Akkreditierungsagentur
im Bereich Gesundheit und Soziales
Accreditation Agency in Health and Social Sciences

Assessment Report

for the Application of
the European University of Lefke, Northern Cyprus
School of Tourism and Hotel Management
Department of Tourism Management
for the Accreditation of the Study Program "Tourism Management",
Bachelor of Arts

On-site visit   06.-07.06.2023

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Decision   18.09.2023

Inhalt

1 Introduction

The Accreditation Agency in Health and Social Sciences (AHPGS) is an interdisciplinary and multi-professional organization. Its mission is to evaluate Bachelor and Master's programs in the fields of health and social sciences, as well as in related domains such as law or economics. By conducting accreditation and recommendation procedures, the AHPGS contributes to the improvement of the overall quality of teaching and learning. However, the higher education institutions remain responsible for implementing the quality assurance recommendations made by the AHPGS. Since 2004, the AHPGS has been a member of the European Consortium for Accreditation (ECA). In 2006, the AHPGS also joined the ENQA and became a member of the International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE) in 2009. Since 2012, the AHPGS has been a member of the Network of Central and Eastern European Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (CEENQA). Furthermore, the AHPGS has been listed in the European Quality Assurance Register (EQAR) since 2009.

In carrying out accreditation procedures, the AHPGS follows the requirements of the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG). In the present case, the decision regarding the accreditation of the study program is carried out by the AHPGS Accreditation Commission based on the following accreditation criteria:

1. Program aims and learning outcomes
2. Curriculum design
3. Personnel
4. Facilities and learning resources
5. Study process and student assessment
6. Program and quality management

I.   The University's application

The AHPGS verifies the sufficiency of the documents submitted by the University, namely the Self-Evaluation Report and its corresponding annexes. These are to

fulfil the assessment spheres as well as the AHPGS standards. With this information, the AHPGS produces a summary (see Sections 2-5), which is to be approved by the University and subsequently made available to the expert group, together with all other documentation.

II.   Written review

The main documents are reviewed by the expert group assigned by the accreditation commission of AHPGS. This is done in order to verify the compliance of the study program with the applicable accreditation criteria. Consequently, the experts comprise a short summary regarding the study programs.

III.   On-site visit (peer-review)

The experts carry out an on-site visit at the University. During this visit, discussions are held with members of the University, which include University and department administration, degree program management, teachers, and students. These discussions provide the expert group with details about the study program beyond the written documents. The task of the experts during the on-site visit is to verify and evaluate the objectives of the program and its projected study results, its structure, staff, material resources, course of studies, methods of assessment (selection of students, assessment of achievements, students' support), as well as the program management (program administration, external assurance of study quality).

Following the on-site visit, the expert group writes the expert report. This report is based on the results of the visit, the written review of the study programs, and the documents submitted by the University. Finally, the report is made available to the University for the opportunity to issue a response opinion.

The expert report as well as the University's response opinion – together with the provided documents – is submitted to the accreditation commission of the AHPGS.

IV.   The AHPGS accreditation decision

The accreditation commission of the AHPGS examines the documentation made available in the process of application, namely the University's self-evaluation

report, its annexes, the summary comprised by the AHPGS, the expert report, as well as the University's response opinion. These documents represent the foundation for the commission's decision regarding the recommendation for accreditation of the study program. Consequently, the decision – together with all other documentation – is forwarded to AHPGS Accreditation Commission for it to reach a decision regarding the accreditation of the study program.

2   Information about the University

The European University of Lefke was founded in 1989 by the Cyprus Science Foundation and opened its campus in 1990. There are currently 10,532 students from 87 different countries studying at the University. The University provides a broad range of contemporary education and is committed to maintaining international standards of excellence through the accreditation of the degree programs and the recognition by the Higher Education Council of Turkey (YOK) and the Higher Education Planning, Evaluation, Accreditation, and Coordination Council of Turkey (YODAK). There are eleven faculties and eight schools. In total, 104 associate/undergraduate degree programs and 55 postgraduate/doctoral degree programs are offered. The University is a member of the International Association of Universities (IAU), of the International Universities Council (IUC), and of the Federation of the Universities of the Islamic World (FUIW). Many departments have been accredited by specialized international accreditation agencies (SER 3.1.1).

The School of Tourism and Hotel Management was established in 2007. Tourism Management was the first program to enroll students and was launched in 2008. The initial graduation of this program was in June 2012. There are currently 67 students registered in Tourism Management (SER 3.2.1)

3 Overview

3.1 Procedure-related documents

The Self-Evaluation Report for accreditation (without the awarding of the official seal of the Accreditation Council of the Foundation for the Accreditation of Study Programs in Germany) of the above-mentioned study programs (hereinafter the SER) of the European University of Lefke (hereinafter the EUL) was submitted to the Accreditation Agency in Health and Social Science (AHPGS) in electronic format on August 09, 2022. The contract between the EUL and the AHPGS was signed on October 05, 2022.

On April 03, 2023, the AHPGS forwarded the open questions and explanatory notes (hereinafter OQ) pertaining to the application for accreditation for the study programs to the University. On April 24, 2023, the University submitted the answers to the open questions and explanatory notes (hereinafter AOQ) to the AHPGS in electronic format.

The application documentation submitted by the EUL follows the outline recommended by the AHPGS. Along with the application request towards accreditation of the Bachelor study program "Tourism Management", the following additional documents can be found in the application package (the documents submitted by the University are numbered in the following order for easier referencing):

Specific documents for the study program "Tourism Management"

Annex	Description
1	Module Overview
2	Module Descriptions
3	Teachers CV
4	Internship Manual
5	Diploma Supplement
6	Graduate Survey Sample
7	Logbook Samples
8	List of Activities
9	Modules and Program Outcomes
10	Modules and Learning Outcomes
11	Teaching Matrix

Alongside the study-program-specific documents, the following documents pertain to all study programs submitted for external evaluation:

Annex	Description
A	Quality Handbook
B	Code of Ethics
C	Organigram
D	EUL Board
E	Statute
F	Diploma Supplement
G	Regulations Students with Disabilities
H	Academic Calendar 18-19
I	Academic Calendar 19-20
J	Cooperation agreement
K	Declaration of Interest
L	Graduation Exam Evaluation Sample
M	Student & Graduate Surveys
N	Thesis Directives

The application, the open questions (OQ) and the answer to the open questions (AOQ) as well as the additional documents build the basis for the present summary. The layout bears no significance, as it solely reflects the agreed standard within the University.

3.2 Structural data of the study program

University	European University of Lefke (EUL)
Faculty/Department	School of Tourism and Hotel Management/ Department of Tourism Management
Cooperation partner	- Hotels in the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus
Title of the study program	„Tourism Management"
Degree awarded	Bachelor of Arts (B.A.)
Form of studies	Full-time, on campus

Organisational structure	3 hours blocks per week
Language of Studies	English
Period of education	Eight semesters
Credit Hours (CH) according to the internal credit hour system	127 credit hours (= 240 ECTS)
Workload	Total: 6,632 hours Contact hours: 1,293 hours Individual work: 4,859 hours Practice: 480 hours
Launch date of the study program	Fall 2007/2008
Time of admission	Fall Semester
Number of available places on the program	25
Number of enrolled students by now	67
Particular enrollment conditions	- High-school graduation diploma or equivalent - English Language Proficiency Test
Tuition fees	5,750 € per year

Chart 1: Structural data of the study program

4   Expert Report

The on-site visit was carried out on June 6th and 7th, 2023 according to the previously agreed schedule. Representatives from the head office of AHPGS accompanied the expert group.

The expert group met on June 5th, 2023 for preliminary talks prior to the on-site visit. They discussed the submitted application documents and the results of the written evaluation as well as questions that had been raised prior. Furthermore, they prepared the plan of the on-site visit at the University.

During the on-site visit, experts conducted discussions with the University management, representatives of the School of Tourism and Hotel Management, the chair, vice chair and the teaching staff of the program "Tourism Management" as well as with students currently studying in the program. Furthermore, they inspected the learning premises, such as lecture halls, seminar classrooms, library, and computer classes.

In the course of the on-site visit, the University submitted the following additional documents at the request of the experts:

- List of research applications in the year 2021 / 2022

The expert report is structured in compliance with the "Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area" (ESG), established by the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA). The study program will be described and analyzed in a comprehensive manner below. The documents submitted by the University, the Experts' feedback to the documents, the observations made during the on-site visit, the results of discussions with the representatives of the University, School of Tourism and Hotel Management and the department of Tourism Management serve as the foundation for the statements made in the expert report.

4.1 Program aims and their implementation

Summary

The objectives and learning outcomes of each module are listed in the module description. The learning outcomes are organized in four categories (Knowledge and Understanding; Cognitive Skills; Interpersonal Skills & Responsibility; Communication & Information Technology Skills). After studying in the Tourism Management program, the students should be able to:

1) Knowledge and Understanding
- Identify and apply business concepts and skills relevant to the operational areas of hospitality management,
- Understand the terminology used in tourism and hospitality related settings,
- Apprehend domestic and international issues of tourism,
- Evaluate diversity and ethical considerations relevant to the tourism and hospitality industry.
2) Cognitive Skills

- Recognize important external and internal factors, and trends impacting the industry,
- be prepared to assess current policies, as well as recommending and adopting changes as needed,
- Observe the dynamic nature of tourism management and reveal problem-solving and leadership skills to manage resources as needed within this environment,
- Understand how to use knowledge of best practices to improve the sustainability in the industry,
- Recognize difficulties linked to the quality of services provided and suggest strategies for improvement,
- Suggest strategies for the marketing of tourism and hospitality service.

3) Interpersonal Skills & Responsibility
- Follow the latest research conducted in the tourism and hospitality sector and self-develop by having a lifelong learning approach,
- Act with ethical values,
- Analyze information and make decisions using critical thinking and problem-solving skills.

4) Communication and Information Technology Skills
- Use both oral and written communication skills effectively in communicating with the colleagues, various stakeholders, and patients,
- Communicate effectively and confidently in the classroom, community, and industry,
- Gain knowledge on the use of technology to gather information and evaluate data to assess the accurate and reliable information (SER 1.3.3).

After graduating in the Tourism Management program, the students can work as managers in various departments of hotels, travel agencies, and airports throughout the world. The program also intends to educate graduates who can work as members of research centers and academic institutions (SER 1.4.1).

The travel and tourism industry in one of the largest and most dynamic industries in today's global economic system. Therefore, travel and tourism has been an important driver for job creation and employment opportunities. Young people are often employed in the field, which means that graduated students have good chances to find a job after graduation (SER 1.4.2).

Judgement

The experts ask about the vision and mission of the EUL. The University states that the vision is to create a multi-ethnic cross cultural student profile on campus as well as to create international diversity by increasing the international student body on campus. Therefore, the mission is to offer up-to date and long-lasting quality education at international standards by meeting the needs of all stakeholders. It is explained by the University, that the proportion of international students is now close to 30 % within the University with a 50 % increase in the last five years, which the experts positively acknowledge. Due to the difficult political and geographic situation, the European University of Lefke is not able to be part of the Erasmus Program. Nevertheless, the University manages to send some students abroad through bilateral agreements and joint programs. Some programs in the University have collaboration agreements with institutions from various countries of the world. Most of the international students come from Africa or Asia. According to the University, the goal of the acquisition of the accreditation is to increase the number of international students. Therefore, the University will be able to offer exchange programs in cooperation with different universities. The experts also see the need to further expand international cooperation to enhance the University's reach and promote cross-cultural exchange.

The experts inquire about research grant sources, including the EUL Research Fund based on the application evaluation process and Tubitak (Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey). Regarding research funding and support, the following information were stated: Research funding is available annually, and ethical approval is obtained from the University. On-site, the experts were shown peer-review publications, which they positively acknowledge. The provision of a day off for publication purposes is also deemed appropriate. As the University explains, students are also involved in research projects and publications. Research methods are taught within a specific module, where the students can gain intensive knowledge about different research methos and how to apply them. In conclusion, the experts note that research activities at the University, as well as within the Tourism Management program, are more intensive than what the documentation initially suggested. An overarching research concept or framework is advocated for, which can provide a clear direction and cohesion to the University's research activities.

Furthermore, EUL has some structured PhD program conducted in English, although a Master's program following the Bachelor study program "Tourism

Management" is currently not available. The experts encourage the University to consider implementing a consecutive Master's degree program in order to strengthen the research component at the University. The students also show interest in this idea during the interview.

The study program "Tourism Management" focuses on specific qualification objectives. These objectives cover professional and interdisciplinary aspects and particularly refer to the domain of academic competences, competences necessary for a qualified employment, skills of social commitment and personal development.

Decision

From the experts' point of view, the requirements of this criterion are fulfilled.

4.2 Structure of the study program

Summary

The Tourism Management program is a four-year degree program with eight semesters. Each year consists of two semesters. The program has 45 modules in total, out of which twelve modules are elective courses and two modules are summer internships. During the first four semesters, the students take 21 compulsory modules and elective courses, which include basic modules. During the last four semesters, the students take ten compulsory modules and other elective courses, which consist of advanced and interdisciplinary courses. The summer internships are taken at the end of the second and third years of study.

There are five to six modules provided for each semester. All modules have to be completed in one semester. The Bachelor study program "Tourism Management" offers between 15 and 18 credit hours (CH) per semester (SER 1.2.1).

The list of modules offered:

Nr.	Title	Sem.	CP
COM100	Introduction to computers	1	3
COM101	English I	1	3
COM104	Psychology	1	3
COM109	Mathematics	1	3
COMP112	Economics	1	3

SCI101	Introduction to Social Sciences	1	3
			18
COM106/ ORT106	Turkish	2	2
COM108/ ORT108	History	2	2
COM110	English II	2	3
COM115	Sociology	2	3
COM204	Ethics in Profession	2	3
TOUR152	Introduction to Tourism Management	2	3
			16
ACCT201	Financial Accounting I	3	3
BUSN205	Principles of Management	3	3
FOLAXX1	Foreign Language Elective I	3	3
GAST205	Food and Beverage Service	3	3
TOUR109	Tourism Geography	3	3
			15
ACCT202	Financial Accounting II	4	3
FOLAXX2	Foreign Language Elective II	4	3
GAST210	Food and Beverage Management	4	3
TOUR203	Rooms Division Management	4	3
TOUR204	Housekeeping Management	4	3
TOUR405	Destination Management	4	3
			18
FOLAXX3	Foreign Language Elective III	5	3
LEUXX2	Free Elective II	5	3
TOUR201	Travel and Tourism Marketing	5	3
TOUR240	Apprenticeship I	5	0
TOUR302	Purchasing and Cost Control	5	3
TOUR307	Tour Programming and Tourist Guiding	5	3

			15
BUSN304	Human Resource Management	6	3
COM351	Research Methods	6	3
FOLAXX4	Foreign Language Elective IV	6	3
LEUXX1	Free Elective I	6	3
TOUR208	Customer Relation Management	6	3
			15
FOLAXX5	Foreign Language Elective V	7	3
TGAXX1	Elective I	7	3
TGAXX2	Elective II	7	3
TOUR340	Apprenticeship II	7	0
TOUR403	Travel Agency and Tour Operators	7	3
TOUR409	Tourism Planning and Policy	7	3
			15
FOLAXX6	Foreign Language Elective VI	8	3
TGAXX3	Secmeli III	8	3
TGAXX4	Secmeli IV	8	3
TOUR408	E Tourism Business	8	3
TOUR420	Graduation Project	8	3
			15
	Total:		127

Tabelle 2: Modulübersicht

The module description/catalogue covers the following aspects: number of credit hours, teaching language, objectives, learning outcomes, content, and examination.

The first year of the program includes courses about basic theoretical knowledge such as mathematics, economics or psychology taught by lecturers from other faculties. Moreover, there are interdisciplinary courses like Turkish or History of Turkish Reforms which are shared with other faculties. During the second year of study, courses about management, accounting, and economics are provided by

lecturers from the Faculty of Economics and Administration Sciences. The students also must complete a module in a foreign language. The courses offered in the third and fourth years are more specific to the field of Tourism Management. Therefore, many courses are provided by the teaching staff of the Tourism Management program. Additionally, the students continue to receive courses from lecturers from the Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences. These courses are mainly shared with other faculties. The students also get to choose elective courses which are mainly in the fields of management or foreign languages (SER 1.2.2).

The first year of the program contains courses teaching basic theoretical knowledge in mathematics, social sciences, or ethics in profession.

The second year of study includes more advanced courses about business and tourism management like destination management, financial accounting, or housekeeping management.

During the third and fourth years, the students get to take more specific courses provided directly by the Tourism Management staff. Moreover, a course about "Research Methods" is offered (SER 1.3.4).

The University underlines the importance of using interactive teaching methods such as class discussions, projects, and presentations. These methods are used to help students gain more knowledge and practical skills. The class sizes are usually kept under 35 students, which allows the teaching staff to use interactive learning methods. The Moodle platform is used to share articles, newspaper reports, case studies, lecture notes, and class materials. The students can also use the platform to easily contact their teachers. Moreover, the program supports the involvement of guest speakers from various organizations (SER 1.2.4).

The teaching staff of the program uses electronic and media teaching aids in the courses, including PowerPoint presentations and videos. Some courses are still taught in the form of distance learning. The lecturers have the possibility to upload their course contents on Moodle. Under normal conditions, the courses are delivered in classrooms fully equipped with central cooling and heating system, desktop PCs and remote-controlled projectors. Since the Covid-19 pandemic, online teaching has also been used as a compulsory method. Microsoft Teams is still being used by the teaching staff for hybrid and online courses. The departments are encouraged by the University to organize Departmental meetings with the students to discuss eventual issues and increase the students'

involvement in new developments and measures taken to increase the quality of education (SER 1.2.5).

The study program includes two summer internships: one is between the 4th and the 5th semester, and the other one is between the 6th and the 7th semester. The students are required to complete 60 workdays in a hotel during each of the internships. Another requirement is that the hotel should have a minimum of 3 stars. The students must complete an internship logbook (SER 1.2.6).

A career day is organized by the Tourism Management department in the spring semester every year. Students' applications for summer internships are received by the human resources manager and department managers of the hotels. Applications are evaluated by the department managers and those whose internship applications are accepted are informed. If the students want to do their internships at other hotels/organizations, the internship coordinator of the department evaluates the suitability of the organization and informs the student about the decision. If any student cannot find an organization for internship, the internship coordinator helps the student in finding a suitable organization.

Before starting their internships, students are informed about the following issues, which are specified in Internship Instruction and Guidelines of the department. The compulsory internship period of the students of the Department of Tourism Management is 120 working days total. Students are required to complete their first internship at the end of the 2nd year (4th semester) and the second at the end of the 3rd year (6th semester) at the same hotel/organization. Each training should include at least 60 working days. After completing their internship, students are required to submit internship logbooks (including official stamp) and internship evaluation forms. Internship evaluation form is filled by the organization's manager and submitted to the department in a sealed envelope.

The necessary criteria for student internships to be considered successful are as follows;

- Students can do their internships in 3, 4 or 5 star hotels or A group travel agencies.
- At least 60 working days should be completed in the same workplace.
- The student should fill out the summary of the working day in English every day during the study period of at least 10 weeks, and each page of the internship book must be signed by the relevant department or unit official of the institution.

- The student evaluation form must be filled and signed by the authorized person and submitted in a sealed envelope.

According to the University, internationality is a core value of the Department of Tourism Management, and its program seems to be preferred by international students. Therefore, the program is an internationally and culturally diverse student platform. This aspect provides the opportunity for the students to network with students from other cultural backgrounds. This is a way for them to gain skills in communication that will be useful in their future professional life. In most of the courses, the students are offered the possibility to work in groups to prepare assignments, presentations or to make case studies. Moreover, both national and international case studies are used for discussions throughout the lectures and practice courses. The education language is English, and all the sources, textbooks, and course materials used are also in English (SER 1.2.8). The students of the "Tourism Management" program are mostly from African and Middle East countries.

Some programs in the University have collaboration agreements with institutions in various countries of the World. The students from the Tourism Management program can apply for an exchange program or ask for a transfer of their credits to universities abroad (SER 1.2.9). According to the University, the acquisition of the accreditation will increase the number of international students. Therefore, the University will be able to offer exchange programs in cooperation with different universities.

The students must complete a module titled "Research Methods" helping them in gaining skills on research methods and analyzing the obtained data. The students get to apply the skills learned by completing the graduation project. This last term course also prepares the students who want to pursue research or begin an academic career (SER 1.2.7).

Judgement

The Bachelor study program "Tourism Management" has a course-based structure and a course-related examination system. Descriptions of the modules are embedded within the course syllabi for each program. The course syllabus contains information on the course code, the credit hours, prerequisite(s), the semester and year, the instructor's name as well as his or her phone number, mail address and the lecture times. Furthermore, the course objectives, the learning outcomes, and the weekly distribution of course topics/contents are presented. Regarding the

assessments, the assessment tools, the assessment plan and the teaching and learning resources are described. The experts value the detailed syllabus, which enables students to prepare adequately for individual lectures as well as scheduled examinations.

The combination of the courses of the study program are consistent with the specified qualification objectives (described earlier). The experts recommend updating the course content regularly and actively by incorporating contemporary scientific findings on an ongoing basis. This will ensure that students are exposed to the latest research and developments. Revising and reevaluating the modules of the study program to reflect emerging trends and developments in the dynamic field of tourism will also ensure that the program remains relevant and aligned with industry demands. By doing that, the University should particularly focus on international aspects and emerging markets relevant to the destination of North Cyprus, such as rural and nature tourism.

Given that more than 90% of students in the "Hotel & Tourism Management" program have an international background, there is an opportunity to facilitate mutual cultural understanding on a personal level. However, to meet the demands of international business and enhance professional qualifications, it is recommended to introduce a module on "Cross-Cultural Management & Marketing." This module would address topics such as different corporate cultures, management styles, leadership, and consumer/guest behavior and demands.

It is assured that students receive the support and guidance they need for the organization and accomplishment of assignments and the learning process in general. During the round of talks, the experts inquire about interdisciplinary taught modules, as the programs involved in this accreditation procedure offer good opportunities for this. The University reports that in the elective modules, students are sometimes taught together. The experts see room for improvement related to interdisciplinary teaching and learning. Increasing cooperation between the different study programs and offering more interdisciplinary elective modules can foster collaboration and facilitate knowledge exchange across disciplines. Furthermore, streamlining and harmonizing the curriculum can help alleviate the examination workload and create a more balanced learning experience.

The experts further inquire about the graduation project. The faculty reports that graduation projects are supervised by advisors, providing guidance and mentorship

to students. Projects are often presented at conferences within Turkey and are also published, showcasing students' research findings. The university offers a research method course where students collaborate in groups on a common project, fostering teamwork and developing essential research skills. The objective of the graduation project is to provide students with the experience of tackling the challenges associated with undertaking an individual research work. It aims to afford them the opportunity to apply, integrate, and expand upon the research skills they have acquired in previous years. Additionally, it aims to cultivate proficiency in effectively communicating research findings through written presentations, which holds particular significance for those aspiring to pursue further studies in the field of Tourism Management. The experts acknowledge that the graduation project is not visibly integrated across all study programs. This should be adjusted as a matter of priority. Additionally, the experts suggest specifying the module description for the graduation project and possibly considering a title change to clearly indicate that students are required to write a final thesis-like research paper.

Decision

From the experts' point of view, the requirements of this criterion are fulfilled.

4.3 Admission and Feasibility

Summary

The process and management of admissions is mainly carried out by the University's Registrar's Office, with the Faculties and the International Affairs Office. It is necessary to have completed the secondary education to apply for the Tourism Management program. The candidates must hold a high-school graduation diploma or equivalent and must show their English language ability by taking part in the English Language Proficiency Test. Students can also provide an international accepted English proficiency certificate.

Turkish students must take the Turkish University Entrance Examination (LYS) which is conducted by the Office of Student Selection and Placements (OSYM). The students are then placed depending on their examination scores.

International students must have a high school level diploma/certificate with a minimum average diploma grade of "C" (SER 1.5.1).

There are special requirements about the English language skills for the direct admission into the degree program. If the students don't have an IELTS examination certificate with a minimum score of 5.5 or similar, they must take the EUL English Preparatory School program, which lasts for a year. (SER 1.5.4)

The University has installed different support services as well as specialized and general consultations to guarantee the feasibility of the study program.

Judgement

The admission policies and procedures along with the requirements are properly documented and made publicly available. The experts determine the admission procedure and requirements to be appropriate.

The University prioritizes social support and provides a range of services, including a kindergarten and support for pregnant individuals. To foster a vibrant community, the University encourages the formation of social clubs and organizes various social events, providing opportunities for students to connect and engage with each other. Additionally, students have access to an advisor who offers guidance and support throughout their academic journey. On-site, it became obvious that the teaching staff follows an "open-door-policy". As another support mechanism, an academic advisor is responsible for a small number of students from the beginning of each semester. Students are supported through advisors with their registration process, financial and personal issues, and their performance during the semester. The university offers scholarships to every international student, including academic scholarships. Additionally, tuition fees can be paid in installments, and sibling scholarships are available. For first-year students, dormitories are provided to ensure a safe living environment. Furthermore, the university offers free rent to victims of earthquakes, demonstrating its commitment to supporting those in need. The workload and examination requirements are deemed feasible, enabling students to manage their studies effectively. The experts find the support services at the University to be exemplary and conducive to the health and success of the student body.

To prepare students for the level of difficulty and volume of exams, the type as well as the time of the different examinations is defined and communicated to the students transparently through the course syllabus at the beginning of each course. The experts confirm that the University takes good measures to guarantee

the feasibility of the study program despite the high workload. The organization of the education process ensures the successful implementation of the study programs.

Decision

From the experts' point of view, the requirements of this criterion are fulfilled.

4.4 Examination system and transparency

Summary

The number of examinations per semester depends on the module. The lecturers are responsible for the preparation of examinations in accordance with the learning outcomes of the Tourism Management program. In each semester, at least one midterm and one final exam must be carried out. Each exam aims to test whether the students have achieved the learning outcomes of the course. Moreover, evaluation methods like assignments, presentations, and term projects may be added to the evaluation process. The contribution of exams and other evaluations to the final score also depends on the module. The following information are automatically given to the students either through the lecturer or on free access on the Moodle platform:

- Learning outcomes,
- Objectives,
- Topics to be covered weekly,
- Evaluation methods,
- Weight of each evaluation method for the final score.

Students with a grade from A to C are successful and pass the exam. Students with a grad from C- to D imply a "Conditional Pass", meaning that the students are successful given that the CGPA is above or equal to 2.00. Grades D- and F indicate "Failure" which means the students must repeat the course. Students who do not fulfill the requirements for the evaluations of the course are given the "FA" grade by the lecturer. The grades "S" (satisfactory) and "U" (unsatisfactory) are given to students who are registered for non-credit courses. "I" is given to students who have not written the exam or who did not complete some of the course components because of a valid reason. The grade "W" is given to students

who are allowed to withdraw from a registered course. At the end of each semester, the students can retake exams on defined days (SER 1.2.3).

The grading system is as follows:

MARK	GRADE	EQUIVALENT SCORES AND EXPLANATIONS
90-100	A	4.00
85-89	A-	3.70
80-84	B+	3.30
75-79	B	3.00
70-74	B-	2.70
66-69	C+	2.30
62-65	C	2.00
58-61	C-	1.70
54-57	D+	1.30
50-53	D	1.00
40-49	D-	0.70
0-39	F	0.00
Failing from Absenteeism	F	0.00
	S	Satisfactory (Pass in a non-credit-course)
	U	Unsatisfactory (Failure in a non-credit-course)
	W	Withdrawal

The students transferring from another HEI or registrations following the Vertical Transfer Examination may be entitled to conversion of credits acquired from other HEIs. The students are required to submit their transcripts of records and the list of the courses taken at the other HEI. This information will then be evaluated by the exemption commission of the concerned department and a list of exempted courses will be provided. The following rules must be followed:

- In case of a compatible course content, the number of National or ECTS credits must be at least equal with the EUL course credits,
- If the number of credits is inferior to the one of the EUL course, then no exemption will be given for that course,
- For a course to be exempted, the grad must be at least equivalent to a C (2.00) in the EUL grading system (SER 1.5.3).

Judgement

The University uses a continuous assessment process to ensure the quality of education for its students. The study program has a course-related examination system. Its implementation, including the grading system, course load regulations, repetition of courses and exams is regulated and transparent for the students. Furthermore, information concerning the study program, process of education, admission requirements and tuition fees are documented and published.

From the experts' point of view, the examinations serve to determine whether the envisaged qualification objectives have been achieved. These examinations are focused on students' knowledge and competences. The transparent information of examination methods and of the examination schedule at the beginning of each term makes the high number of assessments during and at the end of each semester manageable. Nevertheless, in the experts' opinion, the study program includes a very high number of exams which causes a high workload not only for students but also for the teaching staff. Therefore, the experts recommend combining courses into larger modules. This would also increase the efficiency of courses with interrelated topics, such as Tourism Planning, Geography, and/or Sustainability.

Decision

From the experts' point of view, the requirements of this criterion are fulfilled.

4.5 Teaching staff and material equipment

Summary

In the Tourism Management program, the total number of credit hours is 127, under which 87 credit hours correspond to directly Tourism Management related subjects. When considering a teaching load of 15 hours/week, three full-time staff are required. All the modules are taught by full-time academics. Some of the modules are given by other faculty members when the content requires a specialization. Part-time instructors only teach Foreign Language courses like Russian or German. There are also postgraduate students acting as faculty assistants who are employed on short-term contract basis to support the administrative activities of the faculty. There are no adjunct professors in the program. The ratio of full-time teaching loads of the full-time instructors to the

total number of all students in the study program with full enrollment capacity utilization is 1:11,2. As full-time staff, there are four assistant professors, one associate professor and one professor who are part of the teaching staff in Tourism Management. As part-time staff, there are three lecturers who are part of the teaching staff in Tourism Management. Moreover, three professors, two associate professors, five assistant professors, and two lecturers from other faculties are involved in the teaching (SER 2.1.1).

The teaching staff of the Department of Tourism Management is qualified with PhD degrees from accredited universities. According to the University, the teaching staff had various opportunities for self-development:

- Funding for attending seminars,
- Conferences,
- Conducting research,
- Making publications in journals,
- Participating in independent research projects.

The transfer of knowledge between colleagues contributes to the intellectual capacity of the instructors and improves their teaching effectiveness. The faculty members have several occasions to exchange their expertise and knowledge through conferences, seminars, round table discussions and panels. The cooperation between them is institutionalized through departmental meetings, joint committees or group works on specific topics. The primary aim of the development and career planning program is to identify strategies to maintain the faculty member's credential field and to enhance the overall performance and reputation of the Tourism Management department. To do so, the University encourages the teaching staff to co-operate in research programs with other universities or to do post-doc in abroad universities to broaden their knowledge. The titles of assistant professors, associate professor and professor are given to the faculty members who satisfy the University promotion and regulation criteria for the given title. The faculty members are asked to prepare a report about the courses that they have been teaching, their publications and collaborations every year (SER 2.1.3).

There is one program coordinator responsible for the coordination of the lecture programs and exam schedules of all departments. There is also one research assistant responsible for assisting the lecturers if needed (SER 2.2.1).

The lectures take place on-campus in different buildings of the University. There is the Arts and Sciences Building, which contains 48 classrooms and four computer labs. The Central Lecture Hall has 9 classrooms, lecture theaters and numerous smaller seminar rooms. The Faculty of Pharmacy Buildings contains two amphitheaters and five classrooms. Audiovisual equipment is available in most classrooms and seminar rooms, as well as in the meeting room (SER 2.3.1).

The library opened and expanded parallelly to the University. The 2500m² library building has 65 computers available for the students. It also has reading areas and private study rooms, which can be reserved by the students. Concerning the staff, the library has eight full time members and 15 assistants. The library is open from Monday to Friday from 08:30am until 11pm and Saturday-Sunday from 09:30am until 11pm. During the midterm and final exam periods, it is open 7/24.

The library has a collection of 48,500 printed publications, 161,000 digital books or sources, and thousands of audiovisuals and periodical subscriptions. It also has a membership in more than 15 online databases that allow access to full-text journals, reports, abstracts, e-books, reviews, etc. (SER 2.3.2).

In the "Tourism Management" program, there are 2,536 published books, 2,118 electronic journals and 1,898 electronic books available for the students.

The University provides extra funding for research to promote the publication of articles and conference papers. There are three categories of funding:

- BAP Projects: funding for a project approved by the commission organized by the Rectorate,
- Publication in SCI-Indexed/SSCI-Indexed Journal: the University rewards the publication with a fund of 1,500$ per paper,
- Attending of conferences: the amount of the funding depends on the type and location of the conference (SER 2.3.4).

Judgement

New teaching staff is thoroughly briefed about the program and their teaching responsibilities before they start teaching. Students evaluate the performance of all teaching and staff periodically. Overall, the teaching and academic staff of the Tourism Management program at the European University of Lefke shows a very high level of commitment and potential for the execution as well as further development of the study programs they are responsible for. The expert group concludes that there is a strong corporate identity and positive group dynamics

among the University and the administration staff. As a motivation to work at European University of Lefke, the faculty cites the good reputation, the working atmosphere, the safe working environment as well as support mechanisms related to research and academic development. Work-life balance is also emphasized, with one regular work-from-home day, along with generous annual leave of 30 days and 14 days of sick leave. Promotion criteria from assistant to associate professor are clear and fair, ensuring transparency in career progression.

The experts find the amount of human resources allocated to the program to be sufficient to carry out its functions. The teaching staff is highly qualified. The teaching staff within the Bachelor study program Tourism Management is in possession of academic and technical credentials and experience adequate to their tasks. The University informs its employees about opportunities for personal and professional development transparently, and actively encourages their participation in workshops, training courses and conferences intended to further their abilities, which is confirmed during the talks with the staff on site.

From the experts' point of view, it would be beneficial if funding for students to participate in excursions to leading international congresses and fairs, particularly events like ITB Berlin would be provided. These opportunities would create valuable networking and professional development experiences, connecting students with industry experts and facilitating international collaboration.

The University boasts a sufficient library that caters to students' academic needs. Online access to resources and materials further enhances the accessibility and convenience of information. Staff internships are supported, and additional funding is provided for open access publications (approximately $1,500 per year). Access to patient data is restricted, but efforts are being made to facilitate its use for research purposes. Research is considered as an addition to teaching hours and does not reduce teaching obligations. During the exam period, the university provides free food and coffee, ensuring students' well-being and support during this critical time.

The experts visited the premises of the School of Hotel and Tourism, where the Tourism Managemennt program is located. As a whole, it was ascertained by the experts that the program has ample teaching facilities at its disposals.

Decision

From the experts' point of view, the requirements of this criterion are fulfilled.

4.6 Quality assurance

Summary

Internal quality assessment procedures are carried out semi-annually by the Higher Education Quality Commission of the University. At the end of every semester, online surveys are carried out, and the results are evaluated and shared with the departments (SER 1.6.1)

The program has its own Student Experience Survey that is administered at the end of every semester. There is also a Graduate Survey that is administered at the end of every academic year. Once completed, the surveys are evaluated by the academic staff of the Department of Tourism Management so that the necessary improvements can be made (SER 1.6.2).

Modules in the Department of Tourism Management are evaluated at the end of each semester by course lecturers using the course learning outcomes. The University has an online module evaluation survey completed by the students at the end of every semester. The results are analyzed by the Higher Education Quality Commission and then shared with every department. The Tourism Management Department academic staff uses the results to implement the needed measures in order to improve the quality of the program (SER 1.6.3).

Feedback is also obtained from the graduates through the graduate experience survey. The results are used for the improvement of the quality of teaching and the practical relevance of the program (SER 1.6.4).

The students in Tourism Management have a workload equivalent to 30 ECTS each semester. The number of modules taken depends on the cumulative GPA. Students with a cumulative GPA of 2.0 are eligible to register for an additional module, while those with a GPA of 3.0 and above can register for two additional modules (SER 1.6.5). At the end of every academic semester, questionnaires are shared via moodle to evaluate the feasibility of the workload of the modules.

The Tourism Management program has been accredited by YÖDAK (Higher Education Planning, Evaluation, Accreditation and Coordination council).

The number of enrollments per semester is limited to 25 (SER 1.6.6).

The following table shows the enrollment statistics:

2018	13
2019	17
2020	15
2021	17
2022	23

All the students enrolled in the program have access to an online system called the OIBS through the Deanship of Admission and Registration. This system provides them with all the details about:

- The academic requirements,
- The complete academic plan,
- The credit hours of the modules,
- The attendance statistics,
- The information about examinations, grades, and cumulative GPA,
- The information on passed and failed modules.

OIBS is also the platform on which the students can select the modules to study, add, and drop of modules with the support of an advisor lecturer from their department. The students can also manage their study plan. The Examination committee follows a transparent procedure to fix the exam schedules, making sure that it fits with the other subjects from the students. The rules and regulations for the exams are communicated in advance to the students. In the case of disabled students, the special regulations are communicated to the lecturers (SER 1.6.7).

The counselling support begins with an orientation program specifically designed to inform the newly arrived students about the campus, the faculties, and the facilities available. After the enrollment, every student is assigned to an academic advisor who can help with their progress, registration on courses, career advising, and other academic issues. Every instructor must schedule two office hours per week, during which the students can book an appointment to ask questions or further explore the subjects taught during the lectures. During the rest of the week, the students can use the platform Moodle to contact the lecturers. The Career Center of the University:

- helps the students identify career opportunities,
- organizes job forums on campus,
- assists the students in their job research,
- assists the students in the CV writing and interview skills improvement,
- reaches out to students using social networking sites and leaflets.

The Dean's Office offers psychological counselling services. Moreover, the students have the possibility to get involved in one of the 44 clubs and 35 societies of the University, which can help with developing soft skills, teamwork, leadership, communication, and organizational skills (SER 1.6.8).

Judgement

From the experts' point of view, the University has a well-structured system of quality assurance spread across all of its units. The European University of Lefke has developed and documented a concept of quality assurance in education process, teaching, and research, which serves as the basis for the quality-oriented development and implementation of the study program "Tourism Management".

Regular evaluation surveys are conducted after every course, allowing students to provide feedback on their learning experience. The University values feedback from students and implements actual changes based on evaluation surveys, addressing content, examination methods, and teaching approaches to enhance the learning experience. The results of the internal quality assurance management are applied for the continuous development of the study program. In doing so, the University takes into close consideration the quality evaluation results as well as the analyses of students' workload, their academic accomplishments and feedback from graduates. The experts appreciate that regularly meetings on different levels are held to improve the study programs.

Decision

From the experts' point of view, the requirements of this criterion are fulfilled.

4.7 Gender equality and equal opportunities

Summary

The University follows the laws of the TRNC constitution and laws for protection, rehabilitation, and employment of disabled individuals and has its own regulations (Appendix 8). Therefore, the University facilities are planned to be accessible for the physically disabled students (SER 1.5.2).

According to the University, all the students have the same rights, and the classes are mixed with students from different backgrounds. The students without sufficient funds for their education are provided with scholarships. Part-time jobs on campus, such as research assistant, are offered to the students (SER 1.6.9).

The students with special requirements can discuss their needs with their advisors or with the head of the department. If it is possible, the necessary measures are undertaken to satisfy their needs. The University has a Health Centre that offers primary health services and advice on health issues. In total, there are for example, one specialist physician of internal medicine, one general surgeon, one dermatologist, one psychiatrist, one ophthalmologist, one dentist, and one nurse available full time (1.6.10).

Judgement

The University demonstrates its commitment to the provision of equal opportunities for all students and shows openness for diversity and social developments. Overall, the experts conclude that the University's actions on the provision of gender equality and promotion of equal opportunities for students with particular living circumstances are implemented in a transparent manner.

Decision

From the experts' point of view, the requirements of this criterion are fulfilled.

5 Conclusion

Overall, the experts gained a positive impression of the European University of Lefke as well as the Tourism Management program. The management of the University seems highly involved and dedicated, demonstrating a strong commitment to the University's success. This commitment is reflected in their active engagement in various aspects of the University's operations. The Tourism Management program maintains a small student population, allowing for nearly one-on-one teaching and fostering a more personalized educational experience. This close interaction between faculty and students contributes to a supportive learning environment. The working environment is described as familial, suggesting a supportive and friendly atmosphere among staff members.

An overarching research concept or framework is advocated for, which can provide a clear direction and cohesion to the institution's research activities. The experts see room for improvement in terms of documentation and materials. Addressing these areas will ensure that the necessary resources are readily available and of high quality.

The institution places great emphasis on providing intensive support and guidance to students during practical training. This hands-on approach ensures that students receive comprehensive supervision and mentoring to enhance their learning and professional development.

The number of modules and the associated workload are perceived to be too high, resulting in a heavy examination burden for students. Streamlining and harmonizing the curriculum can help alleviate this issue and create a more balanced learning experience. Increasing cooperation between different study programs and offering interdisciplinary elective modules can foster collaboration and facilitate knowledge exchange across disciplines.

Based on the information from written documents and the results of the on-site visit, the experts concluded that the study program Tourism Management offered at the European University of Lefke fulfils the above-described criteria. Hence, the experts recommended that the Accreditation Commission of AHPGS make a positive decision regarding the accreditation of the study program.

For the continuous development of the study program, the experts have outlined the following recommendations:

- International cooperation should be further expanded to enhance the University's reach and promote cross-cultural exchange.
- An overarching research concept or framework should be developed, which can provide a clear direction and cohesion to the University's research activities.
- The course content should be regularly and actively updated by incorporating contemporary scientific findings on an ongoing basis.

- Interdisciplinary teaching and learning should be increased. Cooperation between the different study programs and offering more interdisciplinary elective modules can foster collaboration and facilitate knowledge exchange across disciplines.
- A module on "Cross-Cultural Management & Marketing" should be implemented, addressing topics such as different corporate cultures, management styles, leadership, and consumer/guest behavior and demands.
- A consecutive Master's degree program should be implemented.
- The module description for the graduation project should be specified, and possibly a title change to clearly indicate that students are required to write a final thesis-like research paper should be considered.
- Consideration should be given to whether and to what extent courses can be combined into larger modules to reduce workload. This would also increase the efficiency of courses with interrelated topics, such as Tourism Planning, Geography, and/or Sustainability.
- Funding for students to participate in excursions to leading international congresses and fairs, particularly events like ITB Berlin could be provided.

6 Decision of the accreditation commission

Decision of the accreditation commission September 18, 2023

This resolution of the Accreditation Commission of the AHPGS is based on the University's application, as well as the expert review and the site visit covered in the Assessment Report. The Accreditation Commission has also taken the response opinion of the University regarding the study program into account.

The site visit of the University took place on June 6-7, 2023 according to the previously agreed-upon schedule.

The accreditation procedure is structured according to the Accreditation Criteria developed by the AHPGS. The Accreditation Criteria are developed by the AHPGS in close accordance with the existing criteria and requirements valid in the Federal Republic of Germany and based on the „Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area" (ESG), established by the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA).

The Accreditation Commission of the AHPGS discussed the procedural documents and the vote of the expert group regarding the Assessment Report.

The Bachelor study program requires the obtainment of 127 credit hours (CH) according to the internal credit hour system. The regulated study period in the program "Tourism Management" is four years (eight semesters). The study program comprises 45 modules in total, out of which twelve modules are elective ones and two modules are summer internships. The language of instruction is English. The Bachelor study program "Tourism Management" is completed with awarding of the academic degree "Bachelor of Arts" (B.A.). Admission takes place every fall semester. The first cohort of students was admitted to the study program in the academic year 2007/2008.

The Accreditation Commission of the AHPGS considers that all Accreditation Criteria are fulfilled and adopts the following decision:

The Bachelor study program "Tourism Management" is accredited without conditions for the duration of five years until September 30, 2028.

For further development and enhancement of the study program, as well as of the University as a whole, the Accreditation Commission of the AHPGS support the recommendations articulated in the Assessment Report.