

According to Annex 5 (Regulation of Postgraduate and Doctoral Studies of the Democritus University of Thrace) of the Internal Regulation of Operation of the Democritus University of Thrace (Government Gazette B' 4751 / 20-8-2024), the following apply:

Article 4

Pedagogical framework for planning and implementing activities using distance learning methods and distance student assessment

Online post-graduate education is not based solely on technologies that are being called upon to replace in-person teaching. It is primarily determined by a pedagogical philosophy that focuses on the interactive actions that promote the participation of learners in meaningful learning activities. Based on this consideration, the design of online post-graduate education requires:

- in-depth knowledge of the field of study
- detailed organisation of the educational-teaching processes
- selecting and/or configuring educational material
- designing suitable learning activities (tasks) implemented by the learners
- continuous support of the learners
- establishing two-way communication and a positive learning atmosphere
- the existence of technological environments that effectively support individual educational-learning actions
- valid and reliable assessment of the educational outcome.

E-learning shall be based on the interaction between students and educational resources, students and teaching staff, and between students themselves. In addition, it shall provide increased opportunities for learners to repeat difficult or hard-to-grasp points and to reflect, leading to a deeper analysis of educational materials, exploration and reflection, and, ultimately, to a deepening of knowledge.

Synchronous and asynchronous technologies shall be utilised by teaching staff in many ways to encourage and promote active participation by students in learning, instead of passive observation.

At DUTH, Post-Graduate courses must be suitably structured into modules. These modules may correspond to subject areas of the knowledge content or to the weekly study and work time of the students.

Each module must include:

- ✓ The learning outcome outline (syllabus), with a reasonable workload, and educational obligations, so that participants can attend without hindrance and reflect on what they learn in the programme;
- ✓ the educational and support material;
- ✓ the learning activities (asynchronous and synchronous) and implementation schedule, utilising good teaching practices in online/virtual environments, such as pre-recorded lectures, virtual workshops that use synchronous VR technologies, appropriate educational techniques – such as flipped classroom;
- ✓ the proposals/instructions on how to participate, study, allocate time and cooperate;
- ✓ student deliverables to be completed in this module, as well as any instructions for their preparation, with an emphasis on feedback between teacher and learner;
- ✓ the institutional Regulation of DUTH shall apply with regard to student assessment.

For each subject, it is recommended to use multiple digital learning materials, such as:

- Lecture slides
- Notes from the teacher
- Articles or book chapters in digital format
- Multimedia material (images/graphics, conceptual maps, videos, simulations, etc.)
- Web-based educational content and sources and resources
- Video lessons, podcasts, and other digital media.

The supporting material of an e-course shall include:

1. General guidelines on how students should study and participate in individual and group activities
2. Suggestions, learning support, and guidance for implementing learning activities and preparing projects
3. Technical support material regarding the use of online or other digital tools
4. An assessment process and assessment methods.

Article 5

Establishment of a PGMP that operates using distance learning methods

1. DUTH shall establish and organise PGMPs using distance learning methods, as long as the requirements set out in the applicable law are met, more specifically:
 - a) DUTH has at its disposal an integrated distance learning system. More specifically, DUTH shall have systems that meet the needs of both synchronous and asynchronous distance learning.

Microsoft's MS Teams shall be used for synchronous distance learning. MS Teams has the following specifications and capabilities:

- Teleconferences with a camera, microphone, and speakers or headphones, for audiovisual communication in real time.
- Electronic multi-person virtual classroom where teaching staff and students can interact regardless of where they are located.
- Uninterrupted operation at both high and low network speeds.
- Application and text sharing.
- Shared storage for all class members for exchanging files.
- Public and private messaging (chat) between the teacher and the learners, as well as between learners themselves.

Open e-Class shall be used for asynchronous distance learning, which has the following specifications and capabilities.

- An Educational Content Management Application.
- Course Development and Writing Application.
- Material management (posting, processing, etc.) per class or educational activity.
- Multiple kinds of materials such as notes, presentations, exercises, and other activities.
- Feedback from both students and teaching staff.

- Indicative solutions and examples of exercises.
- Multimodal material.

The two platforms provide all the necessary tools for adapting to legislation, while offering a series of tools for tracking the dissemination of information and personal data. These systems are offered in both English and Greek, and have technologies that make them fully accessible to persons with disabilities and persons with special educational needs.

The synchronous distance learning system is part of a suite of tools and software and is provided free of charge to all members of the university community via DUTH's paid subscription to the manufacturer. The asynchronous distance learning software is distributed free of charge by GUNET, which DUTH is a member of and which actively supports DUTH.

b) A Digital Governance Unit operates at DUTH.

c) This Post-Graduate and Doctoral Studies Regulation is in place.

2. Establishing a PGMP organised using distance learning methods shall follow the process of Article 3 of this Regulation and the following paragraphs of this Article.

The PGMPs shall be organised exclusively through distance learning methods, provided that the field of study (discipline) is suitably and sufficiently supported through this educational process method. Part of the educational process may be organised using asynchronous distance learning methods, provided that the total number of credits of the educational activities organised with this method does not exceed twenty-five percent (25%) of the total credits of the PGMP. If the PGMP includes student internships as an educational activity of the programme, it may be carried out online, if the host bodies support online work and supervision of the internship is ensured.

3. The establishing decision determines the method of conducting the educational process (in-person, synchronous distance learning, asynchronous distance learning, or a blended system) for each educational activity of the detailed study programme, the process of student assessment per educational activity, as well as the technological equipment that every student must have to attend the programme and be assessed.

4. The establishing decision, in addition to the provisions of Article 3 of this Regulation, shall be accompanied by a detailed report which shall include at least the following information:

- Documentation as to whether it is possible and suitable for the field of study of the PGMP to be organised using distance learning methods;
- analysis of the proposed methods for organising the educational process (in-person, synchronous, asynchronous, blended system) per educational activity of the study programme and allocation of the teaching hours of each educational activity of the PGMP per implementation method, as well as the percentage of any asynchronous distance learning per educational activity and in the schedule overall,
- documentation with regard to DUTH material and technical infrastructure and, in particular, the suitability and adequacy of the digital infrastructure for organising PGMPs using remote learning methods;
- documentation with regard to the digital skills and know-how of the teaching staff in the use of Information and Communication Technologies;
- digital educational material;
- any digital student assessment methods.