



# Education Quarterly Reviews

---

**Koniaris, V., Karatsiori, M., Tsalampouni, A., Boutsiouki, S., Skiadas, D., & Zafiropoulos, K. (2022). Traineeships in Greek Higher Education: The State of the Art and the Way Forward. *Education Quarterly Reviews*, 5(4), 504-519.**

ISSN 2621-5799

DOI: 10.31014/aior.1993.05.04.681

The online version of this article can be found at:  
<https://www.asianinstituteofresearch.org/>

---

Published by:  
The Asian Institute of Research

The *Education Quarterly Reviews* is an Open Access publication. It may be read, copied, and distributed free of charge according to the conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International license.

The Asian Institute of Research *Education Quarterly Reviews* is a peer-reviewed International Journal. The journal covers scholarly articles in the fields of education, linguistics, literature, educational theory, research, and methodologies, curriculum, elementary and secondary education, higher education, foreign language education, teaching and learning, teacher education, education of special groups, and other fields of study related to education. As the journal is Open Access, it ensures high visibility and the increase of citations for all research articles published. The *Education Quarterly Reviews* aims to facilitate scholarly work on recent theoretical and practical aspects of education.



ASIAN INSTITUTE OF RESEARCH  
Connecting Scholars Worldwide

# Traineeships in Greek Higher Education: The State of the Art and the Way Forward

Vasileios Koniaris<sup>1</sup>, Marianthi Karatsiori<sup>2</sup>, Aikaterini Tsalampouni<sup>3</sup>, Sofia Boutsiouki<sup>4</sup>, Dimitrios Skiadas<sup>5</sup>,  
Konstantinos Zafiroopoulos<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Department of International and European Studies, University of Macedonia, 156 Egnatia, 54636 Thessaloniki, Greece

<sup>2</sup> Department of Educational and Social Policy, University of Macedonia, 156 Egnatia, 54636 Thessaloniki, Greece

<sup>3</sup> Department of International and European Studies, University of Macedonia, 156 Egnatia, 54636 Thessaloniki, Greece

<sup>4</sup> Department of International and European Studies, University of Macedonia, 156 Egnatia, 54636 Thessaloniki, Greece

<sup>5</sup> Department of Educational and Social Policy, University of Macedonia, 156 Egnatia, 54636 Thessaloniki, Greece

<sup>6</sup> Department of International and European Studies, University of Macedonia, 156 Egnatia, 54636 Thessaloniki, Greece

Correspondence: Vasileios Koniaris. Email: koniar@uom.edu.gr

## Abstract

The paper studies the establishment of work experience programs in the context of the Greek Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and connects it with the attempts to include Work-Based Learning (WBL) in the education system on a large scale. Emerging challenges caused by two significant recent changes in the Greek Higher Education landscape set the aim of this study. The integration of Technological Education Institutions in Higher Education Institutions and a significant financial change initiated by the new law which transfers the cost of compensation for traineeships to host institutions and not to Operational Programs. The paper presents the current state of the art in the Greek Higher Education and provides a detailed analysis of the existing barriers. The particular study acquires special interest in light of the intensification of the efforts made all over the world aiming to improve the organization and implementation of such interventions. Work experience programs offered by HEIs are required to be better adjusted to the special educational and labor market characteristics of each country and to become more effective. In Greece, the educational and the labor market policy framework recognizes the significant contribution of WBL in general and of traineeships in particular to the development of the appropriate professional knowledge and competences by higher education students. At the same time, traineeships can operate as a communication channel between educational institutions, businesses and social partners, which facilitates their multifaceted information exchanges. Considering, however, the operational autonomy that has been granted to HEIs in Greece, each University develops its own strategy as regards the connection between higher education studies and the labor market. The research presented in the paper constitutes a quantitative analysis of all the types of traineeships implemented by the Greek HEIs with special reference to certain axes, the optional or mandatory character of WBL, the awarded ECTS, similarities of WBL within the same scientific field in different HEIs, the possibility to undergo a WBL placement abroad.

**Keywords:** Traineeship, Work-Based Learning, Internship, Higher Education Institutions, Greece

## 1. Introduction

In modern Greece, young people confront a series of challenges that are predominantly related to their smooth social and economic integration in the labor market. The challenge of their successful transition to employment is the most emblematic one, as they become more vulnerable than other groups due to the general shortage of jobs, the difficulty in accessing employment and the limited opportunities to acquire work experience. For many years the unemployment rates in Greece remain the highest in the European Union both in the case of young people under the age of 30 (2021: 28.4% vs. 13.0% of the EU average) (Eurostat database) and in the case of new higher education graduates of the same age group (2021: 14,7% vs. 6.8% of the EU average). At the same time, 25 to 64 year-old tertiary education graduates face the highest unemployment rate (17.2%) compared to the OECD member states (4.6%) (OECD, 2018).

In addition, labor market signals are intensifying with regard to the deterioration of the skills mismatch and the difficulty of enterprises in finding personnel with the necessary expertise and experience so as to easily adapt to the work environment. This situation seems to further hamper the transition of young people to employment.

Work-based learning (WBL) is the acquisition of knowledge and skills through carrying out tasks – and reflecting on them – in a professional context either in the workplace (as in work-based training) or in a vocational education and training institution (Cedefop, 2011; 2014; Morley, 2018). WBL is a generic term, denoting all types of learning that take place in a real work environment. Apprenticeships, internships/traineeships and on-the-job training are the most common types of work-based learning. These types usually combine elements of learning in the workplace with classroom-based learning. In the case of Higher Education Institutions, WBL can be included in the academic study programs, as a mandatory or optional course, funded by national or European funds or the enterprises. In Greek Higher Education Institutions, traineeships are the prevailing form of WBL.

In the direction of strengthening the efficiency of the transition to work, countries are introducing new or revising existing actions, which restore a closer relationship between education and the labor market. This aim is pursued through a wide range of activities, among which practical training actions stand out, allowing the participating students of different levels of education to gain direct professional experience and direct knowledge of the organization and operation of the workplace. Work experience activities appear significantly more numerous, more diverse and more inclusive, allowing interested groups to choose a path that meets their particular circumstances and needs. In addition, there is a tendency to upgrade work experience acquisition actions in the social consciousness, while they are determined according to a series of criteria, which include the general purposes and the more specific objectives that each one serves, the target groups to which it is addressed, the methodology with which it is applied, the place it occupies within the hierarchical organization of the educational system and the way in which the relevant experiences accumulate and connect (or not) organically with the other parts of the educational process.

Various forms of learning in the workplace are projected in the modern environment, which connect different practices of acquiring work experience with the educational process. Each of these has distinct goals and different requirements to meet, but the main purpose remains the transition to employment. From the complex network of such activities, the most widespread forms of gaining work experience in the professional environment in relation to the educational process are apprenticeships, traineeships and internships, which are given special emphasis by modern educational systems at both institutional and operational levels. Workplace learning is called upon to become organic part of the European policy to improve conditions in education, employment and social cohesion (Perusso & Wagenaar, 2021). For this reason, various European actors focus on their effectiveness by developing specific political initiatives and institutional infrastructure.

## 2. Literature Review

Through their participation in WBL programs, students not only develop useful social and professional skills, which would be difficult to acquire in the traditional educational environment, but they also improve their

knowledge of the working environment, thus enabling themselves to redefine their learning strategy (D'Abate et al., 2009; Martin & Wilkerson, 2006; Varghese et al., 2012; Perusso&Wagenaar, 2021). This experience contributes to the maximization of the studies' learning outcomes, to the improvement of the academic performance and to the enhancement of students' curriculum vitae, thus ensuring significant advantages for them in the recruitment processes (Ebner et al., 2021; Baert et al., 2021).

Previous work experience constitutes an important qualification for young people to be able to enter the labor market. Employers require it in the recruitment processes, while, in combination with the observed skills mismatches, its lack can hinder youth professional prospects or put them at risk of becoming NEETs (Young People not in Employment, Education or Training). Research has confirmed that such a danger exists and highlights the need for greater mobilization at national and supranational level for the design of appropriate work experience programs (Drakaki et al., 2013; Papadakis, 2013; Papadakis, 2021).

In recent decades we have seen a rapid increase in interest in Greece in finding effective ways to gain work experience through internship programs, which are understood as an alternative way to develop human capital (Mihail, 2006). These are differentiated according to the educational level and the learning needs to which they have to respond. Furthermore, they respond to the needs of multiple recipients, such as students and graduates, employees and employers (including their trade unions), teachers and business organizations, the labor market and the economy, society and policy makers. Experience from the real work environment helps them to readjust their individual learning strategy and seek to shape their academic and professional qualifications (and consequently their professional expectations) based on the conditions prevailing in it, and there is evidence of a positive effect of the internship on the academic performance of the participants (Matsouka & Mihail, 2016; Olo et al., 2021).

At the same time, participation in a WBL program is seen as an element that enriches the student's CV with work experience and enhances positive differentiation in the competitive environment (Collin & Tynjalla, 2003; Garavan & Murphy, 2001). The theoretical and technological knowledge acquired during studies is tested in practice, offering the individual the opportunity to adapt to evolving conditions by developing valuable transferable skills and professionally oriented abilities and maximizing the learning outcomes of educational activities.

It has also been observed that the participation in WBL is usually associated with higher wages, longer stays in (first) work and a lower risk of remaining unemployed, as well as a better match between qualifications and jobs after entering employment (Boud & Solomon, 2001). To these must be added the opportunity offered to individuals during a WBL activity to develop closer links with the labor market and to join a wider network of – potential – employers, an element that can undoubtedly play a decisive role in their future professional development. Recognizing the benefits derived from taking advantage of opportunities from the types of WBL offered, students are changing the priorities they set during their studies, choosing more often than in the past to combine periods of study and work either in parallel or alternately, while declaring their satisfaction with such participation. Work-based learning contributes to the methodical and practical utilization of the acquired knowledge and the consequent updating and development of further skills and abilities of young students.

Employers also gain significant advantages from the participation of their companies in WBL programs (Sessions, 2006; Urquia-Grande & Estébanez, 2018; Smith & Green, 2021). On the one hand, these programs are a means of better communication between the workplace and the educational providers at all levels, which allows them to participate in the reform of study programs and educational methods, so that students acquire the skills, abilities and qualifications that correspond to the existing demand in the labor market. In the long run this creates the conditions for the existence of a sufficient supply of skilled labor in accordance with the emerging needs of the economic system.

On the other hand, through WBL programs companies have access to a large pool of trained workforce, which allows them to apply more efficient search and recruitment procedures for personnel, who are suitable for their needs and can contribute substantially to the enhancement of productivity, efficiency and competitiveness of their businesses. Therefore, it becomes necessary to cultivate a culture supportive of WBL programs in business, in order to strengthen the prospects for its further promotion and the improvement of its effectiveness.

### 3. Work-based learning in the Greek context (HEIs)

Historically, the concept of WBL has received little attention in the Greek academic and policy framework as a result of inherent deficiencies in the cooperation between the Universities and the labor market. As a result, the provision of a minimum support to the students concerning a skills-based curriculum that will support them in the job transition was not evident (Asonitou, 2015; Panagiotakopoulos, 2012). A significant strategy applied by the Greek universities was to enhance the academic knowledge offered in their study programs on the basis that the theoretical learning should not be combined with the practical application during the studies of a student (Besta et al., 2009).

In Greece, WBL in the form of traineeships was first implemented by the Technological Education Institutes (TEIs) (Iakovides, 1998; Taousanidis & Antoniadou, 2008). In TEIs, WBL was integrated in the study program, had a duration of six months and in most cases students received a salary. From 1996, the work experience programs have been supported financially by the national operational programs. The Greek State diagnosed the need for receiving financial support in order to reinforce the integration of WBL in Universities and TEIs. Thus, the Ministry of Education financially supported WBL in the context of EPEAEK I (1994-1999), which resulted in the first Operational Program by which WBL was formally and effectively financed. Since then, WBL has continued to be funded, in large part, by Operational Programs (EPEAEK II [2000-2006], NSRF 2007-2013 and NSRF 2014-2020). In the case of TEIs, the student compensation was set at 80% of the unskilled worker's salary, as determined each time by the National Collective Labor Agreement. This covered the amount regarding the remuneration, as well as the social security and health insurance. In some cases WBL was financed directly from the companies that offered the positions to the students.

In Greece, traineeships were mandatory and institutionalized by law only in TEIs in accordance with the P.D 175/85. In Universities traineeships are mandatory in some Departments (e.g. Psychology, Pharmacy, Agriculture, etc.) and optional in some others. In any case, traineeships in Universities were never institutionalized by law. In Universities there are individual Departments, in which traineeships are provided as a compulsory course in accordance with their founding law. However, traineeships were not regulated by an institutional/legal framework, as in the case of TEIs. The absence of an institutional/legal framework creates a gap for the implementation of traineeship schemes by the University Departments. The University traineeships were supported and implemented exclusively due to the existence of the institutional/legal framework of the TEIs traineeships.

Currently, under the new legislation of the Ministry of Education in 2019 (L. 4589/2019), all TEIs were either integrated in existing universities or were transformed into new university institutions. This change, along with the new current law (L. 4957/2022, article 69) about WBL, creates challenges in the future of WBL in Greece. The greatest challenge is that the new law failed to introduce a unified framework for WBL in the new university landscape.

The new provision for WBL (L. 4957/2022, article 69) states that students can take part in WBL during their undergraduate and postgraduate studies. The traineeship is under the supervision of a teacher/tutor of the University and can be carried out in public services, legal entities of public law, local government organizations, legal entities of private law and businesses that are referred to as "host institutions". The traineeship can also be carried out in institutions of a foreign country, as long as the supervision of the educational process is safeguarded by the sending academic institution. For each traineeship a contract is concluded between the student, the Higher Education Institution and the host institution where the student will undergo his/her traineeship.

Upon the traineeships' completion a number of credit units (European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System - ECTS) is awarded to the student. The exact number of ECTS is determined by a decision of the Assembly of each academic Department. In addition, the Assembly of the Department decides on details regarding the traineeship, such as the compulsory or non-compulsory character, its duration, its implementation period according to the needs and requirements of the academic study program, as well as the minimum requirements concerning the academic progress that must be met before the start of the traineeship.

If the traineeship is not compulsory for the completion of the degree, the internal regulation of the academic study program determines the conditions and the selection criteria for the traineeship. A member of the academic staff is assigned the responsibility for the overall supervision of the traineeships. There is also a traineeship committee, which comprises professors or other members of the teaching staff and is presided by the member of the academic staff who is responsible for the traineeships. The traineeship committee aims at evaluating applications of students who wish to carry out a non mandatory traineeship, assigns a supervisor for every student undergoing a traineeship, resolves issues that might arise and, at the end, evaluates the traineeship. The supervisor, who is a member of the teaching staff of the department, is responsible to guide and support the student throughout the traineeship by facilitating the student's communication with the host institution and the traineeship committee.

All students who carry out a traineeship are entitled to health insurance provided by the national organization health services. The amount of the monthly compensation for traineeships in private sector organizations has been set to 80% of the minimum wage, provided the traineeship concerns educational activity corresponding to full time employment of forty hours per week. If the traineeship agreement sets fewer work hours, the amount of the compensation is adjusted proportionally. The major innovation of the new law (L. 4957/2022, article 69) is that it provides that the compensation and the social insurance of student trainees is mainly borne by the hosting institutions and not by the national operational programs. In some cases, the compensation and insurance costs may be covered, in part or in full, by the budget of co-financed programs or by university-funded projects that are managed by the Special Accounts for Research Funds of the HEIs. There are many countries (i.e. Germany) where the cost of compensation and insurance of student trainees is borne entirely by the host institutions. The new legislation raises concerns whether the host institutions in Greece will be willing to undertake the increase in the traineeship costs by almost 80% and to continue to contribute to the schemes' implementation.

The traineeship placements for all undergraduate students are supported by ATLAS. The ATLAS system, the centralized online service, is used for the administrative procedures for the traineeship placements and for the selection of the participants. All companies in Greece can register to the ATLAS system and host student trainees. More specifically, the ATLAS connects the providers of trainee placements with all the academic institutions of the country, thus creating a unified database of offers for trainee positions. The operation of the ATLAS system has contributed to (a) an increase in the number of trainee positions available to students, (b) the simplification of the communication between host institutions and Higher Education Institutions, (c) the effective information of the Higher Education Institutions about the available positions, (d) the creation of a central database of available trainee positions, (e) the direct monitoring and assessment of the quality of the traineeship and of the knowledge gained by the students and (f) the decrease of bureaucracy.

Last, in each Higher Education Institution there is a Traineeship Office, which operates as a contact point for students and businesses interested in participating in traineeship projects. Additionally, each University has an Erasmus Office that is responsible for the mobility placements of students under the Erasmus Program in other European countries.

#### **4. The Survey**

This paper presents the finding of a research that focused on the degree of integration of traineeship programs offered by the Greek Higher Education Institutions.

##### *4.1. Methodology*

The sample of the research consists of 267 Departments offering undergraduate studies in 15 Higher Education Institution in Greece. The research took place during the period from June to September 2021.

Different sources of information were used for the selection and the analysis of data. First, the authors studied the traineeship-related information, as well as the study programs that were accessible on the website of each

department. Then, there was a short online meeting with a representative of each University in order to confirm the collected data.

The Academic study program of each department was examined based on the following topics:

- (a) Traineeships exist as a compulsory or a non-compulsory component of the study program
- (b) The semester in which a traineeship takes place
- (c) The duration of the traineeship
- (d) The ECTS accredited to the traineeship
- (e) The implementation of the traineeship in another country under the Erasmus Program

The use of descriptive statistics has been adopted in order to assess the level of adoption of specific WBL strategies in the study program. Descriptive statistics have been an important element in order to quantitatively describe a phenomenon (Kaur et al., 2018) and present results that will help answering the following research questions:

Research Question 1: How many Departments have a traineeship program as mandatory in their study programs ? What is the earliest semester set for the start of a traineeship program?

Research Question 2: How many Departments award ECTS at their respective traineeship programs?

Research Question 3: What are the differences between Departments in the same scientific fields concerning the traineeship programs?

Research Question 4: Is there a unified approach to traineeships inside the same HEI?

Research Question 5: Is the Erasmus+ traineeship included in the study programs of the Greek HEIs?

#### 4.2. Sample Description

The Universities that were examined offer a variety of study programs and are geographically dispersed in the country. Six of the Universities are located in the capital Athens, seven Universities are located in mainland Greece and three Universities are located in the island of Crete (Table 4.1).

Table 4.1: List of Universities and Departments

Name	Departments
Agricultural University of Athens	16
Democritus University of Thrace	10
International Hellenic University	32
National Technical University of Athens	8
National and Kapodistrian University of Athens	42
Mediterranean University of Crete	11
Athens University of Economics and Business	8
University of Western Attica	25
University of Thessaly	35
University of Ioannina	12
University of Crete	14
University of Macedonia	8
University of Patras	33
University of Piraeus	8
Technical University of Crete	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>267</b>

In examining the study programs of the Departments, those that had not included a reference to traineeships (53 Departments) were excluded from the sample. The rest of the sample (N: 214) constitutes the basis of the research. Annex 1 presents the full list of the Universities, Schools and Departments that were analyzed for this study.

4.3. Research Findings

4.3.1. Research Question 1: Type of traineeship and earliest semester

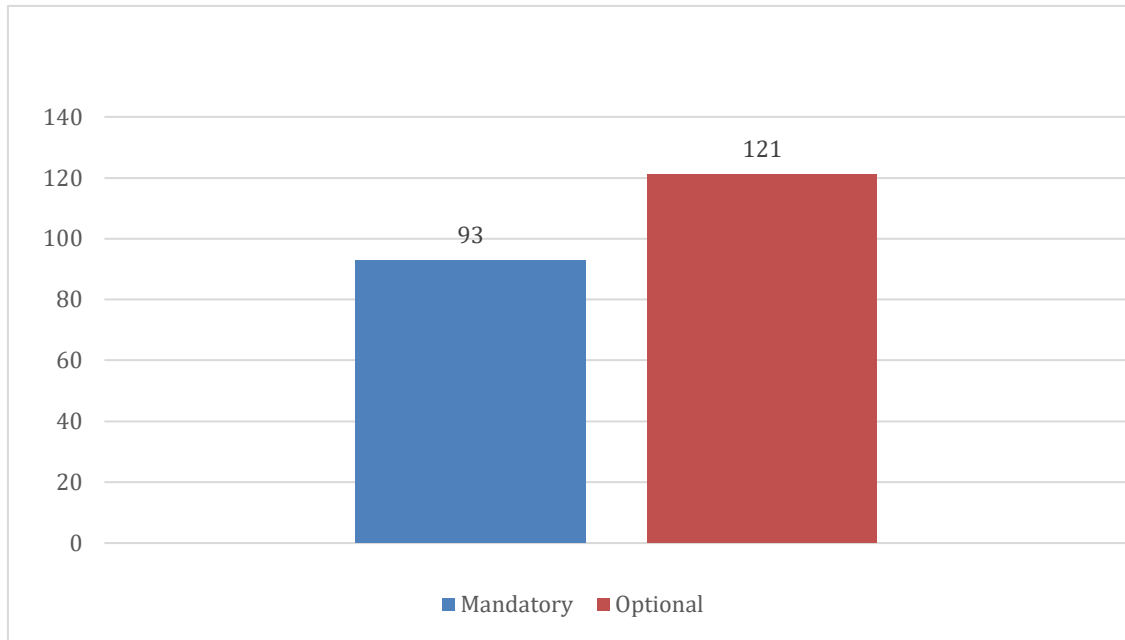


Figure 4.1: Character of Traineeship

Out of the 214 Departments that were examined in the sample, 93 have included a traineeship as a mandatory component in their study programs, while in 121 it constitutes an optional component. The majority of the 93 Departments are in the field of education, where traineeships take place in educational institutions and are mandatory for obtaining the University degree. This type of traineeships usually lasts an academic semester, unless it is stated otherwise in the study program (Figure 4.1).

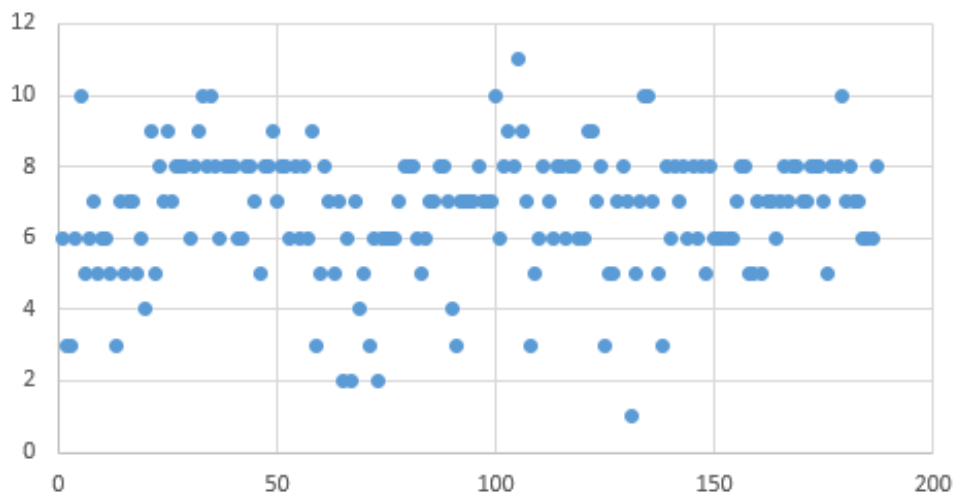


Figure 4.2: Semester of start of WBL



The semester when a traineeship is implemented varies greatly and depends on the department as shown in Figure 4.2. Four departments (Department of Physics, Department of Economics and Department of Preschool Education of the University of Crete and the School of Architecture of the Democritus University of Thrace) offer this option at any semester of the studies, in 15 departments a traineeship can start from the third semester onwards, in 60 departments from the fifth semester onwards and in the remaining 126 departments from the seventh semester. 9 departments follow the general guidelines of their Universities' Traineeship Offices.

#### 4.3.2. Research Question 2: ECTS award

The majority of the Departments (N: 187) award ECTS upon the completion of the traineeship. However, 27 Departments do not accredit their traineeship programs with ECTS (Figure 4.3).

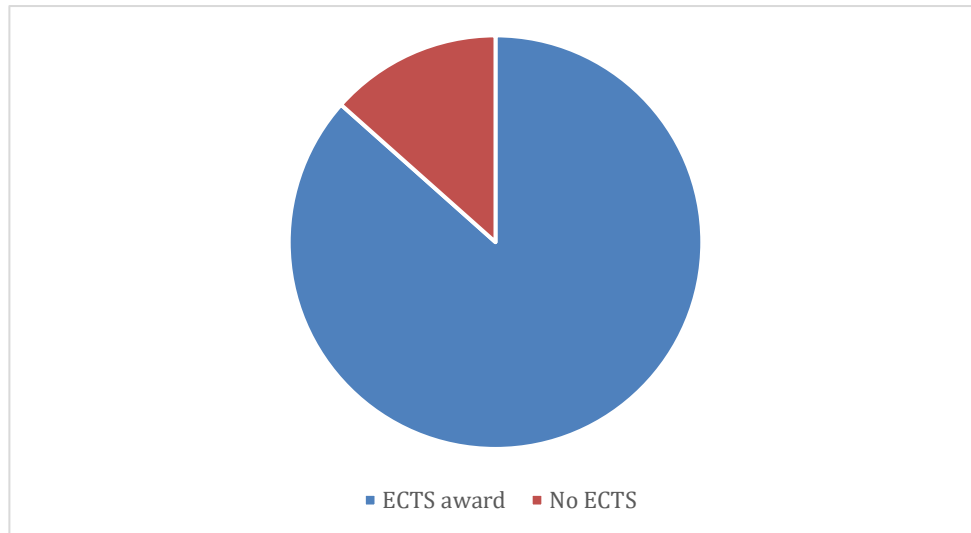


Figure 4.3: ECTS award after WBL completion

The spread of ECTS awarded is demonstrated in the Figure 4.4. From the sample of the research, the majority of the departments award 5 ECTS per traineeship program, while others, especially in the educational sciences field, award more than 10 ECTS units. Six extreme cases of departments that offer more than 30 ECTS create an additional fragmentation since they come from different scientific fields (Nursing, Educational Sciences and Preschool Education, Dietetics and Nutrition, Economics).

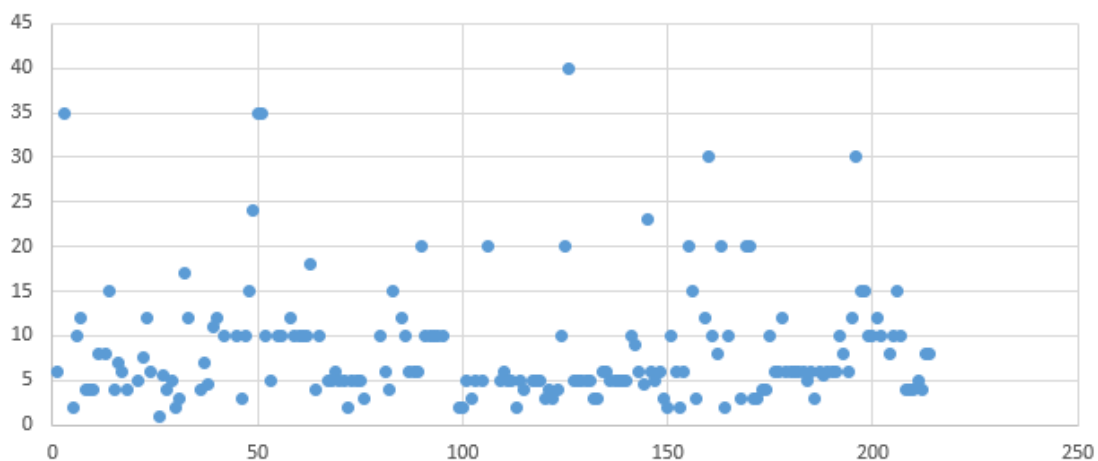


Figure 4.4: Spread of ECTS

#### 4.3.3. Research Question 3: Differences between Departments in the same scientific fields

The Departments of the same scientific field were examined under the assumption that similar fields (e.g. economics or business) should follow a similar pattern concerning traineeships. However, this was not the case, as it is evidenced from Figure 4.5, since even in the same fields this fragmentation exists. In the field of economics and business, 36 out of 44 Departments have included traineeships in their study program, while the obligation to submit a report after the completion of the traineeship exists only in 10 Departments of the sample. Grading (0-10) is referenced in 10 Departments, while 10 others have a 'Pass' or 'Fail' system. Last, 37 out of the 44 Departments have not included a traineeship option under the Erasmus+ Program in their study programs.

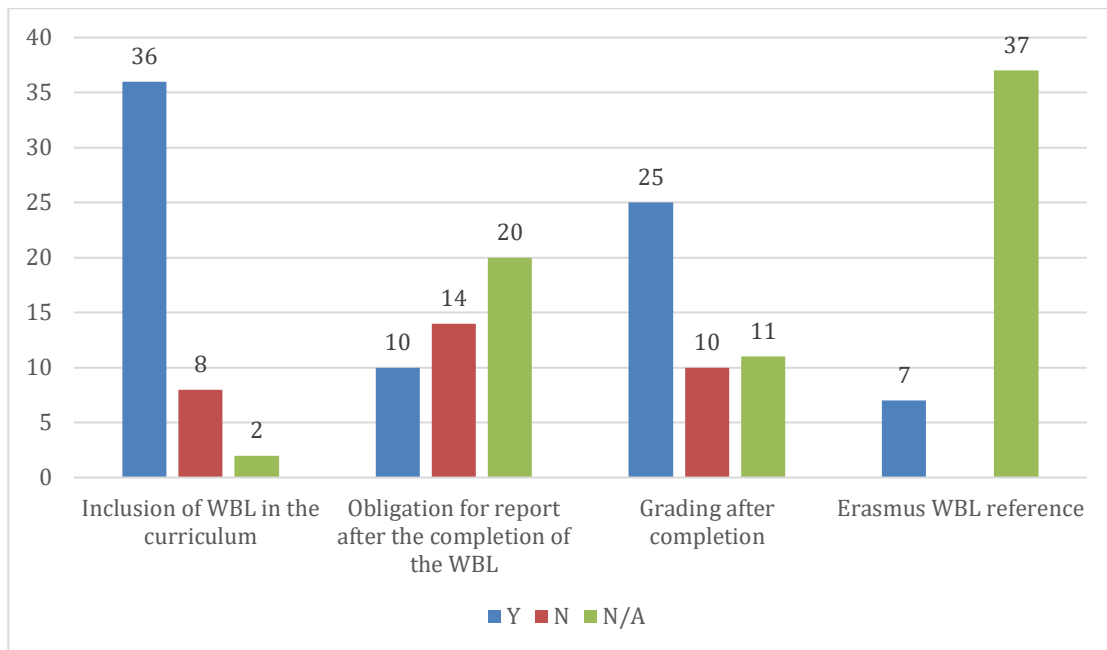


Figure 4.5: Fragmentation in the same field (Economics)

4.3.4. Research Question 4: Differences inside the same HEI

There were no major differences regarding the elements of traineeships when examined in the same HEI. Figure 4.6 presents a significant spread when examining the ECTS system regarding traineeships inside the same HEI. Regardless of the study areas offered by each University, the existing range of 2 to 35 ECTS, as shown in the case of the National and Kapodistrian University in Athens, is in line with the general situation that exists in the other HEIs.

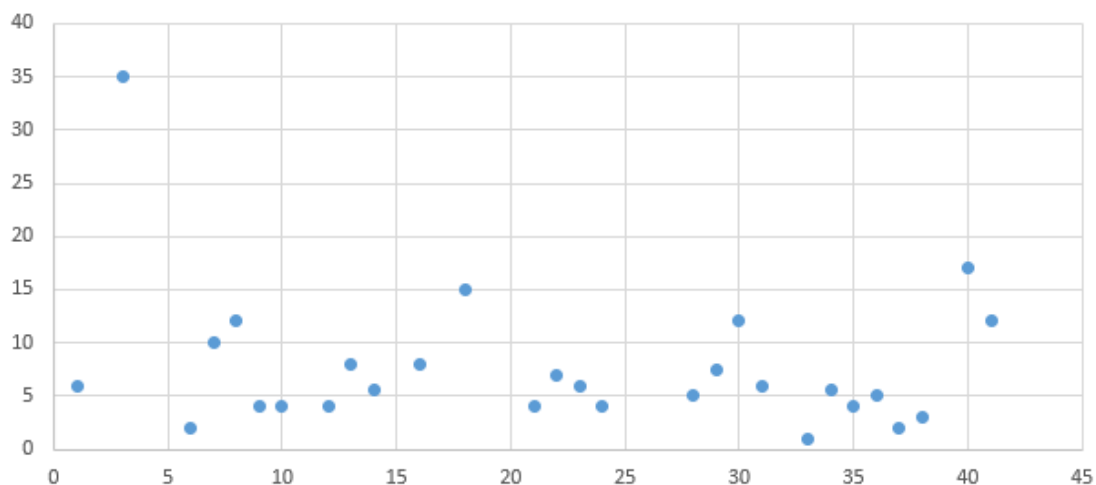


Figure 4.6: Spread of ECTS in the National and Kapodistrian University

#### 4.3.5. Research Question 5: Inclusion of Erasmus+ Traineeships in the study programs

As it is depicted in Table 4.2, only 54 departments, corresponding to the 25% of the sample, offer to undergraduate students the option to participate in a traineeship in another country under the Erasmus+ program.

Table 4.2: Erasmus Traineeships reference in the study programs

Erasmus WBL	Sample of departments	Percentage
Yes	54	25%
No	160	75%
Total	214	100

### 5. Discussion and Conclusions. Implications for Universities and Policy Makers

As it is evident from the results of the study, the fragmentation that exists in the operational settings of the Greek HEIs constitutes a major obstacle in the implementation of a unified strategy regarding traineeships. This is evident in the same study areas, as well as in the examination of the traineeships' elements in different HEIs. The lack of a unified approach can have a significant negative impact on the students' perceptions towards traineeships and on the host institutions' willingness to engage in these programs. This fragmentation equally affects both the universities located in big cities and those located in semi-urban areas. There is great need for the latter to have a unified strategy for traineeship implementation, because both the students and the host institutions are interested in the increase in traineeship positions (Theodora, 2010) especially in the tourism sector (Varvaresos, 1999). Additional research needs to be conducted in this area in order to better address the supply and demand of traineeship positions taking into consideration the geographical particularities of the country.

Another element that needs to be addressed is the lack of internationalization of the traineeship programs in the Greek HEIs. Although Erasmus offices are present in every University, most Departments have not included Erasmus+ Traineeships in their study programs. Giannopoulou et al. (2020) stress the same evidence when examining the perceptions of Greek students participating in Erasmus+ mobility schemes and highlight the same obstacles when examining the cooperation between the Erasmus+ offices and the departments of the HEIs.

An important element of our definition of WBL is that this is a guided and structured activity, which both the student and the host institution need to perform in accordance with pre-set requirements. (Hogson, 1999; Rowley, 2003; Sambrook, 2005; Stasz & Brewer, 1998). This means that, like all educational activities, WBL should be planned, monitored and assessed. Within predefined frameworks, students must acquire precisely defined knowledge material, while the academic supervisor and the mentor appointed by the host institution continuously give feedback to the student about his/her performance and mistakes, as well as about the correct solution paths. However, the lack of a unified approach on the reporting, grading and ECTS awarding in the HEIs, albeit offering a degree of flexibility, further limits the full application of such programs. The traineeship must be (albeit optional) an option for students and must be organically integrated into the undergraduate study Program of the respective Department, so that its successful completion corresponds to a specific number of ECTS.

Today, there is a specific need for the preparation and training of the coordinators who will supervise the implementation of the traineeship at the host institution, as well as the preparation of the students before the start of the traineeship.

The lack of information mentioned above is the reason why, in many cases, both host institutions and students formulate wrong expectations about the process, content and results of the traineeship, and this often leads to misconceptions during the program. This affects all three parties of the traineeship. It can lead student trainees to disappointment, lack of motivation, resentment towards the host institution and even the profession (Renganathan et al., 2012). The host institution can be negatively affected with a severe impact on the quality of the traineeship program. Moreover, the host institution can become the subject of the students' criticism depending on their

performance, knowledge and motivation. Last, for HEIs, these misconceptions can have a negative impact on their relations with the labor market, since they cannot always ensure a stable and clearly defined framework for cooperation.

### Acknowledgements

This paper is part of the research activity of the research project “Higher Education Work Experience Programmes” (Hi.Ed.WEP), which is supported by the Hellenic Foundation for Research and Innovation under the “1<sup>st</sup> Call for HFRI Research Projects to support Faculty Members and Researchers and the procurement of high-cost research equipment grant” (Project Number: 2590). The authors would like to thank the Hellenic Foundation for Research and Innovation for its support and for offering them the opportunity to contribute to the institutional and operational improvement of the traineeship programs of the Greek universities.

### References

- Asonitou, S. (2015). Employability skills in higher education and the case of Greece. *Procedia-social and behavioral sciences*, 175, 283-290. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2015.01.1202>
- Baert, S., Neyt, B., Siedler, T., Tobback, I., & Verhaest, D. (2021). Student internships and employment opportunities after graduation: A field experiment. *Economics of Education Review*, 83, 102141. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.econedurev.2021.102141>
- Besta, C., Georgiadis, N., Manthou, V., & Vlachopoulou, M. (2009). A research strategy formulation for innovative Greek universities. *International Journal of Business Excellence*, 2(3-4), 330-345. <https://ideas.repec.org/a/ids/ijbexc/v2y2009i3-4p330-345.html>
- Boud, D., & Solomon, N. (2001). *Work-based learning: a new higher education?*. McGraw-Hill Education (UK). <https://doi.org/10.1080/07377363.2002.10846683>
- Cedefop (2011). Glossary – Quality in education and training. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union.
- Cedefop (2014). Terminology of European education and training policy (2nd ed.). A selection of 130 key terms. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union.
- Collin, K. & Tynjalla, P. (2003). Integrating theory and practice? Employees’ and students’ experiences of learning at work. *Journal of Workplace Learning*, 15(7/8), 338-344. <https://doi.org/10.1108/13665620310504828>
- D’Abate, C., Youndt, M. & Wenzel, K. (2009). Making the most of an internship: an empirical study of internship satisfaction. *Academy of Management Learning & Education*, 8(4), 527-539. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/27759190>
- Drakaki, M., Papadakis, N., Kyridis, A. & Papargyris, A. (2013). The NEETs’ profile in Greece. In Nikos Papadakis (ed.), “Absents’ Barometer”: Detection, categorization and empirical grounding of policy proposals for tackling a new form of social vulnerability: The NEETs (Young People Not in Education, Employment or Training), Conference Proceedings (pp. 209-240), Athens: I. Sideris (in Greek).
- Ebner, K., Soucek, R., & Selenko, E. (2021). Perceived quality of internships and employability perceptions: the mediating role of career-entry worries. *Education+ Training*. <https://doi.org/10.1108/ET-02-2020-0037>
- Garavan, T. & Murphy, C. (2001). The co-operative education process and organizational socialization: A qualitative study of student perceptions of its effectiveness. *Education + Training*, 43(6), 281-302. <https://doi.org/10.1108/EUM000000005750>
- Giannopoulou, E., Toulas, T., Kaldis, P., Panagiari, G., Papageorgiou, E., Fois, C. T., & Alexopoulos, A. (2020). Assessment of the traineeship importance for Higher Education Institutions (HEIS). A case study of the Erasmus+ Programme. In *INTED2020 Proceedings* (pp. 2328-2337). IATED.
- Hogson, P. (1999). Making internships well worth the work. *Techniques: Connecting Education and Careers*, 74(6), 38-39. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ590746>
- Iakovides, G. (1998). Technical and vocational education in Greece. Athens: Gutenberg (in Greek).
- Kaur, P., Stoltzfus, J., & Yellapu, V. (2018). Descriptive statistics. *International Journal of Academic Medicine*, 4(1), 60. [https://doi.org/10.4103/IJAM.IJAM\\_7\\_18](https://doi.org/10.4103/IJAM.IJAM_7_18)
- Law 2817/2000 on “Education of people with special education needs and other provisions”. Official Government Gazette 78/issue A’/14.03.2000.
- Law 4009/2011 on “Structure, operation, quality assurance of studies and internationalization of Higher Education Institutions”. Government Gazette 195/issue A’/06.09.2011.
- Martin, D.R. & Wilkerson, J.E. Jr (2006). An examination of the impact of accounting internships on student attitudes and perceptions. *The Accounting Educator’s Journal*, XVI, 129-138. <https://www.aejournal.com/ojs/index.php/aej/article/view/70>

- Matsouka, K., & Mihail, D. M. (2016). Graduates' employability: What do graduates and employers think?. *Industry and Higher Education*, 30(5), 321-326. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0950422216663719>
- Mihail, D. M. (2006). Internships at Greek universities: an exploratory study. *Journal of Workplace Learning*. <https://doi.org/10.1108/13665620610641292>
- Morley, D. (2018). *Employability in higher education through work-based learning*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- OECD (2018). Unemployment rates by education level (indicator). (Accessed on 25 September 2022). Available at: <https://data.oecd.org/unemp/unemployment-rates-by-education-level.htm>
- Olo, D., Correia, L., & Rego, C. (2021). How to develop higher education study programs towards employability? A multi-stakeholder approach. *Education+ Training*. <https://doi.org/10.1108/ET-10-2020-0329>
- Papadakis, N. (2013). NEETs in Europe: Convergences, divergences and the interpretatively accessible aspects of the phenomenon. In Nikos Papadakis (ed.), "*Absents' Barometer*": *Detection, categorization and empirical grounding of policy proposals for tackling a new form of social vulnerability: The NEETs (Young People Not in Education, Employment or Training), Conference Proceedings* (pp. 15-75), Athens: I. Sideris (in Greek).
- Papadakis, N., Drakaki, M. & Saridaki, S. (2021). "*The degree of desperation*". *Labor market, precarious work and social vulnerability in the new generation in Greece: the state of play (in Europe and Greece), parameters, trends, transformations, implications and challenges for the employment policies*. Athens: I. Sideris (in Greek).
- Perusso, A., & Wagenaar, R. (2021). The state of work-based learning development in EU higher education: learnings from the WEXHE project. *Studies in Higher Education*, 1-17. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03075079.2021.1904233>
- Renganathan, S., Zainal Ambri S., Abdul B., & Li Ch. (2012). Students' perception of industrial internship programme, *Education and Training*, 54(2-3), 180-191. <https://doi.org/10.1108/00400911211210288>
- Rowley, J. (2003). Action research: an approach to student work based learning. *Education+ Training*. <https://doi.org/10.1108/00400910310470993>
- Sambrook, S. (2005). Factors influencing the context and process of work-related learning: Synthesizing findings from two research projects. *Human resource development international*, 8(1), 101-119. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1367886052000342591>
- Sessions, D.J. (2006). Recruiting made easy. *Journal of Accountancy*, 201(5), 31-34.
- Smith, K. N., & Green, D. K. (2021). Employer internship recruiting on college campuses: 'the right pipeline for our funnel'. *Journal of Education and Work*, 34(4), 572-589. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13639080.2021.1943333>
- Stasz, C., & Brewer, D. J. (1998). Work-based learning: Student perspectives on quality and links to school. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 20(1), 31-46. <https://doi.org/10.3102/01623737020001031>
- Tausanidis, N. I., & Antoniadou, M. A. (2008). The Greek Challenge in work-based learning. *Industry and Higher Education*, 22(3), 177-182. <https://doi.org/10.5367/000000008784867192>
- Theodora, G. (2010). *Approach to the effects of regional Universities on the development of the regions of Greece*. Technical Chronicles Scientific edition TEE (in Greek).
- Urquía-Grande, E., & Estébanez, R. P. (2020). Bridging the gaps between higher education and the business world: internships in a faculty of economics and business. *Education+ Training*. <https://doi.org/10.1108/et-01-2018-0017>
- Varghese, M., Parker, L., Adedokun, O., Shively, M., Burgess, W., Childress, A., & Bessenbacher, A. (2012). Experiential internships: understanding the process of student learning in small business internships. *Industry and Higher Education*, 26(5), 357-367. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ992565>
- Varvaresos, S. (1999). *Tourism development and administrative decentralization*. Athens: Propompos Publications (in Greek).

## Annex 1. List of selected Universities and Departments

NATIONAL AND KAPODISTRIAN UNIVERSITY OF ATHENS									
SCHOOL OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT, NUTRITION AND SUSTAINABILITY									
Dpt of Rural Development, Agrofood and Management of Natural Resources									
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION SCIENCES									
Dpt of Primary Education				Dpt of Early Childhood Education					
SCHOOL OF HEALTH SCIENCES									
Dpt of Medicine		Dpt of Nursing		Dpt of Dentistry		Dpt of Pharmacy			
SCHOOL OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND SPORT SCIENCE									
Dpt of Physical Education and Sport Science									
THEOLOGICAL SCHOOL									
Dpt of Theology									
Dpt of Social Theology and the study of Religion									
SCHOOL OF SCIENCES									
Dpt of Aerospace Science and Technology		Dpt of Biology	Faculty of Geology & Geoenvironment	Dpt of History and Philosophy of Science		Dpt of Informatics and Telecommunications	Dpt of Physics	Dpt of Mathematics	Dpt of Chemistry
LAW SCHOOL									
SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS AND POLITICAL SCIENCES									
Dpt of Port and Shipping Management	Dpt of Communication and Media	Dpt of Economics	Dpt of Political Science and Public Administration	Faculty of Turkish Studies and Contemporary Asian Studies		Dpt of Business Administration	Dpt of Sociology	Dpt of Digital Arts and Cinema	
SCHOOL OF PHILOSOPHY									
Dpt of Educational Studies		Dpt of English Language and Literature	Dpt of French Language and Literature	Dpt of German Language and Literature	Dpt of Theatre Studies	Dpt of Spanish Language and Literature	Dpt of History and Archaeology		Dpt of Italian Language and Literature
Dpt of Music Studies	Dpt of Russian Language and Literature of Slavic Studies		Dpt of Philology	Dpt of Philosophy, Education and Psychology	Dpt of Philosophy	Dpt of Psychology	BA Program in the Archaeology, History and Literature in Ancient Greece		
NATIONAL TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY OF ATHENS									
School of Civil Engineering	School of Electrical and Computer Engineering		School of Architecture	School of Chemical Engineering	School of Agronomy and Topographical Engineering	School of Mining and Metallurgical Engineering	School of Naval Architecture and Mechanical Engineering		School of Applied Mathematics and Natural Sciences
INTERNATIONAL HELLENIC UNIVERSITY									
SCHOOL OF GEOTECHNICAL SCIENCES									
Dpt of Agriculture (Thessaloniki)			Dpt of Forestry and Natural Environment (Drama)			Dpt of Food Science and Technology (Thessaloniki)			
SCHOOL OF DESIGN SCIENCES									
Dpt of Creative Design and Clothing (Kilkis)				Dpt of Interior Architecture (Serres)					
SCHOOL OF HEALTH SCIENCES									
Dpt of Nutrition and Dietetics (Thessaloniki)		Dpt of Obstetrics (Thessaloniki)	Dpt of Nursing (Thessaloniki)	Dpt of Nursing (Branch of the Dpt in Didymoteicho)		Dpt of Physiotherapy (Thessaloniki)	Dpt of Biomedical Sciences (Thessaloniki)		
SCHOOL OF SCIENCES									
Dpt of Geology (Kavala)		Dpt of Informatics (Kavala)		Dpt of Physics (Kavala)		Dpt of Chemistry (Kavala)			
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES									
Dpt of Early Childhood Education and Care and Education (Thessaloniki)			Dpt of Oriental Languages and Cultures (Thessaloniki)			Dpt of Library Science, Archival and Information Systems (Thessaloniki)			
SCHOOL OF ENGINEERING									

Dpt of Production Engineering and Management (Thessaloniki)	Dpt of Environmental Engineering (Thessaloniki)	Dpt of Informatics and Electronic Systems Engineering (Thessaloniki)	Dpt of Informatics, Computer and Telecommunications Engineering (Serres)	Dpt of Surveying and Geoinformatics Engineering (Serres)	Dpt of Mechanical Engineering (Serres)	Dpt of Civil Engineering (Serres)		
SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS AND MANAGEMENT								
Dpt of Supply Chain Management (Katerini)	Dpt of Organization Management, Marketing and Tourism (Thessaloniki)	Dpt of Management Science and Technology (Kavala)	Dpt of Accounting and Information Systems (Thessaloniki)	Dpt of Accounting and Finance (Kavala)	Dpt of Economics (Serres)	Dpt of Business Administration (Serres)		
TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY OF CRETE								
Dpt of Production Engineering and Management		School of Mineral Resources Engineering	School of Electrical and Computer Engineering		Dpt of Environmental Engineering	School of Architecture		
UNIVERSITY OF MACEDONIA								
Dpt of Economics	Dpt of Balkan, Slavic & Oriental Studies		Dpt of Business Administration	Dpt of Accounting and Finance	Dpt of Applied Informatics	Dpt of International & European Studies	Dpt of Educational and Social Policy	Dpt of Music Science & Art
UNIVERSITY OF CRETE								
Dpt of Philology	Dpt of Primary Education		Dpt of Preschool Childhood Education	Dpt of Sociology	Dpt of Economics	Dpt of Psychology	Dpt of Political Science	Dpt of Medicine
Dpt of Materials Science and Technology	Dpt of Chemistry	Dpt of Mathematics and Applied Mathematics		Dpt of Physics	Dpt of Biology	Dpt of Computer Science		
AGRICULTURAL UNIVERSITY OF ATHENS								
Faculty of Crop Science			Dpt of Forestry and Natural Environment Management		Dpt of Forestry and Natural Environment Management			
Dpt of Animal Sciences								
Dpt of Animal Science				Dpt of Hydrobiology and Aquaculture				
Dpt of Environment and Agricultural Engineering								
Dpt of Natural Resources & Agricultural Engineering			Dpt of Informatics in Agriculture and the Environment					
Dpt of Food and Nutrition Sciences								
Dpt of Food Science and Human Nutrition			Dpt of Dietetics and Quality of Life					
Dpt of Applied Biology and Biotechnology								
Dpt of Biotechnology								
Dpt of Applied Economics and Social Sciences								
Dpt of Agricultural Economics and Rural Development	Dpt of Agricultural Business Administration and Supply Systems		Dpt of Regional and Economic Development	Dpt of Culture and Rural Tourism	Dpt of Supply Systems Management	Dpt of Administration, Economics and Communication of Cultural and Tourist Units – DOEPTM		
UNIVERSITY OF IOANNINA								
SCHOOL OF PHILOSOPHY								
Dpt of Philology			Dpt of History and Archaeology		Dpt of Philosophy			
SCHOOL OF SCIENCE								
Dpt of Mathematics			Dpt of Physics		Dpt of Chemistry			
SCHOOL OF HEALTH SCIENCES								
Dpt of Medicine	Dpt of Biological Applications and Technologies		Dpt of Nursing		Dpt of Speech and Language therapy			

SCHOOL OF EDUCATIONAL SCIENCES										
Dpt of Primary Education					Department of Pedagogical School of Pre-primary School Teachers					
UNIVERSITY OF PATRAS										
Dpt of Biology	Dpt of Geology	Dpt of Material Science	Dpt of Mathematics	Dpt of Physics	Dpt of Chemistry00	Dpt of Architecture		Dpt of Electrical and Computer Engineering		
Dpt of Computer Engineering and Informatics			Dpt of Environmental Engineering	Dpt of Mechanical and Aeronautical Engineering	Dpt of Civil Engineering	Dpt of Chemical Engineering	Dpt of Medicine	Dpt of Pharmacy	Dpt of Educational Sciences and Social Work	
Dpt of Educational Sciences and Early Childhood Education			Dpt of Theatre Studies	Dpt of History and Archaeology	Dpt of Museum Studies	Dpt of Philology	Dpt of Philosophy	Dpt of Business Administration	Dpt of Business Administration of Food and Agricultural Enterprises	
Dpt of Tourism Administration	Dpt of Management Science and Technology		Dpt of Economics	Dpt of Agriculture	Dpt of Biosystem and Agricultural Engineering	Dpt of Food Science and Technology	Dpt of Plant Production Science	Dpt of Animal Production, Fisheries and Aquaculture		Dpt of Speech and Language Therapy
DEMOCRITUS UNIVERSITY OF THRACE										
Dpt of Law	Dpt of Physical Education and Sport Science		Dpt of Languages, Literature and Culture of Black Sea Countries	Dpt of Greek Philology	Dpt of History and Ethnology	Dpt of Social Work	Dpt of Social Policy	Dpt of Economics	Dpt of Political Science	Dpt of Architectural Engineers
UNIVERSITY OF THESSALY										
Dpt of Architecture	Dpt of Electrical and Computer Engineering	Dpt of Planning and Regional Development Engineering	Dpt of Mechanical Engineering	Dpt of Civil Engineering	Dpt of Special Education	Dpt of Early Childhood Education	Dpt of Language and Intercultural Studies	Dpt of History of Archaeology and Social Anthropology	Dpt of Culture and Creative Media and Industries	
Dpt of Dietetics and Nutrition	Dpt of Physical Education and Sport Science		Dpt of Biochemistry and Biotechnology	Dpt of Public and One Health	Dpt of Medicine	Faculty of Veterinary	Dpt of Nursing	Dpt of Physiotherapy	Dpt of Business	Dpt of Accounting and Finance
Dpt of Economics	Dpt of Forestry Wood Science and Design		Dpt of Environmental Sciences	Dpt of Energy Systems	Dpt of Digital Systems	Dpt of Agronomy, Ichthyology and Aquatic Environment		Dpt of Agronomy-Agrotechnology	Dpt of Animal Science	
Dpt of Mathematics	Dpt of Informatics and Telecommunications		Dpt of Food Science and Nutrition		Dpt of Computer Science and Biomedical Informatics		Dpt of Agriculture Crop Production and Rural Environment			Dpt of Physics
ATHENS UNIVERSITY OF ECONOMICS AND BUSINESS										
Dpt of International and European Studies		Dpt of Economics	Dpt of Administrative Science and Technology		Dpt of Business Organization and Management	Department of Accounting and Finance	Dpt of Marketing and Communication		Dpt of Informatics	Dpt of Statistics
UNIVERSITY OF PIRAEUS										
Dpt of Economics	Dpt of Business Organization and Management		Dpt of International and European Studies	Dpt of Tourism Studies	Dpt of Maritime Studies	Dpt of Industrial Management and Technology		Dpt of Banking and Financial Administration		Dpt of Statistics and Insurance Science



HELLENIC MEDITERRANEAN UNIVERSITY										
Dpt of Management Science and Technology	Dpt of Business Administration and Tourism	Dpt of Accounting and Finance	Dpt of Nutrition and Dietetics Sciences	Dpt of Social Work	Dpt of Nursing	Dpt of Electronics Engineering	Dpt of Electrical and Computer Engineering	Dpt of Mechanical Engineering	Dpt of Music Technology and Acoustics	Dpt of Agriculture
UNIVERSITY OF WEST ATTICA										
SCHOOL OF ADMINISTRATIVE, ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL SCIENCES										
Dpt of early childhood education and care		Dpt of Archival, Library Science and Information Systems			Dpt of Business Administration	Dpt of Tourism Management	Dpt of Social Work		Dpt of Accounting and Finance	
SCHOOL OF FOOD SCIENCES										
Dpt of Food Science and Technology					Dpt of Wine, Vine and Beverage Sciences					
SCHOOL OF HEALTH AND WELFARE SCIENCES										
Dpt of Biomedical Sciences		Dpt of Occupational Therapy		Dpt of Obstetrics		Dpt of Nursing		Physiotherapy Dpt		
SCHOOL OF APPLIED ARTS AND CULTURE										
Dpt of Graphic Design and Visual Communication		Dpt of Interior Architecture			Dpt of Conservation of Antiquities and Works of Art			Dpt of Photography and Audiovisual Arts		
SCHOOL OF ENGINEERING										
Dpt of Electrical and Electronics Engineering		Dpt of Biomedical Engineering	Dpt of Industrial Design and Production Engineering		Dpt of Informatics and Computer Engineering	Dpt of Surveying and Geoinformatics Engineering		Dpt of Mechanical Engineering	Dpt of Naval Architecture	Dpt of Civil Engineering