ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ

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ΤΗΣ ΠΟΙΟΤΗΤΑΣ ΣΤΗΝ ΑΝΩΤΑΤΗ ΕΚΠΑΙΔΕΥΣΗ

HELLENIC REPUBLIC

H.Q.A.

HELLENIC QUALITY ASSURANCE
AND ACCREDITATION AGENCY

EXTERNAL EVALUATION REPORT

DEPARTMENT OF SPEECH & LANGUAGE THERAPY OF THE

TECHNOLOGICAL EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTE (T.E.I.)
OF EPIRUS (IOANNINA)

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External Evaluation Committee

The Committee responsible for the External Evaluation of the Department of Speech & Language Therapy of the Technological Educational Institution of Epirus (Ioannina) consisted of the following four (4) expert evaluators drawn from the Registry constituted by the HQA in accordance with Law 3374/2005:

1. Prof Ineke (Catharina) Mennen (Coordinator)

   Bangor University, Wales, UK

2. Dr Zoi Kapoula

   Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, Paris, France

3. Dr Mary Andrianopoulos

   University of Massachusetts, USA

4. Dr Dimitrios Giannatos

   General Hospital Athens (Laiko), Athens, Greece

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

The Committee visited the Department of Speech & Language Therapy (SLT) at the T.E.I. Epirus (Ioannina) for a period of two and a half days, from 17 – 19 June 2013. Before the meeting, the Committee met at the offices of ADIP where they were given a short presentation about the purpose of the Evaluation and a briefing about the main points that were to be covered in the external evaluation.

During the visit, the Committee was able to meet with the following individuals:
- senior members of the Administration of the T.E.I. SLT Epirus
- the faculty members of the Department
- administrative staff
- graduates of the course
- professional speech and language therapists
- affiliated lectures and supervisors
- laboratory and technical personnel
- representatives of the professional association of speech & language therapists in Epirus
- students currently enrolled in the SLT degree at the T.E.I. Epirus (representatives of each level of the course, except for level 1 students)
- library personnel
- external research collaborators

The Committee was given the opportunity to visit three off-campus practicum sites, which consisted of a private practice, a centre for pediatric psychiatry, and the University Hospital of Ioannina, section of physical medicine and rehab.

The Committee was also given the opportunity to visit the on-campus facilities, teaching rooms, auditoria, and laboratories. Specifically, these were:
- the library
- otolaryngology laboratory
- the speech & voice science lab
- the computer labs
- one departmental clinic room
- the sports centre
- cafeteria and dining hall

- administrative offices
- auditorium and small class rooms
- a tour of a few private offices

The Committee received the following documents/reports/data:
- the Self-Evaluation Report
- PowerPoint presentation relating to the Self-Evaluation Report
- a comprehensive package of placement and evaluation forms to document student placement for clinical practice and student monitoring
- data about student progression
- packet of orientation material and instructions related to the external evaluation and report
- brochure of the T.E.I. SLT department
- flyer of specialty labs
- a sampling of faculty publications, tests developed by faculty members, and books which were written or translated by faculty members
- software (for assessment and rehabilitation) developed by faculty members

II. The Internal Evaluation Procedure

Two weeks prior to the visit the Committee was provided a 184-page Self-Evaluation Report by the T.E.I. SLT Epirus. The report was comprehensive and well organized, utilizing international guidelines for self-assessment, and comprised of the following sections:
- process of internal evaluation
- presentation of the department
- programmes of study
- curriculum and teaching
- research activity
- relations with social/cultural/professional networks
- strategy for academic development
- administrative services and infrastructure
- formative and summative conclusions
- proposal for improvement and development
- comprehensive outcome data
- comprehensive annex, including references of scientific publications of faculty members, surveys and inventory reports, questionnaires, statistical data, and module descriptors

Together with the other evidence that was provided to the Committee, the Committee was able to get a qualitative and quantitative overview and analysis of the department's internal evaluation process. The Committee was pleased with the comprehensive nature of the T.E.I.'s self-analysis and reflection on current and future objectives and areas for development. The Committee believes that the Department has fully met the aims and objectives of the internal evaluation process.

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

APPROACH

Currently, there exists only an Undergraduate Programme for SLT at the T.E.I. Epirus; hence all comments in this report refer to the four-year Undergraduate Programme, unless otherwise specified.

The goals and objectives of the Curriculum are the following:
1. to educate students on the application of biological and physical science assessment in development of human communication (speech, voice, child and adult language, neurological bases of human communication, developmental and acquired speech & language problems) in order to assess, diagnose and rehabilitate communication disorders
2. to provide services for diagnosis and treatment of disorders of speech & swallowing to the public and clinics
3. to provide research on normal human communication processes versus pathological speech, voice and language disorders, with a particular emphasis on the Greek language

The philosophy of the T.E.I. Speech Language Therapy (SLT) programme is based to the extent possible on internationally recognised professional standards with respect to training in clinical practice of speech & language therapy. T.E.I.'s goals and objectives are being implemented to the extent possible to meet the social, economic and public health needs in Greece. The Curriculum is consistent with T.E.I.'s aims and objectives in as far as this is possible in the given context. These will be discussed later in this report. The Committee believes the T.E.I. Department went to extraordinary lengths to achieve the aims and objectives of the Curriculum, working to great capacity.

The Curriculum is based on national and international standards of professional education, research, and clinical practice in SLT, and is decided by the current faculty in consultation with professionals in the field, stakeholders, researchers, student and alumni feedback, with respect to the changing needs, current and future clinical practice of speech & language therapy in Greece and internationally. The Curriculum fosters independent and scientific intellectual development and curiosity in the Programme's student body and alumni.

The T.E.I. utilises quantitative and qualitative measurements for student progress monitoring, student progress and outcomes, clinical placement, student response to teaching instruction and curriculum development.

IMPLEMENTATION

As previously mentioned, the Curriculum is logically organised and follows international standards for clinical education and practice in speech & language therapy. It is deemed to be coherent and functional to the extent possible. The clinical and scientific materials utilised are exceptional with respect to instrumentation in speech production, speech analysis, acoustics/voice, hearing, otolaryngology, neurology, pedagogy, and clinical software for assessment and rehabilitation. However, it is clear to the Committee that despite the huge efforts of the current five (5) exceptionally motivated and committed faculty, it is nearly

impossible to implement the curriculum to its fullest potential given the exceptionally large size of the student body without additional means and investment from the Hellenic Republic and European Union.

There is a national need for well-educated speech and language therapists in the work force in Greece, and the Department clearly needs greater investment to meet these public health needs in the Hellenic Republic. Priorities of current clinical practice is focused on childhood developmental disorders, yet there is a significant need in the clinical provision for acquired and degenerative neurologic, otolaryngologic, neurodevelopmental, psychopathologic and genetic communication disorders in people of all ages.

RESULTS

In the Department's Self-Evaluation Report a clear and well-defined set of logical goals and objectives were reported. The Committee was impressed by the quality and innovative nature of these aims. The Department is working to its maximum capacity with five (5) full-time faculty to service a student body of greater than 1000 and the demands associated in administrating the programme to its fullest potential. Nonetheless, the Department is doing its best in trying to meet the demands of the academic and clinical programme. As a consequence, certain content areas are not being developed to their fullest potential, such as research.

The T.E.I. administrators indicated that there will be a reduction in the incoming number of students for the academic year 2013-2014. However, this reduction in student numbers is minimal, and not sufficient. Faculty members should be given protected research time, analogous with international standards and expectations (typically 30% of faculty time). This can be achieved by appointing additional full time permanent faculty (and long-term appointment of adjunct faculty and clinical supervisors, please see our recommendations). Most SLT departments on an international basis have an average of approximately eight to twelve full-time tenure track faculty to serve a student body ranging from approximately 300 to 400 undergraduate speech therapy majors, and a masters programme comprised of approximately twenty to forty full-time students, as well as approximately six to ten full-time doctoral students. The current five faculty are of high calibre, yet not sufficient for the daily and long-term operation for speech and language therapy programme that has significant potential to achieve excellence, particularly for fundamental research applied to clinical problems. The calibre of the current research that is being conducted in the Department – although of moderate quantity – is of high quality and should undoubtedly be supported.

Among the 18 part-time adjunct faculty and clinical supervisors we interviewed, only some were certain as to whether they would be able to return the following year. The main reason they gave was the uncertainty in resources that were available to sustain these positions. The Committee believes that these positions are essential in the operation of the programme and its ability to maintain quality assurances.

The T.E.I. administration, full-time faculty, part-time adjuncts and clinical supervisors, including the current students, are fully aware of the Department's potential and its need for more personnel.

IMPROVEMENT

The Department has outlined in their Self-Evaluation Report a set of medium and long-term improvements. In order of priority, these are:

Long-term:

1. to establish a masters or postgraduate programme, independently or in collaboration with other educational institutions

2. to broaden the scope of subject areas and the ability for students to select areas of clinical and research specialization within the current provision of logopeadics and future expansion of the scope of practice within speech and language therapy

3. reduction in student numbers

4. increase in permanent faculty and increase of protected research time

Medium-term:

1. submission of a proposal for an international Masters programme to Erasmus Mundus

2. development and organization of scientific conferences, workshops and seminars

3. creation of an in-house clinic

4. inter-departmental collaboration and expanding partnerships between departments of T.E.I. and universities domestically and abroad

5. closer collaboration with public and private entities engaged in speech & language therapy

To address these needs the Department also proposes plans at the level of the Institution and the State.

Institutional:

- more laboratory equipment and infrastructure

- training of technical staff to new technologies and informatics

- rational allocation of resources proportional to number of students and laboratories

State:

- establishment of autonomous postgraduate studies at T.E.I.

- reducing the number of students

- establish budget for research programmes

- reduction of bureaucratic procedures

- infrastructure and investment in an in-house clinic

B. Teaching

APPROACH:

The Committee is of the opinion that the Department uses a wide range of teaching methods, including seminars, lectures, practicum experiences, group work, video case studies, research experiences under the direction of expert faculty (i.e., neurologist, ENT, informatics, psychology, clinical speech & language therapists).

The scope of T.E.I. personnel in the Department consists of five full-time faculty comprised of 4 Ph.D.s in related fields and 1 pursuing a Ph.D. in speech & language therapy, approximately 22 part-time adjunct instructors and clinical supervisors (approximately 5 informed the EEC that they currently hold Master's degrees), four support staff, to meet the educational needs of approximately 1000 students.

Furthermore, students experience a range of assessment formats, such as class test, exam, oral test, presentation of case studies, research presentation, literature review, conference presentation, and research dissertation.

IMPLEMENTATION

There is a wide array of teaching experiences with respect to formal classroom lectures and seminars, required laboratories, clinical practicum, dissertation projects, and clinical case studies. Novel informatics are used to develop and implement therapy and laboratory assignments.

There are some novel pieces of instruments utilised to support academic instruction and clinical training. Some teaching experiences are enhanced with empirical investigations and use of instrumentation for diagnosis and rehabilitation. This enables some students to engage in translational research.

A small number of staff and students make use of the Erasmus mobility opportunities. There have been some opportunities for evaluation of teaching effectiveness and course content through the use of formal and informal student feedback.

RESULTS

Feedback provided by twenty students currently enrolled in years 2 to 5 and outcome data from the student questionnaire presented in the Self-Evaluation Report suggest general satisfaction with teaching and the speech & language therapy degree programme.

According to data provided in the Self-Evaluation Report the length of time to complete the speech & language therapy programme ranges from approximately four to eight years. On average it takes students approximately five years to complete the programme. Some students need more time to complete the programme, given the programme's demand and the economic and social obstacles encountered by these students.

IMPROVEMENT

The five (5) T.E.I. full-time faculty and part-time adjuncts are aware of these challenges and propose practical methods for improvement. For example, to alleviate the faculty to student ratio, a reduction in the number of students that are admitted annually is practical, cost-effective, and easy to implement. This would allow more time for the full-time faculty and part-time adjuncts and clinical supervisors to interact with the students on an individual basis, and allow greater advising and engagement in scientific, empirical, fundamental and translational research.

The faculty are enthusiastic to engage all students in research and providing them with a well-rounded education. However, there are practical hindrances due to the large student population and limited number of resources.

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

APPROACH

The full-time faculty and some adjunct part-time faculty and clinical supervisors have made enormous and impressive efforts to engage in empirical research, present at scientific conferences, attract grants, publish, and translate literature. However, due to the extremely heavy demands this places on their time and personal life in light of their teaching responsibilities, lab exercises, and student contact time, this has hindered the development and implementation of a Departmental policy and objectives for research. Despite this, investments have been made in support of research, such as instrumentation for the laboratories, research projects, and joint grant applications and collaborations.

IMPLEMENTATION
- How does the Department promote and support research?
- Quality and adequacy of research infrastructure and support.
- Scientific publications.
- Research projects.
- Research collaborations.

One method in which the Department promotes and supports research is through their Curriculum, in that a dissertation is required in the final year of study. Furthermore, the full-time faculty and some adjunct part-time faculty and clinical supervisors engage in academic and research scholarship through scientific publications, successful grant submissions, innovative proposals for research collaboration, translational research, and contributing to the body of literature and diagnostic tests for the Greek language.

RESULTS

As previously stated, the Department publishes in internationally peer-reviewed journals (some of them with high impact factor), developed tools and diagnostic tests for the Greek language (some of which were translated/adapted by American Psychology Association), a very promising track record of attracting international research grants (e.g. EU grants including other European Funding Agencies in intelligent systems, reading, writing, learning disabilities and early childhood development; reaching the final stage of evaluation of competitive grants, such as ERC Starting Grant, COST, etc.).

Some research and literature has been translated in Greek and this has been acknowledged by famous behavioural neurologists (Mesulam, Duffy, Davis), and some faculty serve as editors and reviewers of refereed scientific journals.

Some faculty participate in national research programmes connecting with other departments and scientific world conferences. Achievements of some faculty can be patented. However, there is no dedicated office or technical support to facilitate such applications.

IMPROVEMENT

A major priority of the Department is research and issues concerning normal and abnormal communication processes, with a special emphasis on the Greek language. There is some research productivity and scholarship despite the significant demands on faculty responsibilities.

The Department is engaged in and heading towards the development of various initiatives that would potentially lead to research improvement, including the development and implementation of a Masters programme at T.E.I. and a postgraduate programme through Erasmus Mundus, and fostering research in areas of expertise and strength. This includes developmental and acquired neurological disorders, neuro-otology assessment, early diagnosis and monitoring of reading, learning and communication disabilities, assessment in rehabilitation instruments and programmes, neuro-developmental problems, voice disorders, and computerized informatics for clinical application.

Current proposals have been submitted or are being revised in some of these areas. For example, a proposal for COST is currently under development for resubmission in September 2013. The Erasmus Mundus application will be submitted this autumn. Further, there are concrete initiatives from the Department for strengthening research links with Universities, T.E.I.s and Polytechnic Schools within Greece.

D. All Other Services

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

APPROACH

The Department believes that they play an essential role in educating the next generation of speech & language therapists and serving the Greek society and the public health needs. The Department's approach is to process procedures electronically for efficient administration and evaluation of student's academic and clinical performance.

IMPLEMENTATION

The Department is organised in an efficient manner relative to its available resources, in particular regarding placement and tracking of students, connecting library resources, internet access, assessment and rehabilitation materials, and translation of diagnostic and course text books. Some of the materials and books that have been translated are provided to students for free.

Some full-time permanent faculty and part-time adjunct faculty use Moodle to present their course materials and online education (e.g. study groups), but this is not standard practice of all faculty and adjunct faculty.

RESULTS

Administrative and other services were deemed to be adequate and functional by the External Evaluation Committee (EEC). However, the Department does not have technical support for their laboratories.

IMPROVEMENTS

The Department has implemented electronic means to assist with placement for clinical practicum and periodic feedback of students' clinical performance. The Department also has well-developed informatics and computer technologies for assessment and materials for therapeutic intervention, which the EEC deems to be state-of-the-art. These technological creations can be potentially patented and/or published.

Collaboration with social, cultural and production organizations
The Department has taken initiatives to expand current knowledge and continuing education opportunities through the organisation of seminars, workshops, public lectures, conference presentation, and connections with primary and secondary schools, hospitals, private practices. It is encouraged that they foster these opportunities as role-models and ambassadors for the speech & language therapy profession within Greece.

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.

Some potential inhibiting factors have been recognized by the Department at State, Institutional and Departmental level. This includes, the lack of a masters programme and autonomous postgraduate studies in the SLT Department at T.E.I.; large number of students and faculty-student ratio; lack of budget for research programmes; the time-consuming nature of bureaucratic procedures; a perceived need for additional laboratory equipment and infrastructure; insufficient number of technical and assistant staff to support the learning process and research activities; a perceived need for additional training of technical staff in new technologies and informatics; insufficient allocation of resources proportional to the number of students and laboratories; and the lack of an on-campus in-house clinic.

The Department proposed long and medium-term actions to address the inhibiting factors at State, Institutional and Departmental levels. These are as outlined below.

Long-term:

1. to establish a masters or postgraduate programme

2. to broaden the scope of subject areas of specialization

3. reduction in student numbers

4. increase in permanent faculty

5. increase of protected research time

Medium-term:

1. Submission of proposal for an international Masters programme (Erasmus Mundus)

2. development and organization of conferences, workshops and seminars

3. creation of in-house clinic for development of clinical skills prior to off-campus placement

4. increase of external collaboration with other educational institutions

5. closer collaboration with speech & language therapy profession in Greece and stakeholders

F. Final Conclusions and recommendations of the EEC

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

Overall, the External Evaluation Committee (EEC) was impressed by the quality and care with which the Department conducted the Internal Self-Evaluation and the site visit. This allowed the EEC to thoroughly assess the programme. Below, we will present our conclusion through a set of commendations and recommendations. We hope that this feedback will help the Department in their growth and development, including implementing their aims and objectives.

Commendations:

- the Department is to be congratulated for their collegiality, enthusiasm, motivation, and commitment to the mission of delivering the speech & language therapy degree to their students at T.E.I. Epirus (Ioannina)
- the Department should be commended for their excellence in their respective areas of expertise and their efforts in administrating the programme and shaping the future generation of speech & language therapists and clinical practice in Greece
- the Department is commended for their desire to expand the scope of practice of speech & language therapy in Greece consistent with other countries
- the Department is commended for their comprehensive procedures for placing students and evaluating their off-campus placements

Recommendations:

The Committee is of the opinion that this T.E.I. SLT Department is an essential provision within the Greek health system as it is the main provider of speech & language therapists, a profession which is relatively novel in Greece and for which there is a huge need and demand. The focus of the current speech & language therapy profession in Greece is on developmental and learning disabilities in children, whereas neurological (e.g. traumatic brain injury, stroke), neurodegenerative diseases (such as Alzheimer's), and voice disorders (vocal fold paralysis, vocal nodules, professional voice) receive very little to no attention. As such, the public health needs in the Greek society are currently not being met or utilized by other medical and rehabilitative sectors. With the evolution of the profession in the nation, the speech & language therapy services will broaden their scope of practice accordingly.

The below recommendations are to be interpreted as a guide to ways of further optimizing existing resources and practice:

- it is recommended to implement the on-going operation and expansion of the in-house clinical facility to reinforce both clinical practice and translational research, and involving student trainees, part-time adjunct faculty and permanent full-time faculty

- the T.E.I. should consider creating a dedicated position and office that would facilitate the administration, the processing, and submission of grants, contracts, patents, intellectual property, transfer from research to technology, and facilitate contacts with stakeholders. This is critical to increase research productivity and dissemination of technologies and intellectual property on a national and global level

- it is recommended that the Department foster transdisciplinary research within the SLT Department and other Departments in T.E.I. and other universities. For example, this can be efficiently implemented by formulating a research agenda and strategy in the Department (e.g. inter-collaborations between, for example, neuro-otology, neurorehabilitation, learning disabilities, neurodevelopmental problems, voice, technologies and informatics)

- the Department should consider increasing the existing potential for translational research between theory and practice. The connection of the Department with medical and other sections of the University of Ioannina could be further strengthened, as well as within the T.E.I. and technological departments and polytechnic schools

- the Department should move forward in successfully implementing a masters degree, through T.E.I., Erasmus Mundus, or in collaboration with other departments at the University of Ioannina (particularly medicine and rehabilitation)

- the pending reduction in student numbers for the academic year 2013-14 should be maintained in future years. This is an excellent starting point for achieving better student-staff ratios and building on research capacity, which will strengthen quality of teaching, research driven clinical practice, and faculty research productivity

- three methods of building capacity of faculty should be considered: (i) increasing the number of permanent full-time faculty; (ii) sustaining continuity of part-time adjunct faculty in order to ensure quality assurance; or (iii) merging of the T.E.I. SLT Department with the University of Ioannina

- the Department should consider linking research to practice through the dissertation and clinical practicum experiences by means of the proposed in-house clinic and off-campus collaborations, and by expanding laboratory exercises and instrumentation to a wider range of speech, language, and hearing disorders given the changing demands of the SLT profession and scope of practice

- the Department should consider when new full-time faculty appointments are allocated, that they ensure these are individuals with degrees in speech and language therapy. This is deemed to be essential to ensure that the integrity of the profession is maintained and implemented into the curriculum, research, and clinical practice of speech & language therapists in Greece

- the Department is encouraged to standardize evaluation methods for all courses through regular periodic student feedback in the form of course evaluations (following the methods which are already in place for evaluating off-campus placements) and student-staff consultative meetings, and how the outcome of these assessments are implemented in Curriculum changes

- the Department is encouraged to appoint a dedicated student advisor for academic guidance, tutoring, and advice, in order to further enhance student retention (currently, retention rate is 85%) and student progress

- the Department is encouraged to include a standardized method for critical assessment of diagnostic and therapeutic procedures with respect to evidence-based practice through literature reviews, the student's clinical practice (i.e. patient

outcome data, progress monitoring, improvement or regression of the communication disorder), and principles of neuroplasticity for all communication disorders. This will enhance evidence-based practice

- the Department is encouraged to consider the introduction of a peer-reviewed process of their teaching methods and translational research to improve quality assurance, Curriculum development/improvement

The Members of the Committee

      Name and Surname   Signature

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____