

Decision of the Accreditation Commission of AQAS

on the study programmes:

“English Language and Literature” (B.A.), Faculty of Economics, Administrative and Social Sciences (English programme)

“Turkish Language and Literature” (B.A.), Faculty of Economics, Administrative and Social Sciences (Turkish programme)

offered by Istanbul Gelişim University, Turkey

Based on the report of the expert panel and the discussions of the Accreditation Commission in its 70th meeting on 19/20 February 2018, the Accreditation Commission decides:

1. The study programmes **“English Language and Literature” (Bachelor of Arts, English programme)** as well as **“Turkish Language and Literature” (Bachelor of Arts, Turkish programme)** offered by the Faculty of Economics, Administrative and Social Sciences of **Istanbul Gelişim University** are accredited according to the AQAS criteria for Programme Accreditation.

The accreditation is 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 nine months.

2. The condition has to be fulfilled. The fulfilment of the condition has to be documented and reported to AQAS no later than **30 November 2018**.
3. The accreditation is given for the period of **six years** and is valid until **30 September 2024**.

Conditions for both programmes:

1. The intended learning outcomes of the overall programme and of courses have to be formulated more adequately in terms of knowledge, skills and competences.
2. The university has to outline different study paths in the programmes for various career options.

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| <p>The conditions were fulfilled on time. The Accreditation Commission confirms this with its decision of 25.03.2019.</p> |
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The following **recommendations** are given for further improvement of the programmes:

I. For both programmes:

1. The university should formulate a concept and establish an institutional scheme for the professional development of its teaching staff.
2. Learning and teaching methods as well as assessment should be strengthened and modified in accordance with a learner-centred approach.
3. Future teaching staff should include persons with professional working experience outside of Turkey in order to further internationalise the programmes.
4. Teaching staff should make better use of the learning platform and learning management system.

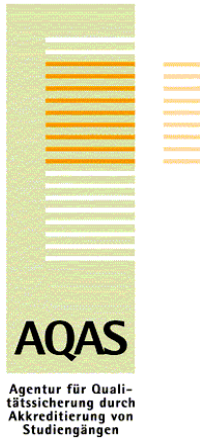
II. For “English Language and Literature”

1. The curriculum should incorporate current trends, theories as well as practices in English language and literature.
2. The first year of study should provide more effective curricular elements in order to allow students to improve their English language proficiency.

III. For “Turkish Language and Literature”

1. In its further development, the programme should focus on distinct areas.
2. The curriculum should address current trends, practices and theories in language and literature.
3. Academic English should be a mandatory and continuous part of the education.
4. Students should be supported and encouraged to do supervised research and to present this in an academic environment.

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



Experts' Report

on the bachelor degree programmes:

“English Language and Literature” (Bachelor of Arts)

“Turkish Language and Literature” (Bachelor of Arts)

offered by Istanbul Gelişim University

Visit to the University: October 23–26, 2017

Panel of Experts:

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| Prof. Dr. Béatrice Hendrich | University of Cologne, Faculty of Arts and Humanities, Germany |
| Deniz Inan | Student at the University of Paderborn, Germany (student expert) |
| Prof. Dr. Gülşen Musayeva Vefali | Final International University, Faculty of Educational Sciences, Cyprus |
| Martin Sankofi | University College of Teacher Education, Vienna, Austria (labour market representative) |

Coordination:

Dr. Dorothee Groeger, Andrea Prater AQAS, Cologne, Germany

Preamble

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

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

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

I. Accreditation procedure

This report results from the external review of the bachelor programmes in “English Language and Literature” and “Turkish Language and Literature” offered by Istanbul Gelişim University (IGU).

1. Criteria

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

2. Approach and methodology

Initialisation

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

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

The appendix included e.g. an overview of statistical data of the student body, CVs of the teaching staff, information on student services, core information on the main library as well as the Undergraduate academic regulations.

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

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

Nomination of the expert panel

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

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

Preparation of the site visit

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

Site visit

After review of the Self Evaluation Report, the site visit to the university took place from 23-26 October, 2017. On site, the experts interviewed in separate discussions different stakeholders, such as the management of the university, the programme management, teaching and other staff as well as students, and consulted additional documentation as well as examples of graded work from students' achievements. The visit concluded with presenting preliminary findings by the experts to the university's representatives.

Report writing

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

Decision

The experts' report together with the comments by IGU form the basis for the AQAS Accreditation Commission to make a decision regarding the accreditation of the programmes. Based on these documents, the Accreditation Commission decided on the accreditation on 19/20 February, 2018. AQAS forwarded the decision to IGU. The university had the right to appeal against the decision or any of the imposed conditions.

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

II. General Information on the University

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

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

Every private university is obliged by the Amendments of the Turkish Law on Higher Education to have a “Board of Trustees”. This Board enters a contract with the Rector, all faculty members and all other staff. Furthermore, it decides on the budget, all hiring and termination decisions and the amount of annual tuition fees. The university has a senate as well as all other organs comparable to a public institution of identical state.

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

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

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

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

The study programmes to be accredited are part of the Faculty of Economics, Administrative and Social Sciences, the largest organizational body at IGU with regard to student numbers. It currently comprises 21 study programmes; students have the opportunity for a double major degree. Graduate and PhD programmes complement the undergraduate education. The Faculty is governed by a Dean.

III. Assessment of the study programmes

1. Policy and Procedures for Quality Assurance

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

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

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

[ESG 1.1]

Description

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Experts’ Evaluation

IGU is subject to all national regulations for state universities and foundation higher education institutions in Turkey, which prescribe specific quality assurance procedures and require related bodies as well as an annual evaluation by a national quality board. The university adheres to all regulations and has established a structured and encompassing quality assurance system on the institutional level. Documentation of meetings of decision-making bodies along with their decisions is adequately kept as has been shown to the experts.

In its further development the university pursues a strategic plan which envisages organizational development and quality enhancement in terms of teaching, learning and research as well as international recognition with the involvement of the internal and external stakeholders.

However, on the departmental level, the quality assurance mechanism could be enhanced. The experts observed that teaching and administrative staff are conscientious in terms of monitoring the teaching and learning quality and that problems, as expressed by the students, were usually addressed and resolved. However, this was done in an informal manner, dependent on specific cases rather than on formal procedures. The expert group would thus encourage the university and its staff to further develop a quality culture by strengthening the use of formal procedures.

This applies particularly to the involvement of student representatives. The expert group found that formal procedures are in place which ensure that students are represented in all decision-making bodies. However, the general impression was that several problematic issues requiring the involvement of student representatives were dealt with on a personal and informal level. The

university should encourage the elected student representatives to follow the formal procedures for performing their duties and actively participate across the institutional governance system on behalf of the student body. Also, the student representative attendance at various council/board meetings should be documented (**Finding 1**). The panel is aware that the implementation of the related regulations requires time and effort as the programmes are still relatively new.

Overall, the responsibilities and expectations within the programmes under accreditation and programme elements are defined and available to students. The curriculum documentation is available, up-to-date and covers all mandatory and elective courses/modules.

In addition, the instruments for quality assurance are regularly used, such as mandatory student evaluations of courses and instructors. Students will only receive their grades once they complete the related survey. The information on the two programmes is part of the institution-wide data management and statistics on admission, progression and graduation rates are collected respectively.

The experts acknowledge that the departments monitor the study programmes closely and that they have already considered possible changes based on the relatively new experiences of the first student cohort. In the “English Language and Literature” programme, for example, the training in oral English skills should be improved, a demand expressed by the students and now considered by the department. The establishment of an English Conversation Club, financially supported by the university, shall offer short-term, informal contribution. Nevertheless, the related curricular revision should also be considered (see Chapter IV.2).

During the meeting with the labour market representatives as well as with the teaching staff, the experts could detect a fruitful and promising cooperation of the university with the labour market. Regular meetings with representatives ensure that their feedback is collected. The local language institutions provide internship opportunities for students of both programmes, whereas the cultural institutions organize reading sessions and talks at IGU.

The university is keen on supporting its teaching staff in their research activities and in their further development by financing their participation in training and conferences (see also chapter IV.5). However, a concept and a structured scheme for the institutional professional development have not been established yet. Related requests are granted on a case-by-case basis and the further development largely depends on the motivation of individual staff members. The experts therefore recommend that the university should formulate a concept and establish a scheme whereby the professional development can be further promoted on the institutional level (**Finding 2**). The university should ensure that the steady improvement of teaching skills is guaranteed by means of a non-individual regulation.

Conclusion

The criterion is fulfilled. Adequate quality assurance mechanisms are defined and applied within the study programmes. They include all stakeholders. For further quality enhancement, the university should encourage its students to actively participate in their formal representation across the decision-making bodies.

Didactic trainings are offered to university members. However, the university should formulate a concept and establish an institutional scheme for the professional development of its teaching staff.

2. Quality of the Curricula

The intended learning outcomes of the programme are defined and available in published form. They reflect both academic and labour-market requirements and are up-to-date with relation to the relevant field. The design of the programme supports achievement of the intended learning outcomes.

The academic level of graduates corresponds to the requirements of the appropriate level of the European Qualifications Framework.

The curriculum's design is readily available and transparently formulated.

[ESG1.2]

Description

Both study programmes are designed to enable students to inquire and think critically, decide properly and to become socially and culturally active in the societies they live in, as outlined by the university in its self-evaluation report. Both programmes are supposed to convey linguistic knowledge and language skills, knowledge in literary theory and genres as well as cultures and other disciplines of the respective language. The curricula allow furthermore for individual profiles of the students as they contain a variety of elective courses. These courses are also included to improve student's world and communication skills and to foster their personality growth as outlined by the university.

Both programmes have a duration of study of 8 semesters and a credit volume of 240. Credits for courses vary between 2 to 7. Turkish courses and a class on the "History of Atatürk's Principles and Reforms" are mandatory – as nationally prescribed by the Turkish Council of Higher Education YÖK. Both programmes generally qualify students to pursue a career as a teacher.

"English Language and Literature"

Graduates of "**English Language and Literature**" are supposed to gain an in-depth knowledge of a wide range of authors, movements and texts and to develop critical reasoning and rhetorical skills in order to analyse and discuss various issues in literary texts and to construct arguments as well as to translate literary texts. The curriculum of the programme covers English as well as American literature, language and culture. In the first half of the duration of study students are supposed to take mandatory courses which establish the fundamental knowledge of English. Courses cover English proficiency, writing and literary analytical skills as well as introductory courses to English and American literature and different literary genres (novel, drama, poetry). From the 5th semester onwards, the compulsory curriculum, which covers specific literary eras and authors such as "Restoration Drama", "Shakespeare" or "Contemporary English/American Novel", is complemented by a number of elective courses which are major and non-major related. Major-related elective courses deal with in-depth aspects of English and American literature as well as translation topics, such as "20th century English Drama", "Discourse Analysis" or "Audio-visual Translation". Non-major electives can be taken from disciplinary fields such as Psychology, Sociology or Turkish Language and Literature.

In particular, courses include:

Semester 1: Introduction to English Literature, Mythology, Textual Analysis I, Advanced Writing Skills I, Advanced English Skills I, Turkish Language I

Semester 2: Introduction to English Literature, Language and Culture, Textual Analysis II, Advanced Writing Skills II, Advanced English Skills II, Turkish Language II

Semester 3: Introduction to Novel, Introduction to Drama, Introduction to Poetry, Introduction to American Literature, Introduction to Linguistics, Principles of Atatürk and History of Revolutions I

Semester 4: English Novel, English Drama, English Poetry, Selections from American Literature, Introduction to Linguistics II Principles of Atatürk and History of Revolutions II

Semester 5: Literary Criticism and Theory I, Romantics, Shakespeare and his Period, Research Methods and Ethical Considerations in Literary Studies, Electives

Semester 6: Literary Criticism and Theory II, Victorian Novel, Restoration Drama, Short Story, Electives

Semester 7: Contemporary English Novel, Contemporary English Drama, Electives

Semester 8: Contemporary American Novel, Contemporary English Poetry, Electives

Successful students can do a double major in “English Language and Literature” and “Turkish Language and Literature”.

“Turkish Language and Literature”

With the programme **“Turkish Language and Literature”** IGU aims at providing students with the basic understanding of Turkish language and literature with the option of specializing in a particular field. Turkish language and literature shall be studied in both their historical roots and geographical expansion. According to the university, graduates will get acquainted with the periods of Turkish literature and they will be able to examine and analyse the works of Turkish literature according to the contemporary art movement.

The curriculum of the programme follows a similar structure to that of “English Language and Literature” in that the first 4 semesters consists of mandatory courses, namely on Old and New Turkish Literature as well as on language and linguistics, such as “Ottoman Turkish” and “Turkish Language History”. In the following semesters, students have to take advanced courses on Turkish literary genres and different fields of linguistics, that is, “Turkish Folklore”, “Contemporary Turkish Dialects” and “Turkish Novel in Republican Era”, for example, as well as elective courses from the field. Electives focus on individual genres and literary themes, such as “Biographies” and “Traditional Theatre”, as well as on linguistic topics (e. g. “Old Anatolian Turkish”).

The curriculum is structured along the following courses:

Semester 1: Turkey Turkish I, Turkish Language History, New Turkish Literature I, Old Turkish Literature I, Ottoman Turkish I, Foreign Language I

Semester 2: Turkey Turkish II, New Turkish Literature II, Old Turkish Literature II, Ottoman Turkish II, Foreign Language II, Written and Oral Expression

Semester 3: History of Atatürk’s Principles and Reforms I, Turkey Turkish III, Old Turkish I, New Turkish Literature III, Old Turkish Literature III, Ottoman Turkish III, Turkish Mythology, Turkish Folklore I

Semester 4: History of Atatürk’s Principles and Reforms II, Turkey Turkish IV, Old Turkish II, New Turkish Literature IV, Old Turkish Literature IV, Ottoman Turkish IV, Turkish Folklore II, Literary Movements

Semester 5: Scientific Research Methods, Old Turkish Literature V, New Turkish Literature V, Middle Turkish I, Electives

Semester 6: Old Turkish Literature VI, New Turkish Literature VI, Middle Turkish II, Electives

Semester 7: Contemporary Turkish Dialects I, New Turkish Literature VII, Turkish Folk Literature I, Prose in Old Turkish Literature, Electives

Semester 8: Contemporary Turkish Dialects II, Turkish Folk Literature II, Graduation Study, Turkish Novel in Republican Era, Electives

In general

According to IGU, students of both programmes are encouraged to engage in research by the instructors. The course “Research Methods and Ethical Considerations in Literary Studies” in “English Language and Literature” and “Scientific Research Methods” in “Turkish Language and Literature” support students in acquiring scientific and research skills.

Potential career opportunities for graduates of “English Language and Literature” are defined by the university to lay in the fields of translation, media, tourism, management as well as in the public sector. Graduates of “Turkish Language and Literature” are trained mainly to pursue a career as a teacher (which requires obtaining an additional teaching certificate afterwards); however, they are also supposed to work in the media, in tourism, education and management.

Both programmes are led by a Head who is responsible for the coordination of the individual programme. Courses, especially the elective ones, are coordinated by the professors and lecturers under the supervision of the Head, as defined in the self-evaluation report.

The university provides a student handbook which is updated every year under the supervision of the Head and the approval of the Dean.

Experts’ Evaluation

The programmes under accreditation welcomed the first student cohort in the academic year 2016/17: 77 students currently study “English Language and Literature”, 59 students are enrolled in “Turkish Language and Literature”. The university is thus currently gaining experiences with the implementation of the new curricula.

The programmes are designed according to the general learning outcomes which are supposed to reflect what kind of theoretical and practical knowledge, language, academic and professional skills and overall competences each respective programme anticipates its students to acquire upon the successful completion of studies. Although the programme learning outcomes are available in published form, they have not been formulated adequately; hence they require further specification as to what specific kind of knowledge, what concrete set of skills and competences shall be acquired (**Finding 3**). The respective programme learning outcomes need to be revised on the course level accordingly. The experts suggest using the related guidelines of the ECTS Users’ Guide (2015) for the formulation of the intended learning outcomes. As the programmes continue to run, the university will gather feedback regarding the appropriateness of the learning outcomes on the basis of the evaluations on the part of the academic staff at their respective departmental board as well as through student surveys.

The curricular elements in both “English Language and Literature” and “Turkish Language and Literature” programmes are offered exclusively for their students with the exception of the nationally prescribed courses in Turkish history and foreign languages. All curricular elements are documented, assigned ECTS credits and defined as mandatory or elective. A typical study plan is available for both programmes. The academic degree of Bachelor of Arts corresponds to the learning outcomes and the requirements of the national Qualifications Framework.

The curriculum of “**English Language and Literature**” contains relevant topics covering the classical literature foundation, language training and introductory linguistics. The programme is thus characterized by a strong focus on literature with linguistics and language teaching methodology mainly as elective courses. The curricular elements intend students to develop traditional knowledge and skills in a Bachelor programme in language and literature studies and they support the formulated learning outcomes. Even though the curriculum may be described as adequate, further modifications shall be suggested by the experts to further improve the programme and offer graduates a more contemporary and comprehensive education in English Language and Literature.

First and foremost, the curriculum should be updated by incorporating current trends, theories and practices in literature and language/applied linguistics studies. The focus should be put on English as a world language, from the literary, linguistic as well as critical discourse analysis perspectives (**Finding 6**). So far, the curriculum tends to focus on mainstream English. The experts commend courses such as “Language & Culture”; however, in order to ensure the cohesion as well as coherence of the courses on offer across 4 years of the academic studies the panel would recom-

mend to incorporate curricular elements on English as a global language as well as the literature from other English speaking contexts.

Furthermore, in order to improve the oral English skills of students the language proficiency development in the first year of study should be strengthened. The students enrolled in the programme are interested in improving their communication skills in English since they are essential for their success in academic studies (**Finding 7**). The option of informal, extra-curricular activities is certainly helpful but should be complemented by curricular elements (see Chapter IV.1). Using the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages in a more coherent and prominent manner in the identification of the students' English language proficiency would be beneficial as it would increase transparency and comparability.

The programme "English Language and Literature" is intended to educate professionals, teachers as well as translators in the field of literary/cultural and/or linguistic studies and practices. Specializations in any of these areas are realised through provision of the necessary curricular elements since the mandatory curriculum in itself would not be sufficient for a comprehensive education and training. However, students need guidance in their choice of electives and in the career paths that they are interested in and would like to pursue. The university should thus outline different study paths for various career options and ensure effective guidance for students in this regard (**Finding 8**).

With the programme "**Turkish Language and Literature**" IGU aims at covering the vast field of Turkish studies in one Bachelor programme. The learning outcomes, as clearly defined during the site visit, include a qualification in speaking proper Turkish, an education in Turkish culture and history as well as personal growth of students to become self-confident citizens. The department is currently revising the curriculum and aims at making several changes, which the panel of experts consider valuable. However, the Higher Education Council is currently drafting new guidelines for the curricular design of programmes in Turkish which will be valid for the further development of the programme at IGU. In the further development of the programme at IGU, the experts would, however, suggest focusing on selected topics of Turkish language and literature. The current curriculum covers an immense amount of topics which can usually only be handled with on a rather superficial level. The experts would suggest focusing the curriculum on two or three main fields (**Finding 9**), considering the new national guidelines, of course. In its further development, the programme focus(es) should become more concrete. This includes the option to offer different study paths which in turn focus early on distinct areas such as Old Turkish and Ottoman Literature, Modern Turkish Literature in a Global world or similar.

International research and publications as well as the history and the impact of 'Turcology' beyond Turkey on Turkish Studies inside Turkey should be included in the course schedule, no matter which focus the students opt for (**Finding 10**). This includes a satisfying level of academic English (**Finding 11**).

With regard to modern Turkish and contemporary literature, modern theory of literature, creative writing and modern topics such as children's literature, literature by Turkish authors outside Turkey and women's writing would be useful in order to join the internationally renowned departments of Turkish language and literature.

Students should be supported and encouraged more prominently to do research and to present this in an academic environment (**Finding 12**). Academic learning can be fostered by organizing both small scale and international conferences where also the students present their papers and join academic discussion.

Internships are not mandatory in both programmes. However, as practical applications are important, especially for those students wanting to become teachers, the university provides support in finding internships. Several agreements with local schools have been signed, which constitutes a valuable support by IGU.

Conclusion

The criterion is partly fulfilled. Learning outcomes are described and the curriculum is designed to achieve these outcomes. However, the intended learning outcomes on the overall programme and course levels need to be formulated more adequately in terms of knowledge, skills and competences.

The curricular elements of both programmes are defined and adequate to achieve the intended learning outcomes. Modifications may be considered to offer graduates a more contemporary and comprehensive education in both programmes.

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

At Istanbul Gelişim University, one academic year consists of two periods. It is based on the workload corresponding to 30 ECTS per semester, including a total of 60 ECTS credits in one academic year (1530 hours of student workload).

The curriculum of both programmes is conveyed most often via lectures and seminars according to the university. Teaching is supposed to be student-centred in that it allows and encourages students to participate in class discussions. Students regularly receive reading and homework assignments on which class discussions usually evolve.

Distance education complements regular class hours. As outlined in the self-evaluation report, several courses are delivered face-to-face as well as digitally, among those Turkish, English and “Principles of Atatürk”.

Assessment

Instructors decide on the examination type and evaluation tool. The “Associate Degree and Undergraduate Education-Training and Examination Regulations” allow for exams, homework, application, quiz, report, presentation, verbal assessment, thesis presentation, document presentation, expert appraisal and computer assisted presentation. The most common examination types in “English Language and Literature” are supposed to be written exams and research papers.

Examinations take place mid-term and end-of-term. A Planning Unit bears responsibility for the organization of the examinations. Times and locations are published on the student information system OBIS. Make-up exams for excused students are being offered.

Experts' Evaluation

IGU has set itself the goal of a student-centred teaching and learning approach, an important and valuable approach in modern teaching and learning. The experts could, however, not make out a stringent and widespread use of this approach in the English and Turkish language programmes and thus suggest strengthening this approach by making use of a greater variety of current methods in learning, teaching and assessment (**Finding 4**). Teaching methods generally associated with a student centred approach, such as e.g. cooperative learning, flipped classroom or inquiry

based learning, should be introduced and added to the methods currently applied in the two programmes. Group work, for example, would support students in practicing their oral skills. Further suggestions include project work or panel discussions, in which students explore and engage in a topic. In addition to this, teaching media literacy with the help of technology would be a great asset for both future teachers and academics. Methods which provide students with constant feedback could further help them in their learning process. Staff training with regard to the above mentioned methods should also be both organised and encouraged.

Assessment tools are currently mostly centred around two examinations (a mid-term and an end-of-term examination), taking place twice a year. However, especially in the humanities, students should be able to follow up on their learning path and a more decentralized formative assessment approach would be beneficial and better suited with regard to a student-centred approach. Summative assessment should be complemented by formative assessment. Furthermore, the variety of assessment tools could be enlarged. Teaching staff reported about individual deviations from using a mid-term exam, which the experts encourage the staff to continue; however, a structured and obligatory use of different assessment forms than the two examinations does not seem to be in place (**Finding 4**).

The assessment requirements and grading regulations are set down in the university-wide policies and are additionally communicated to students in the first session of classes. The university applies a very effective organisation of exams in which overlaps are avoided. Regulations for students with special needs and for make-up sessions are in place.

Written exams are assessed by the teachers; teachers do usually not discuss content and grade of the exam. The only way for the students to challenge a grade is to take the decision to court. The experts would encourage the university to think about further options in dealing with dissent.

Students who fall below a certain grade point average are being monitored and receive support. Teaching and learning caters for students with individual needs, providing flexible learning paths. Some of the classes are recorded and delivered online and the university provides modern, state of the art technologies for distance learning and teaching, an approach considered valuably by the experts.

Conclusion

The criterion is fulfilled. Teaching, learning and assessment methods are varied and adequate. They should, however, be modified in accordance with a learner-centred approach in order to fully achieve the goals set by the university.

4. Student Admission, Progression, Recognition and Certification

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

[ESG 1.4]

Description

Admittance to the study programme

Admission to the programme is based on a central examination system regulated by the national Council of Higher Education. The requirement for admission to Gelişim University is a pre-defined score in the Transition to Higher Education Examination and the Undergraduate Placement Examination. Furthermore, students must pass a foreign language proficiency test if a programme is offered in English. Opportunities for transition to IGU from vocational high schools or other higher education institutions are subject to the "Regulations on Transfer among Associate and Under-

graduate Degree Programs, Double Major, and Subspecialty and the Principles of Credit Transfer among Institutions in Higher Education Institutions”.

IGU charges tuition fees but provides financial support such as scholarships and discounts.

Creditation and recognition

Istanbul Gelişim University is part of the European Higher Education Area and applies ECTS credits to all its study programmes. ECTS credits and workload are assigned on the basis of the weekly course hours, midterm and final exams as well as other assignments, laboratory work, seminars and other learning component. In addition, IGU uses local credits.

Outgoing students sign a learning agreement and receive full academic recognition of their courses taken abroad. According to the university, ECTS transfer is guaranteed. Likewise, incoming students receive a Transcript of Records with ECTS credits and grades for recognition at their home institution.

Further transitional conditions are provided by the “IGU Course Directive on Equivalence and Adaptation Guidelines”.

Certification

Students receive a Diploma Supplement on completion of their studies in English and Turkish. The Diploma is based on the model developed by the European Commission, the Council of Europe and UNESCO and provides a standardized description of the nature, level, context and status of the studies completed by its holder.

Experts' Evaluation

IGU applies an adequate set of rules and procedures for the administration of students' admission, progression, recognition and certification. All procedures have been reported to run well and the experts gained a very positive picture with regard to student support and student organisation. Students feel well taken care of and are aware of whom to contact in case of questions. The experts met enthusiastic and committed administrative staff; the experts do not doubt the smooth administration at IGU.

Formal requirements for admission are clearly defined and available in published form as they are predominantly defined by national regulations. The selection of students is centrally organized by the Higher Education Council. IGU offers preparatory programmes in English and supports all students in providing English courses during their studies.

The programmes have been introduced fairly recently. Data on the admission is thus still basic. However, as shown in other programmes, IGU applies procedures for the collection of data regarding qualitative and quantitative information on their students.

Student mobility is encouraged by the university in that it covers flight costs and provides Erasmus scholarships. Students who wish to go abroad outside of the Erasmus framework will be supported as well. All required regulations, such as the use of learning agreements, are in place and the experts do not doubt that recognition of learning outcomes acquired during a study abroad will be provided. The university is currently still expanding its Erasmus network. Naturally, students of “English Language and Literature” wish to do a semester abroad in the UK. The department is in negotiation with potential partners to grant this wish. A stay abroad would be highly beneficial for students of both programmes and the experts acknowledge the financial effort by the university to support its students.

In “Turkish Language and Literature” sufficient English skills may pose a barrier for students to do a semester abroad. Strengthening the English skills of students would thus be of importance (**Finding 11**, see Chapter IV.2). Even though language courses are already part of the curriculum,

skills of students seem to be rather basic. However, the experts are aware that problems lie already in the secondary education in Turkey and may not be remedied by the university alone.

Graduates receive a diploma supplement upon completion of their studies.

Conclusion

The criterion is fulfilled. Well-designed and comprehensive procedures have been implemented to support students in their student-life-cycle.

5. Teaching Staff

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

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

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

[ESG 1.5]

Description

As outlined by the university, human resource management is supported by the “Strategic Planning and Quality Assurance Office” with the aim of a consistent distribution and equal workload of members among the School. Currently, IGU employs overall 466 full time academic staff according to the numbers given in the SER. Among those are 43 professors, 10 associate professors, 180 assistant professors, 148 teaching assistants, 70 research assistants as well as 15 lecturers. IGU outlines that it adheres to a defined process for hiring new staff. Within the scope of the Turkish Higher Education Law, appointment and promotion conditions for higher education institutions are taken as the basis for recruitment and appointment of teaching staff.

Based on the information given by the university, teaching staff for “English Language and Literature” includes 2 professors and 1 assistant professor; a research assistant supports the professors. “Turkish Language and Literature” is taught by 4 assistant professors with varying teaching hours and 1 research assistant.

The university encourages staff to conduct research by offering a financial incentive for the publication of articles. Didactic training and further education is supposed to be fostered by the participation in trainings, conferences and seminars, both at national and international level.

Experts' Evaluation

For both programmes, the university is aiming at increasing the number of staff and recruitment is still ongoing; recruitment procedures are made transparent. Current staff, however, is sufficient with regard to quantity and quality. IGU adhered to the national regulations with regard to the number of staff in opening a study programme.

Teaching staff is very committed and it is certainly one of the strengths of the university to employ enthusiastic and engaged staff. The university encourages staff to carry out research by providing financial incentives for the publication of articles and the application for patents. Especially interdisciplinary research shall be fostered. The English department, for example, is currently running a research project with the Psychology department on stuttering. Additionally, the university covers costs for the participation in conferences and seminars which fosters the professional development of staff. Courses by the Centre for Continuous Education are free for all academic staff.

In order to further internationalise staff and the study programmes, the experts would like to recommend hiring staff with professional working experiences outside of Turkey (**Finding 5**). This would emphasize the university's own agenda of becoming an international university and it would

support a more comprehensive approach to English and Turkish studies in including different perspectives on the field.

Conclusion

The criterion is fulfilled. Teaching staff can be characterized as well qualified and enthusiastic. To increase the internationalisation within the programmes, future teaching staff should have professional working experience outside of Turkey.

6. Learning Resources and Student Support

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

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

[ESG 1.6]

Description

Facilities and resources

IGU is distributed over 3 campuses in the neighbourhood of Avcilar, Istanbul. Overall, facilities shall comprise 24.400 m² of indoor areas with classrooms, conference rooms, reading rooms and exhibition rooms. Students can benefit from 13 fully equipped computer laboratories and several libraries, as defined by the university. In addition, the campuses host cafeterias, health centers, a fitness club and a radio and television studio.

Students can access learning material and online courses via a Learning Management System provided by IGU. A Student Information System and a Student Mail System facilitate registration and the information exchange. The Department of Information Technology monitors all soft- and hardware systems and IT areas for students and staff.

IGU Library and Documentation Centre currently contains ca. 115.000 items of learning material, including electronic sources such as E-Books and online journals. The seating capacity amounts to 200. According to the university, the library and documentation centre is designed to meet all kinds of information and documentation requirements of its students, academic and administrative staff.

The study programme is financed mainly by tuition fees. According to IGU, the financial resources of the university are determined and distributed in the budget period every year considering the physical and technical requirements for the sustainability of programmes as well as student and teaching staff numbers.

Information, consultation and guidance

Information to interested students is distributed in so-called Promotion Days, in which the university presents its programmes and schools. During registration, students receive guidance and support by the Directorate of Public Affairs as well as by the Head and research assistants.

According to the self-evaluation report, IGU aims to support students' individual, social and academic development during university life. The university applies an academic advisor support system in which advisors help students with all academic as well as administrative issues during their studies. Instructors offer regular consultation hours. The university highlights the Psychological Guidance, Counselling and Research Center, the Centre for Continuing Education as well as the Office of Career Development as further support units which offer guidance in personal as well as professional development and growth of students' personality.

Among the services offered by the Office of Career Development are consultation, seminars and conferences, the invitation of experts and specialists as well as the allocation of internships. The

Psychological Guidance, Counselling and Research Center holds meetings, seminars and organizes social activities to help students adapt.

Students who wish to do a semester or internship abroad may apply for Erasmus+ or Mevlana, an international student and teaching staff exchange programme established by the initiative of Turkey. Support is provided by the International Relations Office and by research assistants. According to the university, the budget allocated by the National Agency to IGU is used in its entirety for financial support to students.

The university offers assistance to a diverse student body: Working students benefit from courses carried out via distance education. International students receive support by the International Relations Office, which organizes an orientation programme and offers guidance concerning visa and other administrative issues. Students with disabilities are supported by a Disabled Student Unit within the framework of the "IGU Regulation on the Advisory and Coordination of Higher Education Institutions". The unit provides guidance and makes arrangements to facilitate the student life of disabled students. For example, special examinations are offered which address the individual need of the student. According to the university, the campus and its facilities are suitable for disabled students.

IGU actively supports students in their effort to found student clubs and student councils. Moreover, it organizes summer schools and conferences. These bodies invite various experts and specialists from private and public sectors to the university and they also organize technical visits.

Experts' Evaluation

Resources for and within the programmes are sufficient for providing a good quality education. Facilities, for example, are modern and well-equipped. The campus in Avcilar offers suitable classrooms and self-study areas as inspected by the experts. Appropriate material resources are available.

Documentation of the curriculum is provided, even if its content may require further improvement, such as the definition of the learning outcomes (see Chapter IV.2); methods of learning, assessment methods and expected workload are documented.

Weekly meetings of the department staff facilitate course coordination between instructors; questions and issues can be addressed quickly. As outlined by teaching and administrative staff, the experts do not doubt that the programmes can be completed within the expected period of time.

The library offers sufficient literature, both in paper form and online. Access to research databases and online journals is available to students, even from their home computer. Laboratories may be used, such as an SPSS lab. The university provides a learning platform and learning management system. However, it is currently only sporadically used. The panel of experts would encourage the teaching staff to make better use of the platform or other digital learning management systems and provide learning material online. The university could support usage of its platform by offering training sessions for teachers. Students would surely appreciate the use of an online portal or learning management system for teaching and learning.

Student support is more than adequate. The experts were impressed by the availability of staff for students. During the talks, students reported about the approachability and availability of their teachers. Student administration, such as course registration or grade distribution, is supported by a student account portal. Student diversity is considered when allocating, planning, and providing learning resources and student support.

Several offices support students in their progression at IGU: the Career Center offers, for example, a peer-mentoring programme, the Psychological Guidance, Counselling and Research Center is approachable in case of personal issues. Specific offers are available for exchange students. Overall, the experts gained the impression that students are well-taken care of.

Conclusion

The criterion is fulfilled as sufficient learning resources are provided. Student support is considerable and generous.

7. Information

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

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

Description

According to the university, IGU gathers information from internal and external stakeholders and holds regular meetings with academic staff, students and local, regional and national stakeholders. Questionnaires among students are regularly distributed and analysed. Deans, the Heads and lecturers are supposed to monitor the scope of programmes with regard to changes in the business world. The Office of Career Development regularly examines the potential employment opportunities of graduates.

The university publishes information on study programmes on its website. Students and staff receive information via the Student Information System, the Student Mail System and the Personnel Information System. The university confirms that it collects data on students' profiles and progression, their satisfaction as well as on the effectiveness of teachers with the help of an information system.

Experts' Evaluation

The university is noteworthy strong in data management: A database with statistics and information on students and programmes is available and accessible to teaching and administrative staff as well as to the management. Feedback is gathered from students as well as from the labour market. Students are informed about possible career opportunities and labour market requirements. Both programmes do not primarily educate teachers; graduates have to take a teacher certificate programme after finishing their Bachelor studies if they wish to pursue a teaching career. A large number of students expressed the wish to become teachers. The university thus collaborates with several local schools and institutions in providing internship opportunities to teach English or Turkish. This could be extended into a programme since it seems to be strongly desired by the students.

The programmes are advertised online and all relevant information is accessible on the Website. This includes information on the curriculum, the learning outcomes, the teaching, learning and assessment procedures as well as the qualification awarded; however, ideal study plans for different career options of "English Language and Literature" would be beneficial (see Chapter IV.2).

Conclusion

The criterion is fulfilled. The university applies an elaborate data-management system and informs third parties adequately.

IV. Recommendations of the panel of experts

The panel of experts recommends to accredit with conditions the study programmes

- **“Turkish Language and Literature”**
- **“English Language and Literature”**

offered by **Istanbul Gelişim University**.

Findings:

For both programmes:

1. The university should encourage its students to actively participate in their formal representation across the decision-making bodies.
2. The university should formulate a concept and establish an institutional scheme for the professional development of its teaching staff.
3. The intended learning outcomes on the overall programme and course levels need to be formulated more adequately in terms of knowledge, skills and competences.
4. Learning and teaching methods as well as assessment should be strengthened and modified in accordance with a learner-centred approach.
5. Future teaching staff should have professional working experience outside of Turkey.

For “English Language and Literature”

6. The curriculum should incorporate current trends, theories as well as practices in English language and literature.
7. The first year of study should provide more effective curricular elements for further English language development of students.
8. The university should outline different study paths for various career options for students.

For “Turkish Language and Literature”

9. In its further development, the programme should focus on distinct areas and/or offer more distinct study paths.
10. The curriculum should address current trends, practices and theories in language and literature.
11. Academic English should be a mandatory and continuous part of the education.
12. Students should be supported and encouraged to do research and to present in an academic environment.