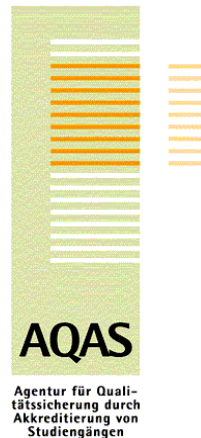# Decision of the Accreditation Commission of AQAS

on the study programme:

"Economy and Finance" (B.Sc.), Faculty of Economics, Administrative and Social Sciences (English programme)

offered by Istanbul Gelişim University, Turkey

Based on the report of the expert panel and the discussions of the Accreditation Commission in circulation procedure on 28 March 2018 the Accreditation Commission decides:

1. The study programme "**Economy and Finance**" (**Bachelor of Science,** English programme) offered by the Faculty of Economics, Administrative and Social Sciences of Istanbul Gelişim University is accredited according to the AQAS criteria for Programme Accreditation.

   The accreditation is **conditional**.

   The study programme essentially complies with the requirements defined by the criteria and thus the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG) and the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) in their current version. The required adjustments can be implemented within a time period of nine months.

2. The conditions have to be fulfilled. The fulfilment of the conditions has to be documented and reported to AQAS no later than **31 January 2019.**

3. The accreditation is given for the period of **six years** and is valid until **30 September 2024**.

Conditions:

1. The general qualification goals, aims and objectives as well as learning outcomes have to be defined and described clearly in all documents for all stakeholders, especially in the Diploma Supplement.

2. The study programme has to be named coherently in all relevant documents provided to students and the public alike.

3. The English Proficiency level for admission to the study programme has to be clearly defined for domestic and international students.

The following **recommendations** are given for further improvement of the programme:

1. Informal processes of communication of information or feedback should be complemented by formal structures to enhance transparency and stability by clearly defining the rights and tasks of staff and students to avoid conflicts and negative effects between persons on different levels and with different roles.

2. To enhance the employability of the graduates, the training of soft skills, e.g. ethics or communication, should be included in the curriculum

3. To facilitate the transition to the professional life more practical experiences would be fruitful and enhance student's satisfaction.

4. The implementation of complementary English courses to reach the goals of the programme for domestic and international students is recommended beyond "English I" and "English II".

5. The department should consider teaching additional software in the curriculum, e.g. E-Views, MAT-Lab, R, or Starter.

6. The panel of experts suggests using the potential to carry out some courses of the Turkish and English programme jointly in order to promote interdisciplinary and to get a comparative point of view when it comes to organizational and cultural structures.

7. More teaching staff should be hired as a diversity of lectures enhances and helps to broaden the vision of students in the fields they are specializing in.

8. To enhance continuity and attractiveness of the study programme contracts of the teaching staff should be longer with secure conditions.

9. The implementation of a plan to promote teachers development in the areas of teaching skills, English proficiency e.g. via an exchange programme for teaching staff, and didactic knowledge is strongly recommended.

10. To strengthen the attractiveness of the programme to international students the university should widen the consulting services for international students.

11. The library should provide more resources considering more work space for the growing number of students as well as literature resources such as English Economy Textbooks in printed and digital version.

With regard to the reasons for this decision the Accreditation Commission refers to the attached assessment report.
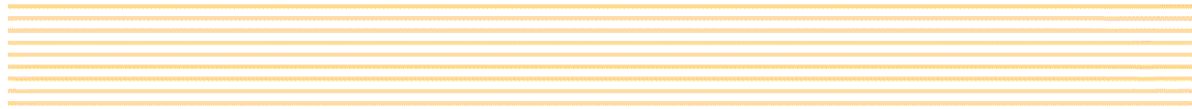
Experts' Report

on the bachelor degree programme:

Economy and Finance (Bachelor of Science; English programme)

offered by Istanbul Gelişim University

Panel of Experts:

Prof. Dr. Yasemin Boztuğ	University of Göttingen, Chair of Marketing with focus on Consumer Behaviour
Emmerich Christiansen	Ford Motor Company, Cologne (labour market representative)
Prof. Dr. Reinhard Hünerberg	University of Kassel, Institute of Management and Business Studies
Prof. Dr. Şemsa Özar	Boğaziçi University, Department of Economics
Jacob Spanke	Student of the University of Potsdam (student representative)

Coordination:

Dr. Katarina Löbel, Constanze Noack	AQAS, Cologne, Germany

I. Preamble

AQAS – Agency for Quality Assurance through Accreditation of Study Programmes – is an independent non-profit organisation supported by more than 85 member institutions, both higher education institutions (HEIs) and academic associations. Since 2002, the agency has been accredited by the German Accreditation Council (GAC). It is therefore a notified body for accreditation of higher education institutions and programmes in Germany.

AQAS is a full member of ENQA and also listed in the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR) which confirms that our procedures comply with the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG), which all Bologna countries agreed upon as a basis for internal and external quality assurance.

AQAS is an institution founded by and working for higher education institutions and academic associations. The agency is devoted to quality assurance and quality development of both academic studies and teaching in higher education institutions. The activities of AQAS in accreditation are neither restrained to specific academic disciplines or degrees nor to a certain type of higher education institution

II. Accreditation procedure

This report results from the external review of the bachelor programme "Economy and Finance" (English programme) (B.Sc.) (Faculty of Economics, Administrative and Social Sciences) offered by Istanbul Gelişim University (IGU).

1. Criteria

The assessment of the programmes is in accordance with a set of criteria for programme accreditation developed by AQAS. The criteria are based on the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG) 2015 and feature a set of indicators used to demonstrate the fulfilment of each criterion. However, criteria are met even if single indicators are not fulfilled. The indicators need to be discussed in the context of the programme as not all indicators are necessarily applicable to a programme.

2. Approach and methodology

Initialisation

Istanbul Gelişim University mandated AQAS to perform the accreditation procedure in June 2017.

The university prepared a Self Evaluation Report (SER). In July 2017, IGU handed in a draft of the SER together with the relevant documentation of the study programmes and an appendix.

AQAS assessed the SER draft for completeness, comprehensibility and transparency. The final version of the SER was handed in in September 2017.

The accreditation procedure has been officially initialised by a decision of the AQAS Accreditation Commission on August 28/29, 2017.

Nomination of the expert panel

Composing the expert panel follows the stakeholder principle. Involved are consequently representatives from the respective discipline/s, the labour market and students. Furthermore, AQAS follows the principles for the selection of experts by the European Consortium for Accreditation (ECA).

The Accreditation Commission nominated the expert panel in September 2017. AQAS informed the university thereafter about the members of the expert panel and IGU did not raise any concerns against the composition of the panel.

Preparation of the site visit

Prior to the site visit, the experts reviewed the SER and submitted a short preliminary statement including open questions and potential points in need of additional information. AQAS forwarded these preliminary statements to the university as well as the panel members to increase transparency in the process and upcoming discussions during the site visit.

Site visit

After review of the Self Evaluation Report, the site visit to the university took place from October 16–18, 2017. On site, the experts interviewed in separate discussions different stakeholders, such as the management of the university, the programme management, teaching and other staff as well as students, and consulted additional documentation such as an overview over statistical data of the student body (e.g. number of applications, beginners, students, graduates, student drop outs), CVs of the teaching staff, information on student services, core information on the main library, the processes and data of quality management, etc. The visit concluded with presenting preliminary findings by the experts to the university's representatives.

Report writing

Following the site visit, the expert group drafted the following report assessing the fulfilment of the AQAS criteria for programme accreditation. The report included a recommendation to the Accreditation Commission. The report was sent to IGU for comments.

Decision

The experts report and statements together with the comments by IGU form the basis for the AQAS Accreditation Commission to make a decision regarding the accreditation of the programme. Based on these documents and the discussion during the circulation procedure on March 28th 2018 the Accreditation Commission decided on the accreditation. AQAS forwarded the decision to IGU. The university had the right to appeal against the decision or any of the imposed conditions.

In April 2018, AQAS published the report and the accreditation result of the accreditation along with the names of the panel of experts.

III. General Information on the University

Gelişim University is a private higher education institution located in Istanbul, Turkey. It started as a vocational school in 2008, having been founded by the "Gelişim Foundation for Education, Culture, Health and Social Development". In 2011, the institution acquired university status and has since expanded its programmes and number of students. Today, Istanbul Gelişim University is characterised by a student population of over 22.000 and a number of teaching staff of ca. 500.

The university structure consists of three faculties, three institutes, four graduate schools, and two vocational schools offering a wide range of graduate and postgraduate programmes: Faculty of Economics, Administrative and Social Sciences; Faculty of Fine Arts; Faculty of Engineering and Architecture; Institute of Social Sciences, Institute of Natural and Applied Sciences, Institute of Health Sciences; School of Applied Science, School of Foreign Languages, School of Physical Education and Sports, and School of Health Sciences.

Every private university is obliged by the Amendments of the Law on Higher Education to have a "Board of Trustees". It enters a contract with the Rector, all faculty members and all other staff.

Furthermore, it decides on the budget, all hiring and termination decisions and the amount of annual tuition fees. The university has a senate as well as all other organs comparable to a public institution of identical state.

The university pursues the goal of becoming an international education and learning institution by running joint projects with internationally recognised schools, by setting up a global research network and by providing high quality professional education in Turkish and English. A strategic plan 2016-2020 defines these objectives together with those of further developing and implementing graduate education and improving service processes as the main targets to be achieved by the university in the near future.

According to the university, its educational approach follows the principle of creative teaching and participatory learning. The university aims at educating civically engaged, self-reliant individuals by providing excellence and highest quality in its study programmes and by fostering critical intellectual development.

Istanbul Gelişim University offers continuous scholarships, free courses, internships and job opportunities to students. It supports international student exchange programmes. At the same time, it aims to support students' individual, social and academic development during university life. Students can receive consultation and help for their needs at the Psychological Counselling Guidance Unit. As outlined by the university, it supports its students in extra-curricular activities such as student clubs and student councils, summer schools and conferences.

IGU participates in the Erasmus+ programme and encourages student and staff mobility. As outlined by the university, the number of European partner institutions is currently 73. The International Relations Office shares responsibility for the organization of mobility.

The programmes to be accredited are offered by the Faculty of Economics, Administrative and Social Sciences and there the departments of Public Relations and Publicity, Business Administration and Economics and Financing, as well as in the case of the programme *Public Relations and Advertising* by the School of Applied Sciences. Within the Faculty there are in total 21 departments offering together with the School of Applied Sciences ten graduate programmes; three of these are PhD-programmes and 14 are Master's degree programmes. The number of students registered to the Faculty of Economics Administrative and Social Sciences in 2016–2017 was 2.826.

IV. Assessment of the study programmes

1. Policy and Procedures for Quality Assurance

The programme is subject to the Higher Education Institution's policy and associated procedures for quality assurance, including procedures for the design, approval, monitoring, and revision of the programmes.

A quality-oriented culture, focusing on continuous quality enhancement, is in place. This includes regular feedback mechanisms involving both internal and external stakeholders.

The strategy, policies, and procedures have a formal status and are made available in published form to all those concerned. They also include roles for students and other stakeholders.

[ESG 1.1]

Description

As outlined by the university, one of Gelişim University's main objectives in quality assurance lies in the effective participation of internal and external stakeholders in all activities in accordance with international quality standards.

The establishment of the quality assurance system of the university is based on ISO 9000 Quality Management System, TS EN ISO-9001: 2015, Higher Education Law No. 2547 and "Higher Education Quality Assurance Regulation". The aims, mission and vision of the university are determined according to these criteria and their appropriateness is measured.

Feedback of internal and external stakeholders shall be collected within the framework of the University Quality Commission. It consists of the Rector, Vice-rector and 14 members from various faculties, institutes, vocational schools and colleges. The commission is supposed to define, implement and further develop factors necessary for the improvement of quality standards. It thus evaluates reports, surveys and suggestions by students and external stakeholders. Additionally, an Office of Strategic Planning and Quality Assurance has been implemented which is working in coordination with the commission. The main performance indicators set at Istanbul Gelişim University are: A) Number of Programmes, b) Number of Students, c) Number of Academic Personnel, d) Rate of fullness,) Number of Programmes teaching in English, f) Erasmus Mobility, g) Student Activities, h) Number of Research Sources, and i) Scientific Publication Numbers of Staff.

 A student council creates further opportunities for students to participate in the supervision of programmes, as presented by the university.

The incorporation of feedback of internal and external stakeholders forms the basis for the further development of study programmes. Evaluation reports have to be approved by the Rector, reviewed by Deans and Heads of study programmes and acknowledged by the Senate.

Furthermore, several measures are supposed to be in place to monitor a programme's quality: regular course and teaching staff assessment questionnaires as well as student assessment and internship evaluation questionnaires. As mentioned above, the university obtains data covering various activities of its programmes. At the end of term, student's evaluations are taken into account in a success analysis.

Istanbul Gelişim University Graduates and Members Association was established in May 2017 to continue the university's relation with its graduates, to increase information sharing, to foster the graduates' solidarity and to follow-up on their career developments.

Experts' Evaluation

During the side visit, it became obvious to the experts that the university has defined goals for further improvement. A quality assurance system is in place that has the utmost support from all bodies of the university such as the faculty leaders. Quality assurance is seen as a major task by IGU. A basic quality assurance system is already guaranteed by the supervision of the Council of Higher Education (henceforth YÖK), which has to sanction all major changes such as changes in the curriculum. Furthermore, a board of quality assurance exists and the university formulated indicators and quality assurance guidelines. The university collects relevant data and information regarding these guidelines and regulations. Every course is evaluated by students. Students have to evaluate the course and the teacher to receive their grade of the final exam and therefore the participation in the evaluation is secured. The results of the students' evaluation are visible to teachers and only used and kept internally. However, this is not unusual in the Turkish higher education system. The students reported to have witnessed change due to the course evaluation such as a change of teaching staff. This formal system is complemented by informal feedback , if teachers communicate with students about their satisfaction and needs. It would be helpful to formalise some of the informal procedures and define rights and tasks of staff and students to

gain more transparency and stability **(Finding 1)**. Through student bodies students' experiences are included. The feedback of the labour market is not yet utilised to its fullest potential and should be used to improve the quality of the study programmes.

Overall the experts found that responsibilities and expectations of the programmes as well as their elements are defined and available to students. The documentation is regularly updated.

Conclusion

The criterion is fulfilled. The quality assurance measures and regulations in place are working well and they should be utilised to their fullest extend to enhance the quality of the study programmes. On one hand informal processes should be formalised to gain transparency and stability and on the other hand feedback from the labour market should be utilised in a better way.

2. Quality of the Curricula

> *The intended learning outcomes of the programme are defined and available in published form. They reflect both academic and labour-market requirements and are up-to-date with relation to the relevant field. The design of the programme supports achievement of the intended learning outcomes.*
>
> *The academic level of graduates corresponds to the requirements of the appropriate level of the European Qualifications Framework.*
>
> *The curriculum's design is readily available and transparently formulated.*
>
> *[ESG1.2]*

Description

Study programme objectives

The main goal of the study programmes as described by the departments in the SER is making science multidisciplinary. In accordance, students should be provided with a broad perspective. The academic degree which is awarded to the graduates in the study *Economy and Finance* (English Programme) is "Bachelor of Science". The university defines more specific intended learning outcomes for each programme.

The study programme *Economics and Finance* (English programme) is established to fulfil the need for managers at all levels both in private and public sector. The programme aims to enable graduated to prefigure opportunities and threats and equip them with necessary economics and finance knowledge in order to manage the assed opportunities and threats to the business world. As a primary goal of the programme the university defines raising business managers who have the necessary skills to make analyses in economics and finance field, follow scientific literature and current developments, making fast and accurate decisions, working efficiently by adopting to working life, and having a holistic perspective and well developed self-esteem. The graduates should be qualified to work as business managers in positions of decision making and able to protect their organisation against any kind of economic threat and benefit from the opportunities that may arise. Following the outline in the SER, graduates of the programme may be employed in any public and private institutions and all organisations or institutions related to finance market including banks with the titles of assistant specialist, executive candidate, supervisor and financial advisor. In addition, the graduates should also have academic career opportunities while continuing with a master and/or PhD degree programme. Students from the Economics and Financing Department are expected to have the following qualifications: interpreting the contemporary affairs regarding economics and finance, expressing an opinion about national and international

economy politics, making economic and financial analyses, and preparing files for economics and finance.

<u>Curricular structure</u>

The curriculum of the study programme to be accredited consists of 240 CP and has a duration of four years. 180 CP are composed by the compulsory courses and 60 CP of them are composed by elective courses. 18 CP of the elective courses are composed by the non-field elective courses. The faculty's English undergraduate programmes offer one-year English preparatory class preceding compulsory and selective courses which are completely held in English. Consequently, the English undergraduate programme might have a duration of five years.

In the first four semesters of the study programme *Economics and Financing* (English Programme), students have to complete the following mandatory modules:

- first semester: "Introduction to Finance", "Economic I", "Mathematics", "Accounting I", "Turkish Language I", and "Foreign Language I (Engl.) ".

- second semester: "Introduction to Banking", "Economics II", "Introduction to Business Science", "Introduction to Law", "Accounting II", "Turkish Language II", and "Foreign Language II (Engl.) ".

- third semester: "History of Atatürk's Principles and Reforms I", "Public Finance", "Micro Economics", "Business Law", "Turkish Constitutional Law", and "Statistics I".

- fourth semester: "History of Atatürk's Principles and Reforms I", "Financial Institutions and Markets", "Macroeconomics", "Statistics II", "Financial Statements Analysis", and "Obligations Law".

- In the fifth semester, four obligatory modules must be completed: "Econometrics", "Turkish Tax System", "Monetary Policy", and "History of Economic Thought" as well as two elective modules.

- The sixth semester comprises three obligatory ("International Economics", "Money and Banking, "Commercial Law") and two elective modules.

- In the seventh semester, four obligatory ("Monetary Policy", "History of Economic Thought", "Financial Market Analysis and Portfolio Management", "Institutional Finance") and three elective modules must be passed.

- The compulsory modules of the eighth semester are "Project Assessment and Investment Management", "Economic Development and Growth", "Fiscal Policy" and the graduation thesis. In addition, tow electives must be completed.

Electives are for example "Financial Management II", "Business Ethics", "Professional English", "Comparative Political Systems", "Budgeting in Company", "Economic Indicators", "Labour and Social Security Law", "Labour Economics", "Corporate Accounting II", "Sociology of Economics", "Public Relations Practice and Case Studies", "Financial Econometrics II", "Financial Markets and Basel Criteria"; "Enterprise Project Management", "Political Communication", "Franchising and Retail", "Current Issues in the World Trade", "Negotiation Techniques", "Public Economy" or "Investment Banking".

As outlined in the SER, the coordination of each programme is provided by the heads of the relevant department. The selection process of the courses is reported to the Dean of the Faculty.

<u>Module descriptions</u>

All modules of the study programmes are described and these descriptions are available to the students, e.g. on the webpage of the university. The university declares that the descriptions are updated regularly.

Experts' Evaluation

The formal aspects such as an ideal course plan to follow, allocation of ECTS credits and work-load or documenting the core and elective courses are fulfilled. Although the curriculum of the Economics and Finance programme is well-prepared and reflects international standards the pro-grammes general ILOs have to be clearly described **(Finding 2)**. All major economics and finance courses are included in the curriculum, therefore it corresponds to the Bachelor's level and the degree awarded. The curriculum also defines a diverse range of elective courses in order to pro-vide students with areas of specialization next to the fundamental core courses. In the documen-tation it should be reflected which courses are linked to each other and pre-requisites must be clearly stated in course descriptions.

Furthermore, to enhance employability of the students, courses such as business ethics and com-munication should be included in the curriculum, in which more soft skills are taught **(Finding 3)**, and also in this programme a longer internship would be advantageous for the students **(Finding 4)**. The implementation of complementary English courses to reach the goals of the programme for domestic and international students is recommended beyond "English I" and "English II" (**Finding 5**). Additionally the department should consider including software use such as "E-Views", "MAT-Lab", "R", "Starter" particularly in the quantitative courses (**Finding 6**).

Conclusion

The criterion is partially fulfilled. The curriculum of the programme provides an overview, is sub-ject to documented modification, and give all basic information on allocated ECTS credits and workload. Although the course descriptions show explicit ILOs, general ILOs of the programme have to be provided. These must be included in the Diploma Supplement o give a defined and clear overview on the programme's overall qualifications.

3. Learning, Teaching and Assessment of Students

The delivery of material encourages students to take an active role in the learning process.

Students are assessed using accessible criteria, regulations, and procedures, which are made readily available to all participants and which are applied consistently.

Assessment procedures are designed to measure the achievement of the intended learning out-comes.

[ESG 1.3]

Description

Learning, Teaching

In the SER, the university names two types of teaching methods which are used. Theoretical cours-es taught throughout the semester are measured together with midterm and final exams. In the applied courses, the students are expected to prepare projects in various topics within the course. The students of the School of Applied Sciences must complete their summer internship for gradua-tion. The summer internship can be completed in the end of second, third or fourth class.

The multitude of teaching strategies is supposed to be effective in educating diverse student learners. Diverse student learners include students from culturally, and linguistically diverse fami-lies and communities of different socioeconomic status.

The university aims to strengthen the exchange between research and teaching, particularly in the Faculty of Economics, Administrative and Social Sciences. As outlined in the application, stu-dents should support the departments in organising academic conferences. Thus they both gain the knowledge of organising conference and have opportunity to introduce themselves in interna-tional environments and to obtain more comprehensive and up-to-date information about the field. This structure constitutes the infrastructure for students who plan to be academicians or continue

to graduate education and gives competence about scientific knowledge production and presentation process.

The School of Applied Sciences focusses more on the exchange between teaching and practice e.g. by involving speakers of the private sector in teaching in order to transfer their sector's experiences.

In addition, lecturers of all study programmes give students various research topics to encourage them to do research in groups. In this context, under the supervision of the lecturers, students learn how to conduct research and how to work and cooperate in a team.

Assessment

The examinations of both the theoretical courses at the Faculty of Economics, Administrative and Social Sciences and the practical courses in the School of Applied Sciences are applied in writing under the name of midterm and final exam. The tools used in the measurement and evaluation in university are designed according to the regulations of Higher Education Council and consist of midterm exam, final exam, homework, application, quiz, report presentation, verbal assessment, thesis presentation, document presentation, expert appraisal, and computer assisted presentation.

The university outlines that time should be reserved for the exams and the optimal exam number is put into the programme by considering the course load of the students. The exams are announced on the academic calendar that was set before the academic year. The examination calendar is announced by the planning unit at least one week before the examination.

Istanbul Gelişim University displays that the Associate Degree and Undergraduate Education-Training and Examination Regulations contain provisions related to the formation of justified and valid causes that prevent students from continuing or entering the examination. Students who can not enter the midterms and certify their excuse are entitled to an excuse examination by the decision of the faculty board of directors. Students who can not attend the final exam due to their excuses are entitled to attend the make-up exams and the summer school.

Experts' Evaluation

During the site visit the experts found all methods of teaching and learning documented in the respective module handbooks of all bachelor degree programmes under review. The module handbooks are available online to all students and stakeholders, but lack in the description of the IOLs (**Finding 2**, see above). The curriculum includes electives and students are provided advisors who will help in the selection of courses based on future career aspiration. Support for career choices is also offered by the Career Office. An appropriate number of different learning methods are provided in the courses including traditional teaching, distant learning, self-learning (eBooks, databases e.g. PROQUEST), project work and internships. The panel of experts suggests using the potential to carry out some courses of the Turkish and English programme jointly in order to promote interdisciplinary and to get a comparative point of view when it comes to organizational and cultural structures (**Finding 7**). By doing this, the university could strengthen both the innovative profile and the yet to be defined profile of the study programme.

The module handbooks document the course learning outcomes which are updated when required and evidence of such changes has been provided during the site visit in the meeting with employers, when curricula changes in general were discussed with the experts.

Regulations, procedures and time tables are published and are transparent to students. A four page so called "student manual" provides an overview of key requirements for the study process, from the start to the examination, including student responsibilities and duties, scores and grades. Furthermore, students are provided with the online system OBIS which includes a comprehensive set of data for students, including details of the curricula, students' grades achieved, the module handbook, assessment regulations and procedures, etc. Since this information is provided online all changes (e.g. to procedures) are made available immediately to students.

The assessment of student work includes mid-term and final examinations and is documented in the module handbook. The examinations include a spectrum of different types such as written examinations, oral examinations, projects and homework. Responsibilities, structures and time tables are clearly defined as the university uses an academic calendar with fixed examination periods. Also make up examinations are available for students with illness or other reason of absence from exams. In addition, the university provides a free summer school which basically repeats the courses of the semester in a shorter time frame (50% duration during summer break). The summer school allows students who failed an examination to repeat the particular course as well as the exam. With this process students can avoid time loss and longer study durations.

With regard to students with disadvantages the university has transparent regulations and support mechanisms documented on their website. Efforts are obviously made (e.g. a so called Action Week) to help mitigate any issues arising from disadvantages as well as other issues such as absence or illness. Also, the university provides awareness sessions to the teaching staff and addresses physical improvement requirements.

The management and the teaching staff of the university can access a very comprehensive set of statistics including data regarding student success which relates to the Gelişim University strategic goal #1 "Increasing Student Success". These statistics include student grades and averages by course and term, graduation, failure and continuation rates, and provide long term trends and distribution which are being used by the teaching staff and management to improve the curriculum.

Although there are structuralised and formal processes at work in the university in some areas it became clear to the experts that the faculties are still operating with a number of informal processes regarding information sharing and feedback to a certain extent which should be complemented by formal structures to enhance transparency and stability, and at the same time define more clearly rights and tasks of staff and students (**Finding 1**, see above).

Conclusion

The criterion is fulfilled. The study programme adheres to the regulations regarding teaching and examination and it became obvious to the panel of experts that the university has subscribed to a process of constant improvement of quality and transparency. Therefore, it is recommended to further work on complementing informal processes with formal processes and structures and clearly define rights and tasks of staff and students. It is also recommended to significantly strengthen the students practical work experience.

4. Student Admission, Progression, Recognition and Certification

Consistently applied, pre-defined, published regulations are in place which cover student admission, progression, recognition, and certification.

[ESG 1.4]

Description

Admittance to the study programme

Students are placed in bachelor's programmes through a central examination system and within the framework of regulations set by the Council of Higher Education. Students who graduate from secondary education institutions are placed to the programmes they want to study based on the scores they got from the central examination.

In order for students to start a programme with foreign language instruction, applicants must pass the foreign language proficiency exam at Istanbul Gelişim University.

Creditation and Recognition

Istanbul Gelişim University applies ECTS as a credit transfer and accumulation system.

ECTS credits are calculated based on the course hours, midterm exams, final exams, projects and other assignments, laboratory work, seminars, and other learning components that make up the student workload.

By using the ECTS, the recognition of the period of study the students spent abroad should be facilitated and student mobility should be encouraged. The university describes further that before the students leave, a "recognition sheet" is prepared taking into account the courses in the learning agreement for which full academic recognition is given by Gelişim University.

Certification

According to the university, a Diploma Supplement has been developed for each study programme with information on the qualifications achieved by the graduates.

Experts' Evaluation

Necessary information for admission, regulations and course descriptions is clear defined and easy accessible for fresh students. However, the Diploma Supplement needs to be improved and the overall qualification goals, aims and objectives as well as skills for the study programme under review have to be stated clearly in the Diploma Supplement, as does the awarded degree in the Diploma itself (**Finding 2**, see above).

The regulations regarding acceptance and admission to the study programme is clearly defined by regulations from the Council of Higher Education and are executed by the Central Placement Test Centre. Yet the English Proficiency level for admission to the study programme has to be clearly defined for domestic and international students (**Finding 8**).

Adequate statistics are kept by the university regarding the number of incoming, progressing and graduated students. The statistics reflect the fact that the course failure rates of students are relatively low. Summer school offers an opportunity to students to repeat courses that they have failed during the regular semester time. The amount of tuition fees and the possibilities to apply for scholarships are clearly defined and publicized.

Students with disabilities or disadvantages are given monetary help and provided with assistance when necessary, in such areas like writing papers and entering exams. Furthermore, the university provides English courses during the weekends in order to advance the English skills of the students. As these courses are not sufficient to promote the much needed English proficiency for the study programmes it is advised to foster intercultural and international skills and competences by international internships arrangements. Raising the number of international students and student mobility would also provide a way of preparing students for international relations in their professions.

In addition, to foster the success rate of graduates more incentives can be offered to students to do internships. Students should be prepared better for the challenging and hard competition in the industries as well as expectations and reality in the world of employment by, for example, longer phases of practical experiences which would increase the chances of graduates to be employed (**Finding 4**, see above).

Conclusion

The criterion is fulfilled. Considering formalities the university has to hand in the "Diploma Supplement" for the study programmes under review with a description of the programme's aims, objectives and skills.

5. Teaching Staff

The composition (quantity, qualifications, professional and international experience, etc.) of the staff is appropriate for the achievement of the intended learning outcomes.

Staff involved with teaching is qualified and competent to do so.

Transparent procedures are in place for the recruitment and development of the staff.

[ESG 1.5]

Description

The university describes the personal resources for the study programmes together with their respective teaching hours. From the Department of Business Administration, 13 lecturers are involved; from the Department of Public Relations and Advertising five, and from the Department of Economics and Financing nine. From the department of Public Relations and Advertising, five staff members are involved in teaching. If positions expire in accreditation period, the university describes that a new advertisement is announced in the Higher Education Institution's official web site.

The state fixes the number of academic and administrative positions for each university every fiscal year. The appointments and promotions are made directly by each university based on the minimum requirements set by the Council of Higher Education and the university senate. The law defines the requirements for academic promotions and the procedures that are to be followed when making appointments. The career advancement for teaching faculty members is regulated by the Civil Servant Law. This law also sets the general parameters for career development of teaching staff members, which is then decided by individual universities that employ them.

The university describes in the SER that it organises training programmes on a regular basis in order for its staff to improve themselves e.g. the university supports the use of new technologies. Newly hired professors or lecturers go through a process of orientation with the help of the head of the department and research assistants.

Experts' Evaluation

The Economy and Finance Department is young and had its first graduates in 2017. There are two professors and five assistant professors that will teach all courses in English, and two research assistants in the Economics and Finance Department. Although the second strategic goal of the university is "academic staff development", the number of staff for a department having both undergraduate and graduate programmes is rather inadequate. If students take different courses from the same lecturers the probability of repetition of topics rises. Moreover, generally different approaches adopted by a diversity of lecturers helps to broaden the vision of students in the fields they are specializing in. Therefore, the number of teaching staff should be increased (**Finding 9**).

The teaching staff receives monetary incentives for publications and financial support for attending conferences in the country and abroad.

Teaching load varies between 9 to 24 hours per week of which the upper end does not seem feasible for a university aiming at enhancing the quality of education as well as research. High teaching load may impede research activities. Furthermore, to enhance continuity and attractiveness of the programme employment contracts with the teaching staff should last for a period of time long enough to provide the academics secure work conditions (**Finding 10**). This will in return incite staff to further develop their skills both in teaching methods or approaches as well as academically by publications, participation at workshops, conferences and improving their English proficiency, which in turn will foster internationalisation. The implementation of a plan to promote teachers development in the areas of teaching skills, English proficiency e.g. via an exchange programme for teaching staff, and didactic knowledge is strongly recommended (**Finding**

11).Furthermore the experts found that utilizing the number of Research Centres at the University could be fruitful to motivate for and support research as well as students' involvement in research.

The collegial as well as superior-subordinate relations within the department seem to be carried out by means of informal ways. Informal types of relations have advantages, but also disadvantages in the sense that the rights and responsibilities of people are not well-defined. In the long-run it may lead to conflicts and may negatively affect the collegial relations in a department and in the university. Therefore, the experts strongly recommend to complement informal processes with formal structures to enhance transparency and stability. The rights and tasks of staff and students should be clearly defined (**Finding 1**, see above).

Conclusion

The criterion is partly fulfilled. The experts acknowledge the challenge of IGU to find and hire new qualified academic staff members especially with a shortage of suitable and available candidates. To use this momentum the experts recommend to stabilise and secure employment with favourable conditions for staff, which will give them incentive and motivation to further develop themselves in areas of research, didactic and academic training, and advanced English proficiency, which in turn will foster attractiveness of the programme and internationalisation.

6. Learning Resources and Student Support

Appropriate facilities and resources are available for learning and teaching activities.

Guidance and support is available for students to advise on achieving successful completion of their studies.

[ESG 1.6]

Description

Facilities and resources

In the SER, the university displays the number of research literature as well as the facilities and infrastructure: e.g. a Learning Management System, classrooms, laboratories, hardware and audio systems, computer labs, campus-wide wireless internet access, synthetic pitch, graphic and fashion design workshops, cafeterias, health centre, fitness club, radio and television studio. All the campuses and physical areas of the university are designed to be suitable for disabled students.

The study programmes are financed mainly by the tuition paid by students. Istanbul Gelişim University describes that it supports its students financially by providing them with various scholarships and discounts. Moreover, successful students in particular are financially supported with scholarships.

Information, consultation and guidance

In order to help the students to choose the programme after the university exam, so-called IGU Promotion Days are organised. In this process, students are given detailed information about the department they want to read and the atmosphere of the department/school is shown.

Gelişim University describes that undergraduate and graduate students are appointed with academic advisors from related departments for guidance in order to help with the resolution of problems they might have related to education and training. Academic advisors should inform students about legislation and advise them on issues such as course selection, add-drop, re-registration procedures and other academic issues. Thesis advisors for graduate students are assigned until the end of the second semester, on the basis of the decision of the Board of Directors of the related Institute. Students can also receive consultation from professors/lecturers and research assistants within their office hours throughout the academic year.

The University further explains that through administrative units such as Psychological Counselling and Guidance and the Centre for Continuing Education and Centre for Career Development, consultancy services are provided to the students. The Career Development Coordination Unit aims to provide service to the students both during their education and after their graduation with respect to their career opportunities.

To support exchange or students in programmes taught in English, Istanbul Gelişim University offers free English Language Courses on Saturdays. In addition, students are offered the opportunity to participate in the Erasmus Exchange Programme and in the Mevlana Exchange Programme.

Within the framework of the "Regulation on the Advisory and Coordination of Higher Education Institutions in Istanbul Gelişim University", the Disabled Student Unit was established and the working procedures and principles were regulated by the aforementioned Regulation. The general aim of the University Disability Student Unit is to take the necessary precautions and make arrangements in this direction to facilitate the learning life of disabled students with higher education.

Experts' Evaluation

The relevant documents of the study programme such as module handbook exist and are accessible through the webpages of the university. These documents contain few intended learning outcomes, and in detail the methods of learning and teaching, assessment methods and the expected workload. The existing structures and implemented procedures allow students, for example through summer schools and the possibility of resitting exams, to complete their studies within the expected period of study duration as defined in the curriculum.

The availability of teachers for counselling is sufficient and guidance can be given during office hours or via the electronic university wide system. The average class size is relatively small and most teachers are also available outside of their office hours. The beginning of student life at IGU marks the social event known as welcome days. For students with psychological problems or learning difficulty the Psychological Counselling and Guidance Centre, the Centre for Continuing Education and appointed academic advisors are available to help and support. The appointed advisors are also helpful in planning the course schedule and advising in course choices. Additionally, a mentor-network between students of different semesters was set up to further provide guidance to students and accustom to student life. Although there is a unit for disabled students the specific assistance measures available or the work and task of this unit could not be communicated to the experts in detail.

The university has an Erasmus office the students are aware of. Support for participation in Erasmus programmes is generally quite high, but a main problem seems to be the lack of English skills of students. Regarding incoming students IGU should widen the consulting services for international students to strengthen the attractiveness of the programme to international students (**Finding 12**). Aware of the lack of domestic students English skills the career office and also the departments have started some initiatives to address that problem. Although the career service is still in its build-up process it already works quite well. The university supports students who want to establish their own business. Agreements with companies for facilitating internships are in place and the staff utilises their own network to match students with suitable internship opportunities. Hence, students receive support when trying to find an internship. Additionally, some teachers try to offer on-site visits to companies and counsel their students about their future career possibilities. In general, most interviewed students were happy with the offered possibilities to work in the university or to get in touch with companies.

The number and quality of the classrooms is sufficient and satisfactory. The number of common rooms for group work could still be increased. The library definitely needs larger capacities to face the growing number of students as well as literature resources such as English Economy Textbooks in printed and digital version (**Finding 13**). The interviewed students described to the ex-

perts that there are not enough work spaces available especially in the time before the exam period. Also, the possibility to access e-books and e-journals is widely unknown. This might be due to the fact that at the time of the accreditation this was a relatively new offer of the library. However, it is necessary that this offer needs to be continued in the future and communicated better. The supply of hardcopies is limited. Therefore, students sometimes need to buy the books themselves or the professors provide notes for copying. Computer rooms and licenses for relevant software are available.

The existence of a mobility ticket for students is very positive. There are also agreements with private partners to provide dormitories. The dormitories were described by the students as being well equipped and reasonable priced. A quite positive aspect is the number of active student clubs which are supported financially by the university and some clubs have rooms to meet. Furthermore, a student council with elected representatives exists. Finally, it was perceived very positive by the experts that the leadership of the university answers responsively to the needs of the students and provides, if necessary, creative solutions.

Conclusion

The criterion is fulfilled. Overall, the university is equipped with the necessary space and facilities to provide a good learning environment to students. This could be further improved by allocating more room to individual or group working spaces within the buildings but especially in the library. By promoting the online availability of literature the university provides, the later could be remedied to some extend.

7. Information

Data is collected from relevant sources and stakeholders, analysed, and used for the effective management and continuous enhancement of the programme. [ESG 1.7]

Impartial and objective, up-to-date information regarding the programme and its qualifications is published regularly. This published information is appropriate for and available to relevant stakeholders. [ESG 1.8]

Description

Information management

The University states that it gathers and evaluates opinions at different levels of management, with local, regional and national stakeholders, for example with meetings with employers and public authorities, to improve programmes and enhance their effectiveness.

Gelişim University also gathers information on the matching of the teaching programmes with the business world's needs. To this end, meetings are held in which the authorities from the business world are participating. The career development centre examines the potentials for which graduates can be employed in which business areas and supports students in this regard. In addition to these, conferences are organised in which participants participate in many different sectors and positions in order to answer and provide information about the students' business world.

Transparency and information to stakeholders

According to the description in the SER, students are informed during their registration process about their programme and helped by the staff of Directorate of Public Affairs. Furthermore, the curriculum of each programme/department is available on the university's website. General information regarding examination regulations, assessment and grading can be found at "IGU's The Rules and the Regulations Concerning the Undergraduate Education, Examinations and Assessment".

Students and other stakeholders have access to evaluation criteria and course descriptions by means of website and their online systems (OBIS). Grades and marks are presented to students via these systems as soon as they get approval of Registrar's Office. Instructors submit original files and evaluation papers to Register's Office and these documents are kept in the archive for a certain period of time. Graduated students receive a "Diploma Supplement" as well as their diplomas.

The student handbook provides policies, regulations, directives and Senate Principles. The handbook is updated on a regular basis. Each year, department updates are made by department heads and sent to the dean for update the handbook. Whenever approved by the Dean, it is sent to the Information Processing Directorate and Public Relations Directorate for publication. If there is a change in the current regulations or guidelines, the dean sends a written request to the heads of departments to update their handbooks. Current regulations and guidelines can also be accessed from the web site of the university.

Experts' Evaluation

Istanbul Gelişim University operates an information system which provides management reports to management and stakeholders. The information covers the university's four strategic goals, i.e. increasing study success, improving the quality of the academic staff, improvement and progress of university specific environment and improvement of efficiency and effectiveness of university management. The statistics and data management can access include details and roll-up to summaries, averages, trends and distribution. Moreover, reports and accessible data include information about the progression of students, terminations, examinations and student grading, employment and further progression of students. These available data also include student feedback at all levels. The experts encourage the university to take the necessary time to consider and implement the results of the various processes as education and research quality needs time. At the moment, as the student numbers are relatively low within the study programmes, university's personnel have very detailed knowledge about the progression of students and the career paths of their graduates. The experts were provided with evidence that the management information system is robust to also cope with the increasing number of students. The management team and departments confirmed that the provided information is being used to monitor and further improve the study programmes.

All students have access to a personal information system which includes personal and financial data, courses completed and grades, the upcoming study programme and also a section documenting the study rules and regulations. The information available to students looks very complete, personal (password protected) and easy to access.

Staff and students have access to academic books (eBooks) and journals online through a comprehensive library system. Access to this information is available on-site in the library as well as from remote. The university actively promotes this capability through their public website.

The university shares information publicly through numerous printed publications and their own university website. The website includes a broad spectrum of information about how to become a member of the university, scholarships, preparatory programmes, the faculties, the graduate programmes, laboratories, exchange programmes, internship opportunities, the academic-social-environmental and administration programmes and the Gelişim library. The public information also includes the detailed curriculum of the programmes. However, it is evident that at the time of review the public information was under re-work and key data like learning outcome or teaching, learning and assessment procedures were not yet available. Furthermore, the information should be regularly updated and corrected as the programme name is not used coherently within all documents (**Finding 14**). For information and transparency it would be conceivable to provide some more information of academic staff for example through CV information on the website, as prospect students and researchers have better access to the achievements, topics or projects the person is working on or was involved in.

IGU maintains a close and institutionalized network of about 80 potential employers in the Istanbul region. These employers as well as the stakeholders on the university board provide feedback about the employment requirements and curricula requirements, on a regular basis. Employment opportunities arising from this network are documented. The information about the labour market requirements is available to university staff members and students. It is also used to a small extend from staff and management to further develop the study programmes, but not yet utilised to its full potential.

Conclusion

The criterion is fulfilled. The university's webpage is currently under re-work. Yet there is a need to complete and revise the public information especially regarding procedures and learning outcomes of the programmes.

V. Recommendations of the panel of experts

The panel of experts recommends an accreditation **with conditions** for the study programme:

- **"Economy and Finance" (B.Sc.) English programme**

offered by Istanbul Gelişim University.

Findings:

1. Informal processes of communication of information or feedback should be complemented by formal structures to enhance transparency and stability by clearly defining the rights and tasks of staff and students to avoid conflicts and negative effects between persons on different levels and with different roles.

2. The general qualification goals, aims and objectives as well as learning outcomes of the programme must be defined and described clearly in all documents for all stakeholders, especially in the Diploma Supplement.

3. To enhance the employability of the students, the training of soft skills, e.g. ethics or communication, should be included in the curricula.

4. To facilitate the transition to the professional life more practical experiences would be fruitful and enhance student's satisfaction.

5. The implementation of complementary English courses to reach the goals of the programme for domestic and international students is recommended beyond "English I" and "English II".

6. The department should consider teaching additional software in the curriculum, e.g. E-Views, MAT-Lab, R, or Starter.

7. The panel of experts suggests using the potential to carry out some courses of the Turkish and English programme jointly in order to promote interdisciplinary and to get a comparative point of view when it comes to organizational and cultural structures.

8. The English Proficiency level for admission to the study programme has to be clearly defined for domestic and international students.

9. More teaching staff should be hired as a diversity of lectures enhances and helps to broaden the vision of students in the fields they are specializing in.

10. To enhance continuity and attractiveness of the study programme contracts of the teaching staff should be longer with secure conditions.

11. The implementation of a plan to promote teachers development in the areas of teaching skills, English proficiency e.g. via an exchange programme for teaching staff, and didactic knowledge is strongly recommended.

12. To strengthen the attractiveness of the programme to international students the university should widen the consulting services for international students.

13. The library should provide more resources considering more work space for the growing number of students as well as literature resources such as English Economy Textbooks in printed and digital version.

14. The study programme must be named coherently in all relevant documents provided to students and public alike.