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QUALITÄTSSICHERUNG DURCH
AKKREDITIERUNG VON
STUDIENGÄNGEN E.V.

FINAL REPORT

ISTANBUL GELİŞİM UNIVERSITY

CLUSTER BANKING

MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEMS (FEAS) (BACHELOR OF SCIENCE)

ECONOMICS AND FINANCE (TURKISH) (BACHELOR OF SCIENCE)

ECONOMICS AND FINANCE (ENGLISH) (BACHELOR OF SCIENCE)

BANKING AND INSURANCE (BACHELOR OF SCIENCE)

June 2025



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DECISION OF THE AQAS STANDING COMMISSION ON THE STUDY PROGRAMMES

- “MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEMS” (FEAS) (BACHELOR OF SCIENCE)
- “ECONOMICS AND FINANCE” (ENGLISH) (BACHELOR OF SCIENCE)
- “ECONOMICS AND FINANCE” (TURKISH) (BACHELOR OF SCIENCE)
- “BANKING AND INSURANCE” (BACHELOR OF SCIENCE)

OFFERED BY ISTANBUL GELİŞİM UNIVERSITY, ISTANBUL, TÜRKİYE

Based on the report of the expert panel and the discussions of the AQAS Standing Commission in its 25th meeting on 19 May 2025, the AQAS Standing Commission decides:

1. The study programmes “**Management Information Systems (FEAS)**” (Bachelor of Science), “**Economics and Finance (Turkish)**” (Bachelor of Science), “**Economics and Finance (English)**” (Bachelor of Science), and “**Banking and Insurance**” (Bachelor of Science) offered by **Istanbul Gelişim University, Türkiye** are accredited according to the AQAS Criteria for Programme Accreditation (Bachelor/Master).

The accreditations are conditional.

The study programmes essentially comply 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 twelve months.

2. The conditions have to be fulfilled. The fulfilment of the conditions has to be documented and reported to AQAS no later than **30 June 2026**. The confirmation of the conditions might include a physical site visit within the time period of twelve months.
3. The accreditation is given for the period of **six years** and is valid until **30 June 2031**, provided that the conditions listed above are fully met. Otherwise, the accreditation may be withdrawn.

Conditions:

For all study programmes:

1. For all programmes, a set of course descriptions for the full curriculum must be handed in, including at least a short description and the intended learning outcomes as well as the type of assessment for every course.
2. The university must provide a short process description on how the course contents and structure can be changed at IGU. This process should especially include the responsible persons and show how students are involved in this process.
3. The university must provide student data regarding the percentage of students that completed their studies and the average time (semesters) needed, separated into cohorts based on the starting semester.

4. IGU must check the estimated workload for appropriateness in a regular manner, e.g., by adding a relevant question to the existing evaluations.

For the study programme “Banking and Insurance”:

5. Courses in Mathematics and Statistics must be added to the curriculum of Banking and Insurance to provide students with a profound qualification.

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

For all study programmes:

1. After a joint introductory phase in the first semesters, the profile of the two specializations Economics and Finance should be sharpened.
2. All departments should hand in an example for a clear and documented preview of the respective form of examination which is usually provided to students for planning their exams in the upcoming semester.
3. All departments should implement and document a process for regular revision of course content and for updates of the recommended relevant literature.
4. In all programmes the catalogue of possible elective courses should be streamlined and focused. In this context, the programmes should cooperate more closely with other departments and faculties.
5. To foster the aim of internationalisation, the English language skills of both teachers and students should be strengthened. This is particularly relevant for the English-language programme of Economics and Finance.
6. IGU should develop a clear table for all students on how Turkish credits and European credits are made comparable and how the workload, which forms the basis of the credits, is calculated in both systems.
7. IGU should evaluate the option to include a final thesis in its programmes without challenging the national regulations.
8. IGU should evaluate renaming the programme MIS FEAS, which has a special focus on data science, to better convey its content and enhance visibility for prospective students and employers.
9. The elective courses of all programmes should be grouped into clusters that are aligned with the learning outcomes of the programme and offered to students accordingly.
10. IGU should invite more representatives of international companies from the area of finance and banking, e.g., guest lecturers from Fintechs with practical experience.
11. For all programmes, IGU should foster a regular exchange of teaching staff with students on the core outcome of the student survey and on measures taken on the basis of the results.
12. IGU should provide an overview of quality assurance processes that are currently in place. This overview should also show how students are involved in the processes and who is responsible for which part of the process.
13. Different teaching and learning methods for more courses in the different programmes should be employed.
14. IGU should implement a rule on how many exams are allowed in a certain period of time.

15. The university should hand in a short process description how students can hand in complaints/appeals and how they are dealt with. These processes should clearly outline how students are involved in handling appeals.
16. IGU should enhance its efforts to attract highly qualified staff by establishing a continuous recruitment process and creating incentives to support the development of part-time lecturers and young professionals.
17. IGU should remove outdated literature and offer more up-to-date resources in its library.

For the study programme “Management Information Systems (FEAS)”:

18. For MIS FEAS it is recommended strengthening an interdisciplinary approach with other departments of IGU, e.g., with the departments of Computer Engineering, Software Engineering and Industrial Engineering not only in research but also in teaching.
19. MIS FEAS should explore the inclusion of specialized courses at the intersection of Business and Data Analytics, such as Finance and Analytics or Marketing and Analytics.

For the study programme “Banking and Insurance”:

20. The department of Banking and Insurance should add elective courses that concentrate on emerging financial technologies, financial data analytics, and artificial intelligence (AI).

With regard to the reasons for this decision the Standing Commission refers to the attached experts' report.

EXPERTS' REPORT**ON THE STUDY PROGRAMMES**

- “MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEMS (FEAS)” (BACHELOR OF SCIENCE)
- “ECONOMICS AND FINANCE (TURKISH)” (BACHELOR OF SCIENCE)
- “ECONOMICS AND FINANCE (ENGLISH)” (BACHELOR OF SCIENCE)
- “BANKING AND INSURANCE” (BACHELOR OF SCIENCE)

OFFERED BY ISTANBUL GELİŞİM UNIVERSITY, ISTANBUL, TÜRKİYE

Visit to the university: 04-06 March 2025

Panel of experts:

Prof. Dr. André W. Heinemann	University of Bremen, Institute Labor and Economy (Germany)
Prof. Dr. Stefan Thalmann	Karl Franzens-University Graz, Business Analytics and Data Science Center (Austria)
Prof. Dr. Mine Aksoy Kavalcı	University of Yalova, Department of Business Administration (Türkiye)
Prof. Robert Kotal	Raiffeisen Capital Management, Wien (Austria) (representative of the labour market)
Peter Michael Schroeder	Student of University of Applied Sciences Berlin (HWR) (Germany) (student expert)

Coordinator:

Doris Herrmann

AQAS, Cologne, Germany

I. Preamble

AQAS – Agency for Quality Assurance through Accreditation of Study Programmes – is an independent non-profit organisation supported by nearly 90 universities, universities of applied sciences, and academic associations. Since 2002, the agency has been recognised by the German Accreditation Council (GAC). It is, therefore, a notified body for the 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), on which all Bologna countries agreed 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 academic studies and higher education institutions' teaching. In line with AQAS' mission statement, the official bodies in Germany and Europe (GAC and EQAR) approved that the activities of AQAS in accreditation are neither limited to specific academic disciplines or degrees nor a particular type of higher education institution.

II. Accreditation procedure

This report results from the external review of the Bachelor's programmes "**Management Information Systems (FEAS)**" (Bachelor of Science), "**Economics and Finance**" (**Turkish**) (Bachelor of Science), "**Economics and Finance**" (**English**) (Bachelor of Science) and "**Banking and Insurance**" (Bachelor of Science) offered by **Istanbul Gelişim University**, Türkiye.

1. Criteria

Each programme is assessed against a set of criteria for accreditation developed by AQAS: the AQAS Criteria for Programme Accreditation (Bachelor/Master). The criteria are based on the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG) 2015. To facilitate the review each criterion features a set of indicators that can be used to demonstrate the fulfilment of the criteria. However, if single indicators are not fulfilled this does not automatically mean that a criterion is not met. The indicators need to be discussed in the context of each programme since not all indicators can necessarily be applied to every programme.

2. Approach and methodology

Initialisation

The university mandated AQAS to perform the accreditation procedure in October 2023. The university produced a Self-Evaluation Report (SER). In March 2024, the institution handed in a draft of the SER together with the relevant documentation on the programmes and an appendix as well as statistical data on the programmes. A wide range of documents was presented in the appendix which included e.g.:

- Descriptions of courses for the programmes
- an overview of statistical data of the student body (e.g. number of applications, beginners, students, graduates, student dropouts),
- some CVs of the teaching staff/supervisors,
- information on student services,
- core information on the main library,

- as well as academic regulations.

AQAS checked the SER regarding completeness, comprehensibility, and transparency and gave general feedback on the requirements for the application documents. The accreditation procedure was officially initialised by a decision of the AQAS Standing Commission on 26 August 2024. The final version of the SER was handed in in November 2024.

Nomination of the expert panel

The composition of the panel of experts follows the stakeholder principle. Consequently, representatives from the respective disciplines, the labour market, and students are involved. Furthermore, AQAS follows the principles for the selection of experts defined by the European Consortium for Accreditation (ECA). The Standing Commission nominated the aforementioned expert panel in January 2025. AQAS informed the university about the members of the expert panel and the university 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 needs for additional information. AQAS forwarded these preliminary statements to the university and to all panel members in order to increase transparency in the process and the upcoming discussions during the site visit.

Site visit

After a review of the SER, a site visit to the university took place from 4th to 6th of March 2025. On site, the experts interviewed different stakeholders, e.g. representatives of the management of the higher education institution, the programme management, of teaching and of other staff, as well as students and graduates, in separate discussion rounds and consulted additional documentation as well as student work. The visit concluded with the presentation of the preliminary findings of the group of experts to the university's representatives.

Reporting

After the site visit had taken place, the expert group drafted the following report, assessing the fulfilment of the AQAS Criteria. The report included a recommendation to the AQAS Standing Commission. The report was sent to the university for comments.

Decision

The report, together with the comments of the university, forms the basis for the AQAS Standing Commission to take a decision regarding the accreditation of the programmes. Based on these two documents, the AQAS Standing Commission took its decision on the accreditation on 19 May 2025. AQAS forwarded the decision to the university. The university had the right to appeal against the decision or any of the imposed conditions.

In July 2025, AQAS published the report, the result of the accreditation as well as the names of the panel members.

III. General information on the university

Istanbul Gelişim University (IGU)

Istanbul Gelişim University (IGU) is a foundation university that operates under the supervision of the Turkish Council of Higher Education (CHE). IGU encompasses six faculties, two schools, two vocational schools, and an institute of graduate studies. Education and training programmes offered by IGU include 77 undergraduate programmes, 61 associate degree regular programmes, 34 associate evening programmes, 39 thesis and 38 non-thesis graduate programmes as well as 9 doctoral programmes. Besides, the university highlights to have cooperations with more than 130 global universities. Human resources of IGU consist of 1,007 academic and administrative staff as well as 287 support and international staff. As of January 2024, IGU has had about 49,000 graduates, and the current number of students is 36,000 out of which more than 5,000 are international students.

As stated in the self-evaluation report (SER), funding for the university comes from the following sources: (a) appropriations to be included in the budget every year, (b) aid to be provided by institutions, (c) tuition fees to be charged, (d) publishing and sales revenues, (e) income from movable and immovable properties, (f) profits from revolving fund enterprises, and (g) donations, and other income. The university has at its disposal more than 140 laboratories and 20 research centres located in the Istanbul campus as well as a central library and four branch libraries in all campuses. Students can engage in social, cultural, scientific, and sports activities in a wide range of student clubs.

IGU states in the SER that it aims to become a prestigious global university in the international arena with its contemporary, developing, productive, and quality education approach and to achieve sustainable success contributing to the country, society, and humanity through science.

Faculty of Applied Sciences (FoAS)

In the 2013-2014 academic year, the Faculty of Applied Sciences (FoAS) launched its activities with six departments. It was upgraded to faculty status in 2021 and offers undergraduate education in 12 departments. FoAS organises various activities such as the International Congress of Applied Social Sciences and the High School Winter Academy. The planning, realisation, and control of academic and administrative activities are carried out by two deputy deans, a secretary, and an office clerk under the supervision of the dean. The undergraduate programme of FoAS to be accredited in this cluster is "Banking and Insurance".

Faculty of Economics, Administrative, and Social Sciences (FEAS)

In the 2011-2012 academic year, the Faculty of Economics, Administrative, and Social Sciences (FEAS) launched five undergraduate programmes. As of yet, this number has been expanded to 25 undergraduate programmes of which eight are taught in English. The faculty also offers postgraduate programmes including 27 Master's programmes and four doctoral programmes in cooperation with the Institute of Graduate Studies (IGS). In addition, more than 100 Erasmus+ and other bilateral agreements have been made available to students. As of January 2024, the faculty has 146 academics and 6,293 active students. The three undergraduate programmes of FEAS to be accredited in this cluster are "Economics and Finance" (English and Turkish programmes) and "Management Information Systems" (FEAS).

IV. Assessment of the study programmes

1. Quality of the curriculum

Bachelor's/Master's degree

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.

[ESG 1.2]

Description

Economics and Finance (Turkish and English) (Bachelor of Science)

The Turkish language Economics and Finance Bachelor's programme launched in 2013 while the English counterpart has been active since 2017. Per year, 41 students are admitted to the Turkish programme while 26 are admitted to the English programme. The full-time study programme has last been accredited in 2019. According to the SER, students are required to complete 240 ECTS, which are equivalent to 132 credits of the national system, in a total of 8 semesters. The curriculum is divided into compulsory and elective courses (60 ECTS) offered by IGU and courses required by the Higher Education Council (HEC) (14 ECTS). HEC courses consist of Turkish Language I & II, Atatürk's Principles and History of Turkish Revolution I & II, and Foreign Language I & II. Compulsory courses required the Economics and Finance department must be taken by all students. They include fundamental concepts of economic and financial theory and aim to develop knowledge and abilities in applied economics, financial, and statistical analysis. Elective courses can be selected from the 3rd year of study according to the students' interests and career plans. Both faculty and university elective courses are available so that students can also take courses other than in the field of their studies.

The SER states that the intended learning outcomes (ILOs) of the Economics and Finance programme are in line with the National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education in Türkiye (NQF-HETR) and the European Qualifications Framework (EQF). The ILOs of the programme are categorised into three main groups: knowledge, skills, and personal and occupational competences. Graduates of the study programme are supposed to be competent leaders who can effectively navigate the constantly evolving global business landscape. They should possess the necessary skills in economics and finance, as well as the ability to anticipate and manage both opportunities and threats. Additionally, they should demonstrate a commitment to sustainability and ethical practices. Graduates can pursue careers in supervisory positions, such as managers, specialists, inspectors, and financial advisers in several industries, with a particular emphasis on banks and financial market organisations in both the public and the private sector. Graduates of the Bachelor's programme can also pursue an academic career by enrolling in consecutive Master's (and doctorate level) programmes.

Experts' evaluation

Based on the evidence given during the site visit and in the self-evaluation report, the experts testify that the curriculum of the Bachelor's degree programme "Economics and Finance (Turkish and English)" reflects the intended learning outcomes on the programme level in general. The curriculum includes a variety of major subjects that are traditionally offered in both Bachelor's degree programmes in Economics and Bachelor's degree programmes in Business Studies or Business Administration worldwide. In this respect, it is an interesting Bachelor's degree programme which teaches both Economics and Business Administration. This leads

to the first realization that after a joint introductory phase in the first semesters, the profile of the two subjects Economics and Finance should be sharpened (**Finding 1**).

The intended learning outcomes are based on international standards. The programme complies with level 6 of the European Qualifications Framework (EQF). A link between the intended learning outcomes on the programme and course levels has been shown. The training within the programme focuses on both theoretical (predominantly in the economics part) and practical skills (predominantly in the business part). The panel of experts positively assesses the fact that AI and new technologies are also integrated into teaching, and that data analysis and programming are taught. Special courses in finance and the offer of new online courses in the coming semesters are also seen as positive. The appropriate, scientific, and ethical use of AI in teaching is of enormous importance, and students must be made aware of this. It is gratifying that students are offered a variety of examination forms. The discussions during the site visit revealed that the forms of examination can vary depending on the subject but are fundamentally dependent on individual lecturers. Reliability and a clear and documented preview of the respective form of examination are therefore essential for students' planning. Examples for these kinds of overviews which are provided to the students for planning the upcoming semester should be handed in for all programmes (**Finding 2**).

The details required of the curriculum are clear and publicly available on the website of IGU. There are already some interesting courses on offer (e.g., ECF225 "History of Economic Thought" or ATA201E + ATA202E "Principles Of Ataturk and History of Revolutions" I + II) for both Turkish and international students. A course such as "History of Economic Thought" caters to a broad student body and can therefore be offered as a compulsory course, while "Principles Of Ataturk and History of Revolutions", for example, should rather be assigned to the elective area due to its specialization. Overall, the panel of experts comes to the conclusion that further specialised courses from the academic field of business and economic studies (e.g., "New Trends in Institutional Economics" or "Current Approaches in Monetary Theory") could and should be designed to increase the attractiveness of the programme. Therefore, all departments in this cluster should implement and document a process for regular revision of course content and for updates of the recommended relevant literature (**Finding 3**).

As realised during the site visit, many elective courses are offered in the English-language programme from the 5th semester onwards (which is basically good), but on closer inspection the catalogue of courses to be chosen is so large that this option could rather be described as a lavish General Studies area. The panel of experts got the impression that this analysis is also true for the other departments. In all programmes the catalogue of possible elective courses should be streamlined and focused. In this context, the programmes should cooperate more closely with other departments and faculties (**Finding 4**).

However, the cross-programme use of courses could help to save resources, which should then be used more intensively for research, for example, with IGU's aim to become a research university. Linked to this objective is the aim of internationalization. The panel of experts recognizes the measures that are suitable for increasing international visibility. These include the provision of funds for conference participation as well as the organization of conferences/workshops and the targeted invitation of international colleagues as part of the "Autumn Talks" format, which is a very good idea. However, the experts also recognize potential for strengthening the English language skills of both teachers and students. This is particularly relevant for the English-language programme and special attention should be paid to this in the future, as it may not be possible for the department to adequately compensate for e.g., the short-term absence of teaching staff in the English-language programme (**Finding 5**).

During the site visit it was reported that there is an established procedure for student complaints. The Student Affairs department is responsible for student complaints and there is a student resolution centre. Students can send complaints anonymously and a 'student ambassador' who is in contact with staff can also be approached

and staff are in contact with them. Complaints are documented in a student handbook. Such a structured procedure is viewed positively.

During the discussion with those responsible for the “Economics and Finance” degree programme, a question of comprehensibility arose regarding the workload calculation. The Bologna criteria are adhered to, as a calculation example in the SER shows 1 CP equals 25.5 hours. However, the panel of experts was ultimately unable to understand how Turkish credits can be compared to European Credits, which might also be a challenge for students who go abroad. It is therefore recommended that clarity be established at this point for communication to students (**Finding 6**). This recommendation is also applicable to the other programmes in this cluster, as they use the same practice of workload calculation.

The programme’s curriculum does not include a final thesis at the end of the programme. The experts understand this to be fully in line with the national regulations and also confirm through continuous assessment that the programme learning outcomes are demonstrated. Despite that, the experts believe that students would clearly benefit from a final thesis option because it would significantly help students demonstrate their skills in the area of Economics and Finance right before graduation. IGU should evaluate the option to include a final thesis in its programmes without challenging the national regulations (**Finding 7**). In this context, the use of AI would also be a further element in verifying the skills and abilities of graduates.

Conclusion

The criterion is partially fulfilled.

Description

Management Information Systems (FEAS) (Bachelor of Science)

The Management Information Systems (MIS) Bachelor’s programme at Faculty of Economics, Administrative, and Social Sciences (FEAS) was launched in 2017. Per year, 83 students are admitted of which 10 students have a full scholarship while 72 have a 50% scholarship. As of the academic year 2023/24, 359 students are enrolled. The full-time study programme has last been accredited in 2019. Students are required to complete 240 ECTS, which are equivalent to 132 credits of the local system, in a total of 8 semesters.

The SER states that Management Information Systems programme is designed for students who wish to study advanced theoretical and applied subjects in the field of information systems. The curriculum is divided into compulsory courses in the first 4 semesters and compulsory and elective courses in the following 4 semesters. In the first two semesters, students mainly take the common courses taught in the faculty. In the following semesters, the weight of the compulsory courses increases.

The SER states that the intended learning outcomes (ILOs) of the Management Information Systems programme at FEAS are in line with the National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education in Türkiye (NQF-HETR) and level 6 of the European Qualifications Framework (EQF). The ILOs of the programme are categorised into three main groups: knowledge, skills, and personal and occupational competences. The department aims to equip students with both theoretical knowledge base and practical skills by following current trends in the field of information technologies. Theoretical and practical education is carried out jointly to reinforce the theoretical knowledge with laboratory applications and in-class projects. According to the SER, it was a strategic decision to cooperate with the industry and provide internship opportunities to prepare students for the sector and enhance employability.

Graduates are supposed to fill an interdisciplinary gap in the labour market and should be able to recognize information technologies, use information and communication technologies effectively, think critically, rationally, and creatively, possess effective communication skills, and can respond quickly and effectively to the

needs of the business world. They are supposed to be employed in the fields of information technologies, finance, software programming, media, communication and publishing, analysis and reporting, trade, transportation, communication and logistics, business and management. Graduates can also pursue an academic career.

Experts' evaluation

As described above, the curriculum is divided into compulsory courses and elective courses. The compulsory courses cover a wide range of subjects and aim to provide students with a strong foundation in information technology, data analytics, business management, and information technology. In addition to basic IT-courses, advanced topics such as statistics, data analytics, network design, and management are also included. In addition, students are offered a variety of elective courses, allowing them to specialise according to their interests and career goals. Some of these courses are offered only in the Management Information Systems programme while others are also available in other programmes.

The department aims to equip students with both a theoretical knowledge base and practical skills by following current trends in the field of information technologies. Theoretical and practical education is carried out jointly to reinforce the theoretical knowledge with laboratory applications and in-class projects. According to the SER, it was a strategic decision to cooperate with the industry and provide internship opportunities to prepare students for the sector and enhance employability. Graduates are supposed to fill an interdisciplinary gap in the labour market and should be able to recognize information technologies, use information and communication technologies effectively, think critically, rationally, and creatively, possess effective communication skills, and can respond quickly and effectively to the needs of the business world. They are supposed to be employed in the fields of information technologies, finance, software programming, media, communication and publishing, analysis and reporting, trade, transportation, communication and logistics, business and management. Graduates can also pursue an academic career.

The Bachelor of Management Information Systems (FEAS) encompasses various aspects of MIS with a strong emphasis on data science. The curriculum clearly reflects this focus, and the staff can effectively articulate the concept and vision. Stakeholders are actively involved in the curriculum development and teaching processes, leading to excellent job prospects for graduates. The relevance of this focus is underscored by the predominantly mathematical and statistical background of the staff. To align with national regulations, IGU should evaluate renaming the programme to better convey its content and enhance visibility for prospective students and employers **(Finding 8)**.

The foundational courses are well-rounded and effectively prepare students for the practical, application-oriented courses in subsequent semesters. However, the reliance on a minimum of 10 registered students for elective courses may pose a disadvantage to students and warrants reconsideration. The collaboration with the departments of Computer Engineering, Software Engineering, and Industrial Engineering leads to valuable course offerings for students, and this collaboration should be further strengthened **(Finding 9)**. To better emphasize the connection to the business world, the inclusion of specialized courses at the intersection of Business and Data Analytics, such as Finance and Analytics or Marketing and Analytics, should be explored in future developments. Additionally, expanding the course options in the realm of application systems, particularly ERP and Business Process Mining, also promises to enrich the curriculum **(Finding 10)**.

Conclusion

The criterion is fulfilled.

Description

Banking and Insurance (Bachelor of Science)

The Bachelor's programme Banking and Insurance launched in 2013. 49 students are admitted per year, of which 40 receive a 50 % scholarship, while the remaining 9 have been granted a full scholarship. The full-time study programme has last been accredited in 2019. According to the SER, students are required to complete 240 ECTS, which are equivalent to 132 credits of the local system, in a total of 8 semesters.

The curriculum is divided into compulsory (134 ECTS), elective (60 ECTS), faculty (24 ECTS), and Higher Education Council (HEC) (14 ECTS) courses and a compulsory summer internship of 30 working days (8 ECTS). Elective courses can be taken in the 3rd and 4th year of the programme. They provide students with the opportunity to deepen or broaden specific skills and knowledge areas to prepare them for the labour market. Graduation requirements, industry trends, faculty expertise and academic diversity are taken into consideration. The Internship Directive requires students to organise their internship themselves and the relevant department/programme head then decides on the suitability of the internship place. HEC courses consist of Turkish Language I & II, Atatürk's Principles etc. as described above. Besides these courses, students can also take 16 ECTS of Pedagogical Formation Education. Students are supposed to acquire knowledge and skills in areas such as economics, finance, banking, and insurance. The department also organises a Student Symposium which is open to undergraduate and associate degree students. In the Symposium, selected academic projects created by students under the supervision of their professors in colloquia are presented.

The SER states that the intended learning outcomes (ILOs) of the Banking and Insurance programme are in line with the National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education in Türkiye (NQF-HETR) and the European Qualifications Framework (EQF). The ILOs of each course indicate the level of competence related to the content of the course. Course ILOs are created in accordance with the Programme Learning Outcomes (PLOs). Graduates are supposed to be able to keep up with the rapid changes in the finance and insurance sectors, have knowledge about new financial instruments, new banking and insurance products, new financial institutions and application techniques and should be closely acquainted with financing technology, solve problems, and have analytical thinking skills.

Experts' evaluation

The BA programme Banking and Insurance is designed as an eight-semester study programme. In the first year of study, Financial Accounting I, II, Introduction to Banking, Economics, Political Science, Sociology, Insurance, Law, Philosophy and Scientific Research Methods courses are offered. In the second year, Microeconomics, Macroeconomics, Turkish Economy, Financial Management, Commercial Law, Obligations Law, Insurance Branches and Introduction to Sustainability are offered. In the third year Monetary Theory and Policy, Financial Markets and International Economics courses are offered. The last year includes International Financial Markets, Actuary and Insurance Transactions, Treasure and Fund Management in Banking and Sustainable Insurance Applications.

The first concern of the expert panel concerns the pool of elective courses. The pool includes all the elective courses offered by the faculty. Students can graduate by choosing elective courses that do not contribute to achieving the learning outcomes of the Banking and Insurance programme (e.g., Prevention of Addictions, Aircraft Electricity, Cooking Techniques and Kinetics). In terms of the structure of the programme itself, electives should be grouped into clusters that are aligned with the learning outcomes of the Banking and Insurance programme and offered to students accordingly. The same should also be done in the other programmes of this cluster (**Finding 11**). In addition, these elective course packages will also help students to decide in which of the banking or insurance fields they would like to specialize.

The second concern of the panel of experts regarding the programme is the absence of core courses in mathematics and statistics in the curriculum. Mathematics and Statistics are essential in Banking and Insurance programmes, as they underpin decision-making, risk management, and financial analysis. Therefore, courses in Mathematics and Statistics must be added to the curriculum to provide students with a profound qualification **(Finding 12)**. This will contribute to the achievement of the intended learning outcomes.

Another significant concern is the lack of elective courses that concentrate on emerging financial technologies, financial data analytics, and artificial intelligence (AI). With the growing prominence of Fintech (financial technology), there is an increasing focus on digital banking, blockchain technology, cryptocurrency, and data analytics within the banking and insurance sectors. The department must add such kind of courses to the curriculum **(Finding 13)**.

Another important concern regarding the programme is the number of academic staff in the department. Having backup for academics is essential to ensure continuity in teaching and learning, even during unforeseen disruptions such as sabbaticals, or retirements. The expert panel recommends that IGU develop a clear strategy for recruiting staff for this applied programme (see chapter on teaching staff).

Conclusion

The criterion is partially fulfilled.

General remarks on the labour market orientation of all programmes

Regarding the labour market, IGU takes extensive efforts to proactively engage with industry and enable its students to enter the job market at an early stage – also through a mandatory 30-day internship for all applied programmes (optional for all other programmes). These internships result in a positive impact in both directions: On the one hand, students can train their skills in real-life-situations. On the other hand, the workforce is needed by companies. Furthermore, selected employees can be sent to Higher Education Institutions (HEI) for further training, including PhD programmes. Industry (especially MIS) supports specific HEI projects, thus providing a valuable bridge between academia and industry.

The companies as stakeholders are currently spread across various industries but primarily serve the local Turkish market. One improvement should be the inclusion of international players **(Finding 14)**. In the area of finance and banking, these companies could primarily be Fintechs. Guest lecturers are currently being invited, but international lecturers with practical experience would also likely have a positive impact on students' English skills, as well as on their willingness to undertake such internships outside of Turkey. A good opportunity to establish contacts with Austrian companies, for example, is the Austrian Chamber of Commerce "Advantage Austria" in Istanbul.

During the site visit, the delegation was able to gain a good overview of the laboratories and library during a guided tour. Currently, no systems are installed for international market data platforms for fundamental and technical analysis of companies (especially for finance and banking). However, the panel was informed that IGU will make this available in the near future in cooperation with the Istanbul Stock Exchange. Furthermore, connections with the (financial) industry can help provide such systems, which can be quite costly.

In general, however, it can be said that the university's technical base is well-positioned with regard to online and on-site teaching, and has thus proven quite resilient even in exceptional situations such as Covid 2020. This is also due to the fact that, among other things, the university is familiar with emergency plans for the possibility of earthquakes.

In order to establish and maintain connections with stakeholders from the industry, a set of selected companies are involved which e.g., support students with internships and are represented within IGU's career centre for

graduates. During the visit, the panel of experts asked for a list of companies which IGU provided in the aftermath. This list contains a list of all companies that are considered stakeholders.

It is positive to note that the relationships between the companies and IGU are based on mutual contracts (Memorandum of Understanding) that clearly define the obligations and rights of both parties. Some panel members were able to inspect a sample of such agreements during the site visit to get evidence.

During a meeting with the companies on the third day of the visit, the panel was able to gain a personal impression of IGU's excellent collaboration with the industry. In summary, it can be said that there is intensive and fruitful interaction between IGU and the industry, so that all requirements regarding the labour market orientation can be considered to be fulfilled.

2. Procedures for quality assurance

Bachelor's/Master's degree

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.

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

[ESG 1.1, 1.7 & 1.9]

Description

According to the SER, the quality assurance (QA) system at IGU is developed within the framework of the Higher Education Quality Board and under the Higher Education Quality Assurance Directive and Higher Education Quality Board Regulation. IGU's QA system operates within a 4-layer methodology:

- Responsible for the first layer is the QA representative, coordinating and managing quality processes at the programme level.
- On the second layer, an academic board of the programme comprising academic staff, student representatives, and external stakeholders, discusses and evaluates issues related to curriculum quality and development as well as education processes in its meetings.
- The third layer of the QA system is governed by the quality assurance commission at faculty level, while the university is in charge of the fourth layer where the quality policy and strategy are determined.

The university has also established an additional structure called the Strategic Planning and Quality Assurance Office to measure, evaluate, and improve the university's performance. The office audits the progress through performance indicators to determine whether IGU has achieved its goals and what it can do to improve performance. The findings are announced twice a year. All monitored quality indicators are determined in the 5-year strategic plan of IGU (2024-2028).

The university states in the SER that the internal quality assurance mechanism has been prioritised since AQAS accreditation in 2018 and that the QA process follows the PDCA (Plan-Do-Check-Act) cycle according to the QDMS (Quality Document Management System). Accordingly, a meeting at rectorate level takes place every 15 days, if possible, with participation of faculty members. At faculty level, quality commissions were established in each academic and administrative unit to disseminate quality studies to all programmes. In addition, there are regular meetings of the programme and faculty board to discuss the curriculum development

as well as the outcomes of the QA process under the participation of, among others, students and external stakeholders including employers, graduates, professional organisations, public institutions, civil society organisations, research sponsors, and student families. Supporting units and systems are Public Relations and the Advertising Directorate, Electronic Information Management System (EBYS), Dean of Students, Alumni Tracking System (METSIS), IGU Career Guidance Application and Research Centre (CGARC), Social Media Monitoring, and Solution Centre (İGÜÇÖZÜMER).

Annually, the university delivers an Institutional Internal Self-Evaluation Report (KIDR) which aggregates the Academic Internal Self-Evaluation Reports (A-BIDR) written at faculty level. The reports at faculty level are said to be compiled based on the reports at programme level (Programme Internal Self-Evaluation Report – BIDR). The report is said to cover a variety of aspects relating to QA criteria and indicators and considers feedback collected from students through surveys on student satisfaction, graduate satisfaction, and course evaluation. According to the SER, surveys such as External Stakeholder Survey, Graduate Satisfaction Questionnaire, and Employer Evaluation and Opinion Surveys are carried out to collect feedback from external stakeholders.

According to the SER, various policies have been determined and implemented by the university, namely the Women and Disadvantaged Student Support Policy, Equal Opportunity Policy, Respect for Diversity Policy as well as the Anti-Sexual Harassment and Anti-Mobbing Policy.

The SER further states that several enhancements of the curriculum have been implemented based on recommendations of the previous accreditation. These include, among others, adding new courses to the curriculum as well as making changes to the elective course pool for the Banking and Insurance programme. Before the beginning of a new academic year, courses and course descriptions are reviewed and revised to keep the curriculums up to date and in line with international standards.

Experts' evaluation

The discussions during the site visit have substantiated that IGU follows the PDCA-cycle internally. The quality assurance system is implemented on different levels within IGU, as described above. The programmes are subject to the university's policy and associated procedures for quality assurance. The quality assurance system involves different scopes, such as course and/or programme evaluations and progression and completion rates and/or further evaluation tools. Statistical data on students' progression (e.g., student composition, study duration, completion rate, grade distribution, failed/completed exams) are analysed and used for the development of the programme.

It was reported in the SER that the surveys are designed and improved by a committee and students have to fill in a satisfaction survey in order to get access to their marks at the end of the semester. Based on the panel's meetings with faculty members and other stakeholders, it was confirmed that the programmes are reviewed annually and revised in various intervals according to emerging trends and developments in the field. Every lecturer has to have their course evaluated. When a lecturer has "3 out of 5", the lecturer has to hand in an optimization report. The results remain confidential. Changes are discussed in meetings with students. While the report on the outcome of the evaluation is available, it is only sent to the deanery and management of IGU but not to students due to confidentiality. IGU should foster the exchange of teaching staff with students on the core outcomes of the student survey and specifically on the measures taken in a reliable and comparable format (**Finding 15**). The panel of experts also recommends to integrate options for free text. In addition to the purely quantitative surveys, even if students have the option to give feedback in other ways. Students who attended classes irregularly or not at all also participate in QA surveys, as this is the only way to view examination results. This poses a problem that has also been discussed during the site visit. This process should also be revised. The experts recommend that IGU provides an overview of quality assurance processes

that are currently in place. This overview should also show how students are involved in the processes and who is responsible for which part of the process (**Finding 16**).

A 4-level quality assurance system is in place. There is a satisfaction survey for the students. If the result is not satisfactory, the lecturer concerned receives an email and is asked to submit an action plan. The establishment of a student ambassador, who is a quality representative, is positive. QA-representative and ambassador meet to take and discuss the written surveys. It can be assumed that communication with the students will also be established in this way.

A central quality coordination office is assigned to control and coordinate the quality assurance policies in general. The respective quality assurance representatives at the faculty level are responsible for implementing the quality assurance processes on the programme level. On the one hand, this setting allows a standardized level of quality assurance throughout the university, but, on the other hand, allows decentralized activities customized to the different faculties' needs.

It would be desirable if the quality assurance measures also provided more appropriate support for protection against intolerance and discrimination. Awareness concepts could be helpful in this case.

Overall, the university-wide quality assurance system is already well-established. Clear allocations and responsibilities complement established quality assurance structures at the central and decentralized levels. A sensitivity to the necessary quality culture for the entire institution is evident, as is a willingness to continuously improve the quality assurance system. The potential for improvement identified and addressed above represents only a minor weakness.

Conclusion

The criterion is partially fulfilled.

3. Learning, teaching and assessment of students

Bachelor's/Master's degree

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 outcomes.

[ESG 1.3]

Description

It is stated in the SER that teaching and learning methods at IGU are designed based on Bloom's taxonomy to equip students with problem-solving, analytical, and critical thinking skills, alongside subject knowledge reflecting the student-centred education approach. Teaching and learning methods include lectures, group-work, practices, reading, discussions, and presentations. Web-based, game-based, and online learning tools are used as well. The study programmes also offer two modes of learning and teaching, namely face-to-face classes on campus and online classes via the Learning Management System (ALMS). ALMS is an online-learning platform that caters to the diverse needs of students with handouts and videos uploaded and accessible to students with special needs or working students.

In terms of assessment, students have two exams per semester, the midterm and the final exam. In practice courses, no exams are conducted. Instead, graded quizzes, homework, and project studies are conducted

weekly. The composition of grade is 10% for homework, 10% for lab projects, 30% for midterm exams, and 50% for final exams.

Exam dates, times, and classes are organised by the Faculty Exam Coordination Unit. After the exam dates and times are determined, they are announced to the faculty members via PERSIS and on the academic calendar via the Student Information System (OBIS). Types of exams might include oral, written, computational, and practical examinations, multiple-choice questions, essays, and homework to ensure the alignment with the ILOs, as stated in the SER. Make-up exams are possible for reasons such as health issues as well as separate exam mechanism for students with special needs. They start two weeks after the final exams. The university also states to have a mechanism at both faculty and programme level to address feedback, concerns, and appeals from students.

Experts' evaluation

Based on the provided documents, the expert panel concludes that the university particularly considers Blooms taxonomy as well as intended learning outcomes for the design of the courses under assessment. However, this could not be assessed for all programmes, as the full course curriculum was only provided for parts of the study programmes. Therefore, the expert panel requires IGU to provide a set of course descriptions for the full curriculum of every study programme in this cluster, including at least a short description and the intended learning outcomes as well as the type of assessment (if multiple assessments: percentage of each assessment for final grade) for every course (max. 1 page per course) (**Finding 17**). The course descriptions available online should be sufficient, but experts could not access them due to website restrictions.

The meeting with university students provided the experts with deeper insights into the students' contribution to the course design. The experts gained the impression that students are happy with their possibilities to contribute to the development of the courses – especially the newly established Quality Ambassador programme for students to represent the wishes and needs of their fellow students appears to be a great chance for students to further engage in the developments of their study programmes.

The teaching staff interviewed in the onsite meeting explained to the expert panel how different teaching and learning methods are used. Overall, the experts conclude that different methods, such as lectures, seminars, group work, etc. are employed in the courses, however, their share compared to traditional lectures could be expanded. The experts therefore recommend employing different teaching and learning methods for more courses (**Finding 18**). Moreover, it was not clear how lecturers can modify a course's structure, teaching style, examinations, and content. The experts therefore require that IGU provides a short process description on how the course contents and structure can be changed at IGU. This process should especially include the responsible persons and show how students are involved in this process (max. 2 pages) (**Finding 19**).

A 30-day internship is an optional opportunity in all other programmes. The experts appreciate the implementation of the internships to enable a transfer of knowledge into more applied, practical situations. However, the experts were wondering why the 30-day-period is not extended, which is why the university representatives explained that this is implied by law, since the university is paying for insurance of the students during the time of the internship. The internship period cannot be changed by the university. However, it is always possible for students to expand their internship period on their own, if they find sufficient funding. The experts therefore do not see this as an issue.

Various assessment methods are used across all study programmes. The students interviewed confirmed that different assessment types are used and are part of the final grade of each course. Typically, a midterm and final exam are used to assess students, whereas other assignments are part of the assessment throughout the entire semester. The experts appreciate the different assessments used, however, the exact assessments that need to be completed to pass each course have not been provided to the experts due to the lack of an

overview of all courses (**see Finding 17**). Additionally, the students told the experts that – even though a central committee organizes the exams for the entire faculty – it does happen that multiple exams are on the same day (but not at the same time). The experts recommend to IGU to implement a rule on how many exams are allowed in a certain period of time, e.g., not more than four exams per week (**Finding 20**). The exact dates of the exams are provided with relevant time ahead of the exam phase to the students through the Online Learning system.

Regarding student appeals, both the university and the students described different possibilities on how all types of different complaints are being handled. In addition to direct contact with teachers or the faculty management, it is possible to hand in complaints anonymously through the Online Learning system of the university. The students interviewed seemed to be very happy with this procedure and confirmed that complaints are being addressed and, if relevant, changes are being implemented in case of appeals. However, the procedures of complaint handling have not been presented in documented form to the experts. Therefore, the experts ask the university to provide process descriptions for all ways of handing in and handling complaints/appeals in a comprehensive way in English (max. 2 pages). These processes should clearly outline how students and their representatives are involved in handling appeals (**Finding 21**).

Regulations to compensate for special needs or in case of absence of students in exams are in place and enforced. The students interviewed described that no problems concerning these regulations occurred in recent years. Extra guidance for disabled students is provided as needed.

Conclusion

The criterion is partially fulfilled.

4. Student admission, progression, recognition and certification

Bachelor's/Master's degree

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

[ESG 1.4]

Description

Admission

According to the SER, student admission to associate and undergraduate programmes at IGU is mostly done by central placement within the quotas determined by YÖK. Central placement is carried out through exams conducted by the Centre for Assessment, Selection and Placement (ÖSYM). There are also special talent exams which are scheduled by the Higher Education Institution and announced on the university's website. Students who seek admission to programmes with foreign language education and foreign language preparatory classes must pass the foreign language proficiency exam at IGU. Regarding international students, the International Students Office (ISO) at IGU applies detailed guidelines with a set of admission requirements including aspects such as country, diploma, and passing average.

As of 2024, there are 129 students enrolled in the Banking and Insurance department, one of which has international status. As for the Economics and Finance department, 382 students are currently enrolled with 40 % of the student body having international status. FEAS has 359 enrolled students, among them seven with international status.

Progression

The university employs the Personnel Information System (PERSİS), which enables faculty members to approve registrations, record grades, and manage personal data online. Additionally, PERSİS facilitates the tracking of students' academic progress, including their course achievements and overall GPA. This system also allows for the annual monitoring of students' retention rates.

Student mobility, both outgoing and incoming, is supported by orientation meetings, close-knit communication with the International Exchange and Cooperation Office (IECO), and close monitoring, among others, via a Buddy programme for incoming students.

Recognition

As stated in the SER, IGU offers students the chance to transition into undergraduate programmes from various educational backgrounds, including associate, pre-baccalaureate, and other undergraduate programmes. Whether transferring domestically or internationally, students interested in lateral transfers to IGU can consult the guidelines outlined in the “Regulation on the Principles of Transfer, Double Major, Minor and Credit Transfer between Associate and Undergraduate Programs”, as well as the “Transfer between undergraduate programmes of different or the same higher education institutions.” In order to ensure a reliable and fair recognition of prior achievements, Learning Agreements (LA) are arranged.

Certification

The SER outlines that graduate students obtain both a Diploma and a Diploma Supplement (DS) in English and Turkish. The DS complements the higher education diploma by providing a standardised description of the respective completed studies, including characteristics, level, environment, and standing. According to the SER, the DS is based on a model developed by the European Commission, the Council of Europe, and UNESCO/CEPES and is approved by the Higher Education Council.

Experts' evaluation

The admission of students is handled by the Higher Education Council (YÖK) of Turkey. Admission to the university and obtaining a scholarship is possible through the university entrance exam administered by YÖK. Placement at a specific university depends on the score achieved in this exam. The university stated that it is not involved in this process. The students who were interviewed confirmed this and stated that admission to the study programme and scholarship applications work smoothly. The admission through YÖK handles all relevant prerequisites as well, however, there are no prerequisites allowed by law other than a language requirement for programmes taught in English. The experts found no issues with this procedure and wish to positively highlight the neutral and accessible admission process.

Prior learning at other universities is acknowledged if the intended learning outcomes and course contents are similar to the courses offered at IGU. Other forms of learning are recognized in line with Turkish law. A transfer of credits obtained at international universities as part of a student mobility is possible, learning agreements ensure that students can participate in international mobility without extending their studies. The Lisbon convention is applied in this manner. The expert panel can find no relevant critical issues regarding the possibilities of international student mobility.

IGU supports internationalization through its International Office, which students have described as very helpful. This office supports students in all phases of their mobility and offers financial assistance through scholarships as well. However, students explained to the experts that funding for mobility, especially to western countries, is often very limited, which is why the mobility is often only possible for students with own funding. The experts would like to encourage the university to extend their efforts to be an internationally recognised university, especially regarding student and staff mobility and its funding.

Upon completing their studies, students receive a graduation certificate and a Diploma Supplement from IGU, as required by the Lisbon Convention. All relevant information are available in these documents.

Conclusion

The criterion is fulfilled.

5. Teaching staff

Bachelor's/Master's degree

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 staff.

[ESG 1.5]

Description

As stated in the SER, the number of teaching staff of each programme is listed as follows:

- Banking and Insurance: 2 Associate Professors, 2 Assistant Professors, 1 research assistant
- Economy and Finance: 2 Professors, 3 Associate Professors, 7 Assistant Professors, 3 research assistants
- Management and Information Systems (FEAS): 5 Assistant Professors, 1 research assistant

According to the SER, there is a recruitment process in place for new teaching staff. Information on vacancies is said to be publicly available on the university's website. Demand for new academic staff is assessed by the university based on the ratio of lecturers to students, the turnover rate of the academic personnel, and the expertise needed for the study programmes. The general requirements are listed as: (1) possessing the minimum academic qualification required for academic staff, which is a Master's degree in their specific field from an accredited graduate school, (2) exhibiting mental and physical well-being, and (3) meeting the requirements set by the university. The vacant positions are announced separately, depending on the level of position such as professor, associate professor, or research assistant.

The SER describes that there are procedures in place for part-time lecturers to ensure their qualification which include holding relevant academic degrees and having practical experience in relevant fields. In addition, part-time lecturers undergo a thorough vetting process which may include interviews, reference checks, and demonstration of teaching competence. Once selected, part-time lecturers are provided with comprehensive orientation sessions to familiarise them with the requirements, objectives, and structure of the programmes. During their tenure, part-time lecturers receive ongoing support and guidance from department chairs and senior faculty members to maintain the quality and consistency of teaching.

IGU states in the SER that it offers teaching staff several opportunities for development in both didactical and academic skills through participation in informative meetings, seminars and webinars, congresses, and workshops. Training sessions cover various topics including scientific advancements, teaching methodologies, and practical skills. Internal support for academic projects is provided by the Scientific Research Coordination Office in order to manage the use the financial resources of IGU fairly.

Experts' evaluation

The panel of experts noticed that according to the IGU homepage, the number of staff differs slightly from the data provided in the SER, which should be aligned. The Banking and Insurance programme has 1 Associate

Professor, 2 Assistant Professors, and 1 research assistant. All academic staff joined the department after 2021. The qualifications of academic staff match the courses offered. Professors have private sector experience, which helps students find internships.

The Management and Information Systems (FEAS) programme includes 8 Assistant Professors and 1 research assistant. It is a more data science focused programme, with the qualifications of academic staff matching the courses offered.

The Economy and Finance Turkish programme has 2 Professors, 3 Associate Professors, 7 Assistant Professors, and 2 research assistants. Finally, the Economy and Finance English Programme includes 2 Professors, 1 Associate Professor, 2 Assistant Professors, and 2 research assistants.

The experts learned during the site visit that some members had left the department (e.g., Banking and Insurance). However, the expert panel observed a highly motivated staff at IGU, which is crucial for providing high-quality education.

During the site visit, the experts had the opportunity to speak with the teaching staff, gaining additional insights into their academic qualifications, relevant experience, and their involvement in the programmes in terms of teaching hours. While this may differ each semester, it has been reported that professors typically have an average weekly teaching load of 12-15 hours. Academics who wish to focus on research, in alignment with the university's goal of becoming a research university, may request a reduced course load from the administration. Additionally, it was mentioned that free English courses are being planned to enhance the staff's English proficiency to support the university's internationalization objectives.

Some programmes, such as Banking and Insurance, face staffing shortages at IGU. While staffing is regulated by the Council of Higher Education, IGU should implement a continuous staffing strategy. Investing in highly qualified staff is crucial, and the university could attract potential academic staff by offering part-time or trial lecturer roles. Acquiring and retaining talented staff should be a structured process, overseen by IGU's top management. While lecturers must have strong academic qualifications, they also need extensive knowledge of the practical and operational aspects of banking, insurance, and Fintech. Therefore, IGU should enhance its efforts to attract highly qualified staff by establishing a continuous recruitment process and creating incentives to support the development of part-time lecturers and young professionals (**Finding 22**). A strong backup of academic staff will allow IGU to stay flexible and responsive to changing educational needs, such as adapting to new technologies or offering specialized courses.

Conclusion

The criterion is partially fulfilled.

6. Learning resources and student support

Bachelor's/Master's degree

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

Guidance and support is available for students which includes advice on achieving a successful completion of their studies.

[ESG 1.6]

Description

Learning resources

For the Banking and Insurance programme a Trade Center laboratory is available for students which features computers with TradeMaster products installed on them, television broadcasting to follow financial programmes on national news channels, and a reading area. In the Trade Center laboratories, the market data presented through the TradeMaster Product Group allows students not only to trade, but also to analyse and research data. The Economics and Finance programme (Turkish and English) is currently in the process of establishing their own Trade Center laboratory. The programme also uses the SPSS Computer Laboratory.

The Laboratory Coordination Office at IGU manages use, maintenance, and development of laboratories. There are 5 libraries on campus which are equipped with WIFI and advanced computer halls. IGU provides access to international databases and online publications such as World eBook Library, Statista, hyperkitap, ProQuest, MathSciNet, and Oxford Academic. In addition to that, IGU comprises several group study halls.

Student support

IGU offers an orientation programme to assist new students in adapting to university life and achieving academic success in each semester. Academic support for students is provided by the teaching staff of the programmes in several ways, among others through consultation hours, one-to-one meetings, email communication as well as feedback on and assessment of assignments.

According to the SER, several support services are available to all students at IGU. The Psychological Guidance, Counselling and Research Centre (PDRAM) aims to support students and employees with their individual, social, and academic development and to facilitate their adaptation to university life while the Continuing Education Centre (SEM) provides education and training services. The Career Development Coordination Office offers consultancy support to students both before and after graduation. Activities of the unit include the implementation of career tests to determine the professional predispositions of students, consulting students and graduates on foreign education and business issues, establishing a dialogue between graduate students and companies and institutions, and organising Career Days and conferences so that students can get in touch with the labour market.

Students can participate in cultural, artistic, and sportive activities with 94 student clubs ranging from Blockchain to nature sports, gastronomy to children's literature. IGU's Department of Health, Culture and Sports (SKS) provides venue support for student societies and their activities. According to Article 47 of the Law on Higher Education, SKS is obliged to protect the physical and mental health of students and staff as well as to meet their social needs such as nutrition, rest and leisure time. Therefore, IGU operates canteens, dining halls, meeting and conference halls, sports facilities, and health facilities.

To accommodate students with diverse learning needs, the university states to offer various means of support through compliance with the "Disabled Student Legislation" and the "Regulation of the Disabled Consultation and Coordination Unit." Examination environments and procedures are adjusted to cater to disabled students by providing additional resources and adapted test formats.

As for international students, IGU provides various scholarship opportunities. These scholarships are given free of charge to students who have an International Diploma in line with their high school graduation grades or to students who have achieved success in the first year of their higher education, provided that their overall GPA is not below 2.72. The Directorate of International Students provides support to international students both during and after the adaptation process. According to the SER, there are scholarships and discounts available for national students which are announced and updated regularly on IGU's website. They are also encouraged to engage in exchange programmes and learning opportunities abroad (e.g., Erasmus+) for which they can receive financial support as well.

Experts' evaluation

IGU provides all students with detailed information on their courses through the online learning system. This information includes a brief description of the course contents along with a detailed estimate of the workload. The experts advocate this comprehensive overview, which is publicly accessible. All additional information such as forms of assessment or methods of teaching can be obtained from this web page as well, or, if students have any questions, they can contact the dean's office.

All courses are coordinated by the programme management and a faculty commission responsible for scheduling exams and courses without course overlaps. The students interviewed described this system as functioning well, no major problems were reported. However, the data on different study programmes show that a certain percentage of students fail to complete their studies in the expected period of time or is not able to complete their studies at all. Unfortunately, IGU has not provided student data for all assessed study programmes. Therefore, the university must provide student data for the past five years regarding: a) the percentage of students that completed their studies and b) the average time (semesters) they took to complete for all study programmes in English language, separated into cohorts based on the starting semester (**Finding 23**).

In addition, the experts noticed after discussions with the management that the workload is calculated in great detail but not assessed regularly. The students confirmed that no evaluations or similar surveys are conducted to enable the university to check whether their workload calculation is correct or needs to be changed. The expert panel therefore requires that the university must check the estimated workload for appropriateness in a regular manner, e.g., by adding a relevant question to the existing evaluations (**Finding 24**).

IGU features an extensive library with all kinds of materials for their students. However, the experts noticed during the visit that many articles and books provided seem fairly outdated. Especially in terms of journals, where the most recent version sometimes dates back to the year 2000 and older, as well as for literature on certain topics, e.g., operating systems (several books on Windows XP have been found, which have been outdated for almost 20 years now). Therefore, the experts strongly recommend removing outdated literature and offer more up-to-date resources (**Finding 25**). The university provides access to some online resources as well, which were found to be more up-to-date and useful for students.

Several laboratories have been presented to the expert panel during the site visit, giving the impression of being modern and well-suited to the study programmes. The experts found some of the most important software resources for the programmes pre-installed or available, which is why the laboratories overall can be described as very good for their intended purpose and strongly support the students in their learning.

As IGU is a rather large university, several buildings and different facilities are available and have been shown to the experts. All visited facilities appear to be fit for purpose, and no complaints have been brought to the experts' attention. Therefore, the expert panel concludes that there are no problems regarding the room and space of the facilities.

In terms of support processes, IGU offers a wide range from consulting hours of teaching staff to designated offices for career support, international services, etc. The students interviewed described the services as well-functioning and the staff members as very supportive with all sorts of issues. The experts agree on this and rank the support processes in general as very good.

A special focus of IGU is the international orientation of the university. A declared goal of the university is to promote and extend student and staff mobility. A number of students already makes use of the possibility to study abroad. The overall support seems to work very well, for example, learning agreements are used to facilitate the courses that can be completed abroad and recognized when returning to IGU, but the students voiced that financial support for outgoing students is rather low and does especially not cover the costs of western countries. Therefore, international mobility is only an option for students with sufficient personal funds. The experts encourage the university to allocate more funds for internationalization to empower more students to take on the possibility of going abroad.

Supporting students in finding a suitable place for an internship is part of the services offered by the career centre and helps students find internship placements if they cannot secure one themselves. As described by the university, usually only a very limited number of students makes use of this support offer, since most students are able to find an internship on their own. Yet, neither students nor university representatives reported cases of students being unable to find an internship and had to extend their studies.

According to the expert panel, student diversity is considered adequately in all processes of the university.

Scholarships are available as a 100 % fee waiver and a 50 % fee waiver. They can be obtained when entering the university through the admission process of YÖK. The best students will automatically receive a scholarship.

Conclusion

The criterion is partially fulfilled.

7. Information

Bachelor's/Master's degree

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

The SER outlines that student information at IGU is communicated via four avenues. OBIS serves as the Student Information System, providing access to exam results, schedules, registration processes, course schedules, and announcements via both PC and mobile app. ALMS, the Learning Management System, facilitates access to course materials, videos, exercises, and announcements, fostering communication between students and academic staff. GBS, the Gelişim Information System, houses the Student Handbook, containing programme curricula, learning outcomes, syllabi, course details, and academic staff information. The IGU website, organised into five main sections – University, Academic, Research, Student, and International – offers extensive information covering organizational structure, strategy, policies, contact details, and corporate identity. Apart from disseminating information via the web and social media, the public and prospective students are engaged and informed through fairs, preference and promotion days, and press releases.

Experts' evaluation

The expert panel found a generally satisfying situation regarding the public information. All faculties use the website and the learning platform to distribute key information about the programmes, the requirements to enter those, as well as the intended learning outcomes. The information provided on the learning outcomes of this programme did match the description and explanation that the panel received during the interviews on site.

It became obvious to the panel of experts that particularly with regards to course descriptions in some programmes there could be updated information (course literature etc., see above). However, as it is also known that updates are always a challenge, the experts will only focus on this in their report. During the side visit, it was conveyed that there is a clear process structure with regard to updates and revisions. However, it has been noticed that the curriculum of a Bachelor's degree programme is presented to the public by two levels. For example, the curriculum of the Economics and Finance degree programme is presented both on the faculty's website and on the department's website. Since the layout of the overview also varies, which can lead to confusion, it is recommended to focus on one level (faculty) and on a single presentation of the curriculum.

The university should consider whether a link to the study programmes or a standardized list of events should be created on the homepage, either in the "Academic" or "Student" section. This could make it even easier for stakeholders to access information about the individual degree programme.

As all relevant information is generally well provided, the panel of experts' comments should be seen as helpful suggestions for improvement.

Conclusion

The criterion is fulfilled.

V. Recommendation of the panel of experts

The panel of experts recommends accrediting the study programmes

“Management Information Systems (FEAS)” (Bachelor of Science),

“Economics and Finance” (Turkish) (Bachelor of Science),

“Economics and Finance” (English) (Bachelor of Science) and

“Banking and Insurance” (Bachelor of Science)

offered by Istanbul Gelişim University with conditions.

Commendation:

During the site visit, the panel of experts got the impression that Istanbul Gelişim University is an ambitious higher education institution which is very motivated on all levels, including management, staff and students, and which works continuously on its own development. Since the past accreditation, some programmes introduced new courses to enhance and update the curriculum. The support of the student population regarding a wide range of aspects was recognizable by the experts and appreciated by students.

Findings:

1. After a joint introductory phase in the first semesters, the profile of the two specializations Economics and Finance should be sharpened.
2. All departments should hand in an example for a clear and documented preview of the respective form of examination which is usually provided to students for planning their exams in the upcoming semester.
3. All departments should implement and document a process for regular revision of course content and for updates of the recommended relevant literature.
4. In all programmes the catalogue of possible elective courses should be streamlined and focused. In this context, the programmes should cooperate more closely with other departments and faculties.
5. To foster the aim of internationalisation, the English language skills of both teachers and students should be strengthened. This is particularly relevant for the English-language programme of Economics and Finance.
6. IGU should develop a clear table for all students on how Turkish credits and European credits are made comparable and how the workload, which forms the basis of the credits, is calculated in both systems.
7. IGU should evaluate the option to include a final thesis in its programmes without challenging the national regulations.
8. IGU should evaluate renaming the programme MIS FEAS, which has a special focus on data science, to better convey its content and enhance visibility for prospective students and employers.
9. For MIS FEAS it is recommended strengthening an interdisciplinary approach with other departments of IGU, e.g., with the departments of Computer Engineering, Software Engineering and Industrial Engineering not only in research but also in teaching.
10. MIS FEAS should explore the inclusion of specialized courses at the intersection of Business and Data Analytics, such as Finance and Analytics or Marketing and Analytics.

11. The elective courses of all programmes should be grouped into clusters that are aligned with the learning outcomes of the programme and offered to students accordingly.
12. Courses in Mathematics and Statistics must be added to the curriculum of Banking and Insurance to provide students with a profound qualification.
13. The department of Banking and Insurance should add elective courses that concentrate on emerging financial technologies, financial data analytics, and artificial intelligence (AI).
14. IGU should invite more representatives of international companies from the area of finance and banking, e.g., guest lecturers from Fintechs with practical experience.
15. For all programmes, IGU should foster a regular exchange of teaching staff with students on the core outcome of the student survey and on measures taken on the basis of the results.
16. IGU should provide an overview of quality assurance processes that are currently in place. This overview should also show how students are involved in the processes and who is responsible for which part of the process.
17. For all programmes, a set of course descriptions for the full curriculum must be handed in, including at least a short description and the intended learning outcomes as well as the type of assessment for every course.
18. Different teaching and learning methods for more courses in the different programmes should be employed.
19. The university must provide a short process description on how the course contents and structure can be changed at IGU. This process should especially include the responsible persons and show how students are involved in this process.
20. IGU should implement a rule on how many exams are allowed in a certain period of time.
21. The university should hand in a short process description how students can hand in complaints/appeals and how they are dealt with. These processes should clearly outline how students are involved in handling appeals.
22. IGU should enhance its efforts to attract highly qualified staff by establishing a continuous recruitment process and creating incentives to support the development of part-time lecturers and young professionals.
23. The university must provide student data regarding the percentage of students that completed their studies and the average time (semesters) needed, separated into cohorts based on the starting semester.
24. IGU must check the estimated workload for appropriateness in a regular manner, e.g., by adding a relevant question to the existing evaluations.
25. IGU should remove outdated literature and offer more up-to-date resources in its library.