

UNIVERSITY OF WEST ATTICA

IPSP "Educational Sciences through Innovative Technologies  
& Biomedical Approaches"

**Special regulations for the application of e-learning**

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## Article 1: Introduction

The University of West Attica possesses and has extensively used synchronous and asynchronous distance learning infrastructures. Synchronous distance learning was implemented during the COVID-19 pandemic via the MS Teams teleconferencing application, and asynchronous distance learning via the Open eClass platform of the Greek Academic Network (GUnet). The MS Teams service is provided by Microsoft. Users are authenticated through the Central Authentication and Authorization Service of the University of West Attica. Administrators can manage member data (students and instructors) and supervise teleconferences. Members (either instructors or trainees) can manage their profile information and schedule teleconferences. In teleconferences, there are the roles of host (the one hosting the teleconference) and participant.

The Open eClass application is accessible via a browser at the address <https://eclass.uniwa.gr/> and as a mobile app. Users are authenticated through the Central Authentication and Authorization Service of the University of West Attica or with local accounts created on the platform. There are four levels of access: instructor, trainee, administrator, and department administrator. The instructor is responsible for creating and managing electronic courses. The trainee user can enroll in permitted courses, access their educational material, and participate in working groups, discussion areas, and self-assessment exercises. The administrator has overall supervision of the platform. They can create/delete user accounts, manage all courses and platform settings. The department administrator can manage users and courses of the department.

The MS Teams service is commercial, provided, maintained, and upgraded by Microsoft. The management of member accounts, hosting and connection issues for teleconferences, as well as the organization of teleconferences are supported by University members. Additionally, manuals are provided at the address <https://www.uniwa.gr/e-learning/>.

The University of West Attica, through its Directorate of Informatics, Computerization, Network Infrastructure and Services, manages modern technological infrastructures which are monitored and maintained by existing staff and collaborators. Technical Support is provided for computer systems at the infrastructure level and for already installed distance learning and educational content management information systems that are operational (MS Teams & eClass). The material and technical infrastructure, particularly the digital infrastructures, including network and computing infrastructures, are suitable and sufficient for the common use for which the aforementioned applications were designed and implemented.

The Open eClass application has technical support from a specialized team via email at [eclass@uniwa.gr](mailto:eclass@uniwa.gr) and by telephone at the user helpdesk. Additionally, user manuals are provided at the address <https://eclass.uniwa.gr/info/manual.php>. The application is

maintained and upgraded during periods outside of examination periods, unless it is an upgrade that covers security issues and is done immediately.

Users are prohibited from reproducing, republishing, selling, transmitting, publishing, performing, copying, and displaying platform content in third-party applications without the explicit prior written consent of the Instructor, with the exception of material for which it is explicitly stated that it is subject to Creative Commons (CC) licenses. In the case of a Creative Commons license, the use of the material is permitted according to the terms of the license. Furthermore, publishing material on the platform that is the intellectual property of third parties and which a) is not covered by any restriction or other exception according to Greek intellectual property law and for the use of which b) the relevant permission has not been granted, is not allowed.

The eClass asynchronous learning platform has security specifications summarized below:

- Compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).
- Immediate software upgrade to newer versions when it concerns security upgrades.
- Access to the I.S. (Information System) via secure HTTPS protocol.
- Recording of user and visitor actions both in log files and by the information system itself.
- Existence of three user levels and authorization of access only to information and services provided for the user level.

## Article 2: Privacy Policy

The Privacy Policy of Open eClass governs the procedures by which the University of West Attica collects, uses, manages, or shares information and personal data from Users visiting the Asynchronous Distance Learning Platform. It is available on the Asynchronous Distance Learning Platform and describes what data is collected, why it is collected, how it is protected, and how it is used. Its main points follow:

### Article 2.1: Use of collected information

The Distance Learning Service of the University of West Attica may collect and use users' personal information for the following purposes:

- For the correct display of information in the application.
- To improve technical support.

- To send periodic email messages.

## Article 2.2: Personal Data Protection

Appropriate data collection, storage, and processing practices and the necessary security measures are adopted and implemented to protect against unauthorized access, alteration, disclosure, or destruction of personal information, username, password, information, and<sup>1</sup> data stored on the platform and in the Services' information systems.

## Article 2.3: Sharing of personal information

The University of West Attica does not trade personal information and data in any way with any individual or entity. However, it reserves the right to share aggregated information, which is not linked to any personal information or data related to users and visitors of the application, with trusted collaborating bodies or University services.

## Article 2.4: Email Messages

Emails are sent if the User decides to subscribe to a mailing list. If at any time the User wishes to unsubscribe from a mailing list and not receive future email messages, relevant detailed unsubscribe instructions are found at the bottom of each relevant email, and they can also contact the user support department.

## Article 2.5: Third-party websites

Users may find advertising or other content on third-party sites they might visit if they choose a link from the Asynchronous Distance Learning Platform. The content or links appearing on these websites are not controlled, and the Distance Learning Service of the University of West Attica cannot be held responsible for any reason for any third-party website. Furthermore, these specific websites or services, including their content and links, may be constantly changing. These third-party websites and services may have their own privacy policies and customer service policies.<sup>2</sup> Browse and interaction on any other website, including websites that have links to the Asynchronous Distance Learning Platform, are subject to the terms and policies of the respective specific third-party website.

## Article 2.6: Policy for personal data protection and compliance with the provisions of the General Data Protection Regulation and Law 4624/2019

The processing of personal data during the distance examination procedure is carried out in such a way as to achieve the appropriate level of security against risks, such as accidental or unlawful destruction, loss, alteration, unauthorized disclosure<sup>3</sup> of, or access to personal data transmitted, stored, or otherwise processed. Teaching staff, invigilators, and persons providing technical and/or administrative support (such as the platform administrator) are bound by confidentiality obligations. The choice of the electronic platform<sup>4</sup> for conducting examinations

using distance methods is made based on reliability and the provision of guarantees regarding the protection of personal data.

## Article 2.7: Data Controller

The processing of the above data makes the University of West Attica a Data Controller, in accordance with the provisions of the General Data Protection Regulation – GDPR (EU) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council of April 27, 2016, and<sup>5</sup> Law 4624/2019 (Government Gazette A' 137) as amended and in force. The IPSP, as a distinguished Provider of Postgraduate Distance Education, through its competent bodies (Director and Program Steering Committee), is committed to protecting the personal data of applicants and postgraduate students and to maintaining a transparent method of processing them.

## Article 2.8: Types of personal data

The personal data processed by the competent Services originate from the information provided to them by applicants and postgraduate students, by any means of communication (in particular, submission via the IPSP website or sending an email message) as follows:

- Personal details: name, surname, father's name, gender, date of birth, VAT number.
- Contact details: country of residence, municipality, mailing address-number, postal code, landline and mobile phone, email, LinkedIn profile, comments regarding contact details.
- Details of undergraduate, postgraduate, or other studies (title, university & department, year of degree acquisition, grade) and level of knowledge of English or other language.
- Employment details: organization/company and job description.
- Billing details: company name, profession, country, address-number, municipality, P.C., VAT No., competent tax office, purchase order number, payments manager, email address for sending invoices, telephone.
- Digital copies of curriculum vitae, letters of recommendation, detailed degree transcript, degree certificate, professional license or professional ID, documents for granting a discount, proof of personal details, and any other documents. Processing is carried out with or without the use of automated means, on personal data or on sets of data.

## Article 2.9: Recipients of applicant and postgraduate student

data Access to the personal data of applicants and postgraduate students is granted only to the competent, authorized personnel of the IPSP and the Services of the University of West Attica, who are bound by the principles of secrecy and confidentiality within the scope of their duties and the instructions assigned to them by the data controller. For personal data collected

in this context, there is no need for transmission. Recipients of the data may be the competent Services of the Ministry of Education, Religious Affairs and Sports, the Hellenic Statistical Authority, the Hellenic Authority for Higher Education (HAHE - ETHAAE), for which the University is obliged to issue and send statistical data. In these cases, the data will be anonymized. Public Authorities that may receive personal data in the context of a specific investigation are not considered recipients as defined in Art. 4 par. 9 of EU 2016/679.<sup>6</sup>

## Article 3: Distance Education

The educational process in the IPSP (Interdepartmental Postgraduate Studies Program) "Educational Sciences through Innovative Technologies and Biomedical Approaches" is carried out using a hybrid model, with students attending in person, with the instructor present in the classroom, but also with a parallel connection via synchronous distance learning through the MS Teams platform, having gained significant experience regarding the pedagogical strategy to be followed and guided by the fact that the mission of the said IPSP is the acquisition of specialized knowledge in the applications of education, early childhood education and care, and Special Needs Education.

## Article 4: Pedagogical framework for synchronous distance education

Within the framework of the IPSP (Interdepartmental Postgraduate Studies Program) "Educational Sciences through Innovative Technologies and Biomedical Approaches," specialized knowledge is provided, offering students significant opportunities for professional development. Guided by the creation of a framework distinguished by learning flexibility and optimal time management, the Study Program, the operation of the digital classroom, and the provision of appropriate educational material in digital form have been structured.

In modern hybrid education, the instructor teaches, having as a valuable tool the appropriate educational material displayed on the screens of remote PCs. In the IPSP, care is taken through the educational process to achieve interaction, mobilization, and feedback with students, in order to achieve the highest degree of their participation in the conduct of each course. The goal is the construction of new specialized knowledge and the development of new skills in different cognitive fields, which will make the graduate capable of responding to different work and research environments.

The IPSP "Educational Sciences through Innovative Technologies and Biomedical Approaches" applies the principles of student-centered learning, focusing on the student in teaching,

encouraging their active participation in the educational process, with the aim of achieving learning outcomes. Therefore, it follows a strategy that motivates and encourages students to show perseverance despite difficulties. It is also adapted to students: The academic background of students, their level of study, pre-existing knowledge and skills, age, selection motives, employment, expectations, and experiences related to the cognitive subject under study have been taken into account.

Learning objectives: They concern specialized knowledge, much of which is cutting-edge knowledge in the applications of education, early childhood education and care, and Special Needs Education, as well as the acquisition of analysis, processing, application, and interconnection of knowledge from different cognitive subjects. Guidance is provided for achieving learning objectives, i.e., instructions on how they should learn and what they should be able to do after the end of the course.

Student profiles: Instructors receive timely information about the students' academic background so that the course can be organized in a way that will specifically help students to perceive and internalize new knowledge. In particular, students' knowledge is taken into account, and especially any deficiencies that would be an inhibitory factor in achieving learning objectives.

Preparation Material: Prerequisite material for student preparation has been sent in a timely manner for easier understanding of the upcoming course before it takes place, where required, with the prerequisite knowledge that facilitates course attendance and will bridge to new knowledge (via the e-class platform).

Introductory discussion aiming at social interaction, before the start of the lesson, to overcome the disadvantage of the absence of a physical classroom. Instructors are distinguished for their inclusive discourse and the politeness with which they address students. The friendly framework and pleasant atmosphere facilitate the smooth conduct of the educational process.

Encouragement of student participation, through the formulation of comments, queries in real time, carrying out activities with sharing of common files, presentation of student work in plenary, collaboration in groups for the greatest possible interaction also among students. The creation of bonds of "belonging" to a community acts catalytically in favor of the realization of learning objectives, and therefore instructors ensure the promotion of collaboration both between students and the instructor and among students through the active involvement of students in the learning process, collaborative learning (Group Assignments, Projects), and the promotion of students' self-confidence and satisfaction.

Course organization: The necessary cognitive whole to be assimilated is clearly distinct from the relevant documentation that supports it. There is a breakdown of the material into sub-units with explanatory and distinct titles and subtitles. Auxiliary – supplementary material is provided to support the learning process.



During the course, the instructor encourages dialogue and discussion. Presentations and information are shared, and relevant discussions take place aiming at interaction and collaboration. Students also use written chat for information exchange and clarification of difficult points.

During the course, students are divided into breakout rooms for greater interaction and active participation, with short tasks to be completed. The participants in groups are varied from lesson to lesson to refresh the composition of the groups, which positively affects interaction each time, as does the responsible/coordinating student. Short assignments are conducted using quizzes. Also, Polls are conducted regularly to ascertain students' understanding of points deemed necessary. The above promote student interaction, encourage participation, and keep their interest unabated.

In practical courses, students carry out the necessary laboratory exercises, which have been appropriately designed and structured to acquire practical skills for the application and verification of theoretical knowledge in practice. It is worth noting that, based on the number of students and the will of the Program Steering Committee to provide more and higher quality implementation opportunities, the initial laboratory exercises take place over more than one day, so that they are conducted better and better student preparation is achieved.

The IPSP actively supports distance teaching via the MS Teams platform and the E-Class platform. The capabilities and tools of the MS Teams platform are used for the presentation of educational material and student participation in the educational process, such as sharing slides (in PDF and PPT), video projection, internet connection, whiteboard, chat, etc. All educational material such as presentation files, supplementary material, as well as any information the instructor deems useful for student access, is posted on the E-Class platform.

Core material:

- Digital files with slides, photographs, graphs, images, videos that help in understanding the basic elements of the courses.
- Text files with material for study, elaborated studies that specialize them, assignments for submission.
- Digital material from scientific journals and publications freely provided by the library of the University of West Attica.
- The Online MS Office suite is provided by the University of West Attica. In case of video recording of an electronic lecture or other synchronous educational activity, participants are informed so that consent can be ascertained.

## Article 5: Material and technical infrastructure

The organization of distance education is carried out with the support of the Open e-Class platform, an integrated Electronic Course Management System, which is managed by the Management and Support Department of the University of West Attica. The role of the Open eClass platform is supportive (as it is for face-to-face teaching). The Open e-Class platform is compatible with international standards (SCORM, IMSCP) which ensure the reusability, accessibility, and resilience<sup>1</sup> of educational material to technological changes, as well as interoperability between e-learning systems. The Platform supports the electronic organization, storage, and presentation of educational material, regardless of the limiting factors of space and<sup>2</sup> time of traditional teaching, creating the conditions for a dynamic educational environment. The Open<sup>3</sup> e-Class platform is designed to implement new educational actions. Central roles are those of the instructor and the trainee. Specifically, the user - instructor can easily and quickly create user-friendly and functional electronic courses, using the educational material at their disposal (notes, presentations, texts, images, etc.). At the same time, trainees gain an alternative channel of access to the offered knowledge. Access to these is achieved using a simple web browser without the requirement of specialized technical knowledge. In summary, the Open e-Class platform includes the following capabilities:

- (a) creation of electronic units,
- (b) access to educational material,
- (c) posting announcements regarding the IPSP courses,
- (d) communication with students,
- (e) assignment, submission, evaluation / feedback, and grading of assignments.

The MS Teams teleconferencing platform can be used via a simple web browser or a mobile application and allows users to connect online for video meetings, webinars, and live chat.

These platforms

- (a) provide high-quality video and audio,
- (b) allow session recording,
- (c) enhance collaboration through content sharing, real-time collaborative annotation, and the digital whiteboard, and
- (d) provide innovative ways for student participation such as breakout rooms, polling, and group chats.

## Article 6: Specialized Audiovisual Equipment

The audiovisual equipment of the IPSP (Interdepartmental Postgraduate Studies Program) constitutes a complete set for the support of a modern Postgraduate Studies Program, in which teaching is carried out simultaneously with physical presence and remotely in classrooms which are all equipped with projection systems and connection to the academic network. The technological equipment is provided to support teaching activities and research within the framework of the postgraduate program. The technological equipment includes PCs, projectors, cameras, and audio material, and is intended for use by educators and students during courses. The equipment is as follows:

1. Portable PCs of High Processing Power. Equipped with high-power processors for handling advanced tasks and programs.
2. Portable Projectors of High Definition FHD. Clear image for text and video presentations.
3. Robotic PTZ USB Cameras of High Definition. Coverage of the amphitheater for seamless and interactive communication.
4. Web Cameras USB of High Definition FHD. Clear image and sound for the participation of distance learning students.
5. Camera Support Tripods. Stable placement to ensure a better viewing angle.
6. USB Microphones & Lavalier Microphones. High-quality sound performance for clarity in communication.
7. Headsets with Microphone. Ensure portability for individual listening and conversations.
8. Sound Bar Type Speakers. Quality sound for accurate presentations and lectures.
9. Stylus Pens for Connection to PC. Recording and transmission of notes and graphics to students.
10. Equipment Transport Bags. Ensure safe transport of equipment.
11. Multifunction Machines – Printer/Scanner. Printing and scanning of documents to facilitate academic procedures at the program's secretariat.
12. PCs of High Processing Power. For the needs of the Program's secretariat.
13. Cables & Adapters. Connectivity and compatibility for seamless operation.

## Article 7: Digital Skills of the teaching staff

In the IPSP (Interdepartmental Postgraduate Studies Program) "Educational Sciences through Innovative Technologies and Biomedical Approaches," teaching is conducted by TRS (Teaching and Research Staff) members with many years of teaching and research experience, scientific and research competence, significant published scientific work, as well as participation in numerous national and international conferences. They are also distinguished for the breadth of their collaborations, their participation in the implementation of research programs, as well as their participation in national committees and international scientific bodies. On the one hand, instructors closely monitor developments in their cognitive subject to be able to transfer cutting-edge know-how directly to the electronic and face-to-face classroom; on the other hand, they actively participate in the training activities of their Teaching Support Offices <https://teach.uniwa.gr/>, aiming to support distance teaching on issues of methods, techniques, and good practices regarding pedagogical principles and ICT. Also, at the beginning of each cycle of the study program, they receive updated practical advice on good practices for conducting courses, based on developments in pedagogical principles and ICT on the one hand, and on feedback from student evaluations on the other. It should also be mentioned that the IPSP has set as a Quality Objective the Improvement of Teaching / Educational Work-Learning Process and in this context plans the establishment of an annual conference-seminar for the improvement of digital skills, as well as participation in training and teaching support actions in distance education organized by the Center for Teaching and Learning Support (KEDIMA).

## Article 8: Distance examination and assessment

The assessment of postgraduate students and their performance in the courses they are required to attend within the framework<sup>1</sup> of the IPSP (Interdepartmental Postgraduate Studies Program) is carried out through written or oral examinations or by completing assignments throughout the semester, or a combination thereof. The assessment method is described in the outline of each course. The postgraduate student is informed in advance both about the assessment method and the required percentage of response to the assessment demands for it to be considered successful. Methods for assessing the performance of postgraduate students indicatively include formative or summative assessment, multiple-choice tests, short-answer questions, essay questions, problem-solving, written assignments, reports, oral examinations, public presentations, and laboratory work. A complete detailed syllabus for each course, necessarily supplemented with the assessment method and a bibliography list, is distributed at the beginning of each semester; however, core assessment methods for the IPSP are final examinations and a mixed system of final written and oral examinations and written assignments/projects. For the assessment of students with disabilities and special

educational needs, the articles referring to alternative methods that may be applied on a case-by-case basis are implemented, as these are in force in the Internal Operational Regulations of the University of West Attica. If, for any reason, distance examination is applied, the IPSP ensures, for each of the above examination methods, that the reliability, transparency, and validity of the entire process are absolutely guaranteed. Regarding the assessment of the student in asynchronous learning, this can take several forms. Usually, it includes: correction and grading of written assignments, participation in tests of assimilation and understanding of the material of the educational "package," and final exams. It is noted that in distance education, assessment is taken as a broader concept which does not only function as an examination procedure but constitutes an important parameter of the entire educational process.