



ΠΑΝΕΠΙΣΤΗΜΙΟ
ΠΑΤΡΩΝ
UNIVERSITY OF PATRAS

School of Agricultural Sciences
Department of Sustainable Agriculture

Quality Policy of the Joint MSc Programme
«Agri-Food Biotechnology»

Agrinio, December 2025

The Department of Sustainable Agriculture, in collaboration with the Quality Assurance Unit (MODIP) and the competent services of the Institution, has aligned the Quality Policy of the Postgraduate Programme (MSc) with the Quality Policy of the Department and of the University of Patras. This Quality Policy of the Joint MSc Programme «Agri-Food Biotechnology» is published on the following website:

https://agrobiotech.upatras.gr/wp-content/uploads/sites/278/2026/06/Quality_Policy_AFB_EN.pdf

Mission of the Department of Sustainable Agriculture

The core mission of the Department of Sustainable Agriculture is the thorough education of undergraduate and postgraduate students across a broad range of subject areas within the Agricultural Sciences. Within this framework, the Department of Sustainable Agriculture promotes the presence and participation of its students in international Erasmus+ mobility programmes. In addition, it regularly monitors international developments in education relating to Sustainable Agriculture and the integrated management of the rural and countryside environment, with a view to updating the Department's undergraduate and postgraduate programmes of study.

At the same time, the Department of Sustainable Agriculture pursues intensive research activity, including through its established laboratories and research groups, with participation in research projects funded by Greek and European sources. To this end, the members of the Department also collaborate with members of other educational institutions, both in Greece and abroad. A direct outcome of these research activities is the publication of scientific work by the members of the Department of Sustainable Agriculture, both in reputable scientific journals and at conferences (national and international).

Beyond its educational and research activities, the Department of Sustainable Agriculture seeks and undertakes collaborations with agricultural enterprises, as well as with biotechnology enterprises at local, national and international level, in order to disseminate and integrate into the real economy and practice both existing knowledge and the new knowledge generated through the Department's research activities. A fundamental and integral element of the mission of the Department of Sustainable Agriculture is contact and communication with professional bodies, so that knowledge in Sustainable Agriculture also has practical applications.

The Department of Sustainable Agriculture also supports the work of agricultural enterprises by offering services relating to pathogen analysis, the design of new diagnostic products, as

well as training services for executives of agri-food, rural development and protection, and biotechnology enterprises.

A further fundamental element of the mission of the Department of Sustainable Agriculture is contact and communication with social bodies and ordinary citizens, so that, through activities such as workshops and lectures, information is provided to producers and entrepreneurs, as well as information on other topical issues concerning Greek society.

Vision of the Department of Sustainable Agriculture

The vision of the Department of Sustainable Agriculture is to become a pioneering University Department and a model of education, excellence, outward orientation, internationalisation and innovation in the practice of integrated, sustainable agricultural methods and in countryside management. It envisions becoming a Department that uses modern teaching methods and contemporary educational materials, that produces thoroughly trained scientists with a significant presence in international Erasmus+ mobility programmes, while the graduates of its undergraduate and/or postgraduate programmes will be among the first in demand by related enterprises and organisations.

The vision of the Department of Sustainable Agriculture is to become a notable and renowned educational and research centre, with significant collaborations with other educational institutions, both at national and international level, with substantial participation in funded research projects, with research results that have wide impact and application on the local and international business scene, and with a large number of publications by its members, both at conferences and in scientific journals (national and international), aiming at a high number of citations.

The vision of the Department of Sustainable Agriculture also concerns the creation of a Department sought after for collaboration by major organisations relating to Sustainable Agriculture and countryside management, as well as by the leading enterprises of the biotechnology and agri-food sector, in order to disseminate the knowledge arising from the Department's activities and to put it into genuine practical application. A core aim of the Department of Sustainable Agriculture is to be a Department through which knowledge moves from theory into practice.

Furthermore, a fundamental element of the vision of the Department of Sustainable Agriculture is to become a Department whose impact on producers, consumers and social bodies is pervasive, not only at local and national level but also globally.

Subject areas of the Joint MSc Programme «Agri-Food Biotechnology» of the Department of

Sustainable Agriculture

The core subject areas of the Joint MSc Programme «Agri-Food Biotechnology» of the Department of Sustainable Agriculture are the following:

- Fundamental and modern techniques of molecular biology and bioinformatics (PCR, genomics, CRISPR, etc.).
- Systems agrobiology and agroecosystems (production systems, biodiversity, ecosystem services, adaptation to climate change).
- Applied microbial biotechnology for nutrition and the environment (fermentations, probiotics, biofertilisers, bioremediation).
- Advanced crop genomics and plant biotechnology.
- Food quality and safety biotechnology (molecular testing, traceability, DNA barcoding).
- Functional, novel and innovative foods.
- Environmental biotechnology for sustainable agriculture.
- Advanced food preservation and packaging technologies (e.g. biodegradable materials).
- One Health approach (humans–animals–environment, food safety, AMR, zoonoses).
- Research methodology and applications of artificial intelligence in biotechnology.

Strategic objectives of the Joint MSc Programme «Agri-Food Biotechnology» and their connection with the strategic objectives of the Department of Sustainable Agriculture

The strategic objectives of the Joint MSc Programme «Agri-Food Biotechnology» derive from and are directly linked to the corresponding strategic objectives of the Department of Sustainable Agriculture and of the University of Patras, and are specified at programme level as follows:

Mapping of the strategic objectives of the MSc Programme to the strategic objectives of the Department of Sustainable Agriculture:

S1. Provision of high-level postgraduate education in Agri-Food Biotechnology, with emphasis on student-centred learning and on learning outcomes → Department strategic objective: «Provision of high-level education with emphasis on student-centred learning and a focus on Learning Outcomes».

S2. Connection of the MSc Programme with the labour market and with the scientific/professional bodies of the agri-food and biotechnology sector → Department strategic objective: «Improvement of the connection with the labour market, scientific bodies and graduates».

S3. Production of high-level research through the courses and dissertations of the

MSc Programme → Department strategic objective: «Production of high-level research based on international developments».

S4. Promotion and recognition of excellence and innovation in the teaching and research of the MSc Programme → Department strategic objective: «Promotion and recognition of excellence and innovation».

S5. Strengthening the outward orientation and internationalisation of the MSc Programme through collaborations, networking and mobility actions → Department strategic objective: «Strengthening the outward orientation and reinforcing the international presence of the Department».

S6. Effectiveness of administrative procedures and student welfare, including support for distance learning → Department strategic objective: «Effectiveness of administrative procedures and improvement of infrastructure, prioritising Student Welfare».

- Provision of high-level education, with emphasis on student-centred learning and the continuous upgrading of the postgraduate programmes, through the institutionalised process of annual review of the programmes, the updating and standardisation of academic operations and the focus on Learning Outcomes. Upon completion of the Joint MSc Programme «Agri-Food Biotechnology», students will be able to:
 - hold theoretical and applied scientific knowledge in biotechnology and agri-food (systems agrobiolology, molecular biology and bioinformatics, applied microbial biotechnology, crop genomics, food quality and safety, One Health) and in the individual subjects that make up this field of knowledge,
 - have the competence to staff private enterprises of the agri-food sector and public organisations related to the agri-food sector,
 - have the ability to perceive, interpret and solve problems through the collection and processing of data,
 - possess knowledge and skills in applying modern biotechnological and molecular methods to agri-food production and to the control of food quality and safety,

- possess knowledge and skills in data management and in applying computational methods for its analysis, on the basis of their knowledge of statistics and relevant information systems,
- have developed cognitive skills and managerial autonomy that enable them to continue their scientific education in a subsequent cycle of studies.
- Improvement of the connection with the labour market, scientific bodies and the graduates of the Department's postgraduate programmes.
- Production of high-level research based on international developments, through the promotion of research collaborations and the exploitation and dissemination of results for the benefit of the economy and society.
- Promotion and recognition of excellence and innovation, through the encouragement, support and reward of the achievements of the members of the university community in teaching and research.
- Strengthening outward orientation by reinforcing and promoting collaborations, networking and publicity actions and the international presence of the Department, through internationalisation actions and benchmarking with Universities of comparable size, placing emphasis on the distinction of the Department at local, national and international level. More specifically, the strengthening of outward orientation and the reinforcement of the Department's international presence is achieved through:
 - the organisation of national and international scientific conferences,
 - the participation of the Department's faculty members in the scientific committees of national and international scientific journals and conferences,
 - the participation of the Department in student exchange programmes, mobility of faculty members and laboratory teaching staff, etc. (e.g. Erasmus, Erasmus+),
 - the participation of the Department's faculty members in national and European research and development projects,
 - the delivery of educational seminars open to the public,
 - the participation of the Department in the action «Days of acquaintance between the Region's Schools and the University of Patras», under the title «Schools go to University»,
 - the participation of the Department in the action «Auditors of University

Courses».

- Effectiveness of administrative procedures and improvement of the Department's infrastructure, prioritising Student Welfare.

The quality assurance procedures recorded in the Institution's Quality Manual are implemented at Department level with the specialisation required in each case. All quality assurance procedures of the Department of Sustainable Agriculture are subject to inspection and review, conducted on an annual basis by the Internal Evaluation Group (OMEA) in collaboration with the Institution's Quality Assurance Unit (MODIP).

Quality Policy for the distance-learning operation of the MSc Programme

The Joint MSc Programme «Agri-Food Biotechnology» is offered through distance-learning methods and, therefore, its Quality Policy is specified so as to ensure the quality of synchronous and asynchronous online teaching. In particular, the Department of Sustainable Agriculture is committed to: (a) the use of a certified digital online-learning platform and reliable synchronous teaching tools provided by the Institution; (b) ensuring the quality and accessibility of the digital educational material; (c) the training and support of teaching staff in distance-teaching methods; (d) the continuous technical and academic support of students; (e) safeguarding the integrity of distance examination and assessment (identification, invigilation, personal-data protection); (f) monitoring student participation and progress; and (g) the periodic evaluation and improvement of the distance-learning educational process through the OMEA and the MODIP. The above commitments are in accordance with the Distance-Learning Regulation of the MSc (D2.2), the Good Practice Guide for Distance Learning (D2.5) and the Technical Report on the organisation of the MSc through distance-learning methods, as well as with the relevant guidelines and decisions of the HAHE (ETHAAE).