



AGENTUR FÜR  
QUALITÄTSSICHERUNG DURCH  
AKKREDITIERUNG VON  
STUDIENGÄNGEN E.V.

## EXPERTS' REPORT

# **“BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION” (BACHELOR), “ECONOMICS” (BACHELOR) AND “PUBLIC FINANCE” (BACHELOR)**

Erciyes University/Turkey

December 2020



HEI	<b>Erciyes University/Turkey</b>
Campus, if applicable	

Programme	<b>Business Administration</b>
Degree	<b>Bachelor</b>
Extent	240 CP
Length of studies	8 Semester
Language	Turkish

Programme	<b>Economics</b>
Degree	<b>Bachelor</b>
Extent	240 CP
Length of studies	8 Semester
Language	Turkish and English

Programme	<b>Public Finance</b>
Degree	<b>Bachelor</b>
Extent	240 CP
Length of studies	8 Semester
Language	Turkish

Concept accreditation	<input type="checkbox"/>
First-time international accreditation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
No. reaccreditation	

Responsible agency	AQAS e.V.
Responsible consultant(s)	Ronny Heintze / Patrick Heinzer

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## Decision of the AQAS' Commission

on the Bachelor programme

“**Business Administration**” (Bachelor),

“**Economics**” (Bachelor), and

“**Public Finance**” (Bachelor)

offered by

Erciyes University, Turkey

**Based on the report of the expert panel and the discussions of the AQAS Commission in its 7<sup>th</sup> meeting on 7 December 2020, the AQAS Commission decides:**

1. The study programmes “**Business Administration**” (Bachelor), “**Economics**” (Bachelor), and “**Public Finance**” (Bachelor) offered by Erciyes University, Turkey are accredited according to the AQAS criteria for Programme Accreditation.

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 **31 December 2021**. 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 September 2027**.

### Conditions for all programmes:

1. To differentiate the programmes in a more adequate way, compulsory courses must justify the specific character of the programmes reflected in the title in order to assure that the learning outcomes specific to the programme are acquired by all students.
2. The calculation of credits and its verification has to be subject to the evaluation of the courses. This will increase the programmes' compatibility with other programmes using the ECTS system.
3. The quality assurance system have to include feedback from students, alumnae and alumni, and labour market representatives in a formalised and structured way.
4. Clear scientific standards must be defined in order to demonstrate the academic reflection of the internship reports or the final thesis. This will additionally support the university to foster strategic positioning towards research.

5. The course handbooks need to be updated with special attention given to the examination methods and their contribution to the final grade.

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

1. To support the development of English language skills appropriately, discipline-specific English courses should be implemented in the curricula.
2. The faculty should include a final thesis for all programmes in order to enable students to reflect academically and with a theoretical foundation on the content of the respective study programme.
3. To close the feedback loop between the students and the faculty management entirely, room to discuss course-specific student's feedback should be given within the courses.
4. The teaching methods should focus on a student-centred learning approach.
5. A variety of assessment methods for examinations which are relevant to the final grade of the courses should be implemented within the study programmes.
6. Once having redressed the imbalance between discipline-specific compulsory courses on the one hand and elective courses on the other, the university should assure that the student-teacher ratio is appropriate in the "Public Finance" programme.

With regard to the reasons for this decision the AQAS' Commission refers to the attached assessment report.

**EXPERTS' REPORT  
ON THE BACHELOR DEGREE PROGRAMMES**

**“BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION” (BACHELOR),  
“ECONOMICS” (BACHELOR),  
AND “PUBLIC FINANCE” (BACHELOR)**

**OFFERED BY ERCIYES UNIVERSITY/ KAYSERI, TURKEY**

Visit to the university: 2 November / 6 November 2020

**Panel of Experts:**

<b>Prof. Dr. Hasan Alkas</b>	Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences, Faculty of Society and Economics, Department for Microeconomics
<b>Prof. Dr. Hasret Balcioglu</b>	formerly Cyprus International University and YÖDAK board member (Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus)
<b>Prof. Dr. Nicole Küchler-Stahn</b>	University of Applied Sciences Berlin, Faculty of Business and Law – HTW Berlin Business School
<b>Karl-Peter Abt</b>	“Management and Human resources consultation company Karl-Peter Abt”, former Executive Directors Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Bielefeld (Germany) (representative from the labour market)
<b>Tobias Burk</b>	Student of Hohenheim University (student expert)
<b>Coordinator:</b>	
Ronny Heintze	AQAS, Cologne, Germany
Patrick Heinzer	

## II. Preamble

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AQAS – Agency for Quality Assurance through Accreditation of Study Programmes – is an independent non-profit organisation, supported by more than 90 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), 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 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

## III. Accreditation procedure

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This report results from the external review of the Bachelor programmes in “Business Administration”, “Economics”, and “Public Finance” offered by Erciyes University.

### 1. Criteria

The programme is assessed against 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. 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 the programme since not all indicators necessarily can be applied to a programme.

### 2. Approach and methodology

#### *The initialisation*

The university mandated AQAS to perform the accreditation procedure in December 2019.

The Erciyes University produced a Self-Evaluation Report (SER). In February 2020 the institution handed in a draft of the SER together with the relevant documentation of the study programmes and an appendix.

The appendix included e.g.:

- Overview over statistical data of the student body (e.g. number of applications, beginners, students, graduates, student dropouts).
- CVs of the teaching staff
- Information on student services
- Core information on the main library

- Undergraduate/graduate academic regulations

AQAS checked the SER regarding completeness, comprehensibility and transparency. The final version of the SER was handed in March 2020.

The accreditation procedure was officially initialised by a decision of the AQAS' Commission on 17 February 2020.

#### *The nomination of the panel of expert*

The composition of the panel of experts follows the stakeholder principle. Consequently, representatives from the respective discipline/s, the labour market and students are involved. Furthermore, AQAS follows principles for the selection of experts of the European Consortium for Accreditation (ECA).

The AQAS' Commission nominated in March 2020 the before mentioned expert panel. AQAS informed the university about the members of the expert panel and Erciyes University did not raise any concerns against the composition of the panel.

#### *The 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 the panel members in order to increase transparency in the process and the upcoming discussions during the site visit.

#### *The site visit*

After a review of the Self Evaluation Report, a virtual site visit to the University took place on the 2 and 6 November 2020. During the discussion rounds, the experts interviewed different stakeholders, e.g. the management of the HEI, the programme management, teaching and other staff, as well as students and graduates, in separate discussions and consulted additional documentation as well as student work. The visit closed with the presentation of the preliminary findings of the group of experts to the University's representatives.

#### *The report writing*

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

#### *The decision*

The report, together with the comments of the departments, forms the basis for the AQAS Standing Commission to make a decision regarding the accreditation of the programme. Based on these two documents, on 7 December 2020 the AQAS' Commission took its decision on the accreditation. AQAS forwarded the decision to the university. The university had the right to appeal against the decision or any of the imposed conditions.

In January 2021, AQAS published the report and the result of the accreditation as well as the names of the panel of experts.

## **IV. General Information on the University**

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Erciyes University (ERU) is located in Kayseri/Turkey and was established as a public state university in 1978 under the name of Kayseri University. The Faculty of Business Administration founded in 1977 and the Gevher Nesibe School of Medicine (an affiliate of Hacettepe University in Ankara), already founded in 1968, are considered to be the core of the Erciyes University. It is stated that the Erciyes University has been recognised as



a “Research University” by the Council of Higher Education (YÖK) in 2017. By holding this title, the University receives more budgetary and academic staff opportunities. The academic staff, for instance, can be twice as much as the academic staff of a university without this title. Following the SER, the University is placed 136th among an evaluation list of 780 universities from 85 countries. In this ranking, they are ranked 2nd among 43 Turkish universities.

At the moment, the University has 19 faculties, seven institutes, two vocational colleges, 39 research centres, five libraries and a total of 140 students clubs. At the time of the self-evaluation report, the University has a total number of 52,534 students with a ratio of 47% female and 53% male students (44,722 graduate students and 7,812 postgraduate students). The SER states that ERU currently employs 4,795 administrative and 2,209 academic staff (414 professors, 244 associate professors, 366 assistant professors, 288 lecturers and 897 research assistants).

The Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences currently has 4,630 students (2,203 female and 2,427 male students, 76 academic staff and 18 administrative staff members. At this very moment, the Faculty consists of seven departments (Business Administration, Economics, Public Finance, International Relations, International Trade and Business, Political Science and International Relations, and Political Science and Public Administration). These numbers are distributed as follows in 2019: 1,396 students (631 female and 765 male students) are part of the department of Business Administration, whereas 1,304 students (638 female and 666 male students) are in the department of Economics and 1,067 students (522 female and 545 male) are in the department of Public Finance.

On an organisational level, it is stated that responsibilities such as the coordination of the programmes are carried out by the faculty board. The faculty board consists of twelve members and is the body of strategic decisions and supervisions concerning coordination of academic affairs or educational plans. Members of the faculty board are the dean, the heads of departments, three representative professors, two representatives of associate professors and one representative of the assisting professors. For each study programme, the faculty appoints an academic advisor who helps and advises the students.

## V. Assessment of the study programme(s)

### 1. Quality of the Curriculum

*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]

#### General

Students are to take a total of 30 Credit Points (CP) every semester. The variety of CP given for each course is between four and six CP. Being part of each study programme curriculum (as prescribed by the Turkish Higher Education Council), the courses “Turkish I”, “Turkish II”, “Ataturk’s Principles and history of Turkish

Revolution I” and “Ataturk’s Principles and history of Turkish Revolution II” are each worth two CP. These classes will be imparted as distance courses.

The University provides a student handbook (course information package). The core information about each programme will be published on the website of the department. In general, the handbook is revised at the beginning of each semester. It is stated that the content of the curriculum can be updated each year, based on the feedback from stakeholders, such as labour market representatives or experiences made by teaching staff. The teaching staff can make course suggestions to the chair of the programme. The programme’s board will discuss potential changes and these will be included within the curriculum, in case a favourable decision has been made. Furthermore, the course descriptions indicate to which extent the intended learning outcomes on course level address the intended learning outcomes on the respective programme level.

## **A. Business Administration**

### **Description**

Based on the assumption that business administration will continue growing in the future, ERU designed the “Business Administration” Bachelor’s programme in a way that the basic knowledge and skills are included within the curriculum. The Department of Business Administration includes 20 intended learning outcomes on its programme level. Graduates of this programme are expected to know the basic concepts of business administration, to establish the relationship between the essential functions of an enterprise such as management, marketing, accounting or public relations. The systematic perspective of an enterprise as such and the design of basic management processes should give graduates the skills to develop new business-enterprise processes and the ability to adapt to contextual changes of enterprises. Finance-related content within the curriculum focusses on the accountability of enterprises and the decision-making processes following national and international markets. Graduates will be enabled to use this knowledge to develop effective marketing mix strategies under different market conditions and customer potential on a national and international level. Regarding soft skills, the programme should enable students to apply oral and written communication techniques (including an adequate level of a foreign language). Furthermore, students will obtain computer usage proficiency corresponding to the European Computer Driving License and the International Computer Driving License.

The curricular structure of the study programme “Business Administration” covers courses in management, accounting, finance, marketing, basic law and strategic management. It is said that most of the courses in the first three years are mostly compulsory courses covering business-related content such as “Introduction to Accounting I”, “Introduction to Accounting II” or “Behavioural Sciences”. Nonetheless, cross-business related courses such as “Introduction to Economics” are also included. Students will get the chance to specialize in a wide variety of elective courses such as “International Finance”, “Digital Marketing”, “Public Administration” or “International Economics”. The curriculum includes methodological and more generic skills with courses on “Research Methods and Graduation thesis”, “Data Structures and Algorithms” or “Computer-Aided Modelling”.

According to the SER, graduates will be able to work in accounting, banking, state agency, tax inspection, sales management or human resources positions. Students are required to prepare either a graduation thesis or to complete a practical traineeship of one month. By doing the latter, students will get the chance to gain practical experiences. Practical experiences are also covered by having labour market representatives as speakers or by organizing site visits at industrial partners.

## Experts' Evaluation

The department of Business Administration has benchmarked its programme against comparable offers at Turkish universities and has aligned with the criteria of the Higher Education Council (YÖK). The curriculum covers subject-specific and cross-subject knowledge, subject-related, methodological and general skills and competencies. The intended learning outcomes are defined for each course and published. The curriculum documentation and the course descriptions are also available. As most of the Turkish universities, ERU uses a standardised platform to publish and document the course descriptions for the programme (including in general information on the programme learning outcomes) which is a useful tool to create comparability between Higher Education Institutions in Turkey. Based on the documentation and the discussions during the site visit, the panel of experts can testify that the programme's learning outcomes are compatible with the Turkish Qualifications Framework for Higher Education (TYYÇ). Thus, the overall structure of the programme is defined and the tone is set for the programme. In general, the curriculum includes a considerable number of elective courses which are defined accordingly, and which are meaningful to the programme. In general, the curriculum embraces field-specific courses, and the overall programme's intended learning outcome is reflected in the courses. The academic degree awarded to the graduates corresponds to the appropriate level of the TYYÇ and the European Qualifications Framework. However, it became evident that several Business Administration related courses are not mandatory for students to take during their studies.

In consequence, the mandatory courses for programmes within the faculty are sometimes quite similar and have a less study programme-specific character (e.g. "Introduction to Economics" or two courses in "Financial Management"), and the study courses specific to the programme which are necessary to achieve the programme's intended learning outcomes are outlined as electives (e.g. "Microeconomics I" and "Microeconomics II"). Thus, the panel of experts believes that the current composition of compulsory courses offers a much too wide variety of business-related topics without focussing on the Business Administration related components. Currently, the specialisation concerning Business Administration happens mostly in elective courses which creates a misbalance of the rationale of the study programme. The discussions have shown that at the moment graduates do not have problems in finding an adequate job after completing the programme. When students graduate, they receive a Diploma Supplement and a transcript of records which transparently outlines which courses students took during their studies. However, to level out this misbalance, the panel of experts believes that the programme needs to justify the specific character of the Business Administration programme by making explicitly Business Administration related courses compulsory. Based on the programme's learning outcomes, the department has defined intended learning outcomes on the course level, which are transparently allocated. The curricular elements are documented, and the structure supports the learner's progression. Despite this, it also became evident that in reality students are well-advised by the teaching staff and students take the necessary courses so that graduates have the expected knowledge in Business Administration on a Bachelor's level to a sufficient degree. Nonetheless, the panel of experts believes that by making more Business Administration specific courses mandatory, the study programme will have a much better alignment between the mandatory courses and the programme title which allows for a more precise differentiation between the study programmes (**Finding 1**). As a side effect, these adjustments and clarifications can be used to further develop the Business Administration programme which will also profit from a structured and formalised feedback from stakeholders (see Finding 7).

Internationalisation efforts are visible in a vast majority of Turkish Higher Education Institutions, although the structured internationalisation is in general still under development. Especially in the business world, English as the lingua franca can significantly increase job opportunities of graduates. During the site visit, it became

evident that ERU also wants to foster the English knowledge of both teaching staff and students. The panel of experts appreciates these efforts as a good initiative. However, comparing the actual situation with the ambition of the University, the experts believe that the department should strengthen its effort in encouraging students and staff to improve their English language skills (**Finding 2**). This might be a potential for a unique selling point for the department if the efforts are implemented and handled accordingly.

The curriculum of the study programme includes an internship of at least one month at the end of the programme. This internship together with a written report, can serve as a replacement of the final thesis. Based on the impressions during the site visit, both the students and the labour market representatives expressed the high value of the internship since significant first-hand experience and initial contacts to the labour market can be made. However, it is of utmost importance that the academic reflection of the internship reports in the light of Business Administration is assured. Currently, there are no regulations within the study programme which are applicable to the internship reports. Thus, clear scientific standards need to be implemented for or the reports of the internships (see Finding 9).

Furthermore, while respecting national regulations concerning the final thesis and the importance of the internship to students and the labour market, the experts believe that a consideration of making both internship and the final thesis compulsory to all students would be beneficial to the programme. There might also be the chance to create synergies between the final thesis and the internship using practical aspects of the internship as thesis topics (**Finding 3**).

## Conclusion

In general, the study programme “Business Administration” has defined learning outcomes for the programme which are meaningful and comparable to similar programmes. Concerning the content, all relevant topics are covered within the curriculum - though not all courses specific to the study programme are labelled as mandatory. The courses are carefully aligned with the intended learning outcomes on programme level. Graduates of the programme are equipped with knowledge, skills, and competencies on a Bachelor’s level. However, as outlined above the study programme needs some clarification concerning the business administration specific mandatory courses. The academic standards for the internship report need careful consideration and clarification. In consequence, the criterion for the study programme “Business Administration” is partially fulfilled.

## B. Economics

### *Description*

The SER lists 17 learning outcomes for the Bachelor programme “Economics”. Students will get to know theoretical content by learning the basic economic concepts and theories and essential economic topics. By enabling students to analyse these theories and models, the general understanding of economics should be triggered, which should lead to the development of economic thought of the students. Methodically, the programme offers qualitative and quantitative analysis methods and tools in data collection, analysis and interpretation. By using these theories and methods, graduates should be enabled to develop new strategic approaches for regional, national and global economic issues. Interdisciplinarity will be tackled within the curriculum by including sub-fields of economics. Additionally, students will be able to master a foreign language at the end of their Bachelor studies.

The curriculum of the Bachelor's programme "Economics" follows a similar structure to the Bachelor's programme "Business Administration". Within the first year, mostly compulsory courses have to be taken by students. These courses cover mainly introduction courses to economics, accounting or business. From the second year on, students will get the chance to specialise in specific topics, such as communication in business and economics, corporate finance, competition and ethics, foreign trade economics, tourism economics, or managerial economics. At the end of the curriculum, the study programme focusses on policy, research and application tools. Students can also participate in some research projects, funded by the Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey (TUBITAK). The graduation thesis can either be a research paper or an internship in the field of studies. It is said that at least 72 of 280 CP should be taught in English.

### *Experts' Evaluation*

The faculty offers a reasonable Economics Bachelor programme which is in line with the national Higher Education Council criteria. The curriculum covers the range of similar programmes and provides useful knowledge, skills, and competencies, which are relevant to the career development of graduates. The study programme has defined intended learning outcomes which are allocated to the intended learning outcomes on the course level by using a matrix. This enables the department to react quickly to new developments and gives a good overview of the curricular structure of the programme. The level of the academic degree corresponds to the learning outcomes and the appropriate level of the European Qualifications Framework (EQF). By using the standardised platform for course descriptions, students can quickly get a quick overview of the course content, the intended learning outcomes and each courses' contribution to them. The platform also creates a connection to the ECTS credit system, which theoretically is a useful tool but needs improvement (see Chapter IV.3).

The curriculum comprises introductory courses of Economics covering Microeconomics and Macroeconomics at the beginning of the studies, and more specialised courses at later stages of the curriculum. The programme offers compulsory and elective courses which are described and published. The standardised platform, as a tool creates comparability within the Turkish Higher Education system. In parallel to the Bachelor programme "Business Administration", it became evident that subject-specific courses which are relevant for the overall intended learning outcomes on the programme level are often marked as elective courses, which leads to a scenario where a relatively high number of essential intended learning outcomes on the programme level is acquired in elective courses. This applies specifically to mathematical courses within the curriculum, which are very important for economic modelling. Students should be enabled to understand and apply mathematical tools in order to calculate key figures required for analysing and decision making in Economics. Also, students should be prepared to illustrate standard economic issues by mathematical models and should be able to apply relevant mathematical approaches to real-world problems. All these essential components exist in the curriculum in courses such as "Mathematical Economics I" or "Mathematical Economics II", but since these courses are only elective courses, there might be a theoretical chance that graduates do not have this relevant knowledge and these skills. Nonetheless, it became apparent during the site visit that students usually are counselled in a right way by the teaching staff in order to take these essential courses.

In consequence, the number of mandatory Economics specific courses must be increased, e.g. "Mathematical Economics I" and "Mathematical Economics II" instead of "Commercial Law" or "History of Economics thought" (**Finding 1**). At the same time, it might be wise to consider a reduction of Business Administration related courses that are currently marked as elective courses, but which are not necessarily contributing to the intended learning outcomes on the programme level for a Bachelor's programme in Economics (e.g. Marketing and Communication). By doing so, there might be the chance to create some additional room for electives in

trending topics of Economics, such as the increasing importance of behavioural economics including content in game theory, asymmetrical information problems or principal-agent models.

The panel of experts highly appreciates the efforts of ERU concerning the internationalisation of their programmes by amplifying the international cooperation network and exchange possibilities or the university strategy to strengthen research in all programmes. English as a facilitator language in Economics is crucial for graduates who enter the labour market but also for academics in the field. During the site visit, it became clear that the first steps have already been made to improve the knowledge of English. The panel of experts encourages ERU to follow this path for all programmes. Most likely, extracurricular English language skills can be offered from language departments or similar institutions on the campus. In the long run, this might give ERU the possibility to offer some Economics courses in English, which might foster their internationalisation efforts (**Finding 2**).

The panel of experts got the impression that employability is not an issue for graduates. The programme is important in the region, and in the past, graduates have held a position of regional importance quite quickly. Taking this as a basis, the importance of the one-month internship at the end of the study programme has been outlined by the labour market representatives and the students. It became clear that students of the programme have a certain readiness to work in the respective field. Despite of its general importance, students can choose between the internship and the internship report or a final thesis to demonstrate the achievement of the intended learning outcomes on the programme level. When looking at the academic reflection of the internship report, the panel of experts has to conclude that the scientific standards of these reports have to be increased in order to demonstrate the achievement of the ILOs adequately (see Finding 9).

Furthermore, the panel of experts recommends that in the light of ERU's ambition for the study programme, the final thesis should be implemented in the curriculum as mandatory (**Finding 3**). By doing so, students will have to demonstrate their academic writing skills to solve a field-specific problem in a given time. In the long run, this will foster their ability to use reliable research methods and reasonably formulate applicable solutions. In the future, a Bachelor thesis defence might also be something to consider.

## Conclusion

The study programme has well-defined intended learning outcomes on the programme level, which are visible on the course level. ERU uses a matrix to allocate the ILOs from programme to course level. However, the main theme of the programme is allocated in the elective courses whereas some for the rationale of the programme less important courses are marked as compulsory courses. In addition, the academic standards of the internship report have to be raised. This criterion is partially fulfilled.

## C. Public Finance

### Description

The department lists twelve intended learning outcomes for the Bachelor programme "Public Finance". Based on a theoretical introduction to the field of public finance, students will be able to understand economic, social and legal dimensions. Students can analyse and interpret data related to fiscal indicators and, thus, identify and create a solution to public finance-related problems. Graduates will be able to provide support to the society on tax issues by having learnt the theoretical and legal infrastructure of taxation. Economic problems can be solved by using the cause-effect relationship and by following the latest developments, policies and strategies. Additionally, the use of a foreign language will be fostered within the curriculum.



The curricular structure indicates that within the first year, all courses are compulsory courses. The aim of these courses is to provide students with an introduction to economics, accounting, public finance, macroeconomics and microeconomics. Starting in the third semester, students can start to sharpen their profile by taking elective courses, such as “Fiscal sociology”, “English III + IV”, “Contemporary issues in public finance” or “Public administration”. The structure makes clear that 197 CP are composed of compulsory courses, whereas 43 CP are elective courses. According to the course handbook, some of the courses can be either taken in Turkish or English (e.g. “Introduction to Economics I”, “Mathematics I”, “Microeconomics I” or “Macroeconomics I”).

### Experts' Evaluation

The department of Public Finance at ERU offers a Bachelor's study programme “Public Finance”. The curricular structure comprises courses which are comparable to similar programmes in the world. The department has drafted intended learning outcomes on the programme level and aligned them via a matrix with the ILOs on the course level. From a labour market perspective, it became evident that graduates of the Bachelor's programme can find jobs in public or private sectors, which indicates that the curriculum reasonably covers both sectors. The academic degree corresponds with the EQF.

On the curricular side, the problem outlined for the “Business Administration” and the “Economics” programme is quite similar. The orchestration of the compulsory and elective courses for the programme focuses on the compulsory side and less on Public Finance specific courses. Although some courses such as “Introduction in Public Finance”, “Theory of Public Finance” or “The History of Public Finance” are compulsory, these do not lead automatically to a specialization in Public Finance. Thus, just focusing on the compulsory courses and the curricular structure leads to a broad multidisciplinary knowledge in Economics, Law and Accounting. In consequence, the experts conclude that Public Finance specific courses have to be compulsory in order to assure that students will have in-depth knowledge in this specific field when graduating (**Finding 1**). Especially for the Public Finance programme, it became evident that some courses which are essential for the rationale of the programme are not offered regularly which has been caused in the past by a lack of personnel (see Chapter IV.5).

All curricular elements are documented as being part of the standardized platform that ERU uses as many other Turkish higher education institutions. The platform outlines the course descriptions, an ideal course plan, the intended learning outcomes on the programme and the course level, and the workload for the courses plus the equivalent to the ECTS credit system.

Respecting that the study programme primarily aims towards graduates for the Turkish labour market and having in mind that the courses “Mathematics I”, “Mathematics II”, “Microeconomics I”, “Microeconomics II” and “Macroeconomics I” and “Macroeconomics II” might be taught in Turkish and/or English, the panel of experts believe that English as one of the main language in the scientific environment is more than useful to students. Especially with regard to the fact that not only the public but also the private sector is seen as a future job market for graduates of the programme, it is recommended to implement some English courses, e.g. by subject-specific courses or courses focusing on scientific English (**Finding 2**).

As for the other two programmes, the importance of the internship in the study programme became visible. Eventually, it might be an idea to consider to extend the internship to ensure that students fulfil suitable tasks according to their competencies. However, the internship report which is currently a practical report rather than a scientific piece of writing that reflects the academic level of the students' needs (see Finding 9). By drafting clear-cut academic standards concerning scientific writing in the long run, the quality of research at a later

stage will be improved. This might be crucial for students who want to continue studying on a Master or even PhD level.

The panel of experts understands that in the Turkish higher education system, it is rather unlikely that a mandatory final thesis is implemented in the curriculum. Nonetheless, the panel believes that the internship on the one hand with specific scientific standards and a final thesis focusing more on a theoretical topic might be beneficial for the programme and its graduates (**Finding 3**).

### Conclusion

The intended learning outcomes on the programme level are defined and a clear structure to assure the learner's progression is visible. Nonetheless, the ratio between Public Finance specific courses that are mandatory to students and less field-specific elective courses is currently unbalanced. Furthermore, scientific standards must be increased for the internship report. Thus, the criterion is partially fulfilled.

## 2. 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.*

*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

#### Quality Assurance Procedures

The University states that the main objective of quality assurance lies in the active participation of internal and external stakeholders. The ERU uses a quality assurance system which is based on ISO 9000. Following the SER, the University outlines four main strategic objectives which cover objectives such as the increase of capacity, quality of practice and research activities, increasing the quality of education and teaching, higher number of students, and the implementation of new didactical teaching methods. In relation to these goals, the University has established a total of 16 key indicators (addressing several levels, such as safeguarding the national framework defined by the Turkish Higher Education Council, the enhancement of internal and external stakeholder satisfaction or the continuous enhancement of education, research and management activities).

It is outlined that ERU follows a clearly defined process based on the policies and strategies of The Higher Education Quality Council of Turkey (THEQC). In 2016, this council initiated a pilot project for the external evaluation of the quality assurance system of Turkish Higher Education Institutions. Based on the results, Erciyes University has established in 2016 the Erciyes University Quality Commission on an institutional level. Within this commission, which is chaired by the rector and consists of 15 administrative and academic members, guidance and support are given to all educational units across ERU. The aim of this commission is the implementation of quality assurance systems for all faculties and departments.



On the faculty level, a Faculty Quality Assurance Commission has been established which organises all activities regarding quality assurance systems at faculty level. One of the primary responsibilities is the submission of an annual faculty self-evaluation report. At the time of the self-evaluation report, a peer-evaluation system has been established within the University. This system comprises a system that each academic unit will be evaluated by other academic units within the University. This internal evaluation process is expected to be finalised in April 2020.

#### Information Management

The ERU outlines that formalised data collection mechanisms of internal and external stakeholders are in place. On an internal level, this includes teaching staff evaluation, administrative staff evaluation, workload evaluations, and satisfactory student surveys. The results of these procedures are statistically analysed and shared with relevant stakeholders, such as instructors, the study programme leadership or the faculty board. Besides this, employer and alumni surveys are planned to be implemented. For the study programmes, it is stated that the effectiveness is measured by the analysis of course success and completion, certificate and degree attainment rates, transfer rates, or results of student satisfaction surveys. The results will be fed into the unit internal evaluation report and the unit annual report and strategic plan. These reports will be published online, which assures that all stakeholders are informed about the outcome of the evaluation procedures.

#### **Experts' Evaluation**

Based on the discussion with different stakeholders, the panel of experts can testify that ERU has a comprehensive approach to quality assurance and quality management. It became clear that the mission and vision of the university are translated into these procedures. ERU has drafted a quality policy within the framework of the institutional performance measurement. The Quality Assurance system, which is based on ISO 9000, has clearly defined strategic goals and are comprehensible to the panel of experts. In 2016, ERU established a Quality Commission on university level and a Faculty Quality Assurance Commission on faculty level. The tasks and competences of these commissions are transparently described. During the site visit, it became evident that the quality assurance mechanism at ERU follows the study programmes relatively close in terms of the further development of content and the organisation of the programmes. Data management on the study programmes is available and was provided during the site visit. The information covers the composition of student bodies, enrolment numbers, duration of studies, and drop-out rates.

Being part of the overall strategy of ERU, the university has started to translate their credit hour system into ECTS, which is a good sign because it demonstrates ERU's striving towards internationalization. However, based on the impressions gained during the site visit and based on the documentation, the calculation of credits and its verification are currently not subject of the evaluation of courses, which is why a particular gap between the de facto status quo and the documentation is visible. The panel of experts points out that by including the verification of workload concerning the courses in the quality assurance instruments, ERU will be able to increase the programmes' compatibility to other programmes using the ECTS system. As a side effect, this will support ERU's internationalization goals (**Finding 4**).

The evaluation instruments at ERU which are carried out usually online are regularly conducted on faculty and on department level. Teaching staff members whose courses were evaluated will receive their results and the Quality Commission will receive the results of all evaluations and will evaluate them. Furthermore, deans and vice-deans are informed with more detail about the results, while others receive anonymous average values. The panel of experts believes that these instruments and mechanisms are beneficial to follow the

developments of the programmes closely. In case of any problems, all relevant persons in charge are in the picture at an early stage. However, the evaluation results are not shared with the students in order to close the feedback loop. By doing so, the experts believe that students will, on the one hand, will have an increased commitment towards their study programme, and, on the other, the faculty can quickly inform students about possible changes. In consequence, the room should be given within the courses to discuss evaluation results at the end of the semester (**Finding 5**).

During the site visit, the faculty management presented some results from internal assessments and described the transparent procedures of how data was collected, how this data was analysed, and how initial improvements were implemented. Based on these results, the panel of experts discussed the necessity to include the perspective of all stakeholders in the internal evaluations. Mostly the perspective of stakeholders, such as students, Alumni or labour market representatives focusing on possible challenges for the study programmes, are very useful opinions which are crucial for the further development of the programmes. Currently, loose connections to Alumni and the labour market are in the place, but it is more on an informal and unregular basis. During the discussion, it became evident that these stakeholders have a great interest in the study programmes. Furthermore, regular and standardised exchanges with these stakeholders will give the faculty, on the one hand, the possibility to follow the paths of their Alumni closely, and, on the other, will enable the faculty to anticipate current trends coming from the labour market. The collection of this feedback has to be done in a formalised and structured way (**Finding 6**).

### Conclusion

In general, ERU has established a meaningful quality assurance system on the university level, which is clearly visible on the faculty level. The integration of feedback coming from Alumni and labour market representatives has to be integrated into these procedures. The internationalization effort of ERU using the ECTS system became visible during the site visit; however, the integration of mechanisms to verify the workload calculation needs to be done. The criterion is partially fulfilled.

### 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 outcomes.  
[ESG 1.3]*

#### Description

##### Learning, Teaching

The self-evaluation report states that at ERU, a wide variety of teaching methods is provided. This comprises traditional lectures, projects, distance learning, laboratories, homework or presentations as well as the graduation project/summer internship. The teaching method will be selected according to the course in the study programme. Theoretical courses are carried out as face-to-face teaching, supported by computer and projection systems. Applied courses are taught in a way that students can participate in the classes. This is supported by visual and audio education tools in the classrooms with appropriate infrastructure or in laboratories. The

courses prescribed by the Turkish Higher Education Council will be offered as distance learning courses. The ERU states that this individual learning approach supports students in active participation.

Student-centred learning is reinforced by lectures, academic and social activities. In this context, it is aimed to increase the presentation skills and teamwork skills of students through seminars, group work or term projects. In light of ERU being a research university, academic writing and research will be fostered in the third year of the curricula with a particular course on research methods and its application in the graduation thesis or the internship.

#### Study Organisation and feasibility

It is outlined that each study programme under consideration has a total of 240 credit points. The curricula are designed in a way that 30 CP have to be completed by students each semester. The credits for each course are determined by taking into account all learning and teaching activities such as lectures, independent study hours, homework, research, project or preparation for exams. The total workload and the corresponding number of credit points are presented in the course information package that every student receives at the beginning of their studies. According to the SER, study programme meetings ensure the feasibility of the respective curriculum by assigning compulsory courses to specific time periods and arrange elective courses around this structure.

#### Assessment

ERU designs its assessment instruments according to the Turkish Higher Education Law. The course information package provided enables students to get an overview of assessment methods, grading regulations and procedures. The main tool in the examination of students are mid-term and final exams. It is outlined that instructors can use additional tools, such as assignments and report presentations. At the beginning of each course, the instructors inform the students about the respective examination method. Theoretical courses will be assessed in a written exam. This can either be a classical written exam or a multiple-choice test. Applied courses are usually assessed in computer labs. Exams of distance education courses are carried out centrally by the Erciyes University Distance Education Application and Research Centre (ERUZEM). Students who fail in an exam are allowed to take a make-up exam.

Furthermore, the University provides a paid summer school which repeats the content of the courses in a shorter time (seven weeks). The final grade of each course consists of 40 % of the mid-term and 60% of the final term examination. In order to be successful in the course, the total course grade must be 60 or above.

The examination schedule for all study programmes under consideration is prepared by the Exam Schedule Preparation Commission. Mid-term exams are announced within the first four weeks of the semester. Final exams are held at the end of each semester within two weeks. Students can use an internal student system called OBISIS through which students have access to course notes, course attendance, evaluation criteria, and necessary information about the course exam (general exam success rate, etc.).

#### **Experts' Evaluation**

Teaching methods used in all three programmes are mainly appropriate for the intended learning outcomes on the course level. Students reported great satisfaction with the commitment of the teaching staff and felt supported in mainly all matters during their learning journey. Nevertheless, students and teaching staff reported that predominantly teacher-centred teaching methods are being used in most of the courses, even though some exceptions were reported for all three programmes. Students highlighted during their time with the group

of experts that they enjoyed some of the new and different approaches of teaching which were established due to the pandemic crisis. The panel of experts believes that these developments and the shift to a more student-centred teaching approach will be significant for the next steps in the study programme. The change of the didactical approach of courses towards a stronger emphasis on a student-centred learning process with seminars, workshop, training, or e-learning elements will activate the students' participation and should be carried out for the study programme (**Finding 7**).

Assessment regulations, procedures, and requirements are documented online, and students have access to these documents. Students are aware of the formal procedure concerning the assessment procedures at ERU. In case of any problems, students can approach the relevant person in charge to raise appeals, which will be carefully handled. Course-specific details about examinations are announced in the beginning of each course. While the assessment methods in general are appropriate, the overall grade mainly consists of the results from the mid-term and final exam which are mostly written exams, e.g. multiple-choice tests or essays. While other examination types may be used to during the course, they contribute little or nothing to the final grade. Only up to 20% of the final exam score may be contributions by forms of assessment other than written exams. The employability of graduates for all three programmes is on a high level, which means that the programmes are getting noticed in the region. However, it is important that other examination methods such as presentations, papers and oral exams are also included in the mid-term and final assessment of students, especially during the third and fourth year of study. In consequence, a variation of assessment methods which will contribute to the final grade of the courses should be implemented in the courses (**Finding 8**).

The internship as an essential factor for the study programme is positively evaluated by students, the labour market representatives, and by the panel of experts. By having implemented this practical experience within the curricula, students can gain first-hand experience. Within the curricula, students can either decide to undergo a final thesis or complete an internship with a report. While looking at the reports, the experts conclude that the academic reflection of this graduation project is currently too low and does not reflect the purpose of the project. This becomes especially crucial, having in mind that ERU wants to focus on research in the long run. Clear scientific standards have to be defined in order to demonstrate the academic reflection of the internship reports or the final thesis. This will additionally support the university to foster strategic positioning towards research (**Finding 9**).

## Conclusion

Methods of teaching and assessment are transparent, and the teaching staff seems committed to the (individual) needs and growth of students. Nonetheless, the assessment methods, especially those of midterm and final exams should be more varied in order to familiarize students with a broader spectrum of examination types and to enhance essential competences used in future careers, either on the job market or in the field of sciences. The criterion is fulfilled.

## 4. Student Admission, Progression, Recognition and Certification

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

[ESG 1.4]

## Description

### Admission to the study programmes

The admission procedures are compulsorily maintained by a country-wide central examination (YKS), which is carried out once a year. This central examination is organized by the Measuring, Selection and Placement Centre (ÖSYM). After this examination, the Centre places student nominees in accordance with their grades and higher education institution choices.

Students from abroad have to take an entrance examination for international students (ERUYOS), which is carried out in May of each year. To be eligible to apply, prospective international students should meet conditions such as a result of at least 50% at the ERUYOS, at least three A-Level certificates (one of which should be related to the respective study programme), a specific grading in mathematics and scientific logic, or an international baccalaureate with at least 28 points.

In addition, both domestic and international students enrolled in the respective study programme are required to have an intermediate level of English. Students have to take an English proficiency test at the enrolment. Those who do not pass this test are required to take a compulsory English class for one year. For the Bachelor's study programme "Economics" it is said that at least 72 CP have to be courses taught in English. This is an equivalent of 30% of the study programme.

### Progression

In order to follow the progress of each student, ERU has established two computer-based programmes which can be used to follow the progression of students individually. Although there is no systematic monitoring on student's attendance, compulsory attendance of at least 70% is required by law. Every student has an individual advisor, who is part of the academic staff. Students can meet their advisors on a weekly set date and time.

The SER indicates that all three programmes have been feasible programmes in the past. Nonetheless, the study programme leaderships declare that the programmes are constantly updated in line with the demands of faculty members and students.

National and international exchange has been established via exchange programmes such as FARABI (exchange between Turkish higher education institutions), MEVLANA (exchange between higher education institutions in Turkish related countries such as Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kyrgyzstan, Jordan, Kazakhstan or Azerbaijan), or ERASMUS.

### Credits and Recognition

The Adaptation Committee of the faculty is set in place in order to recognize the courses completed at other higher education institutions. The SER indicates that no problem of recognition should be possible, since the inner structure of courses is in line with European standards. Courses taken by students who have an associate degree are also evaluated by said committee.

Students who have completed the studies will receive a bachelor's degree in the respective discipline. A diploma supplement will be issued in English and includes information identifying the holder of the qualification, information identifying the qualification, information on the level of the qualification, on the contents and results gained, on the function of the qualification and the higher education system.

### **Experts' Evaluation**

The admission requirements of the programmes for Turkish nationals as well as for international students are clearly defined and standardized for all applicants. The criteria are accessible to the general public. Since admission to higher education programmes is structured as a governmental process, all formal requirements by the government are met. In addition, the number of students allocated to Erciyes University is sufficient for the capacity of the faculty and meets the overall qualification requirements. The university closely monitors the student intakes and provides sufficient data on admission. Furthermore, the expert panel supports as an admission requirement English language skills in order to enable international mobility.

ERU puts great effort to support their students. The expert panel is convinced that the personal advice given by academic staff to individual students is valuable for the successful completion of the studies. In addition, the faculty aims to provide their students with a wide range of mobility opportunities. With several exchange programs, international mobility and cultural exchange are ensured.

Recognition of courses attended in a semester abroad is organized in accordance with European guidelines. Overall, the panel is convinced, that the faculty is enabling students to stay abroad and therefore focusses on a compliant recognition policy. Furthermore, a diploma supplement in English is provided to all graduates of Erciyes University free of charge. All European standards for certifying the graduation from academic programmes are met since the university uses the newest version of the diploma supplement issued by European institutions.

### Conclusion

The admission, progression, recognition, and certification procedures that ERU have established are well defined and clear and easily accessible to all stakeholders. The criterion is fulfilled.

## 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 staff.*

*[ESG 1.5]*

### Description

#### General

The faculty has established programmes for personnel development. Based on student satisfaction surveys, the faculty can measure the teaching abilities of their academic staff. By doing so, the faculty can detect any shortcomings and can react, if needed. Furthermore, administrative and technical staff can participate in in-house training concerning topics, such as occupational safety, first aid, or firefighting. On a regular level, the faculty organizes activities such as “Measurement and Evaluation Education” or “Project Design Education”, which shall enhance the quality of the teaching staff. Besides, seminar like the “Seminar on Education of Educators” is carried out on an irregular level.

The recruitment processes for ERU is obliged to act according to the Turkish Higher Education Law. This law defines that higher education institutions can set conditions for the recruitment process of staff. These conditions are published on the homepage of the Turkish Higher Education Council. If an applicant meets the



requirements, the application will be sent to a committee to create a nomination list. In addition to this, research assistants and lecturers need to take written and oral exams for the respective position.

#### A. Business Administration

The SER explains that the Department of Business Administration has 30 members at the moment (Nine professors, eight associate professors, seven assistant professors, three research assistants, and three lecturers). The academic members cover the subdisciplines in “Accounting and Finance”, Management and Organization”, “Production Management and Marketing”, and “Quantitative methods”. ERU states that all academic members in the department are currently full-time staff. The overall workload of teaching staff is 21 hours per week.

#### B. Economics

The department has a total of 16 members, out of which six members are professors, five are associate professors, three are assistant professors, and two are research assistants. The academic staff members cover, according to the SER, the subdisciplines “Economic policy”, “Economic theory”, “Economic development and international economics”, and “Economic history”. Each academic member has a range of teaching hours of three to nine hours per week for the study programme.

#### C. Public Finance

The academic teaching staff body of the department covers subdisciplines such as “Fiscal Law”, “Fiscal Theory”, “Fiscal Economics”, and “Budget and fiscal planning”. The academic body consists of one professor, one associate professor, four assistant professors, one lecturer, and three research assistants. Their teaching hours for the study programme is indicated as between nine and 21 hours per week. It is outlined that staff exchange can be done via the Erasmus programme or the MEVLANA programme.

### Experts' Evaluation

Based on the documentation, the panel of experts deduced that there is a mismatch in staff comparing the programme “Public Finance” to each other. However, based on the impressions during the site visit the experts can conclude that due to the current interdisciplinary approach of the three programmes in the faculty, the number and qualifications of academic staff cover all areas of the programmes and are sufficient to guarantee the running of the programmes. All academic staff members are employed as full-time staff which is also a good sign. The panel of experts got the impression that ERU has young and dynamic academic staff members, who are highly engaged in their programmes. Nonetheless, having in mind that the mandatory courses for the field-specific courses have to be raised, it should be considered to raise the number of academic staff members for “Public Finance” to assure that the further developments of the programmes do not lead to a problem in the student-teacher ratio (**Finding 10**).

Recruitment procedures for open positions are transparently published on the homepage of ERU or newspapers and follow national regulations for open positions. The teaching staff have the opportunities to benefit from academic and didactic workshops within different programmes, such as Erasmus or MEVLANA. The faculty administration also supports the teaching staff with seminars on didactical concepts, e.g. “Seminars on Education of Educators”.

### Conclusion

The current programmes have a sufficient number of teaching staff to run the programmes. The interdisciplinary character enables the faculty to create synergies for the programme which can be used for the further

development of the programme. The engaged and dynamic faculty members impressed the experts. The criterion is fulfilled.

## 6. Learning Resources and Student Support

*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

At the beginning of each semester, the students of the respective study programme will receive a course information package, which covers the course description of each course for the study programme. Students also have access to the course descriptions online. The intended learning outcomes on the course level are outlined within the description of each course. A direct link to the intended learning outcomes on the programme is created by indicating how much the specific course contributes to the intended learning outcomes on the programme level. A differentiation is made between class hours, independent studies of students, and the examinations.

#### Facilities and resources

Following the information provided, the operating divisions within the faculty extend 29,000 m<sup>2</sup> on land and are jointly used with other departments of the faculty. The educational complex consists of offices, classrooms, lecture halls, a conference hall, a cafeteria, a library and an IT department. Lessons are conducted in 37 classrooms (with a capacity between 80 and 150 students), six lecture halls with a capacity of 210 students, and six seminar halls with a capacity for 15 students. The faculty offers four computer laboratories with a capacity of 360 computers. The library of the faculty was renovated in 2011 and offers access to more than 13,600 books and over 6,700 periodical publications.

Furthermore, the central library of ERU, which is 24/7 accessible for students, offers reading halls, access to computer rooms, and group and single rooms. The library has since 2001 access to digital databases. Students can also use the databases outside the campus.

ERU outlines that the financial resources rely to a large extent on the central budget allocated for the respective programme.

#### Student support

The SER explains that ERU launched a project in 2008 for a barrier-free campus unit. This unit operates in order to determine the needs of disabled students studying at ERU. Since then, ERU has established several units to support physically challenged students, e.g. with a visually impaired unit.

New students will participate in an orientation activity at the beginning of each academic year with the faculty. In the first year, students will be supported by the research assistant advisor. In addition, students can access online an introduction catalogue and a presentation on the faculty. Students are brought into (regular) contact with academic advisors from the departments for guidance. They advise the students on issues such as course selection, registration procedures and other academic issues. On the institutional level, ERU offers career



guidance, has an information centre, offers psychological counselling, guidance application, and has a research centre.

### Experts' Evaluation

The infrastructure provided by the university includes all necessary facilities for the programmes. Students can study in a sufficient number of dedicated reading halls, group work and computer rooms. The library is available 24/7 to students, provides a significant number of books and online resources and, thus, enables the students to achieve the intended learning outcomes.

Student support is one of the strengths of the university. Academic staff is closely connected to its students and provides help in all circumstances. The expert panel greatly appreciates the concept of individual academic advisors for every student and the detailed support available in all academic issues, addressing the individual problems of each student. The orientation activities for new students are integrated into overall student support and facilitate a problem-free start of studies. ERU uses a standardized platform where students have access to all necessary information. This tool enables both the faculty and the students to have a good overview of the programmes. Information on courses is provided to all students as part of the course information package, which covers detailed course comments, the differentiation between compulsory and elective courses, literature and teaching methods. Notwithstanding, the course handbook is not consistent in the field of assessment methods. Although the standard structure of assessment is a mid-term as well as a final exam, not all courses reflect the correct percentages of the final grade when related to the different exam periods (**Finding 11**). Furthermore, the calculation of workload hours and corresponding ECTS Credits is not consistent. Since the self-evaluation report states that one ECTS Credit is valued by 25 hours of work, e.g. a five Credit course must reflect 125 hours of workload (see Finding 4).

### Conclusion

Student support and the offers at the university are highly appreciated by the panel of experts. This is one of the strengths of ERU. The platform, as a helpful tool, provides an overview and detailed information on the respective programme. However, an adjustment has to be made when it comes to the presentation of the assessment methods for each course. The criterion is partly fulfilled.

## 7. Public Information

*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

As an essential source of information, each department gathers useful information on the webpage of the department. Students can find general information about the department, the curriculum, and all course descriptions online. The SER further explains that at the beginning of each semester in each course, a course outline is delivered to the students where all necessary information related to the course is included. Apart from this, ERU uses the Measurement, Selection and Placement Centre (OSYM) as an external point of information for potential students. At the website, the centre publishes programme requirements, general information, information on the academic staff and the curriculum.

**Experts' Evaluation**

ERU's homepage and the faculty homepage contain a range of information on the study programme and the admission procedures. Interested students who wish to enrol at ERU are provided with all necessary information. The course information package which is given to the students at the beginning of the programme is helpful, which has been confirmed by the students. More detailed information of the course content can be found in Turkish and English on the platform ERU uses, which enables students from abroad to check the content of the study programme. Furthermore, ERU uses digital media tools, such as a YouTube channel or a WhatsApp information system to inform students in different ways.

On the university level, ERU provides up-to-date information on the overall mission of ERU concerning research and teaching. On the faculty level, the faculty regularly publishes a journal with current research papers. In addition, the annual activity report with a series of facts and figures is published online.

**Conclusion**

Public information about the programmes is up-to-date and comprises all the necessary information on the study programmes. ERU uses several media to inform the public about its programmes. The criterion is fulfilled.

## VI. Findings

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1. To differentiate the programmes in a more adequate way, compulsory courses must justify the specific character of the programmes reflected in the title in order to assure that the learning outcomes specific to the programme are acquired by all students.
2. To support the development of English knowledge appropriately, discipline-specific English courses should be implemented in the curricula.
3. The faculty should include a final thesis for all programmes in order to enable students to reflect academically and with a theoretical foundation on the content of the respective study programme.
4. The calculation of credits and its verification has to be subject to the evaluation of the courses. This will increase the programmes' compatibility with other programmes using the ECTS system.
5. To close the feedback loop between the students and the faculty management entirely, room to discuss course-specific student's feedback should be given within the courses.
6. The quality assurance measures have to include feedback from students, alumnae and alumni, and labour market representatives in a formalised and structured way.
7. The teaching methods should focus on a student-centred learning approach.
8. A variety of assessment methods for examinations which are relevant to the final grade of the courses should be implemented within the study programmes.
9. Clear scientific standards must be defined in order to demonstrate the academic reflection of the internship reports or the final thesis. This will additionally support the university to foster strategic positioning towards research.
10. Once having redressed the imbalance between discipline-specific compulsory courses on the one hand and elective courses on the other, the university should assure that the student-teacher ratio is appropriate for the "Public Finance" programme.
11. The course handbooks need to be updated with special attention given to the examination methods and their contribution to the final grade.