with Faculty members in advising for the planning/restructuring of courses and other academic issues as these may arise. Advising responsibilities are distributed equally among the teaching Faculty.

Students evaluate the quality of lectures electronically. Statistical analyses of the evaluation data are available, and it is easy to assess their effectiveness.

### Panel Judgment

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

### Panel Recommendations

- Targeted objectives should include longer-term plans, preferably over the next ten to twenty years, to clearly articulate the School's strategic plan and adjust it as needed. The Panel recognizes that the training program is often revisited but feels that still some of the academic/thematic identities (courses), of less actual importance in dentistry, must drastically decrease in volume, thus allowing the incorporation of courses focusing on newly developed medical and dental fields, where a growing interest is clearly perceived during the last few years.
- The Panel realized that there is not a clear long-term direction for research purposes. This is pivotal for the continuous efforts towards excellence. Therefore, the Panel strongly suggests the appointment of a Director of Research (5-years term).

## Principle 2: Design and Approval of Programmes

**INSTITUTIONS SHOULD DEVELOP THEIR UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMMES FOLLOWING A DEFINED WRITTEN PROCESS WHICH WILL INVOLVE THE PARTICIPANTS, INFORMATION SOURCES AND THE APPROVAL COMMITTEES FOR THE PROGRAMME. THE OBJECTIVES, THE EXPECTED LEARNING OUTCOMES, THE INTENDED PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS AND THE WAYS TO ACHIEVE THEM ARE SET OUT IN THE PROGRAMME DESIGN. THE ABOVE DETAILS AS WELL AS INFORMATION ON THE PROGRAMME'S STRUCTURE ARE PUBLISHED IN THE STUDENT GUIDE.**

*Academic units develop their programmes following a well-defined procedure. The academic profile and orientation of the programme, the objectives, the subject areas, the structure and organisation, the expected learning outcomes and the intended professional qualifications according to the National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education are described at this stage. The approval or revision process for programmes includes a check of compliance with the basic requirements described in the Standards, on behalf of the Institution's Quality Assurance Unit (QAU).*

*Furthermore, the programme design should take into consideration the following:*

- *the Institutional strategy*
- *the active participation of students*
- *the experience of external stakeholders from the labour market*
- *the smooth progression of students throughout the stages of the programme*
- *the anticipated student workload according to the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System*
- *the option to provide work experience to the students*
- *the linking of teaching and research*
- *the relevant regulatory framework and the official procedure for the approval of the programme by the Institution*

### Study Programme Compliance

The formulated strategy aims to keep the School as centre of excellence in fields that cover the broad areas of Dentistry. Although this strategy is well designed and executed, a broader long-term vision is required so that the program maintains its leading status. Several new Biomedical Disciplines have emerged the last few years, and the strategy of the School of Dentistry should adapt to these trends. For example, the incorporation/reinforcement of Regenerative Biology/Medicine studies should be endorsed. Similarly, owing to the presence of the large Medical Faculty of NKUA and Academy of Athens, it is suggested to the School to increase the synergies in the field of Medical Biology.

The student program is based on international standards to offer both theoretical knowledge and practical training, to introduce modern techniques and methodologies through a series of laboratory exercises and practical training/internship, which require the active involvement of the students. Therefore, the program aims to engage students in participating in the planning of new developments of the curriculum. Most of the students take no more than five years

(80%-94%) to complete their studies, and one might conclude that this is due to the engagement of both Faculty members and students.

Graduates from the NKUA-Dentistry were very positive and thankful to the Faculty members, affirmed that they were very well trained and praised the quality of the undergraduate program and the education and training that they received. All felt that by finishing their undergraduate studies were confident and ready for exerting their private practice or to follow post-doctoral or academic paths. However, all mentioned the very charged and heavy UP. All felt that the number of students was high and that the number of the Faculty reduced. Several of the graduates suggested to increase the possibilities for research-oriented projects (basic or clinical research) during the period of undergraduate studies.

All social and academic partners participating in the evaluation mentioned that the NKUA-Dentistry undergraduates, graduates, and Faculty members were very reliable, enthusiastic and helpful. This active engagement of the stakeholders with the students continues and the good training of the students is widely appreciated. Social and academic partners mentioned the existence of severe and prohibiting administrative and bureaucratic obstacles outside of the NKUA (State-related) and pointed out that the realization of these fruitful and visionary interactions is strongly compromised or entirely prohibited. Faculty members complained and mentioned similar sorts of problems linked to heavy bureaucracy, unrelated to the NKUA, which together with the necessity of time investment in competitive grants explains the small number of research grants filed by Faculty members. The EEAP believes that there is a considerably increasing potential in exploring opportunities with industrial and social partners, both locally and internationally. Therefore, a quick and efficient solution should be elaborated between the NKUA and the State authorities by modifying the existing administrative rules that will thus allow exploring the great potential of NKUA-Dentistry.

The program is structured by semesters. The majority of the program is rational, well designed and articulated. Several courses (e.g., embryology, histology) are given very early (first year), when it is not possible to be appreciated by the students since there is not a link between these courses and the pure dental disciplines (e.g., Orthodontics) that are developed at the last 2 years (4 and 5 year).

The Study Guide is up-to-date, and the program of studies is revised on a regular basis. The curriculum revision procedures involve students' consultation.

Efforts are made by the School and the NKUA to accommodate students with special needs (e.g., mobility problems), and this effort is commendable and highly appreciated. There are also continuous and restless efforts from Faculty members and students at the School to accommodate social groups with special needs.

The program follows the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS). The workload is estimated high and the EEAP perceived an unsustainable situation, where the Faculty members try hard to deal with the excessive workload. This is a major concern from the Faculty and the administration and it is very often discussed in the Sections' General Assemblies. The EEAP estimates that historical/traditional/classical courses should be revisited, by incorporating courses of actual interest in the dental and medical field. The EEAP was informed that a considerable decrease of the number of the Faculty members realised during the last 5-6 years, dropping down the number of Faculty members to 73 from 127 during the previous years (2010). A plethora of external instructors are used to compensate this lack of personnel, but this is a high risk and not stable situation that can compromise the status and future of the School of Dentistry. Furthermore, the number of admitted students is by far very high (140), representing more than double the number of students that the School requests to the Ministry of Education (60 students). These decisions from the State compromise the efforts of the School, disadvantage the undergraduate students since they get a less qualitative education, and inhibit all efforts from the School and the NKUA towards quality and excellence.

Medical and dental courses (i.e. Gerontology, Community Dentistry) of various durations are offered to the students throughout the dental study program. Clinical training sessions in private Dental Clinics are provided to senior students, thus offering the opportunity for a 3-months clinical training. This initiative is highly appreciated by both students and instructors.

Several students requested increased periods of research activities, and the EEAP suggests that the Faculty try to steer a larger proportion of students in research-driven activities, through Erasmus and other similar exchange initiatives. It is worth noting that the new undergraduate program offers the two-semester course "scientific evidence", where a small group of students are initiating in the development of research projects. The EEAP supports this initiative and encourages the Faculty to take more actions towards this direction.

There are procedures in place to officially implement changes and approve them in the General Assembly. The structure of the study program is rational and clearly articulated, and the Student Guide is complete, concise, and appropriate. The Student Guide is updated every year and there is a plan to revise the study program on a regular basis. The curriculum revision procedures do involve an active consultation with students or representatives.

## Panel Judgment

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

## Panel Recommendations

- Methods of student engagement should be explored, such as videoconferences with successful and established alumni members from abroad. Students should be responsible for the invitation of selected lectures and organization of the whole event.
- One-day events with exhibitions allowing the students to familiarize themselves with actual job issues (private practice, academic or industrial orientation etc.) should be organized by the School involving the active participation of academics, entrepreneurs etc.
- The EEAP encourages the School to significantly reduce the coursework, aiming to introduce advanced concepts and not to lead to course repetitions. The Faculty members should also aim to engage and inspire students towards a research philosophy to the undergraduate students by increasing clinical and basic research-oriented activities.
- The EEAP discussed the possibility of including courses on the general principles of Regenerative Dentistry/Medicine, Biomedicine and Digital Dentistry during the curriculum.
- It would be useful if some pivotal courses and presentations could be given in English to facilitate student preparedness for postgraduate activities, participation in international venues and Erasmus or COST student exchange purposes. This could be supplementary.



### 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 undergraduate dental program at NKUA is delivered in a truly blended learning platform, consisting of various delivery methods, including theoretical (lectures, group-seminars and discussions, clinical case presentations) practical pre-clinical (demonstrations and simulations) and clinical (patient-based) components. The first two years of education are strongly integrated into the medical curriculum, whereas the last two years culminate with the comprehensive treatment clinics, a stronghold of the dental education at NKUA. Clinical training takes place primarily within the Department, but selective elements are delivered externally (e.g., Hospitals, Geriatric Care Units, Special Needs Units, etc.). A portion of the clinical training (12 hours/week

for 3 months) is carried out at practitioners' dental offices, in order to enhance the students' experience of a clinical hub. This initiative is well perceived by the trainees as well as the employers, yet it is highly depended on external funding and has been significantly hampered due to the COVID-19 pandemic over the past year.

The use of e-learning tools has been intensified particularly during the course of the pandemic. Indicatively, 100% of the theoretical education has been carried out via e-learning during the academic year 2020-2021. This has consequently led to greater innovativeness in the delivery of the curriculum, such pre-recorded lecturers and other material being available throughout the curriculum. On-line teaching (Zoom) has become the norm over the past year. Of note, certain educators have also used this platform to dispatch in-lecture short quizzes to the students, which may enhance the attentiveness of the students and validate real-time the delivery of information.

Current undergraduate students admitted that the workload associated with education is high, and graduates have considered that they have also experienced a high such burden.

Student assessment is governed by the respective regulations, and consists of a queue of evaluations including formative, summative (written, oral, practical, clinical) and self-assessments. Reflective evaluations are instilled within selected courses of the curriculum, and this is particularly innovative tool of the self-assessment strategy.

For ensuring transparency of the quality of the teaching processes, the students are provided with an anonymized questionnaire on an annual basis. The overall results of the teaching assessment have been fairly steady over the past 5 years, at approximately 80% satisfaction rate (rated 4, 5 being the maximum). The results are communicated back to the students, along with feedback on potential actions for improvements. A final self-evaluation questionnaire is distributed to the new graduates in order to assess their preparedness level enter the profession. This has yielded results of a high output (82%), which was also confirmed during the interview with the group of NKUA dental graduates of NKUA, who declared that they felt ready to commence their profession as dentists right after graduation (e.g., felt autonomous in setting treatment plans and carrying out comprehensive dental treatment). Moreover, the ones that have pursued post-graduate education (at diverse Institutions) did not feel that there was any considerable gap of knowledge or skill between graduation and commencement of the postgraduate program. The only notable change was the gradual switch of the learning content from the Greek to the English literature. Of note, teaching of the undergraduate dental curriculum and NKUA is delivered officially in the Greek language.

A point worth noting is the increasing tendency of NKUA dental students to participate in presentable or publishable research activities, which was rocketed during the past 2 years. This can be well justified by several high research-incentive Faculty members, whom we have interviewed during our accreditation visit. A proportion of the interviewed NKUA dental graduate group, particularly those currently holding academic positions, stated that they wished to have the possibilities for event further engagement in research during their undergraduate studies, and note that the available infrastructure for this purpose is already in place. Alongside, they considered that some more English-language driven education would have supported even further their transition to their research-oriented career.

The students felt that they always had the support of staff members or the teaching affiliates (επιστημονικοί συνεργάτες) in carrying out their required educational tasks, particularly in clinical training. Also, the students as well as the graduates considered that there is a good collaboration and alignment in the teachings of the staff and teaching affiliates. Yet, some expressed the opinion that more staff members are necessary, but this understaffing is a direct result of underfinancing by the State, a conclusion that this Panel has also reached independently.

Overall, the undergraduate dental program at NKUA is well-organized with a successful blended-learning approach and innovative e-learning tools, efficiently adapting to the rapidly changing societal needs and educational advancements.

### Panel Judgement

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

### Panel Recommendations

- Incorporation of research into education is evident, and we advise to continue further in this direction.
- Selected teaching material should also be delivered in the English language, especially during the final year(s) of studies. This will enhance the capacity of the students to delve into the international literature, which will help them acclimatize with postgraduate education (either clinical or research-focused). This module should be supplementary to the existing curriculum.
- The students recognized that there is a high workload of courses, and some have felt that this is justifiable. This point should be looked into further and clarified by the Faculty members and student bodies alike. If this proves to be a necessity, as is the general trend in

Europe, then the School should consider reducing or reformulating the content of individual courses, or the requirement for physical presence. This will help to achieve a healthier work-life balance and contribute to mental well-being (no stress).

- Increase the ratio of employed teaching staff versus teaching affiliates, which is directly related to a State-secured financial plan for sustainable development.

## 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

At present, there are 701 active undergraduate dental students at NKUA, 62% of which are female. The primary body of dental students (61%) enter the NKUA dental program via the annual Pan-Hellenic National Examinations, whereas the rest 39% by alternative routes (153 newly subscribed undergraduates during academic year 2020-2021). It should be noted that the number of undergraduate students eventually admitted into the Dentistry program is disproportionately higher than the number of undergraduate students requested by the School (60) to the State.

The GPA of the graduating Dentists is currently at 7.4/10, whereas approximately 20% graduate with a GPA >8.0/10. Approximately 80% of the students are able to graduate within the designated 5-year period of studies, whereas 75% of the graduates are employed within 12 months of graduation and 10% enter post-graduate study programs. The Dental degree can be provided in both Greek and English versions, along with the detailed grades per course, throughout the curriculum.

In conclusion, completion of dental studies under the current curriculum can be considered timely, and yields knowledgeable and skilled dentists, who enjoy fast employability and broad opportunities for post-graduate education. The latter was further evidenced during the interviews of the graduate group, some of which have received postgraduate education abroad or are currently academic staff members at Institutions abroad.

## Panel Judgment

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

## Panel Recommendations

- While the student progression, recognition and certification processes of the School are fully compliant, there is a need for a consistent and predictable annual student admission. The Panel understands that this is also in agreement with the School's wishes. The reason for this discrepancy is not directly attributed to the School's management, but decisions of this calibre lie at the level of the Ministry of Education. It has to be stressed that this is entirely due to unreasonable pressure by the Ministry of Education to increase the annual intake of students despite the established formal admission process through the national examination pathway (Panhellenic Exams).
- Regardless of the key regulator of this process, a predictable student intake is crucial for sustainable growth and for safeguarding the educational quality and operational costs. Therefore, there is space for further alignment in this process. While the State needs to ensure a predictable and steady annual student admission, the School may carry out calculations on the required the student/Faculty ratio and the studies cost per student, facilitating the cross-talk with the State on this matter.

## Principle 5: Teaching Staff

**INSTITUTIONS SHOULD ASSURE THEMSELVES OF THE QUALIFICATIONS AND COMPETENCE OF THE TEACHING STAFF. THEY SHOULD APPLY FAIR AND TRANSPARENT PROCESSES FOR THE RECRUITMENT AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE TEACHING STAFF.**

*The Institutions and their academic units have a major responsibility as to the standard of their teaching staff providing them with a supportive environment that promotes the advancement of their scientific work. In particular, the academic unit should:*

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

### Study Programme Compliance

The Panel felt that the recruitment process is transparent and follows the formal regulations/state laws of the Ministry of Education. The policy to attract academic staff (advert) is mostly through the nationally implemented ΑΠΕΛΛΑ system. Furthermore, the Faculty did not indicate that there were signs of School inbreeding. However, it was understood that there are neither start up package available for new Faculty members (especially those in junior positions) or a formal mentoring process. This could be attributed to the loss of significant number of Faculty members/posts since 2010, which has increased the teaching workload and does not allow time to provide adequate mentoring support to new Faculty members or for those in the process of being promoted.

The Panel felt that opportunities and promotion of professional development of the teaching staff were limited which was compounded by the heavy teaching load at least for some Faculty members. Furthermore, there was no clear mechanism in terms of annual appraisal process and job planning leading to regular review of distribution of workload in terms of teaching and administration. Such mechanism would have been advantageous in following the performance of the Faculty members and address potential problems. As the School is structured in a rather traditional way with the presence of a Chair of a discipline this should be possible to be implemented.

A point that the Panel felt that requires some consideration from the leadership of the School is the increased exposure of junior Faculty members to international teams through maintaining the existing collaborations, which appear to be one of the strengths of the School. At the same

time though, opportunities for further research training of senior Faculty members (e.g., sabbatical) needs to be promoted when and if possible.

A number of Faculty members are research-active and there was high level of research outputs within the field of dentistry. Furthermore, the undergraduate and post-graduate students are involved in research-driven projects, which facilitates the link between theoretical/clinical education and research. This was evident from the high number of students participating in national/international congresses and abstracts submitted, as well as the research awards that have been received.

At the same time however, it was clear that basic research was significantly under-staffed and there is an urgent need to attract Faculty members/researchers in basic research (genetics/molecular biology/immunology/stem cell biology with expertise in platform technologies) to support the relevant teaching and development of clinical/translational research. The existing teams are well trained and with an established and solid international reputation but a strategic planning in recruiting new Faculty members that can deliver both education and basic research with clear clinical applicability should be regarded as one of the priorities of the School's leadership.

The teaching is based on a number of methods and technologies. Following the previous external review, the School underwent a wide scope restructuring of the way that education is delivered. Currently, a combination of active/proactive and self-directing learning is followed with an enhanced element of reflection during the academic year. Furthermore, the recording of lectures and their availability through e-platforms is a positive development. This has led to high satisfaction of the undergraduate students and maintains high quality of undergraduate education. Since the pandemic due to COVID though, procedures applying new technologies was further enhanced and a high number of web-seminars and e-learning have been adopted. The Panel was re-assured that these practises would be further continued especially since the feedback from the undergraduate students was very positive.

The Panel did not identify a clear mechanism or long-term strategy to consolidate clinical/translational and basic research in targeted and focused themes, which would guarantee creation of a track record and relevant long-term sustainability. Whilst the quality and quantity of research outputs are highly appraised and there is an element of collaboration between School's Units/Departments, these intra-departmental interactions for research purposes should be further reinforced and promoted based on a coherent research strategy, which will be sustainable. Shared equipment and resources across the different Departments will support the Faculty in their research interests. The coordination of all these research-related activities should be ensured by an appointed for Dean or Director of Research within the School. Furthermore, the Panel felt that the collaboration with Medicine especially in areas where an overlap exists (chronic diseases, immunology) was a positive development and needs to be further enhanced.

The Panel felt that the School would benefit from a plan in establishing and strengthening a thematic research strategy which would allow to retain existing "champions" and further attract high calibre (in research) Faculty members. This will ultimately lead to possibilities in being successful in attracting higher research income, which in turn will allow the creation of research



teams that will maintain and further enhance the international reputation of the School of Dentistry (i.e., QS ranking).

### Panel Judgment

<b>Principle 5: Teaching Staff</b>	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	<b>X</b>
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

### Panel Recommendations

- Develop a formal annual appraisal and performance review system based on clear indicators in teaching/research/administration.
- The appropriate number of Faculty members should be derived through a thorough performance review.
- Develop a targeted, focused thematic research strategy, which will streamline both basic and clinical research and will allow the creation of a critical mass of researchers within the School. These research-oriented Faculty members will also support the long-term sustainability and succession of the research teams.
- A coordinated approach to attract highly qualified academics with experience in research funding and ability to lead research teams should be considered as a priority.
- A Director or Dean of research should be appointed (5-years term minimum).
- Number of staff should be proportional to the actual number of students per year.
- The use of web-based tools for teaching should be further developed.

## 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

The School of Dentistry facilities are very good, modern, and able to support high quality undergraduate education. All the clinical facilities, clinical skills laboratories, seminar rooms and lecture halls are all well-equipped and in position to support the delivery of education. The Panel was impressed with the infection control requirements and systems in place following the pandemic, which ensures safety for students, patients, and staff members. The Panel was informed that a new building has been approved and its addition will enhance both teaching and research.

The Panel expressed the view that the existing type and quality of research equipment, which is often accessible for undergraduate and postgraduate student research with correct training and supervision, is of high quality.

The Library is located within the School and information and communication systems appear to be adequate.

Overall, the School of Dentistry is well maintained with clean and inviting facilities, both in the classrooms, clinics, and laboratories as well as in the associated spaces.

There are mechanisms for students with disabilities for their support throughout the duration of the studies. There are not international students (apart expatriates or ομογενείς) subscribed to the School.

## Panel Judgment

<b>Principle 6: Learning Resources and Student Support</b>	
Fully compliant	<b>X</b>
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

## Panel Recommendations

- The School of Dentistry should ensure savings to maintain the clinical facilities as well as the clinical skills and research laboratories. Furthermore, merging of funds for creation of shared resources in laboratories and platform technologies will ensure equal (financial) contribution of the different School's Departments towards maintenance of the research facilities.
- Ensure investment of funds for web-based education.
- It is advisable the regrouping of all research facilities in one common space. This will greatly facilitate the interactions between students and the various Departments of the School.

## 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 Panel considered the following:

Various key performance indicators were presented to the Panel members. It was clear that the School performs exceptionally well and probably 'punches above their weight'. It features in several world rankings and particularly in the QS it features in the top 40-60 worldwide (QS for 2019-2021) which is the highest position of all Departments in NKUA. Several research areas and academic staff are world leading and renowned for their expertise.

The ratio of female to male students is 62% to 38%.

The vast majority of the students (80% to 94% the last few years) graduate in the allocated five-years period. The remaining students graduate either within an additional year or two additional years.

The School of Dentistry has established mechanisms for collecting and analysing information regarding student satisfaction. A comprehensive list of all units was presented to the Panel with individual evaluation. Overall, the students seem to be very satisfied. The number of students engaging in this process varies between years and units. In some cases that the numbers are very low (10%), it is not possible to reach a definitive conclusion.

There are adequate learning resources and support. For generic matters, such as issue of a student ID, student housing etc. support is provided by the central university (EKPA). Being a clinical program, patients are needed. In this respect, there are approximately 7,500 patients annually processed through the Dental Hospital resulting in approximately 32,000 dental treatments.

There is a clear career path. The majority of graduates find employment within six months (67% of men and 74% of women). These numbers increase to 72% and 81% respectively after 12 months. A further 10% for each of men and women embark on postgraduate studies.

### Panel Judgment

<b>Principle 7: Information Management</b>	
Fully compliant	<b>X</b>
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

### Panel Recommendations

- Increase interactions with leading institutes worldwide.
- Increase exposure in relevant international conferences.

## 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 School of Dentistry has a dedicated website that provides extensive information on all relevant aspects. Regarding their program, there are specific and clear sections for Undergraduate, Postgraduate Taught (Masters) and Postgraduate Research (PhD) studies. The Undergraduate program is subdivided into semesters (two per year). Each semester contains detailed information for each course that includes date and time and also a web-link that the students can follow for online education. The latter is indicative of adaptive learning comparable to leading Universities worldwide. Each unit is extensively described with intended learning outcomes, the content, how it is evaluated and with the relevant bibliography that it is essential for the students in order to successfully complete their studies.

The students are very well prepared for future employment. There is a dedicated unit that relates to setting up and running of a dental practice that even includes information like tax advice. Additionally, the students have the option to visit several dental practices and gain first-hand experience from their colleagues (full practicing dentists). The success of these initiatives is evident by the fact that more than 75% of graduates find employment within 12 months, while a further 10 % opts for postgraduate studies.

The website is very informative regarding the staff. There are specific sections for Academic, Professional Support Staff, and Experimental/Training Officers. Contact details (phone number and email address) are included for all staff. Academics have an expanded section that included their qualifications, awards and key publications. A version in English is also available.

### Panel Judgment

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

### **Panel Recommendations**

The Panel suggests frequent updates of the website, particularly regarding academic achievements (awards, publications), to maximize visibility and raise the profile internationally.

## 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

There is regular and rigorous monitoring of the Undergraduate program. The School has appointed an internal assessment committee (OMEA), comprising of seven academics and one member for administrative support. During our evaluation we had the opportunity to meet and interact with all OMEA members. The Panel is fully satisfied that there is regular monitoring and the outcomes for each year are clearly displayed in the School's website. The composition of OMEA is appropriate and representative of the different areas within the School of Dentistry, including Faculty members from basic sciences.

Regarding the specific points of evaluation:

The Panel believes that there is commitment from the Faculty members to include clinical or basic research in their teaching. Several students, during the Zoom meeting, expressed their eager to engage themselves and participate in either basic science or clinical research. The graduates also supported this vision during our Zoom meeting.

The School has a wide range of activities that involve visits to local primary schools to inform pupils, ensure dental care provision to vulnerable social groups, visit remote areas of the country (islands) to provide specialist care etc. Therefore, the School excels in this area of societal action.

Since the last evaluation, comments were taken on board to reduce the unusually high workload of students and Faculty members. Although some changes have been performed towards this direction, the Panel members believe that there is still some room for further improvement. The new curriculum seems to be more manageable than before, and students received these



changes positively. The latest developments in online learning can prove beneficial to further decrease the workload by reducing the physical presence of students into lecture theatres.

The procedures for the assessment of students are effective, evident from the high proportion of students graduating on time (5 years) with the appropriate qualifications. The Panel thinks that an increase of formative assessment with concomitant reduction of summative assessment will be beneficial to the curriculum.

Students' expectations, needs and satisfaction in relation to the program have been successfully addressed. The School should be commended for managing a particularly challenging situation under Covid-19 that affected Dentistry disproportionately compared to other subjects. Despite that, strong leadership and internal commitment allowed the students to graduate effectively, surpassing the expectations.

The Panel had the opportunity to assess the learning environment through an online video presentation. The facilities fulfil both clinical and research requirements. Certain aspects could be further improved. For example, the library/reading hall space could greatly benefit from the digitalization of the numerous books and scientific journals, more working station could be created where students could work with their personal computers. The students can also use the School of Health Sciences Library that is substantially larger and well equipped. The Panel is pleased to hear that there is ongoing support from the NKUA to realize further changes. The Panel was also informed that the funding for a new building has been granted to the School of Dentistry.

### Panel Judgment

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

### Panel Recommendations

- Efforts should be made to embed research in as many aspects of teaching possible. Emphasis should be given to Evidence Based Dentistry.
- Maintain and improve Wi-Fi access due to higher demands on broadband speed and connection and encourage students to use their personal computers.

## Principle 10: Regular External Evaluation of Undergraduate Programmes

**PROGRAMMES SHOULD REGULARLY UNDERGO EVALUATION BY COMMITTEES OF EXTERNAL EXPERTS SET BY HAHE, AIMING AT ACCREDITATION. THE TERM OF VALIDITY OF THE ACCREDITATION IS DETERMINED BY HAHE.**

*HAHE is responsible for administrating the programme accreditation process which is realised as an external evaluation procedure, and implemented by a committee of independent experts. HAHE grants accreditation of programmes, with a specific term of validity, following to which revision is required. The accreditation of the quality of the programmes acts as a means of verification of the compliance of the programme with the template's requirements, and as a catalyst for improvement, while opening new perspectives towards the international standing of the awarded degrees.*

*Both academic units and institutions participate in the regular external quality assurance process, while respecting the requirements of the legislative framework in which they operate.*

*The quality assurance, in this case the accreditation, is an on-going process that does not end with the external feedback, or report or its follow-up process within the Institution. Therefore, Institutions and their academic units ensure that the progress made since the last external quality assurance activity is taken into consideration when preparing for the next one.*

### Study Programme Compliance

The School of Dentistry had an external evaluation in January 2010 by a Committee of four expert evaluators. The previous review found significant strengths including an excellent clinical facility with modern equipment and materials, a good number of enthusiastic and very well-trained Faculty members, a varied and plentiful patient base which creates a good educational environment for students to carry out a range of clinical activities. Also, there was strong evidence for quality research activities through a significant number of high quality national and international publications. The Committee also provided some recommendations on issues that could be improved. These recommendations included suggestions to establish professional competencies and include active learning and self-study. Furthermore, they suggested a change in the curriculum in line with the Association for Dental Education Europe (ADEE). Finally, there were recommendations to the University and the government encouraging them to increase financial support and provide this on a more predictable basis to ensure sufficient planning. They also highlighted the need for a research strategy and inter-Departmental collaborations.

The School of Dentistry provided a response to the 2010 evaluation, and an update to what has been accomplished and achieved since then. They also provided reasons for rejecting / not implementing some of the recommendations in the area of the curriculum. Notable changes and accomplishments include:

- Strong emphasis on education in Dentistry. The School liaised extensively with an international expert in Dental Education and changed things accordingly.
- Active learning and self-study have been included.
- The School has adopted the European Academic Credit System (ECTS).

- The students' schedule has been reviewed and the extremely long schedule has been shortened, but not significantly.
- Outreach activities to communities in and around Athens have been embraced and the Dental School now excels in this area.

Recommendations that were not adopted involved:

- Small research groups do not have critical mass. This is still the case and research should be strengthened.
- Low and unpredictable financial support from the ministry hampers research. This is still the case.
- The School should establish an overviewed research strategy.

The School indicated that they have adopted most of the recommendations of the previous (2010) evaluation.

The Panel met with a range of undergraduate students, most of them seniors, and with graduates.

The Panel strongly believes that the School offers a top-quality undergraduate program that forms high calibre graduates (dentists). Since the last evaluation, the School has significantly improved and benefited from the comments of the previous Committee members. The School is in the right trajectory and is fortunate to actually benefit from a strong leadership within and, furthermore, to receive a clear support from the NKUA.

The Panel members are aware that the very significant increase of the student numbers (almost double of the requested by the School of Dentistry) is the result of not assessing and valuing correctly the justified Dental School's continuous requests to the State (Ministry of Education). Furthermore, the drastic decrease of the number of Faculty members since the previous evaluation (2010) adds to this problem and do not resolve issues. There is a clear pressure of the State (ministry of Education) to increase the quantity of incoming students by maintaining a system which continuously tops up the official number of students that the School of Dentistry requests. This will ultimately compromise the quality of the undergraduate education in favour of the quantity of students. The Panel members support the idea to significantly increase the Faculty members and administrative personnel and reduce considerably the number of undergraduate students in order to maintain and even increase the actual quality of education.

Finally, the Panel wishes to acknowledge the full cooperation of all members of staff involved. They were friendly and accommodating to any request by the Panel. They were receptive to our suggestions during the discussions and provided accurate and in-depth information for all relevant areas. They had clearly updated materials and the website to be available for the review. Moreover, during the sessions with the Panel members, they were knowledgeable and responsive to all questions asked.

## Panel Judgment

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

## Panel Recommendations

- The content of aspects of Restorative Dentistry is recommended to be assessed such that it becomes more relevant to the knowledge needs of the discipline and include some of the latest developments in Digital Dentistry, NanoDentistry, and Regenerative Dentistry.
- The course load is significant. Some old-fashioned descriptive courses could be combined or eliminated to favour new additions.
- Improve staff / student ratio.
- Formulate a clear research strategy, appoint a Research Director and strengthen research areas that are deemed under risk due to Faculty members retirement.
- Given the fact that regular evaluations appear to take place at long intervals (11 years have passed since the last visiting group), the School could implement interim informal evaluations as it did in the past. These evaluations could be general, or they could pertain to specific questions or laboratories.

## **PART C: CONCLUSIONS**

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

- There is strong effort, willingness, and enthusiasm by the School of Dentistry to comply with evaluation procedures.
- The Faculty is proactive, dedicated, and enthusiastic in dealing with the teaching and clinical duties and the staff is involved in quality research activities.
- Some Faculty are involved in successful industrial collaborative research projects that facilitate the research functioning of the School.
- There is not “inbreeding” in the Faculty.
- High rate of students (94%) finishing the studies in the desired period of 5 years.
- The new curriculum follows recommendations from the previous evaluation and efforts are being made for continuously improving and excelling in theoretical and clinical teaching.
- The needs of students and patients with physical disabilities are accommodated.
- There is a strong awareness of the importance of research impact.
- The teaching and clinical facilities are appropriate with two large lecture halls (one old and one modern), many smaller lecture/seminar halls, and well-managed spaces for practical clinical training and courses. All these spaces are clean and well maintained. The equipment for the practical/clinical courses of the undergraduate and postgraduate students is modern.
- There is strong effort for public engagement such as regular school visits, social actions etc.
- The website is user-friendly and up to date.
- Alumni connections are commendable and offer valuable perspectives to the students.
- There is a continuous effort to increase the international visibility and impact of the School. The School was classed between the 40-60 best dental institutes worldwide.
- Social partners were very keen and showed great interest in pursuing further existing academic/industrial partnerships with the School.
- Social partners and public stakeholders are identified and engaged, resulting in the continuous development of the School, and improving graduate opportunities.
- The function of the administration office is satisfactory concerning the delivery of hard copies of diplomas and related material.

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

- The gender ratio is not balanced between Faculty members.
- There is not mobility of students with Erasmus.
- The digitization process of old books in the main Library of the School of Dentistry is necessary.
- Mid-term and long-term future directions and target objectives of the School are not currently articulated, especially in the biomedical research and all corresponding research activities.

- The School utilizes specialized infrastructures located in other Institutions or Departments (e.g., Dimokritos, Academy of Athens, Medical Faculty etc.), but could extend such interactions with other academic Institutions in Athens or abroad from research driven purposes.
- The library is functional but needs to be re-evaluated and to become more modern.
- Mobility of the academic staff should significantly improve.
- The scientific collaborations with the Medical Faculty exist but should be a continuous effort from the Faculty members to improve and further develop and strengthen these links.
- There is not a Faculty member acting as coordinator of the research activities and orientation of the School (Research Director).
- The fluctuating ratio between students/Faculty members is problematic.
- The term of the Dean of the School of Dentistry should be increased to 5 years with possibility of another term. This will provide stability and realization of the strategic priorities elaborated by the School.

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

The EEAP wishes to highlight the following actions:

- Clear articulation of the School of Dentistry strategic plan with target objectives and research-oriented activities over the next ten to twenty years.
- The School should highlight and insist at the Ministerial level on the need to increase the number of Faculty members, decrease drastically the actual number of students and guarantee a stable research-oriented budget for a long time period. The proportion of Faculty members and students should be balanced, and the research activities should not be compromised. A well-regulated number of dental students at entry is of paramount importance for the safe calculation of: a) the student/Faculty member ratio (quality of studies); b) the education cost per student (determinant of operational costs). We consider this to be crucial for sustainable growth and safeguarding the educational output. The associated calculations need to be carried out and presented by the School. The State must facilitate and adopt this initiative and has to realize that this is a unique situation concerning Dentistry.
- The workload of courses is high. The School must consider reducing further or reformulating the content of individual courses, or the requirement for physical presence.
- Research activities and orientation plan on future research developments of the School should be clearly defined and monitored under the guidance of a Director or Dean of Research. Therefore, a Dean of Research should be appointed for at least 5 years.
- Embed research in as many aspects of teaching possible.
- Identification and engagement of additional academic, public and private partners who will contribute to the academic and economic impact of the School.

- Revisit the curriculum in order to engage students towards research activities and responsibilities and inspire them by offering courses dealing with actual clinical and societal needs (regenerative dentistry based on stem cells and gene therapy, nanodentistry based on nanotechnology and new dental materials elaboration, computational/imaging dentistry, bio-related dentistry and industrial needs.
- Selected teaching material should also be delivered in the English language, especially during the final year(s) of studies. This will: a) enhance the capacity of the students to delve into the international literature, which will help them acclimatize with postgraduate education (either clinical or research-focused); b) promote international mobility and realization of Erasmus exchanges.
- Organization of career days by the School allowing the interaction between all Faculty members and permitting to familiarize the students with job opportunities other than the private praxis (academic or industrial career, opportunities in some biomedical fields etc.) involving the active participation of Faculty members and entrepreneurs/social partners.
- Interaction and collaboration with other Departments of the Medical Faculty, Veterinary School, Engineering, Agronomy, Pharmacy and complementary research institutes in Greece (e.g., Fleming Institute), including short research visits and participation in teaching/seminars, etc.
- Implementation of interim informal School evaluations of research activities.
- Encouragement and reward of excellence by adopting School prizes for outstanding performance across student cohorts (Dental prize).
- Encouragement of continuous education of Faculty members via short visits abroad in emerging areas of the dental disciplines and invitations of foreign professors to visit the School to either teach specialty courses, short courses, and/or be involved in research. The actual Zoom platform offers possibilities to held courses for undergraduate students from abroad.
- Regrouping all research facilities in one common space. This will greatly facilitate the interactions between students and the various Departments of the School.
- Appointment of new Faculty members with the ability to attract starting research funding and participation of Faculty members in Horizon Europe research grants and consortia (e.g. COST actions).
- Access of technical laboratory personnel from the NKUA for efficient facility activities and equipment maintenance.
- Regular updates of the Google Scholar profile or similar platforms of the Faculty members.
- Inclusion of *Athens Dental School Association* information and activities on the NKUA and School's website. This site is not active, but the vice-rector of NKUA confirmed that this is one of the priority plans of the University.
- The gender balance between Faculty members should improve, if possible.

#### IV. Summary & Overall Assessment

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

The Principles where substantial compliance has been achieved are: **4, 5, and 10.**

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

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

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



## The members of the External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel

**Name and Surname**

**Signature**

1. **Prof. Efthimios Mitsiadis (Chair)**  
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2. **Prof. Georgios Belibasakis**  
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4. **Prof. Nikolaos Silikas**  
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