



ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ

HELLENIC REPUBLIC

**Α.ΔΙ.Π.**

**H.Q.A.**

ΑΡΧΗ ΔΙΑΣΦΑΛΙΣΗΣ & ΠΙΣΤΟΠΟΙΗΣΗΣ  
ΤΗΣ ΠΟΙΟΤΗΤΑΣ ΣΤΗΝ ΑΝΩΤΑΤΗ ΕΚΠΑΙΔΕΥΣΗ

HELLENIC QUALITY ASSURANCE  
AND ACCREDITATION AGENCY

## EXTERNAL EVALUATION REPORT

DEPARTMENT OF THEATRE STUDIES

UNIVERSITY OF ATHENS



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### **External Evaluation Committee**

The Committee responsible for the External Evaluation of the Department of Theatre Studies of the University/Technological Educational Institution of University of ATHENS consisted of the following five (4) expert evaluators drawn from the Registry constituted by the HQA in accordance with Law 3374/2005 :

1. **Professor CARPINATO CATERINA**, Università Ca' Foscari - Venezia, ITALY.  
**(Coordinator)**
2. **Professor Antony Molho**, European University Institute – Istituto Europeo di Firenze, ITALY
3. **Senior Lecturer Marilena Zaroulia**, University of Winchester, UK.
4. **κ. ΒΑΣΣΙΑΛΗΣ ΒΑΦΕΑΣ**, Παραγωγός, Σεναριογράφος, Σκηνοθέτης, ΕΛΛΑΔΑ

**N.B.** The structure of the “Template” proposed for the External Evaluation Report mirrors the requirements of Law 3374/2005 and corresponds overall to the structure of the Internal Evaluation Report submitted by the Department.

The length of text in each box is free. Questions included in each box are not exclusive nor should they always be answered separately; they are meant to provide a general outline of matters that should be addressed by the Committee when formulating its comments.

## ***Introduction***

### I. The External Evaluation Procedure

- Dates and brief account of the site visit.
- Whom did the Committee meet?
- List of Reports, documents, other data examined by the Committee.
- Groups of teaching and administrative staff and students interviewed
- Facilities visited by the External Evaluation Committee.

The Committee decided to write the External Evaluation Report as a narrative text using the questions of the template only like a general outline.

Following a brief orientation meeting held at the ADIP offices on 13 February 2014, the evaluation of the Department of Theatre Studies at the University of Athens, Zografou was held on 13th and 14th February 2014 in the principal campus of the University of Athens, in Zografou. From the very start of our visit we were struck by the evidence of how the country’s general economic situation has created widespread discomfort for everyone in Greece: in the immense, nine-story University building that houses departments of humanistic studies, only one elevator was in service during our visit there.

Our first meeting at the Department took place in a wing of the building originally intended to house the library, which, later, was transformed into a seminar room, an IT room (now largely not used due to shortage of staff) and a conference/meeting room (where the staff have their meetings and where the postgraduate teaching takes place).

In the course of our two-day visit, the Evaluation Committee met the Department’s teaching staff; professors emeriti; students of all three levels (undergraduates, postgraduates and doctoral candidates); recent alumni; the secretariat and library technical and administrative staff; external collaborators; representatives of public and private institutions that have signed conventions with the Department. The members of the Committee also had two conversations via skype, first with a Dutch professor who has collaborated with the network on ancient theater, and with the director of the National Theater of northern Greece, who is a former graduate of the Department. Our originally scheduled meeting with the vice Rector was canceled by his office.

The Department staff provided members of our Committee with exhaustive documentation to allow us to examine its recent activities, as well to inform us of individual members’ recent scholarly activities. A USB stick offered to each of us contained copies of all the documents given to us in print (which was necessary since the process of evaluation had been delayed for over twenty four months), as well as of the visual evidence presented to us in a series of power point presentations.

## II. The Internal Evaluation Procedure

Please comment on:

- Appropriateness of sources and documentation used

The documentation provided is exhaustive and very accurate.

- Quality and completeness of evidence reviewed and provided

The support tools provided to the Commission are comprehensive and of good quality.

- To what extent have the objectives of the internal evaluation process been met by the Department?

Our impression from the documentation shared with us as well as the presentation we had on the topic on the first day of our visit and subsequent conversations with the Head of the Department and academic staff is that processes of internal evaluation are closely observed in the Department. The staff openly discussed about the ways in which they reflect on student feedback and internal mechanisms of evaluation/promotion in the Department and clearly showed that they are committed to high quality standards in teaching and learning (across undergraduate and postgraduate programmes), administration and research.

## **A. Curriculum**

*To be filled separately for each undergraduate, graduate and doctoral programme.*

### APPROACH

- What are the goals and objectives of the Curriculum? What is the plan for achieving them?
- How were the objectives decided? Which factors were taken into account? Were they set against appropriate standards? Did the unit consult other stakeholders?
- Is the curriculum consistent with the objectives of the Curriculum and the requirements of the society?
- How was the curriculum decided? Were all constituents of the Department, including students and other stakeholders, consulted?
- Has the unit set a procedure for the revision of the curriculum?

### IMPLEMENTATION

- How effectively is the Department's goal implemented by the curriculum?
- How does the curriculum compare with appropriate, universally accepted standards

<p>for the specific area of study?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is the structure of the curriculum rational and clearly articulated?</li> <li>• Is the curriculum coherent and functional?</li> <li>• Is the material for each course appropriate and the time offered sufficient?</li> <li>• Does the Department have the necessary resources and appropriately qualified and trained staff to implement the curriculum?</li> </ul>
<p><b>RESULTS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How well is the implementation achieving the Department's predefined goals and objectives?</li> <li>• If not, why is it so? How is this problem dealt with?</li> <li>• Does the Department understand why and how it achieved or failed to achieve these results?</li> </ul>
<p><b>IMPROVEMENT</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does the Department know how the Curriculum should be improved?</li> <li>• Which improvements does the Department plan to introduce?</li> </ul> <p><u>Note to the reader:</u> This section is developed as a narrative on the Department's three programmes, and in doing so the EEC comments on the various questions addressed in the four parts of this Report's first section.</p> <p>The Department of Theatre Studies at the University of Athens was established over two decades ago with a clear and detailed set of aims, prioritising the need to study the history of Greek and international theaters thus securing the establishment of theatre education at university level with an understanding that such a programme has a bearing on both primary and secondary education, as well on as society at large. The quarter of a century during which the Department of Theatre Studies at the University of Athens has seen the development of its theoretical assumptions is the one that can be divided into two main phases, the preparatory great adventure of media, economic and political -cultural Olympics 2004, and the following period, which has been marked by economic crisis and subsequent sociopolitical and cultural turmoil.</p> <p>The Department's objectives/foundational mission were summarised in the internal evaluation document that the EEC received as well as on specific presentations from the Head of the Department and members of the faculty in the following five points:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) to develop the discipline of theatre studies;</li> <li>2) to enhance the art of theatre in the country by promoting, preserving and demonstrating the country's rich (theatre) heritage/tradition;</li> <li>3) to disseminate knowledge through systematic research and study of the field of theatre;</li> <li>4) to provide graduates with appropriate skills that will contribute to their development as scholars and professionals;</li> <li>5) to sustain the professional development of the members of academic staff so that they are able to meet the challenges in fields of education as well as other fields of cultural life.</li> </ol> <p>The EEC will comment on how these foundational aims of the department are reflected on the Undergraduate (UG) and Postgraduate (PG) programmes, which are closely interconnected.</p>

As a general comment, all three programmes express the Department's clearly-defined academic identity, as a department that has approached the study of theatre as a separate field of enquiry that cannot be sufficiently expressed through modules in philological departments. There is a coherent line-through connecting the four years of the UG with PG Taught (PGT) and Research/doctoral (PGR) programmes and during the site visit, the EEC had meetings with doctoral students who are graduates of both the UG and PGT programmes and commented on their experience of incremental learning throughout the years as well as how the rigour and the breadth of UG and PGT programmes contributed to their selections of research topics.

### UG

The scope of the UG curriculum is to introduce students to international theatre studies, with a particular focus on Greek theatre (production; dramaturgy; reception). Although the department does not currently offer pathways/strands (an area that we will comment on further later), there are three areas running through courses across the years: history of theatre; theory of theatre and performance analysis, with a particular interest in Greek and European theatre from antiquity to the present. These areas are covered through 58 modules/courses (46 compulsory and 12 elective), which study a range of topics that complement each other and are clearly linked to the Department's mission statement; on completion of this degree, students seem to have acquired a rather robust understanding of theatre history in Greece and Europe. The EEC would suggest that staff engage with the possibility of the inclusion of more courses studying contemporary theatre and performance, particularly as students spoke very highly of their experiences of existing courses that focus on performance analysis (instead of textual analysis/drama criticism) and in doing so, clearly distinguish theatre studies as a discipline focusing on the here and now (and subsequently on the challenges posed by the ephemerality of the theatre event, orality of accounts and so on). This may respond to certain concerns that were voiced by former and current students, who felt that occasionally the degree's rationale was more philological than theatre/performance studies oriented.

In the period under assessment, the Department has enhanced its curriculum with a sustained effort to include certain courses with practice-oriented focus. These can be grouped into two categories: first, elective courses, which offer students an introduction to theatre praxis (acting; directing and scenography, primarily taught by external/non enumerated visiting artists) and second, courses on Theatre (in) Education. The latter enhances and solidifies the department's mission to contribute to both the theoretical and historical study of theatre practice as well as provide its graduates with the appropriate tools to work as facilitators and teachers in primary and secondary education. The EEC was particularly impressed by the breadth and methods used for this particular aspect of study in the UG programme, particularly when considering the members of staff work with limited resources, i.e. facilities that may be impeding students' learning – for example, the room where a module is currently taught is not a studio facility, as would be expected in institutions abroad; students do not have access to the room or other appropriate rooms to rehearse in preparation for their assessment. We were particularly impressed by the fact that the Department is the only one that has a permanent member of staff specializing on music theatre and we would invite our colleagues to consider whether/how the Department would benefit (in terms of teaching, pedagogy, research) from a porous approach to the borders separating or distinguishing disciplines.

Further, particular attention is being paid to how the curriculum can respond to the increasing demands of a competitive market. The EEC comments the Department on their



sustained efforts to implement processes of graduates' employability with ongoing conversations with institutions from both the private and the public sector and the inclusion of a 'work placement' compulsory module in the programme. The EEC members, during the site visit, had the opportunity to discuss aspects of work experience with both academic staff supervising the students' placements as well as supervisors of the Department's students in the work context. The depth and breadth of the Department's curriculum is implemented in clear and coherent ways, which are often instrumental in securing graduates with employment in relevant fields, following the work placement module and the experience that they develop there.

#### PGT and PGR

During the assessed period, the PG programme has undergone three phases of review and development. The PG is responding to the Department's mission statement through its educational, pedagogic and priorities underpinning it: the programme aims to contribute to the systematic analysis of Greek theatre history, to the promotion of the discipline in Greek society and the arts sector as well as to prepare the PG students for further doctoral study. The PG programme appears to equip students with appropriate skills for the systematic engagement with theatre studies, a very recent discipline in the country. However, a more specific focus on the programme (rather than the broad topics that it currently covers) may be worth considering; the programme needs to be open to both graduates of the Department and from other Departments and faculties across the country, and in order to do so a more specific thematic or methodological focus may be imperative.

Another point that we would like to invite the Department's members to consider is whether the final exit exams (after the completion of the PGT dissertation) are necessary, particularly bearing in mind that both current Masters and doctoral students feel that they are time-consuming but not clearly contributing to the programme's learning objectives. We would also encourage colleagues to reconsider the balance between optional and compulsory courses at postgraduate level and whether enough space for experimentation and tailoring of learning experience/research interests is provided to the students, particularly those who may carry on at PhD level. The current portfolio of doctoral topics reflects the Department's profile/staff's research expertise and ongoing contributions to the history of Greek theatre and the systematic development of theatre research in the country.

Overall, the members of academic staff implement the Department's very solid curriculum, with integrity, rigour and passion/commitment. The Department's curriculum is of high standard compared to other similar departments. Any recommendation that the Committee puts forward later on in this report works on the assumption that the very solid foundation of the existing degree (through rigorous historical/theoretical study) will be maintained and aims to enhance the programme.

## ***B. Teaching***

### APPROACH:

Does the Department have a defined pedagogic policy with regard to teaching approach and methodology?

Please comment on :

- Teaching methods used
- Teaching staff/ student ratio

- Teacher/student collaboration
- Adequacy of means and resources
- Use of information technologies
- Examination system

#### IMPLEMENTATION

Please comment on:

- Quality of teaching procedures
- Quality and adequacy of teaching materials and resources.
- Quality of course material. Is it brought up to date?
- Linking of research with teaching
- Mobility of academic staff and students
- Evaluation by the students of (a) the teaching and (b) the course content and study material/resources

#### RESULTS

Please comment on:

- Efficacy of teaching.
- Discrepancies in the success/failure percentage between courses and how they are justified.
- Differences between students in (a) the time to graduation, and (b) final degree grades.
- Whether the Department understands the reasons of such positive or negative results?

#### IMPROVEMENT

- Does the Department propose methods and ways for improvement?
- What initiatives does it take in this direction?

Note to the reader: This section is developed as a narrative on the Department's three programmes, and in doing so the EEC comments on the various questions addressed in the four parts of this Report's second section.

The Department has carefully thought out its teaching responsibilities. Basing its teaching on a combination of lecture courses and seminars, the Department also draws on the availability of theatrical resources in Athens, and ensures that its students have the chance to attend theatrical productions which then become objects of critical analysis and discussion in class. Recently, a successful programme of e-class instruction was introduced, with Department members expressing their intention to continue and enlarge this new form of instruction. It must also be said that, given the Department's objectives, the weight of instruction is placed on theoretical and historical studies, while instruction and exposure to practical aspects of theatrical production are generally considered ancillary activities. We understand that, thanks to a series of discussions over the past few years, the Department has enlarged the range of courses in practical aspects of theatrical production. Their symbolically marginal status is indicated by the fact that instruction in such courses is often entrusted to unpaid, if highly qualified and widely recognized, professionals, who offer their services on a voluntary basis. The Department's curricular structure (examined in greater detail in another part of this report) requires students to take a large number of mandatory courses, and a relative small number of courses of their own choice. Asked about this imbalance, members of the department responded by emphasizing the poor preparation of Greek university students, and the need to provide them with basic knowledge that, in the past, was offered by the

country's secondary schools. We encourage the Department to reconsider this aspect of their teaching activities, so as to offer students a wider number of elective courses as well as a reduction in the number of mandatory ones. We note that students would welcome such a change. The Department, thanks to its relatively small size, encourages direct contact between students and professors. The resulting atmosphere greatly enhances the possibility of active and productive learning, and generates excellent conditions for introducing students to a culture of critical analysis and creative thinking. As a part of our visit, members of our Department visited some classes, and were impressed. In often unwelcome surroundings, members of the teaching staff, taught with enthusiasm, (in one case, teaching more hours than required), presenting visual materials that were attractive and convincing, and demonstrating familiarity with the most recent scholarly trends in their fields. We should also like to point out the excellent summer programme on ancient drama that has been developed by one member of the Department, drawing on the expertise of several other members. This programme, held in sites of great archaeological and historical importance, has brought together widely recognized international experts in the history and production of ancient theatrical works, as well as postgraduate students from an impressively large number of countries. The resulting enrichment of its pedagogical activities is widely recognized as producing greatly beneficial results to the Department's students.

Essential for the kind of teaching in which the Department prides itself is the availability of library resources, on which students can draw while preparing for their classes. The department's library is well stocked with printed and electronic materials, and well suited for the classes offered by the Department. But the current financial straits, and the resulting loss of suitable personnel to oversee the functioning of the library results in an extremely awkward situation: while, thankfully, the Department long ago abandoned the policy of the «single monograph» required for each course, encouraging, instead, students to prepare their assignments and papers by reference to the available bibliography, the library tends to be open only for short hours, which largely coincide with the scheduling of classes. Staff have tried to respond to this awkward situation by making available to students various readings on line. Yet, there is wide recognition, both by students and academic staff, that the successful conduct of the Department's courses relies on the ready availability to students of library resources. This is a problem that needs to be addressed by the Department. An additional challenge related to library resources is that, in our impression, the library should be enriched by the addition of substantial number of audio-visual materials and access to e-books.

We strongly suggest that the Ministry reconsiders its policy with regards to offering free monographs to students. In our opinion these monies could instead be invested in Departments' library resources. Thus using the available funds in a more creative and up-to-date manner would perhaps be an effective way to improve the library's system. In that way it might be possible to have more access to e-books as well as the renewal of electronic databases for journals- which are currently suspended due to the economic crisis. However most importantly sufficient support staff would be made available so that the library could be open to professors and students for the appropriate amount of hours. It seems to us that this proposal will protect the principle of public education and access to knowledge.

Students of all levels, when questioned about their evaluation of the Department's courses and of their professors, expressed a nearly unanimous enthusiasm about their academic experience. Indeed, in a meeting we had with a large number of undergraduates (of whom perhaps as many as three dozen were present) those few students who had studied in other

Departments or Universities discussed, in genuinely flattering terms, their experience in the Department. Their criticisms regarded three points: 1. The library; 2. The need for wider choice of elective courses; 3. The need to enlarge the number of possibilities of imparting practical experience to students, by making available a greater number of courses on all aspects of theatrical production.

While having suffered the loss, mostly to retirement, of a number of distinguished colleagues, the Department's 19 staff members seem to us to be adequate for meeting the needs of its undergraduate students. Yet, the number of students who appear in the department's rolls points to a series of interconnected problems: While the Department regularly asks that 60 new undergraduate students be admitted annually, the Ministry's arbitrary and seemingly capricious decisions result in an almost double number of enrolees. If all students were to regularly attend classes, the available classrooms would be inadequate to accommodate all of them. Thus, we are convinced that the Ministry bears heavy responsibility for some of the imbalances we note in this section of the report. But there is an additional problem related to the number of the Department's students. The students who graduate annually are fewer than half those admitted each year. The country's current economic conditions perhaps explain part of this discrepancy. But there may be a wider and more serious issue here, and we encourage the Department to consider a way to diminish this discrepancy.

Given its present orientation, the Department's technical and technological infrastructure is good, although, as is the case with the Library, the lack of technical support renders the use of this technology difficult. This is especially the case with the very well equipped computer room, which could greatly enhance the Department's teaching. Lack of supervisory and technical personnel renders largely unusable the excellent equipment purchased by the Department. Thus, a large investment in hard ware is left unexploited because of the lack of relatively modest sums needed to maintain it, and to bring up to date the software required to optimize its functioning. A different issue, but one that also has a bearing on the department's teaching activities, is the lack of adequate space where students can prepare for the production of theatrical plays. Such space has been identified, but bureaucratic complications seem to have interfered with its proper use. We strongly urge the University Administration to cooperate with the Department and ensure that, without loss of time, arrangements be made for assigning this space to it.

Despite these problems --the shortage of funds, the loss of personnel, the greater number of students, the woeful conditions of the building in which the Department is called upon to carry out its teaching responsibilities-- we are greatly impressed by the commitment (one may be even tempted to say, the passion) which the members of the teaching staff bring to their teaching, and the corresponding affection which students nurture for their teachers and the Department at large. Everyone is aware of the «conditions of seige» under which the Department (indeed, all University Departments in the country) live of these days. Everyone is determined to make the very best of these conditions, and to render as profitable and productive the department's teaching mission.

Many of the preceding comments and questions apply to the department's post graduate and doctoral programmes. Here, as well, we were struck by the students' high esprit, by their recognition that the close scholarly relations with their teachers and the constant encouragement and inspiration they receive from them, and by the seriousness of purpose and engagement they show to the Department. This seriousness is not only the result of the students' somewhat older age at the time of admission to the Department, but also of their obviously keen sense of purpose, and their determination to acquire an outstanding professional preparation. Nonetheless, there are some issues that these students brought to our attention, which we wish to convey to the Department: as we noted in a previous section

of the report, the postgraduate programme calls for both an entrance and a final set of examinations. While everyone with whom we talked recognized the need and utility of the entrance examinations, several students voiced their opposition to the exit examinations. Although we do not wish to take a position on this issue, we strongly urge the Department either to abolish this requirement, or to explain (once again if necessary) the need for its maintenance. Postgraduate students share the view of undergraduates that greater exposure to and instruction in practical courses would enhance their professional training. In more than one case, doctoral students expressed their gratitude for the help they received from their supervisors not only in formulating important and original dissertation topics, but also and most especially in helping them to frame their topics in new theoretical and comparative contexts.

In sum, the Department's teaching activities bespeak the working of an effective organization and a highly professional orientation. The members of the Department's Faculty are deeply interested in their pedagogical responsibilities, which they discharge with a sense of commitment and a continuing sensitivity to their students' needs. It was obvious to us that these teachers manage to transmit their scholarly commitment and professional seriousness to their own students. Thus, our overall assessment of the Department's teaching programme is extremely positive. The questions we included in our report are meant to enhance an already outstanding programme.

### **C. Research**

*For each particular matter, please distinguish between under- and post-graduate level, if necessary.*

Note to the reader: This section is also developed as a narrative text.

- Since its establishment in the 1990s, the Department's primary research aim has been 'to fill some gaps' in theoretical and practical aspects of theater studies. In this quarter of a century, research has focused mainly on two areas: the historical documentation and archival study of Modern and Ancient Greek theater, also in its relations with the European theater (and more generally with international experiences in theater); And, linked to the first area, the practical application of theater in all its forms, from acting to staging, from traditional to folk popular theater, and, chronologically, from antiquity to the present. A quarter of a century after this important new beginning in the scholarly life of the University of Athens, the department has achieved its original research objectives and has expanded to other areas (both theoretical and practical) the field of its collective investigation.
- As a result of the Department's activity, Greek Theater is no longer defined simply as Ancient Tragedy and Comedy. The Department's Members have made major contributions to the History of Modern Greek Theater, including the earliest Cretan texts from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries; the theater in the islands of the Ionian sea; the role of language in drama during the Catholic presence in the Aegean islands; the influence of Venetian theater in the Balkan areas in the eighteenth century, and the first theatrical events between the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Specific mention should also be made of the role of theater in areas dominated by Greek-speaking Catholics and in areas of the Danubian principalities – a research area that was largely under-explored until the 1980s.
- Research initiated in the Department, and carried out in archives and libraries in Greece and in other countries, has produced results of great

importance not only for the history of theater, but also for its connections with the history of orality and of the Greek language itself.

- Another important aspect of the Department's research deals with the relationship between ancient Greek theater and modern performance, a rich and interesting field that touches upon another important and interesting field, that of reception theory. Research is carried out not only in libraries and archives, but also in the practical field, with performances by the students in the context of Theatre Education courses or by the teachers in context of their professional duty in the University and also addressed to wider public. In preparing for such performances, teachers and students work on relevant theoretical research. Such 'applied research experience' has had a significant and measurable impact, as the Department's graduates, working with cultural institutions in the capital, have contributed to significantly improving the theatre production programmes, which in the future will be historical documents for theatre studies by historians and other scholars.
- Our overall judgment is that, by the strictest international standards, the research carried out in the Department is of the highest quality, comparable to research in the best Universities in Europe—and elsewhere. It is therefore a matter of deep regret that, due to the predictable language barrier, the publications of the Department's members are not better known by the international scholarly community. To counter this situation, we encourage our colleagues in the Department to cultivate their international connections, to publish, even more than they now do, in foreign journals, to participate in Congresses and seminars abroad, - in short, to contribute to the lowering of the linguistic barrier between themselves and scholars from other countries. Over the years, the Department has established contacts with non academic Institutions (Municipal Governments, and of course, theaters). This outreach has produced benefits to the Department's students, as many of them have been able to acquire experience and, eventually, reach positions outside the university.

In sum, all the while intending to maintain its attention firmly fixed on the theoretical and historical approaches that have characterized its work so far, in its research, the Department is committed to exploring new approaches and methods, especially in pursuit of greater integration of practical and theoretical studies, and also, as noted in another part of this report, in opening new interdisciplinary studies with similar departments in the University and elsewhere. Thus, the Department is set to continue its heretofore successful balancing act of embracing approaches inherent both in the University's Philosophical School and those rooted in Arts Departments.

- The Department's journal.
- The Journal, PARABASIS, is currently in its eleventh issue (with a volume of indices for the first 9 volumes). This Journal has established its leading role in the international scene. Supported in part by a private foundation, the journal is already available on-line and will feature special issues on specific topics. The series *κείμενα*, has hosted rare and unknown texts, while the journal published collections of essays in honor of the department's academic staff at the time of their retirement and proceedings of conferences (for example, on the archive of choreographer Rallou Manou, the theater of Sikelianos and twentieth century directors and playwrights). The publications of its individual members cover a wide spectrum of interest, although one

identifies, throughout the Department's history, a concern with interdisciplinary approaches, which, with the passage time and the enrichment of the Department's staff by the addition of new members, inevitably shift in focus. A report such as this one cannot refer to all the important publications of the Department's members. Suffice it here to refer to some areas that impressed us in the course of our survey of the Department's activities: the reception of the ancient theater in Greece and internationally; the didactic function of the theater (Το θέατρο στο σχολείο); the reception of foreign authors in Greece (Goethe, Maeterlinck in Greece, but also conferences and seminars on Beckett, theater work in the Ionian Islands until 1953); expression in the theater of movement of ideas (enlightenment, surrealism, etc.), or historical facts and events (p.e. the Asia Minor catastrophe and its consequences in –theater – the topic of a doctorate thesis); The history of drama translation; pre-revolutionary theater in the areas of Greek language of the Ottoman Empire. We also note positively the volume published in 2010, in celebration of the first 20 years of the Department, through which it is possible to draw a clear picture of the Department's scholarly life. The newsletter *Parodos* for the European Network of Research and Documentation of Performances of Ancient Greek Drama (printed on recycled paper) usefully documents the activities of this network.

- An example of the rich work carried out in the Department that much impressed us is the recent book by one of its members devoted to a study of religious sermons and rhetoric, which, in addition to its traditional scholarly virtues (bibliographic documentation and solid archival research) is distinguished for its new perspectives on theatrical performance, rhetoric and religious sermons.
- The infrastructure necessary for the Department's research activities is adequate in quality, especially because of its success in obtaining funding (Thalis 2012-2015). But, as we note elsewhere in the report, staff shortages often make it difficult to use this equipment profitably.

The Department currently hosts a number of important research projects such as the European Network of Research and Documentation of Performances of Ancient Greek Drama, launched in 1995, which offers a Summer School on Ancient Greek Drama (from 2013 part of its activities held in Lavrio, with its ancient theater which is not in the main touristic circuits). The network, focusing primarily on the reception of ancient drama, promotes research activities (such as the development of a research database, funded by Pythagoras) as well as a series of conferences/symposia, meetings, editions and cultural exchange between student and staff from various European countries.

- The Department also has several bilateral exchanges as part of the Erasmus exchange in the future that will be implemented with the new European program Erasmus plus.
- The Department has established a number of important national and international collaborations with public and private institutions and also with academics and with the world of theater and cinema. The committee had the opportunity to meet and appreciate the active collaboration of personalities involved professionally in the cinema and theater offering their competence

for a better preparation of students. This research, teaching and practice, is of great importance also in view of the development prospects in the labor market.

In particular, the Department has established trade relations with institutions such as the Municipality of Athens, the French Institute, several foreign universities, public and private theaters in Greece and abroad, other universities in Greece, primary and secondary schools, libraries, archives, foundations.

- In pursuit of its research programmes, the Department has promoted European projects and has secured substantial funding, as, for example, from -Thalis 2015 - Pythagoras - Kapodistriasis - Project Pergamos: database, while the Programs Erasmus has provided a general course of modern Greek culture, in English, in order to facilitate the insertion of non Greek students in the department and to allow them to take exams: The course is titled: *History Arts and Letters* 7 hours per week (13 weeks)
- The scientific importance of the Department is recognized by the national academic community, and also at an international level. Many teachers have received awards and recognition locally, nationally and internationally.
- The department, in addition to the trend of scientific research already started, should promote studies in the management of cultural heritage, in order to offer its graduates further professional opportunities. In the next few years it should also explore the possibility of investing in young people trying the way of the joint degree and joint PHD, so that the research and teaching can have a uniform dimension. More work on contemporary theatre practice and interdisciplinary/performance studies approaches to work in the country and abroad both by academic staff and postgraduate/doctoral students will enhance the Department's position in the field internationally.
- The summer school of the Network of Ancient drama is exemplary of the Department's commitment to outward-facing research activities involving staff and students; more exchange programs for academic staff would also be desirable as they can enhance their research. The Department's consistent engagement with cultural industry in the country exemplifies how it sees its role in the society and how research in the field can be applied in other contexts.

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### **D. All Other Services**

*For each particular matter, please distinguish between under- and post-graduate level, if necessary.*

#### IMPROVEMENTS

- Has the Department identified ways and methods to improve the services provided?
- Initiatives undertaken in this direction.
  
- Due to the ongoing financial crisis, this is an area that needs immediate attention and responses from the university and Ministry authorities. We will list a few areas that shocked us (and which were commented on by members of the faculty, UG, PG students). We wonder whether the unattractive conditions of the building may be impacting on students' unwillingness to attend classes as frequently as would be required by the Department:
  1. Building's woeful conditions (e.g. functioning of elevators, conditions of bathrooms, limited or non existent access for disabled students {we met two current UG students with learning needs}, mountains of dirt throughout the building, transgression of the smoking ban...)
  2. We were shocked by the fact that the Department lacks direct wi-fi access.
  3. Due to the ongoing financial crisis, two members of staff were suspended from their duties and currently there are only two employees covering the Department's needs, which range from students' requests, reading/interpreting legislation frameworks, taking minutes of faculty meetings and processes of promotion and staff development and so on. We were impressed by the amount of consistent effort, passion (and perhaps self-sacrifice) that the administrative staff shows but we cannot stress enough the need to resolve this situation with increasing the number of staff *asap*. The unacceptable delay in

graduation processes, which was raised as an issue by undergraduate students, is one example of how the lack of staff has a negative impact on students' evaluation of their university experience. During our meeting with current undergraduate students, a lot of students emphasised that the department's administration was impeccable, when the team was properly staffed. Particular attention needs to be paid to the administration of the PG programme, where the relevant member of staff currently remains unpaid. We would also like to communicate request for clarity of communication between the central university/state administration processes and relevant offices, as this is impeding the efficiency and timeliness of their work.

4. In terms of staffing issues, we emphasise a point that was made earlier on in the report that it is necessary to employ more support staff, across various areas: first, the library; second, support and technical staff for maintaining the Department's IT equipment and for designing and maintaining the Department's website (which is currently administrated by a member of the academic staff).
5. In terms of resources, the need for more studio facilities is imperative particularly for the Theatre Education course. Those studio facilities will also be invaluable for the delivery of courses on acting, directing and other more practice-based teaching experiences.
6. In terms of administration, a lot of issues in the Department are developed electronically (e.g. student registration; input of marks and so on) but are processed slowly due to shortage of staff. The introduction of e-class facilities allows for online teaching and learning for students who may not be able to attend a class; it would thus make the Department's main fields of research accessible to a wider public, is another example of the ways in which the Department attempts to introduce new technologies in administration and organization structures. The committee would like to encourage the Department to pursue this process further to enhance efficiency and other structures.

### **Collaboration with social, cultural and production organizations**

Please, comment on quality, originality and significance of the Department's initiatives.

During the site visit, the Committee had the opportunity to have conversations with representatives of various organizations, from the private and the public sectors (employers, graduate-employees or doctoral students who are also working in the archives, education contexts, theatres, arts organizations and so on). We were impressed by the measurable impact that the work of Department's academic staff, students and graduates has had on various fields. For instance, the 'work placement' course offered by the Department to undergraduate students paved the way for graduates to pursue such careers in places, where they were employed during their studies. The National Theatre of Greece has employed seventeen graduates in the past six years and their work across a number of departments (production; stage management; marketing and international relations; dramaturgy and translation) did not only mean a more robust presence of theatre studies graduates in contemporary theatre practice and industry but also marked a shift in repertoire choices and the shaping of a new audience for the country's main stage. As another example, the ongoing engagement of the Department with archives (for example, E.L.I.A.) led to the development and maintenance of significant archival collections and their access to the research and wider communities. Overall, the Department's outwards-facing activities and links with various organizations are commendable and impressive, particularly bearing in mind the financial

crisis context – we hope that our colleagues will receive more support from the state, the public and private sector in their ongoing work in securing the position of theatre studies in Greek society, the arts and cultural sector as well as its graduates’ employability. We appreciated also the effort to create a “theatrologo” for the educational system of the country.

### ***E. Strategic Planning, Perspectives for Improvement and Dealing with Potential Inhibiting Factors***

*For each particular matter, please distinguish between under- and post-graduate level, if necessary.*

Please, comment on the Department’s:

- Potential inhibiting factors at State, Institutional and Departmental level, and proposals on ways to overcome them.
- Short-, medium- and long-term goals.
- Plan and actions for improvement by the Department/Academic Unit
- Long-term actions proposed by the Department.

In the complex Greek situation, culture in public institutions could be a safe investment: we must therefore proceed with a policy of supporting scientific research (theoretical and applied) by investing in human potential and resources for internationalization.

In the short term, the Department should enter into its more mature phase using the experience and accumulated assets, and will face the generational change; in the medium term it will seek to establish scientific interconnections more closely with the other humanities departments of Greek universities and foreign Institutions, while in the long-term it will seek to ensure effective professional opportunities to its graduates, establishing a real and permanent contact with the world of school and work.

### ***F. Final Conclusions and recommendations of the EEC***

*For each particular matter, please distinguish between under- and post-graduate level, if necessary.*

Conclusions and recommendations of the EEC on:

- the development of the Department to this date and its present situation, including explicit comments on good practices and weaknesses identified through the External Evaluation process and recommendations for improvement
- the Department’s readiness and capability to change/improve
- the Department’s quality assurance.

We found the Department in a period of transition, having completed a quarter of a century’s work and we felt that there is consensus among members of staff in terms of the need to identify the shape/scope of the curriculum as well as strategies of implementation for the future. The Committee’s impression is that there is an ongoing and fruitful debate among the Department’s members of staff, with regard to the Department’s orientation, which clearly

indicates a reflexive attitude, committed to detail and high standard. The two interconnected areas, which the members of staff are debating, is the introduction of more practice-led/practice-focused courses in the undergraduate programme and the possibility of more optionality or pathway-specific degrees. The Committee's understanding is that such a revision of the Department's programme (potentially allowing for a history/theory/performance studies strand; a practice-oriented strand and one emphasizing theatre education) would signify:

1. a new approach to the model of theatre studies that the Department has promoted so far;
2. a re-evaluation of its foundational aims;
3. a redrafting of its mission statement;
4. the need for closer collaboration with the Ministry of Education and other relevant authorities to secure the appointment of more staff – both academic, administrative and support – and the acquisition of appropriate resources (particularly rooms and equipment) for the Department.

We would like to encourage the Department's academic staff to continue this conversation, challenging and difficult though it may be. A question of balance, in terms of approach is raised: how can a more synchronic, contemporary approach to the theatre event both in teaching and research be developed while protecting the Department's commitment to rigorous historical and theoretical framework? The integration of more current developments in performance studies is an area to consider as this will complement the strong work that is currently developed in the Department. In this way, the Department's graduates will not fall into the trap of 'cheap journalism' or reviewing contemporary theatre without the necessary critical skills.

The shape of the curriculum as it currently stands, and this was confirmed both by current students at all levels and graduates, is comprehensive, rigorous and has certainly established the field in the country. Now, as the Department moves on to its next phase, we would support our colleagues in their attempts to revisit the Department's scope, securing and enhancing its legacy and opening their work further to where the field stands internationally. We feel that there are already possibilities for revision and improvement of the curriculum, firstly by allowing for collaborations with other Departments of the Philosophy School of Athens. We believe that the department would take advantage of opportunities for collaboration existing either in the University (such as for the example, Music Department, Foreign Languages) and beyond.

At an age of interdisciplinarity and in a Department, which historically seems to have emerged through the contribution of scholars from different fields in the arts and the humanities, we feel that there is a fertile ground to promote the growth of this tradition and allow for more contacts between ideas and approaches/methods between departments – both in terms of teaching and research. This may lead to a re-evaluation of what 'theatre education' suggests in the twenty-first century and how new models, building on the knowledge of the past, may solidify the field even further. We hope that our colleagues will receive the appropriate support from the state and wish them the best of luck in continuing their exemplary work.

#### The Members of the Committee

##### Name and Surname

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**(Coordinator)**
2. **Professor Antony Molho**, European University Institute – Istituto Europeo di Firenze, ITALY
3. **Senior Lecturer Marilena Zaroulia**, University of Winchester, UK.
4. **κ. ΒΑΣΣΙΑΛΗΣ ΒΑΦΕΑΣ**, Παραγωγός, Σεναριογράφος, Σκηνοθέτης, ΕΛΛΑΔΑ