



UNIVERSITY OF  
**PATRAS**  
ΠΑΝΕΠΙΣΤΗΜΙΟ ΠΑΤΡΩΝ

D6.5 Published Policy and Staff Development Programmes in Distance  
Education

of the Master's Degree Programme

*«Master in Education»*

Department of Educational Sciences and Social Work  
School of Humanities and Social Sciences  
University of Patras

## **1. Introduction**

The Department recognizes that the human resources supporting the Master's Degree Programme constitute the most important resource for achieving its academic, educational, and research objectives. The present Staff Support Policy aims at establishing a framework that enhances professional development, continuous training, and the improvement of the quality of the educational and research work provided.

The Master's Degree Programme "Master in Education" implements a clear and publicly available policy for the support and professional development of its teaching staff in matters of contemporary and distance education, within the framework of the overall Quality Policy of the Master's Degree Programme.

This policy is based on the principle that distance education constitutes a pedagogical methodology with specific theoretical, instructional, and organizational requirements, and not merely a technical solution. Therefore, the continuous support and training of teaching staff is considered a critical parameter for ensuring the quality of the educational work.

## **2. Purpose and Scope of Application**

This policy concerns the teaching and administrative staff of the Master's Degree Programme and aims:

- to support professional and academic development,
- to improve the effectiveness of teaching,
- to strengthen the link between teaching and research,
- to ensure and upgrade the quality of studies,
- to develop skills for student support.

## **3. Structures for the Support and Training of Teaching Staff**

The Master's Degree Programme employs teaching staff with long-standing and documented experience in distance education, particularly through their participation in programmes of the Hellenic Open University and other higher education institutions. This experience is systematically utilized for the support of instructors and the transfer of good pedagogical practices.

A central role in the professional development of teaching staff is played by the Teaching and Learning Support Center (KEDIMA). KEDIMA operates within the

framework of the Quality Assurance Unit and is aligned with the Institution's Unified Quality Assurance System.

Through KEDIMA the following are offered:

- training programmes for specific groups of teaching staff,
- programmes developed following requests from Departments,
- ad hoc training actions for the implementation of contemporary, innovative, and student-centered teaching methods,
- actions aimed at strengthening digital skills and pedagogical training.

#### **4. Support of Academic and Research Activity**

The Department actively encourages:

- the research activity of its teaching staff,
- participation in scientific conferences, workshops, and events,
- the development of collaborations with academic and research institutions in Greece and abroad,
- the connection of research with teaching and society.

At the same time, the mobility of teaching staff is supported through programmes such as ERASMUS+ and related international initiatives.

At the institutional level, there is special provision for one-time funding aimed at supporting the research of newly appointed faculty members of the University of Patras, as well as the "Karatheodoris" programme for the scientific and financial support of research at the University of Patras.

#### **5. Procedures for the Evaluation of Teaching Work**

The evaluation of teaching work is conducted on a regular basis through anonymous student questionnaires, which are completed electronically at the end of each academic semester.

The results:

- are available to instructors through the information system of the Quality Assurance Unit (MODIP),
- are used for the improvement of the teaching process,
- are taken into account in procedures of election, promotion, renewal, or tenure of faculty members.

## **6. Recognition and Awards**

The Department participates in award schemes established by the Institution, such as:

- Excellence in Teaching Award “Evangelos Papanoutsos”
- Excellence in Publication Award “Panagiotis Kanellopoulos”

These initiatives aim to highlight the importance of high-quality teaching and high-level research.

## **7. Administrative and Support Staff**

The training of administrative staff, with the aim of improving their effectiveness and efficiency, is carried out through their participation in:

- Seminars of the Training Institute of the National School of Public Administration, following their own application and approval by the Head of the Unit.
- Specialized seminars related to their field of work, organized by the University when relevant needs arise (e.g., training in the use of new information systems, Secretariat management systems, etc.).
- Participation in workshops, seminars, and other educational activities related to quality assurance, relevant procedures to be followed, and best practices.
- The possibility of attending non-formal professional training programmes organized by the Lifelong Learning Center (KEDIVIM) with a 15% reduction in tuition fees.
- Administrative staff mobility programmes for training (Erasmus+). The selection of participants follows a specific procedure based on selection criteria, which form part of the call for expressions of interest.

## **8. Academic Leave**

The scientific development of faculty members is encouraged through decisions of the General Assembly, which facilitates such development by approving academic leave that includes participation in conferences or collaboration and research activity within Greece or abroad, provided that the relevant request complies with the applicable legislation. An indirect outcome of this process is the production of published work. Furthermore, the Master’s Degree Programme maintains a policy supporting its instructors in the purchase of equipment or books.

## 9. “Alexandria” Tool

The University of Patras, placing great importance on the promotion and recognition of the research work of faculty members, developed the “Alexandria” application, which automatically collects data such as number of publications, citations, h-index, g-index, both overall and for the last year and the last five-year period. This process is based on the automatic retrieval of relevant data of faculty members from widely used, recognized, and reliable bibliometric databases.

In addition, the Rectorate of the University of Patras established in 2021 the Excellence in Publication Award in order to (a) emphasize the primary importance the University of Patras attributes to basic and applied research aimed at advancing scientific and technological knowledge, and (b) recognize and reward each outstanding research work carried out at the University of Patras.

At the same time, within the framework of the operation of the Master’s Degree Programme, regular cooperation and communication among instructors has been institutionalized, with the aim of exchanging experiences, discussing pedagogical and technical issues, and collectively addressing challenges related to the implementation of the distance education process.

The implementation of the policy for the support and development of teaching staff is published on the website of the Master’s Degree Programme: <https://post.elemedu.upatras.gr/>

It is monitored within the framework of the internal quality assurance system of the Master’s Degree Programme, with the objective of continuously improving the students’ educational experience and enhancing the pedagogical effectiveness of the Programme.