



University of Thessaly

SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS AND BUSINESS
DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMICS & DEPARTMENT OF ACCOUNTING AND FINANCE

INTERDEPARTMENTAL POSTGRADUATE PROGRAM

In Accounting and Auditing



Quality Policy for the development and improvement of the postgraduate program
(in accordance with the provisions of Law 4957/2022)

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Introduction:

The mission of the University of Thessaly (UTH) is to provide high-quality education to its students and to promote knowledge and research in the fields related to its programs. The University of Thessaly aims to advance knowledge and expertise with ethical standards that serve the needs of society. It strives to create a free academic environment, conduct high-level research, ensure that the teaching staff has the highest possible level for teaching and research, and foster a culture of collaboration with educational and research institutions both domestically and internationally.

UTH's primary goal is the recognition and attractiveness of its undergraduate and postgraduate programs nationally in the next decade, as well as international acceptance of its research work.

1. Quality Assurance Policy of the Department of Economics

The focal point of the quality assurance policy of the Department of Economics (DOE), closely linked to the Quality Assurance Policy of the University of Thessaly (UTH), is to provide the required qualitatively modern education in accordance with international academic and research standards. This is achieved through continuous and effective improvement of the curriculum, along with the support of educational and research activities, as well as administrative services and functions. This ensures that the department as a whole can meet international academic and research conditions and requirements.

The Department of Economics supports and implements its quality policy, guiding the design and implementation of the curriculum. It strengthens its position in the international academic community, highlights its role in the local and regional society, remains faithful to its purpose and mission, achieves the department's goals, and invests in continuous improvement.

2. Quality Assurance Policy of the Interdepartmental Postgraduate Program "Accounting and Auditing"

The quality assurance policy of the Interdepartmental Postgraduate Program (IPPP) "Accounting and Auditing" is directly connected to that of the Department and, by extension, the University of Thessaly (UTH), according to the "Institution's Quality Assurance Policy Plan," as decided by the Senate at the meeting on 12th October 2021.

The action plan is based on the philosophy of Quality and Excellence and includes policies and measures that concern all UTH Operational Sectors. The Quality Assurance Policy (QAP) of UTH covers the following areas:

Theoretical and Applied Education of undergraduate students.

- Postgraduate Studies.
- Excellence in Education and Research.
- Internationalization and globalization.
- Contribution to regional development.
- Effective administrative operation.

The Quality Assurance Policy of the IPPP aligns with the principles and strategic framework of UTH's Quality Assurance (QA). Specifically, this connection is reflected in the following:

- Internal Evaluation Team (IET)

At the Department of Economics of UTH, a 3-member IET has been established, responsible for designing and implementing the principles of UTH's Quality Assurance within the department. The IET is in charge of preparing the Annual and 4-Year Internal Evaluation Reports of the Department, certifying the quality of education provided to students, the quality of departmental infrastructure, research level, and administration conducted by the department's personnel (academic and administrative). The report identifies the strengths

and weaknesses of the department, serving as a vital step for future improvements in teaching and research outcomes.

For the preparation of the Internal Evaluation Report, the Quality Assurance Officer of the IET collaborates with the other two members, academic and administrative staff, and assists prospective PhD candidates.

- Evaluation Procedures

Evaluation is conducted for each course and instructor through electronic completion of a carefully designed questionnaire provided by the IPPP. The anonymity of participants is fully ensured. The questionnaire completion process by students is carried out through electronic assessment on a dedicated platform of UTH, where students, using course-specific codes, engage in the evaluation process.

- Research Activity

To ensure the quality of research activity, quantitative and qualitative objectives are defined. Quantitative objectives involve counting research activities such as the number of publications, conference participations per year, submission of proposals for research projects, and approval/implementation of research projects. Qualitative objectives include awards, patents, and the presence of publications in journals belonging to international reputable scientific bases.

- Secretariat

The responsibilities of the secretariat include administrative support for students through the management of the electronic secretary and the issuance of study certificates. Additionally, it assists in the academic progress of students by providing information and support on matters related to the Study Guide and the use of University's services (library use, personal email, electronic secretary codes, student IDs, etc.). The role of the two websites, one for the Postgraduate Program and the other for the Alumni Network, is also significant.

Specifically, the quality assurance policy of the Postgraduate Program "Accounting and Auditing" is directly connected and an integral part of the Institution's and the Department of Economics' Strategic Plan. It is based on the following pillars:

- Enhancement and upgrading of educational work according to current developments:

Adaptation of the educational operation of the program and the study subject to the constantly evolving scientific field through continuous reform and improvement of the curriculum.

- Staffing with high-qualified human resources:

Human resources at the academic and administrative levels constitute a source of multiple competitive advantages. At the organizational level, it ensures a work environment that motivates all human capital to work towards development and the achievement of academic goals. Simultaneously, it encourages proposals for the participation of personnel in the Public and Private Sectors, especially in the field of Auditing.

- Student Care:

Ensuring high quality in the educational process within a student-centered approach, aiming to empower graduates for the transition to the job market. This involves providing accessible learning resources for students through a variety of teaching methods and techniques, emphasizing Information and Communication Technologies (ICT).

Updating and ensuring the quality of the Postgraduate Program's website to be a continuously reliable source of information for students.

Keeping track of the professional status of graduates and disseminating information on professional placement beyond the Alumni Network.

- Internationalization and Globalization:

Development of collaborations between Departments/Schools of UTH in undergraduate and postgraduate study programs, as well as with programs of the Lifelong Learning Center.

Establishment of interdisciplinary and international partnerships, fostering continuous cooperation with Public and Private Sector Entities and Businesses for the dissemination and enhancement of research projects and broader collaborations.

- Quality Assurance:

Posting the most up-to-date Quality Assurance Policy of the Study Program on its website (<http://accaud.uth.gr/πολιτική-ποιότητας/>) and communicating the implementation of the Quality Policy to all relevant stakeholders.

The material is subject to inspection, review, and revision, conducted annually by the Internal Evaluation Team (IET) in collaboration with the UTH Quality Assurance Unit.

Finally, there is a commitment to comply with all legislative requirements and regulatory provisions, as well as the confidentiality and security of the managed data.

Thematic Scope of the Postgraduate Program "Accounting and Auditing"

The postgraduate program covers a significant number of theoretical and practical topics, including Audit, Accounting, Internal Control, International Financial Reporting Standards, International Auditing Standards, Consolidated Financial Statements, Auditing and Professional Ethics, Managerial Accounting, Cost Accounting, Company Accounting, Tax Legislation, Finance, Money, and Capital Markets, Corporate Law, Financial Management, and Risk Management. Moreover, it encompasses a series of topics that approach both the academic and professional perspectives of the trainees, as well as the preparation and practice of undergraduate students in the professional exams they will undertake.

Specifically, it covers:

- **Alternative Forms of Investment:**
 - Diversification of risk and return between a portfolio of traditional stocks and a portfolio of alternative forms of investment.
 - Cryptocurrency market analysis.
 - The impact of blockchain technology on accounting.
 - Models for predicting exchange rates.
 - The use of accounting information in determining stock values during crises.
 - Derivatives market and its relationship with the underlying stock market.
 - Evaluation of Greek mutual funds during crises.
- **Technology and Accounting:**
 - The impact of information systems on business performance.
 - The impact of accounting information systems on the quality of accounting information.
 - The use of big data technology in accounting.
 - Ethical issues in information systems in accounting.
- **Audit and Internal Control:**
 - The contribution of auditing to combating economic crime.
 - The contribution of internal control to the effectiveness of financial auditing and risk reduction.
 - The importance of internal control in cost management.
 - Corporate governance and internal control.
 - The impact of internal control on financial information.
- **Taxation:**
 - Tax evasion and mitigation methods.
 - Tax audit of businesses.
 - Tax evasion, tax exemption, and the role of the accountant.
 - Tax policy and economic development.
 - Level of tax evasion and cross-border transactions (transfer pricing).
 - The phenomenon of corruption and the role of auditing in combating it.
- **Costing:**
 - Cost organization of businesses.
- **Quality of Financial Information:**
 - How IFRS/IAS affect the quality of financial information.
 - The role of corporate governance in reducing profit manipulation and opportunistic behavior of companies.
 - Corporate social responsibility and its impact on financial statements.

General Objectives of the Master's Program

1. Lectures and seminars for the dissemination of knowledge and the formation of critical thinking, enabling students to actively choose fields of thought. Course presentations are supported by new technologies, incorporating audio-visual materials to enhance the topics significantly.
2. Group assignments, research, literature review, and methodological approaches that highlight the importance of collaborative teaching. Through solidarity and mutual respect, communication and negotiation skills necessary for professional duties are developed.
3. Individual assignments, research, and literature review to enhance individual skills.
4. Educational software and digital technologies, essential for both individual digital skill development and teaching utilization.
5. Laboratory applications and experiments that activate theoretical knowledge, providing direct feedback and identifying strengths and weaknesses.
6. Interaction and engagement, highlighting experiential learning through the design and implementation of various teaching scenarios, micro-teaching, organization, and implementation of educational activities.
7. Research design, data collection, and paper writing to broaden perspectives in the respective knowledge field and cultivate scientific writing skills.
8. Use of multiple sources (Greek and foreign literature) to keep students informed about emerging theories and the application of innovative educational practices in the Greek and international educational space.
9. Holistic connection of scientific fields, recognizing that education is related and collaborates with other scientific areas.
10. Development of personal skills:
 - Use critical thinking to define issues, collect and analyze information, evaluate evidence, and draw conclusions.
 - Use creative thinking to formulate ideas and experiences, take risks, and develop innovative approaches to address operational problems.
 - Integrate knowledge and principles from different scientific areas and transfer skills to the workplace.
11. Problem-solving skills:
 - Define problems, identify alternatives, and establish criteria for evaluating solutions.
 - Use or create models to represent and solve operational problems, calculate results, and develop solutions.
 - Demonstrate excellence in using digital information and management information systems.

Upon successful completion of this program, graduates will be able to:

- Expand technical skills in financial reporting and analysis, decision-making, tax compliance, risk management, and compliance testing.
- Enhance core professional skills, such as critical thinking, effective communication skills, teamwork, and data analysis skills.
- Develop awareness of the needs beyond the boundaries of their profession.
- Propose a course of action to a potential client using a framework or model for analyzing financial statements and other relevant data.
- Evaluate the accounting implications of an economic event by applying the principles, standards, and practices of financial accounting.
- Advise stakeholders on how strategic business risks relate to internal controls, financial reporting, taxation, and/or auditing using valid literature, fieldwork, research, archives, or other research data.
- Synthesize accounting information within the framework of other business functions to inform the business decision-making process.
- Identify arguments for and against alternative accounting decisions, weighing ethical consequences, stakeholder impacts, and overall management.
- Analyze statistical information.
- Understand and address complex issues.
- Apply their knowledge and understanding with a professional approach.
- Use the Accounting Coding System to search for valid answers to specific financial accounting issues.
- Identify ethical issues and apply appropriate ethical principles and rules to make ethical business decisions.
- Understand and apply International Financial Reporting Standards and analyze international financial statements.

In summary, the Interdisciplinary Master's Program in "Accounting and Auditing" steadfastly implements a contemporary program quality policy, shaped by international developments in education and the job market, with a focus on continuous improvement. Thanks to this policy, it has successfully provided graduates with the necessary tools to meet the demands of the fields of Accounting and Auditing during its five years of operation.