

University of Thessaly – School of Technology

Department of Forestry, Wood Sciences & Design



A2. THE QUALITY ASSURANCE POLICY POSTGRADUATE STUDIES PROGRAM



**MSc in Multifunctional
Management of Natural
Ecosystems and Bio-economy**

2023

A2. THE QUALITY ASSURANCE POLICY

POSTGRADUATE STUDIES PROGRAM

"MULTIFUNCTIONAL MANAGEMENT OF NATURAL ECOSYSTEMS AND BIO-ECONOMY"

DEPARTMENT OF FORESTRY, WOOD SCIENCES & DESIGN

1. General

Quality Assurance in Higher Education is the main objective of the European Single Higher Education Area, in which Greece has also participated since 2005 (Law 3374/2005). The basic objective governing quality assurance is the sense of responsibility of each University Institution towards students and society for the provision of high quality education as well as research.

At the University of Thessaly (hereafter UTH) the Quality Assurance Unit (QAU) has been established and is operating, in accordance with article 14, Law 4009/2011. MODIP is "the central body for the coordination and support of the quality assurance procedures of the University of Thessaly, through the Internal Quality Assurance System (ICSA). The Quality Assurance System of the University of Thessaly aims to develop a culture of quality in the academic community, so that it can transmit knowledge through efficient teaching and produce high-level expertise through innovative research" (as stated on the website of the MODIP of UTH).

Among other things, MODIP aims to further improve the quality indicators of the academic and administrative units of UTH, to provide incentives for attracting scientists with high training and international recognition, to promote excellence and to improve the position of the individual Academic Units, but also of UTH in general. For this reason, the MODIP has been set up and operates at UTH and the Internal Evaluation Teams in each Department, which have undertaken the internal evaluation process and submit the annual evaluation reports to the MODIP of UTH. MODIP then approves the Quadrennial Internal Evaluation Reports of the Departments and submits them to the Hellenic Authority for Higher Education (HAHE), while at the same time submitting to the Senate of the University of Thessaly the Internal Self-Assessment Report of the University of Thessaly every two years for information.

2. The quality assurance policy of the Master's Program "Multifunctional Management of Natural Ecosystems and Bio-economy" of the Department of Forestry, Wood Sciences and Design

The Master's Program "Multifunctional Management of Natural Ecosystems and Bio-economy" (hereinafter MSc POLYVIO) of the Department of Forestry, Wood Sciences and Design (FWSD) is committed to ensuring quality in all its academic, educational, administrative and research activities. It will offer modern and competitive study programs (at all levels), focus on innovation, quality culture and applied research. MSc POLYVIO recognizes the contribution of Quality Assurance for equal access to knowledge, extroversion, international recognition and finally cooperation with organizations and productive bodies of local society as well as national bodies. The aim of MSc POLYVIO is to achieve the highest possible quality of operation but also the continuous improvement of the educational and research project, in accordance with international standards and best practices.

The object of the MSc POLYVIO, which is implemented from the Academic Year 2020 – 2021 at the University of Thessaly, is the creation of studies in an interdisciplinary manner and with the ultimate goal of training scientists who will have well-rounded views on the subjects of the program, will have an in-depth understanding of field they will have chosen and will be able to fully respond to developments in science, the environment, as well as local, national and international society.

The Quality Policy of MSc POLYVIO harmonizes and fully follows the standard of operation of the UTH, as it is formulated by MODIP. In the FWSD Department, since the first year of its operation, the OMEA committee has been established, which consists of three [3] faculty members and is responsible for the preparation of the Department's annual and four-year evaluation reports. The aim of OMEA is to certify the quality of the educational process provided, the level of the research process, as well as the Department's administration.

The students are asked to answer a questionnaire which includes two categories of questions whose answers are taken on a 5-point Likert scale. The first category includes five [5] sections of questions concerning: 1) the course, 2) the assignments, 3) the laboratories, 4) the lecturers and 5) the laboratory assistants. The second category includes a series of questions where the student records his views on the courses and teachers.

The Quality Policy of MSc POLYVIO is based on the philosophy of interdisciplinary approach and multifaceted quality with a commitment to the progress of science, the optimal satisfaction of the requirements of the participants, scientific excellence, innovation and dedication to the transmission of knowledge. The Laboratories of the FWSD Department contribute to the provision of reliable and specialized services for product development, the performance of checks and diagnostics on products and the protection of the environment both locally and nationally.

The effort to achieve the Political Quality of the MSc POLYVIO is carried out through the internal inspection which is carried out by the OMEA members of the FWSD Department, as well as the annual evaluation which takes place in collaboration with the MODIP of UTH. In particular, the members of the OMEA of the FWSD Department, contribute to:

- monitoring the implementation of the Department's quality objectives,
- harmonization of the quality policy with the general strategic goals of the Department and the Foundation,
- making decisions for the continuous improvement of the quality of the work offered by the FWSD Department,
- conducting the Internal Evaluation and the constructive cooperation with the Quality Assurance Unit of the University of Thessaly, and
- achieving excellence, but also in meeting the expectations and requirements of all stakeholders.

For this reason, the Quality Policy will be published on the Department's website and all involved bodies will be informed (local society, all staff, external partners, students of all levels, the Academic community in general, the bodies and others) to ensure consent and direct involvement in the processes referred to in the quality system.

The Quality Policy of MSc POLYVIO will be carried out on the basis of international quality standards - the principles of the Common Assessment Framework for education may also be applied - and will be harmonized with the quality policy of UTH.

In addition, the quality policy will be drawn up with the strategic objectives of the FWSD Department at all levels, will be actively supported by all participants in the educational process, and finally will be specialized and evaluated through the MSc's objectives, as presented in its A3 form of this file.

To implement the quality policy, the FWSD Department will implement a series of procedures which will ensure that:

- emphasis is placed on student-centered learning and learning outcomes will be sought to be in accordance with the National as well as the European Framework of Higher Education Qualifications,
- the principles of the Management and Quality Assurance System (QMS) of the University of Thessaly are applied,
- the needs of human resources are met, which will actively participate in decision-making,
- the quality but also the general research and writing work of the members of the FWSD Department is promoted,
- teaching is linked to research in order to improve the qualifications of graduates and meet the demands of the labor market,
- an annual evaluation is carried out and there will be the necessary feedback in collaboration with the OMEA of the FWSD Department and the MODIP of the UTH,
- there is transparency in all actions of the FWSD Department,
- applicable ethical rules are applied and any kind of discrimination will be prevented,
- the continuous improvement of the educational activity of the FWSD Department is sought,
- all student benefits are improved,
- the formal and substantive qualifications of the teaching staff of the FWSD Department are evaluated.

Finally, the quality policy of the MSc POLYVIO is made public and disseminated to all involved members (students of all levels, teaching staff, administrative staff, the Senate of UTH, members of UTH, HAHE and others) in the context of knowledge management, so that all involved take responsibility for quality assurance.