

## Quality Assurance Policy

The Department of Primary Education promotes Education Sciences, focuses on students' scientific, pedagogical and professional training while particularly aims at the continuous development and improvement of the level of education of the future of Primary Education teachers. Since its establishment, the Department has been following an upward trend towards achieving its goals, although conditions are not always favourable and various problems need to be tackled by a Department located in the borderland. The greatest ally in this endeavor is constant care and the corresponding actions of human resources who and serve the Department with responsibility and dedication.

It aims at developing a culture of quality within academic community so that it can fulfill its principles and policies, through education, excellence, knowledge promotion and innovation in research as well as through its connection with teachers and social agents.

The Department participates in the formation and monitoring of the implementation and the publication of its results as these arise from development strategies through the operating procedures of its bodies (General Assemblies, Committees, etc.). Also, the Department promotes with various actions a variety of activities developed regarding educational, scientific and social level. It maintains a website with information for the Department and its members' actions, collaborations, scientific and research work, informing about the scientific and social activities and its programs.

The following are among the principles and aims of the Department:

- *Ensuring a high level of studies aimed at its science progress and knowledge transmission;*
- *Promoting innovation in research;*
- *Continuously investigating, recording, analyzing and reviewing its needs;*
- *Ensuring the efficiency of systems and services to support students in the light of social welfare.*

The Department of Primary Education of the University Western Macedonia (UOWM) is committed to providing high quality higher education but also to developing a creative research and work environment. The Department of Primary Education is committed to implementing a quality assurance policy that supports its academic profile and Program of Studies orientation; promotes its purpose and object; implements its strategic aims; determines the means and ways to achieve them and finally aims at its continuous improvement.

The quality policy of the Department focuses on the following:

- *Continuous development of educational and research quality*
- *Continuous development of process and services quality*

- *Continuous development of the working conditions and quality of life at the Department*
- *Transparency in every level*
- *Protection of employees and students' individual rights, personal data and copyright.*

The Department of Primary Education of the University of Western Macedonia:

Designs, modifies and improves the Program of Undergraduate Studies with transparent quality procedures and with all interested parties' participation, so that it can:

- *meet the modern scientific requirements and teaching needs and adapt in a timely and effective manner to the new national and international conditions;*
- *achieve learning outcomes and ensure qualifications according to the Framework of Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area.*

It promotes quality and effectiveness of the teaching work by:

- *focusing on its suitability and high level, but also on the academic staff's continuous training,*
- *applying the legal framework concerning the academic staff's selection and development, thus ensuring meritocracy and transparency in every process,*
- *implementing an annual recording of the teaching work by the academic staff in the context of their self-assessment through the annual Internal Reports submitted to the Quality Assurance Unit of the University of Western Macedonia,*
- *analyzing the teaching work assessment as this is carried out by students every semester,*
- *focusing on the smooth operation of courses and examinations timetable*
- *utilizing a range of contemporary teaching methods and strategies with emphasis on ICT,*
- *focusing on student's progress and development during their studies*
- *encouraging and facilitating students' participation in students' mobility programs,*
- *cultivating a climate of respect, cooperation, understanding and participation for all interested parties while applying the optimum practices for addressing any possible problems,*
- *encouraging participation in collective actions of public service or environmental causes that link the Department with society,*
- *supporting knowledge dissemination through students' practicum in primary education and other social institutions.*

It focuses on the quality (and quantity) of faculty members' research work by:

- *encouraging academic staff's international mobility while supporting our country's cooperation abroad.*
- *supporting academic staff's participation in postgraduate as well as national and international research programs,*
- *encouraging writing and publication of research papers, edited books and monographs in Greek and other foreign languages,*
- *facilitating the academic staff in organizing and participating in conferences and scientific meetings in the light of promoting and publishing the Department's research activity.*

It focuses on the connection between teaching and research (in the educational as well as the scientific field, in general) by promoting research data dissemination to all levels of formal and to various forms of non-formal education.

It is informed about its' graduates professional career and disseminates information regarding students' future career besides the context of Primary Education.

According to its abilities regarding the academic staff, material and technical infrastructure, etc., it proposes the appropriate annual number of entrants so that it can offer students high quality education in combination with the corresponding care benefits.

It focuses on the quality assurance of the secretarial and other forms of support of the Department; informs the Management regarding any deficiencies in its logistical infrastructure as well as in the operation of the University of Western Macedonia supporting services, while it simultaneously submits proposals to improve them.

It conducts a review and internal inspection of the quality assurance system of the Program of Undergraduate Studies while it ensures the good cooperation between the Group of Internal Evaluation of the Department and the Quality Assurance Unit of the Institution.

Specifically, the main mission of the University of Western Macedonia is to provide graduates with the necessary theoretical and practical training for their scientific and professional career and development. Particularly, the Department Program of Studies formation, that is selecting the courses, determining the proportion of the various courses categories and their content, as well as practicum were based on the following principles, so that the Program of Undergraduate Studies can meet the Department's objectives but also society requirements for *teachers as professional* (able to carry out their pedagogical and teaching work with responsibility and effectiveness), *teachers as scientists* (able to critically confront their pedagogical and didactic role), and *teachers as researchers* (able to monitor the developments in the relevant sciences and plan independent research in order to produce new pedagogical and educational knowledge).

Therefore, a major aim of the Department is to offer students such scientific training that they will not be able to follow the developments in the Education Sciences but

also to critically approach this knowledge. This is realized through students' practice and training in educational research methods as well as through quantitative and qualitative evaluation and self-assessment, reflection and the use of ICT. In other words, the Program of Undergraduate Studies of the Department of Primary Education offers graduates the necessary qualifications of academic knowledge, pedagogical competence and teaching skills in order for them to address their professional role while teaching in the future.

The Department of Primary Education aims at Quality Assurance Policy and organizes a series of actions in this direction. In brief:

1. The strategic aims of the Department include:
  - Providing high level education, with an emphasis on student-centered learning, the improvement of the Program of Undergraduate Studies through the institutionalized process of its annual review as well as the update and standardization of academic functions by strengthening the role of the Group of Internal Evaluation and of the Curriculum Committee;
  - Conducting high level research based on international standards through the promotion of research collaborations as well as the results exploitation and dissemination for the benefit of society;
  - Promoting excellence and innovation, through encouraging and rewarding the achievements of the university community members in teaching and research;
  - Improving financial data through funding from research projects;
  - Enhancing academic staff and students' mobility, reducing expected time for graduation;
  - Enhancing the production and recognition of the academic staff's scientific work.
2. The strategic goals of the Department are related to the respective ones of the Institution, which include:
  - Support-upgrade of the educational work,
  - Support-upgrade of research and innovation,
  - Improvement of the amount and absorption of funding,
  - Support-upgrade of human resources,
  - Support-upgrade and improvement of infrastructure management as well as of the services offered by the Institution.
3. The strategic goals of the Department of Primary Education are related to its quality improvement and the effectiveness of the educational work, namely:
  - Modernizing the offered courses, replacing the old ones with new, avoiding overlaps between courses, adding new courses,
  - Hiring new faculty members (Academic Staff, Laboratory Teaching Staff, Special Scientific and Teaching Staff, Special Technical Staff) and administrative

staff to improve the teaching process as well as the infrastructure and services that support educational work in the Department,

- Increasing students' participation in educational work assessment.

The Department focuses on the continuous **communication**, as well as the valid and timely information of the students and the public. Necessary information is offered on the Department's website. This information is constantly updated and special staff ensures its quality and validity.

Specifically, the Department of Primary Education of the University of Western Macedonia:

- has posted the updated Quality Assurance Policy for the Program of Undergraduate Studies on its website (<https://eled.uowm.gr/>) and notifies all interested parties in various ways to all parties regarding its implementation;
- has posted the Program of Undergraduate Studies on its website;
- ensures that in the freshmen's welcoming ceremony of first year information regarding the Quality Assurance Policy is thoroughly described;
- presents its policy for quality assurance in lectures, workshops and information events, which take place aiming at promoting undergraduate and postgraduate programs in national and international conferences;
- focuses on the website update and quality (<https://eled.uowm.gr/>), so that it is always a valid, reliable and accessible source of information on what is happening in Department. Besides, a large part of students' communication with the administrative services of the Department as well as with the academic staff a but also access to courses information and material are carried out electronically;
- informs about the Quality Assurance Policy all social, productive and cultural agents with whom it cooperates or wishes to cooperate;
- Finally, it organizes annual information days for students regarding policy of the Department to ensure the quality of undergraduate studies.

