

Akkreditierungsagentur für Studiengänge  
im Bereich Gesundheit und Soziales  
Accreditation Agency in the Area of Health and Social Sciences



## **Assessment Report**

**for the Application of  
Istanbul Gelişim University,  
School of Health Sciences,  
Department of Social Service  
for the Accreditation of the Bachelor Program  
“Social Service” (Bachelor of Science, B.Sc.)  
(Turkish Program / English Program)**

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**Decision** April 30, 2018

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<sup>1</sup> The experts listed in italics did not participate in the One-Site Visit.

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## 1 Introduction

The Accreditation Agency for Study Programs in Health and Social Sciences (AHPGS) is an interdisciplinary and multi-professional organization. Its mission is to evaluate Bachelor and Master's programs in the fields of health and social sciences, as well as in related domains, such as law or economics. By implementing accreditation and recommendation procedures, the AHPGS contributes to the improvement of the overall quality of teaching and learning. However, the higher education institutions remain responsible for fulfilling the quality assurance, too.

Since 2004 the AHPGS has been a member of the European Consortium for Accreditation (ECA). In 2006, the AHPGS also joined the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) and became a member of the International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE) in 2009. Since 2012, the AHPGS has been a member of the Network of Central and Eastern European Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (CEENQA). Starting from 2009, the AHPGS has been listed in the European Quality Assurance Register (EQAR).

In carrying out accreditation procedures, the AHPGS follows the requirements of the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG). In the present case, the decision regarding the accreditation of the study program is carried out by the AHPGS Accreditation Commission based on the following accreditation criteria<sup>2</sup>:

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

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<sup>2</sup> Approved by the AHPGS Accreditation Commission

The external assessment procedure is carried out in four steps:

### **I. The University's application**

The AHPGS verifies the sufficiency of the documents submitted by the University, namely the self-evaluation report and its corresponding annexes. These are to fulfill the assessment spheres as well as the AHPGS standards. As a result, the AHPGS produces a summary (see Sections 2-5), which is to be approved by the University and subsequently made available for the expert group, together with all other documentation.

### **II. Written review**

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

### **III. On-site visit (peer-review)**

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

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

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

#### **IV. The AHPGS accreditation decision**

The accreditation commission of the AHPGS examines the documentation made available in the process of application, namely the University's self-evaluation report, its annexes, the summary comprised by the AHPGS, the expert report, as well as the University's response opinion. These documents represent the basis for the commission's decision regarding the recommendation for accreditation of the study program. Consequently, this decision – together with all other documentation – is forwarded to the AHPGS Accreditation Commission for it to reach a decision regarding the accreditation of the study program.

## 2 Overview

### 2.1 Procedure-related documents

The Istanbul Gelişim University, Istanbul, Turkey delegated the task of accrediting its Bachelor study program “Social Service” (Bachelor of Science, B.Sc.) to AHPGS.

The self-evaluation report for accreditation (without the awarding of the official seal of the German Accreditation Council) of the above-mentioned study programs (hereinafter the SER) of the Istanbul Gelişim University (hereinafter the University) was submitted to AHPGS in electronic format on August 25, 2017. The contract between the Istanbul Gelişim University and the AHPGS was signed on May 9, 2017.

On November 16, 2017, the AHPGS forwarded the open questions and explanatory notes (hereinafter OQ) pertaining to the Application for accreditation for the study programs to the University. On November 24, 2017, the University submitted the answers to the open questions and explanatory notes (hereinafter AOQ) to the AHPGS in electronic format.

The present document presents the summary of the AHPGS for the Bachelor study program “Social Service”.

The application documentation submitted by the University follows the outline recommended by the AHPGS. Along with the application request towards accreditation of the B.Sc. study program “Social Service”, the following additional documents can be found in the application package (the documents submitted by the University are numbered in the following order for easier referencing):

Specific documents for the Bachelor study program “Social Service”:

Annex	Description
1	Social Service Curriculum
2	Social Service Electives
3	Module Descriptions for Social Service
4	Matrix Table for Social Service
5	CVs
6	Diploma Supplement
7	Directive for Field Study of Social Service

8	Social Service Library Details
9	Graduation Statistics

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

Annex	Description
A	Directive on Training and Examination of Associate and Undergraduate Students in IGU
B	Occupational Practice File
C	Application Form for 'I Have an Idea'
D	University Decision and Management Structure
E	Course and Lecturer Assessment Questionnaire
F	Student Satisfaction Questionnaire
G	Follow-Up Form for Graduated Students
H	Welcome to Gelsim Practice Form
I	Organization Chart
J	Private Budget
K	IGU Traineeship Directive
L	Student Traineeship File
M	Preparatory Class Curriculum
N	University's Internal Structure
O	IGU Directive On Disabled People Counseling And Coordination Unit
P	Directive On Lateral Transfers
Q	Directive On Equivalence And Adaptation On IGU
R	Directive on Double Major in IGU
S	Turkish Law on Higher Education
T	Higher Education System in Turkey
U	Directive on Equivalence and Adaptation at IGU
V	Regulation on Higher Education Quality Assurance

The Summary, the Expert Report as well as the resolution of the Accreditation Commission build the basis for the present Assessment Report.



## 2.2 Study program

### 2.2.1 Structural data

University	Istanbul Gelişim University, Istanbul, Turkey
Faculty/Department	School of Health Sciences Department of Social Service
Cooperation partner	Cekmece Public Hospitals Union, Bakirkoy Public Hospitals Union, Fatih Public Hospitals Union, Beyoglu Public Hospitals Union, Anatolia North Public Hospitals Union
Title of the study program	"Social Service" (Turkish) "Social Service" (English)
Degree awarded	Bachelor of Science (B.Sc.)
Form of studies	Full-time
Period of education	8 semesters
Credit Points (CP) according to the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS)	240 ECTS points
Hours/CP	25.5 hours/ECTS point
Workload	Total: 6,120 hours Contact hours: 1,722 hours Individual work: 3,614 hours Practice: 784 hours
Thesis	None
Launch date of the study program	Turkish track: 2012/2013 English track: 2015/2016
First accreditation	Program has not been accredited before
Time of admission	Fall, annually
Tuition fees	TRY 33,960 (ca. EUR 7,800) per academic year. Merit scholarships covering 30% of the tuition fees, 50% of the tuition fees, 100% of the tuition fees, and 100% of the tuition fees plus a USD 1,000 (ca. EUR 850) monthly grant are available based on A-Levels or IB scores. When paying tuition fees by installments, an additional fee of 6% is assessed.

Table 1: Structural data of the study program

### 2.2.2 Qualification objectives and employment opportunities

According to the University, the aim of the Department of Social Service is to train professionals who can integrate social sciences, social service methods and techniques and the field applications within the framework of their professional responsibilities as qualified social workers. The graduates are supposed to be capable of carrying out necessary service applications to individuals, families and societies experiencing social problems in various areas.

The University has divided the qualification objectives for its B.Sc. "Social Service" program into four categories. The first, **scientific or artistic qualification**, seeks to enable students to be able to use theoretical and practical information to inform others, to convey ideas and suggestions for solutions to problems in written or verbal ways, to discuss these ideas with people of various educational backgrounds and skill levels, to interpret and evaluate data, to identify and analyze problems, and to propose research- and evidence-based solutions. Furthermore, attaining the CEFRL level B1 in a foreign language will allow students to communicate with a wider, more international range of people; the European Computer Use License, Advanced level, speaks to graduates' technical competence with information and communication technologies.

Regarding **occupational qualification**, graduates of the program will be able to inform concerned parties about field-related matters, convey opinions and solutions to problems, listening to the requests and explanations of others, share ideas with experts and laymen alike, using qualitative and quantitative data to craft solutions, act in accordance with sociocultural/ethical/scientific values, and cooperate with relevant disciplines and protocol when carrying out data collection, interpretation, application and dissemination.

For **social responsibility qualification**, graduates will be capable of organizing projects and activities for the social environment.

Finally, for **personality development qualification**, graduates will be able to carry out scientifically based interpretation and evaluation using advance knowledge and healthcare skills; this includes defining, analyzing, investigating and developing solution suggestions while heeding professional values,

ethical values and available evidence. Moreover, graduating students will be able to carry out trainings for individuals, families and societies.

The University states that graduates of the “Social Service” program can work in state and private institutions, as well as in academic capacities. Graduates of the program obtain the title “social worker”. The development of the Turkish healthcare sector is said to indicate an increasing need for health workers and their assistants. In order to be allowed to work in state or public institutions, the Public Personnel Selection Exam (KPSS) must be passed. Finally, the University states that graduates will have the opportunity to work in special education institutions.

Examples of institutions where Social Service graduates could find employment include the Ministry of Family and Social Policies, care houses, rest homes, rehabilitation centers, and the Mission of Turkey to the UN. For more examples, please consult the SER §1.4.1, paragraph 4.

### 2.2.3 Modularization and exam system

Study programs at IGU are set together out of University-wide compulsory courses which are centrally defined by the Turkish Higher Education Council, departmental compulsory courses and intra- and extra-departmental elective courses.

There are a total of 46 modules in the Turkish program and 47 in the English program. In both programs, there are 10 elective courses; in the Turkish program there are 36 compulsory courses, and in the English program there are 37. All modules have to be completed within eight semesters. One module is no longer than one semester. There are between six and eight modules in total provided for each semester. Each semester comprises a workload of 30 ECTS credit points. Students may go abroad on an Erasmus+ basis by special agreement with the University.

The following study plan lists the University-required sequence of courses for the attainment of the degree Bachelor of Science (B.Sc.) in “Social Service.”

Semester	Course Nr.	Course Title	CP	ECTS
1 (Fall)	TRD101	Turkish Language I	2	3
	BEY109E	Reading Literature I	3	4

	BEY111E	Occupational Terminology	2	2
	SHY101E	Introduction to Social Service	3	7
	SHY103E	Basic Law	3	6
	SHY105E	Introduction to Economics	3	6
	SHY107E	Sociology	2	2
Semester Total			18	30
2 (Spring)	TRD102	Turkish Language II	2	3
	BEY112E	Reading Literature II	3	4
	SHY102E	Social Structure of Turkey	2	4
	SHY104E	Report Writing and Presentation Skills	3	3
	SHY106E	Introduction to Philosophy	2	4
	BEY110E	Business Administration	3	4
	SHY108E	Introduction to Psychology	3	4
	SHY110E	Introduction to Social Anthropology	3	4
<i>English program only: SHY112E / Review of Social Services Environment / 3 / 3</i>				
Semester Total			21	30
3 (Fall)	ATA201	Ataturk's Principles and History of Turkish Revolution I	2	2
	SHY201E	Human Behavior and the Social Environment I	4	6
	SHY203E	Social Issues	2	4
	SHY205E	Social Service Research I	2	4
	SHY207E	Introduction to Statistics	4	5
	SHY209E	Legislation of Social Service	2	4
	BEY211E	Advanced English I-E	3	5
Semester Total			19	30
4 (Spring)	ATA202	Ataturk's Principles and History of Turkish Revolution II	2	2
	SHY202E	Human Behavior and the Social Environment	4	6
	SHY204E	Theories of Social Service I	4	6

	SHY206E	Social Service Research II	4	6
	SHY208E	Public Administration	3	5
	BEY212E	Advanced English II-E	3	5
Semester Total			20	30
5 (Fall)	SHY301E	Theories of Social Service II	4	6
	SHY303E	Social Service Management	2	3
	SHY305E	Professional English	2	3
	<u>One of the following electives:</u> Social Service with Families and Children (SHY307E), Social Service with Disabled People (SHY309E)		3	6
	<u>One of the following electives:</u> Communication Skills (SHY311E), Patients' Rights (SHY313E)		3	6
	<u>One of the following electives:</u> Planning and Management in Public Relations (HIT201E), Organizational Behavior (ISL203E), Microeconomics (EKF201E), History of Economic Thought (EKF301E), New Approaches and Total Quality Management (ISL401E), Critical Psychology (PSI313E), Administrative Structure of Turkey (HIT207E), Digital Marketing (HIT301E), Statistics (ISF205E)		3	6
Semester Total			17	30
6 (Spring)	SHY302E	Theories of Social Service III	4	6
	SHY304E	Human Rights and Social Services	2	3
	SHY306E	Social Service Ethic Principle Values and Responsibility	2	3
	<u>One of the following electives:</u> Social Service with Refugees (SHY308E), Social Services in Disasters (SHY310E)		3	6
	<u>One of the following electives:</u> Conflict Resolution and Mediation (SHY312E), Drama in Education (CGY314E)		3	6
	<u>One of the following electives:</u> Public Relations Practices and Case Studies (HIT208E), Communication Theories (ISY304E), Labor and Social Security Law (ISG204E), Management of Change (ULT310E),		3	6

	Commercial Law (ISF302E), Money and Bank (BSY222E), Media and Public Opinion (HIT302E), Radio and Television Advertising (RTR205E), Human Rights (SOS314E)			
Semester Total			17	30
7 (Fall)	SHY401E	Social Service Practices I	14	18
	<u>One of the following electives:</u> Medical and Psychiatric Social Service (SHY403E), Criminality and Social Service (SHY405E)		3	6
	<u>One of the following electives:</u> Social Service with Young People (SHY407E), Social Service with the Elderly (SHY409E)		3	6
Semester Total			20	30
8 (Spring)	SHY402E	Social Service Practices II	14	18
	<u>One of the following electives:</u> Community Health and Social Service (SHY404E), Social Policy and Planning (SHY406E)		3	6
	<u>One of the following electives:</u> Sign Language (ISF402E), Entrepreneurship (GIR402E), Public Economy (UTI408E), Customer Relationship Management (MIY208E), Political Communication (RTS302E), Communication Ethics (RTS402E) Advertising Campaigns (HIT402E), Brand Management (HIT306E), Negotiation Techniques (UTI410E)		3	6
Semester Total			20	30
<b>Study Program Total</b>			<b>152</b>	<b>240</b>

Table 2: Study Plan

The module descriptions (Annex 3) contain information on course names and codes, course level, semester of study, in-class hours, credit points, ECTS points, language of instruction, course type, mode of delivery, name of course coordinator and instructor(s), pre- and corequisites, objectives and contents, key learning outcomes, weekly course contents, source materials, assessment methods and grade weighting, level of contribution of course units to learning outcomes, and the constitution of course workload and ECTS credits.

In the **first semester**, students take various basic courses intended to ensure a satisfactory level of language competence, literacy, familiarity with terminology, and field-related principles in economics, sociology and standardized social service.

The **second semester** contains follow-up courses in Turkish language and reading literacy, as well as introductions to philosophy, psychology and social anthropology. These topics will be used as a foundation for future coursework. Students also take “Social Structure of Turkey,” “Report Writing and Presentation Skills” and “Business Administration” to provide students with professional skills and knowledge of their surroundings.

In the **third semester**, students take an “Introduction to Statistics” and an advanced English course, as well as a course in Turkish culture and history. These supplement the major courses of “Social Issues,” “Social Service Research I” and “Human Behavior in the Social Environment.”

In the **fourth semester**, students take a second course covering Turkish culture and history and another advanced English course. Alongside these, “Public Administration” teaches about bureaucracy and organization in public works; “Theories of Social Service I” familiarizes students with the leading theories and concepts in the field; and “Social Service Research II” furthers students’ research skills and ethics.

In the **fifth semester**, students take three elective courses, one of which is from a different field. Alongside these, students top off their English knowledge with “Professional English” and combine their previously learned administrative/bureaucratic skills with their topical knowledge in “Social Service Management. “Theories of Social Service II” extends familiarity with Social Service theories and concepts.

In the **sixth semester**, students again take three elective courses, one of which is from a different field. “Theories of Social Service III” finishes students’ theoretical instruction, preparing them for the field study which they will undertake in the following year. “Human Rights and Social Services” and “Social Service Ethic Principle Values and Responsibility” teach about the important issues of confidentiality, ethics, and responsibility in practices of social service.

In the **seventh and eighth semesters**, students are obliged to participate in 18-ECTS-point field studies with 80% compulsory attendance. Field studies are conducted at institutions approved or contracted by the University. Students must follow working and discipline rules at their placement locations. More information on field study is regulated in the “Directive for Field Study of Social Service” (Annex 7). In each of the final two semesters, students also take two elective courses.

Learning concepts in these courses are to be conveyed through instructor-selected methods of teaching, including lecture method, question-answer method, small group activities, role play, brainstorming, group discussion, and demonstration (SER 1.2.4).

According to the University, certain courses (determined by the University Senate) are taught online as distance education classes. These generally consist of entry-level and/or general requirement courses such as Foreign Language I-II, IT, Introduction to Psychology, Turkish Language I-II, and Atatürk’s Principles and History of Revolution I-II. Materials for these courses can be found through the University’s Student Information System (OBIS) (SER 1.2.5).

The University states to have structured the Bachelor study program “Social Service” based on the Bologna System using ECTS credit points in order to facilitate international recognition of credits and degrees. Students may participate in exchange programs at approved overseas universities through the Erasmus+ program; this appears to only be possible through special agreement with the University (SER 1.2.8 and 1.2.9).

Examinations in the program are carried out according to the “Directive on Training and Examination of Associate and Undergraduate Students in IGU” (Annex A). The University uses a combination of continuous and final assessments with a 40:60 ratio. Assessment types include exams, quizzes, field works, practices, homework, workshops, seminars, laboratories, traineeships and similar activities. Assessment methods and their numerical weights are given in the module descriptions. (Annex A, Article 23-1)

Grades are issued by the University on a scale of AA (4.00 GPA, 90-100%) down to FF (0.00 GPA, 0-39%). DD (GPA 1.00, 45-49%) is the lowest passing score; students receiving this or a higher score in a course are barred from



repeating the course to improve their grade. A Cumulative GPA (CGPA or GANO) is the credit-weighted average GPA over a student's history at the University. Students with high CGPAs may take higher-level courses from the third semester onward. (Annex A, Article 16-2)

There are a total of 46 midterm and 46 final exams in the study program, totaling 92 exams. One week out of the 16-week semester is reserved for each type of exam. Students who fail courses, as well as those who miss final exams due to excused absences, are required to repeat the course or exam, respectively. Make-up exams only apply if students have attended at least 70% of theoretical meetings and 80% of laboratory meetings in the course. (Annex A, Article 17-1,2)

The recognition of credits transferred from other universities (domestic and abroad) according to the requirements of the Lisbon Recognition Convention is regulated through the Directive on Lateral Transfers (Annex P). The major requirements set forth in the Directive are a satisfactory grade point average and available space in the transfer quota set by the Council of Higher Education.

Compensation measures for students with disabilities are given in the IGU Directive On Disabled People Counseling And Coordination Unit (Annex O). The stated aim of the Directive is to "ease" and "facilitate the life of disabled students" when necessary.

#### **2.2.4 Admission requirements**

The procedure pertaining to the admission procedure is centrally regulated and executed by the Turkish Student Selection and Placement Center (OSYM) and corresponds with the provisions of the Turkish Law on Higher Education No. 2547 (Annex S). Students are admitted to institutions of higher education by means of an examination prepared in accordance with provisions specified by the Turkish Council of Higher Education (YOK). In the evaluation of examination results, the performance of students during their secondary education is taken into account. Those performing well in University special talent exams can similarly be placed directly into a program requiring such talent. (Annex A, Article 5; SER 1.5.1)

Those students who are not placed into any university by OSYM are eligible to apply for any remaining free places in programs at the University. (Ibid.)

The registration of the students who are entitled to enroll in the programs of Istanbul Gelişim University is done by the Department of Student Affairs/Registrar's Office. The admission process at the University is regulated by the "Directive on Training and Examination of Associate and Undergraduate Students in IGU" (Annex A, Article 5) according to the above mentioned law.

Well-performing students may elect to combine two fields of study through the Double Major Program. To be eligible for this program, students must hold a GPA of at least 2.72 out of 4.00, be in the best-performing 20% of their cohort and have no record of disciplinary action at the University. The Double Major Program is regulated by the "IGU Double Major Directive" (not available in English).

## **2.3 Study conditions and quality assurance**

### **2.3.1 Human resources**

Currently, there are two full-time assistant professors in the Turkish program lecturing 24 hours per week each; the English program does not have full-time faculty members. For a complete overview of all lecturers, please refer to the submitted teaching matrix (Annex 4) and the respective short CVs (Annex 5).

The student-to-faculty ratio of the Turkish and English programs is 46 and 31, respectively.

Selection for new instructors is carried out through the Rectorate in accordance with Turkish Higher Education Law No. 2547 (Annex S).

The weekly teaching load for instructors and lecturers employed at a Turkish University is to be determined by the Council of Higher Education (YOK), with a minimum of 12 hours per week (Annex T, Article 36). Rectors, Deans, Directors of Graduate Schools and Schools of Higher Education are exempted from the requirement of the weekly teaching load. The weekly teaching load for Vice-Rectors, Assistant Deans, and Assistant Directors of Graduate Schools and Schools of Higher Education and for Heads of Departments is half the regularly specified term (*Ibidem.*).

According to the University, the requirement of teaching staff is determined at the beginning of the semester by the heads of department and the directorate of the School of Health Sciences and reported to the rector's office. The rectorate announces job vacancies and appoints teaching staff according to the

(qualification) requirements of the Turkish Higher Education Law (Annex T, part 5).

The University states that the teaching staff is provided with the right to participate in the training programs organized by the University's "IGU Continuing Education Center", the right to participate in scientific research projects, international symposiums and conferences and in advanced training programs related to the department/study program (SER 2.1.2).

### **2.3.2 Facilities**

The University's campus comprises the buildings with lecture halls and classrooms, laboratories, two student canteens as well as several cafeterias, a sports complex and a health center for emergency and daily poly-clinic services.

Additionally, the University Istanbul Gelişim University signed agreements with the residences to provide student accommodation.

In Part A of Annex N "IGU's Internal Structure", the University listed its laboratories with their respective equipment. The University disposes an Anatomy Laboratory, an Audiometry Laboratory, a Biomedical Laboratory, a Child Development Laboratory, a Dental Prosthesis Laboratory, a Dialysis Laboratory, an Electro Neurophysiology Laboratory, an Ergotherapy Laboratory, a Physical Exercise Laboratory, a First and Emergency Aid Laboratory, a Hair and Beauty Laboratory, a Medical Laboratory, a Nursing Laboratory, a Nutrition and Dietetics Laboratory, an Optician Laboratory, an Oral and Dental Laboratory, an Orthosis Prosthesis Laboratory, a Pathology Techniques Laboratory, a Perfusion Laboratory and a Physiology Laboratory.

Students studying "Social Service" have access to the University's three libraries, the Central Library, the Art and Engineering Library and the Vocational College Library. According to Part A of Annex N "IGU's Internal Structure", IGU's libraries hold 35.702 printed books, 164.452 e-books, 22.803 e-magazines, 3.341 e-standards and three databases. The University states that the library owns 204 program-specific books (Annex 6).

Through the government's Turkish Academic Network and Information Center (ULAKBIM), IGU's staff and students access 1.237 health-related e-journals

and another nine databases. Twice a year, the heads of departments may request the purchase of new publications.

The Central Library is open Monday to Friday from 8:30 to 21:30, in summer term until 18:30. The libraries do not serve on weekends. Students may also access the library's resources through IGU's online catalogue "Kütüphane" off-campus and out of opening hours.

### **2.3.3 Quality assurance**

The Turkish Higher Education Council (CoHE, YOK) has founded a semi-independent quality board. The board has issued its own directives. Each university has founded its own quality office and commissions which are handled by directives. The CoHE quality board orients to the European Higher Education System and standards for quality assurance.

Quality assurance at the University is based on the target of maintaining a structure in line with international standards in education, research and administration. The University states that ensuring the participation of all internal and external stakeholders is a priority (SER 1.6.1).

The University maintains an Office of Strategic Planning and Quality Assurance, which is responsible for measuring, evaluating and continuously improving the performance at the University. Additionally, there exists a University Quality Committee, the duties of which include establishment of internal and external quality assurance systems, conducting internal evaluation studies, preparing an annual institutional evaluation report and to make necessary preparations in the external evaluation process.

According to the CoHE Quality board's regulations, the University has to submit its self-evaluation reports to the CoHE Quality board each year in April. These reports have to be publicly accessible.

Subordinate to the University Quality Committee exists the College Quality Committee, a team of similar type specific to the College of Health Sciences. The College Quality Committee sets and monitors various quality assurance goals, reporting to the Rectorate and analyzing feedback from all stakeholders, including students and employers.

These quality assurance units are contained within a Strategic Plan for the University in the timeframe 2016-2020 (SER 1.6.1). The University states that the Strategic Plan is currently revised and was, thus, not submitted (AOQ). Instead, the Directive on Quality Assurance at IGU and Directives on Quality Commission and the Strategic Planning and Quality Assurance Office at IGU, which have been prepared during the revision process, are being used this year but are not available in English (Ibid.). In the plan, the goals of establishing a working quality system related to education and training and cooperating with external accreditors to evaluate its progress are listed. The University states that student-centered, effective communication lies at the core of its strategy.

For module evaluation, students are required to fill out questionnaires pertaining to their satisfaction with the quality of the study program, its individual modules, the teaching staff and their course workload (Annexes E and F). The University Quality Committee then assesses the reports and uses them to set targets and determine corrective/proactive action, if necessary. Students furthermore have the opportunity to evaluate their field studies using a similar questionnaire. The Rector's Office is directly in charge of all quality improvement tasks and processes.

The Quality Committee puts itself in contact with University graduates and invites them to report their experiences using a form (Annex G). Additionally, there is an Alumni Association and a University web portal specifically for alumni, intended to facilitate the graduate feedback process.

The University states that due to the young age of the study program, exact statistics regarding the evaluation of student workload are still being prepared.

Since the program started in 2012 (Turkish track) and 2015 (English track), a total of 331 students have been enrolled in the program; 277 in the Turkish track and 54 in the English track. From the classes 2012-2013 and 2013-2014, the graduation rates from the program were 77% and 71% (Annex 9).

General information about the study program is published on the University's website at [gbs.gelisim.edu.tr](http://gbs.gelisim.edu.tr). Policy aspects, including e.g. examination regulations, rights for disabled students, transfer requirements etc. are either available online or in person at University offices.

Lecturers have two office hours each week, which are made known to students. Counseling days and hours are also disseminated electronically; the University's Psychological Counseling and Guidance Center assists students in crises or struggling with mental health problems. A Career Development Coordinator and the Continuing Education Application and Research Center help plan students' postgraduate pathways. Furthermore, a mentoring program exists within the College, allowing qualified students to undergo professional training and become mentors to their peers; currently, however, there are no mentors in the Department of Social Service.

For disabled students, a University regulation (Annex O) has established a Disabled Students Unit and sets compensation measures and assistance practices. The Unit aims to facilitate the learning life of disabled students, regardless of financial background or other characteristics (SER 1.6.1).

## **2.4 Information about the University**

The University as it is today was founded in 2011 by the Gelişim Education Culture Health and Social Service Foundation. Previously, in 2008, the foundation had attempted to found a vocational school under the name "Istanbul Gelişim Vocational College," which Turkey's Ministry of National Education recognized. When the University was established, education commenced in three faculties and one vocational college. Since then, the number of institutes and programs in colleges and faculties of the University has grown; currently the University consists of three institutes (Social Sciences, Science and Technology, Health Sciences), three faculties (Engineering and Architecture; Economic, Administrative and Social Sciences; Fine Arts), two vocational colleges (Istanbul Gelişim Vocational College, Health Services Vocational College) and four colleges (Health Sciences, Applied Sciences, Physical Education and Sports, Foreign Languages).

The University is currently acting on its Strategic Plan 2016-2020, which is heavily based upon expanding its quality assurance concept and achieving external accreditation.

The School of Health Sciences was established in 2012 and currently offers ten Bachelor study programs, for five of them also an English track: Audiology, Child Development, Ergotherapy, Health Management, Nursing, Nutrition and Dietetics, Orthosis/Prosthesis, Perfusion, Physiotherapy and Rehabilitation,

and Social Services. In total, 2,715 students are currently enrolled in the School of Health Sciences.

### 3 Expert Report

#### 3.1 Preliminary remarks

The Accreditation Agency in Health and Social Sciences (hereupon, the AHPGS) was commissioned by Istanbul Gelisim University, Istanbul, Turkey (hereupon, the University) to accredit the study programs “Social Service” (Bachelor of Science), “Child Development” (Bachelor of Science) and “Health Management” (Bachelor of Science).

The on-site visit evaluation of the study program “Social Service,” as well as the study programs “Health Management” and “Child Development,” offered at the Istanbul Gelisim University, was carried out on January 18-19, 2018, at the Istanbul Gelisim University, Istanbul, Turkey.

The following experts were appointed by the Accreditation Commission of AHPGS for the evaluation of the study program.

#### **As representatives of higher education institutions:**

##### **Prof. Dr. Holger Höge**

Carl von Ossietzky University, Oldenburg, Germany  
Professor of Psychology

##### **Prof. Dr. Axel Olaf Kern**

University of Applied Sciences Ravensburg-Weingarten, Germany  
Professor of Health Economics and Social Management

##### ***Prof. Dr. Birgit Leyendecker<sup>3</sup>***

*Ruhr University Bochum, Germany  
Professor of Developmental Psychology*

##### ***Prof. Dr. Hugo Mennemann***

*University of Applied Sciences, Münster, Germany  
Professor of Social Work*

##### **Prof. Dr. Christine Meyer**

University of Vechta, Vechta, Germany  
Professor of Social Work over the Life Span

##### **Prof. Dr. Peter Schäfer**

Niederrhein University of Applied Sciences, Mönchengladbach, Germany  
Professor of Family and Youth Welfare Law in the Context of Social Work

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<sup>3</sup> The experts shown in italics did not participate in the on-site visit of the University.



**Prof. Dr. Jürgen Zerth**

*Wilhelm Löhe University of Applied Sciences, Fürth, Germany  
Professor of Health Economics*

**As student representative:****Mrs. Julia Stiefel**

Master's Studies in Health Management and Health Economics at Friedrich Alexander University, Nürnberg, Germany

According to the *Rules for the Accreditation of Study Programs and for System Accreditation* (determined by the decision of the Accreditation Commission, of 08.12.2009 in the version of 20.02.2013, Drs. AR 20/2013), the task of the experts in the accreditation procedures is to evaluate the education concept of a specific study program as well as to estimate the possibility of its successful implementation. This concerns, in particular, qualification objectives of the study program, its conceptual integration into the system of education, the concept of the study program, feasibility of the content and scope of studies, the examination system, study-relevant collaborations, personnel, material and space resources, transparency and documentation, application of the results of quality assurance for further development of the study program (it is especially important to present the analyses and evaluation results of student workload, academic accomplishments and employment of graduates, which are to be documented and taken into account within the framework of continuous development of the study program), as well as the provision of gender equality and equal opportunities.

The on-site visit of the experts is carried out in accordance with the *Rules for the Accreditation of Study Programs and for System Accreditation* (determined by the decision of the Accreditation Commission, of 08.12.2009 in the version of 20.02.2013, Drs. AR 20/2013) as well as the *Criteria for the assessment and accreditation procedures of study programs at foreign higher education institutions* developed by AHPGS. After the announcement of the accreditation decision, the expert report will be published as a part of the final Assessment Report.

**3.2 Basic information about the study program**

The main objective of the Bachelor study program "Social Service" offered at the School of Health Sciences of the Istanbul Gelisim University is to educate

students in the field of social services to increase the health and social level of Turkish society and resolve social problems.

The study program requires the obtainment of 240 credit points (CP) according to the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS). One CP is equal to 25.5 workload hours. The total workload of the program constitutes 6,120 hours, of which 1,722 are contact hours, 3,614 are hours of independent study and 784 are hours of practical training. It is a full-time study program with a regular duration of four years/eight semesters. The program curriculum consists of 46 modules/courses, of which 36 are obligatory and ten are elective.<sup>4</sup>

Students are admitted to institutions of higher education by means of an examination prepared in accordance with provisions specified by the Turkish Measuring, Selection and Placement Center (OSYM). In the evaluation of examination results, the performance of students during their secondary education is taken into account. Upon completion of the study program, students are awarded with the academic title "Bachelor of Science." The number of annually available study places in the program is determined annually by the Turkish Higher Education Council (YÖK) according to the University's resources. Admission takes place every winter semester. The study program is offered Turkish and in English language. The first batch of students was admitted to the Turkish track of the program in the academic year 2012/2013. The first batch of students was admitted to the English track of the program in the academic year 2015/2016. The University charges tuition fees.

### **3.3 Expert Report**

The on-site visit was carried out on January 18-19, 2018, according to the previously agreed schedule. Representatives from the head office of AHPGS accompanied the expert group.

The expert group met on January 17, 2018, for preliminary talks prior to the on-site visit. They discussed the submitted application documents and the results of the written evaluation as well as questions that had been raised. Furthermore, they prepared the plan of the on-site visit at the University.

In the course of the on-site visit, experts conducted discussions with the University management, representatives of the School of Health Sciences, the

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<sup>4</sup> The English track of the program contains one additional obligatory course, for a total of 47.

teaching staff of the programs “Social Service”, “Health Management” and “Child Development” as well as with students currently studying in the programs. Furthermore, they inspected the learning premises, such as lecture halls, seminar classrooms, library, and computer classes. Moreover, experts had the opportunity to see the equipment and the capacity of the laboratories.

The expert report is structured in compliance with the Accreditation Criteria of AHPGS, which were last revised on 21.07.2015 and approved by the Accreditation Commission of AHPGS on 30.09.2015. The study program will be described and analyzed in a comprehensive manner below. The documents submitted by the University, the experts’ feedback to the documents, the observations made during the on-site visit, the results of discussions with the representatives of the University, the School of Health Sciences and the Department of Social Service serve as the basis for the statements made in the expert report.

### **3.3.1 Program aims and their implementation**

The Bachelor program “Social Service” pursues specific qualification objectives. The program is intended to prepare students for careers in governmental and non-governmental civil society institutions, educational and health institutions, and community services in order to prevent and solve social problems by improving the social functioning of individuals, families and societies of all ages. To this extent, graduates of the program are expected to be able to use advanced topical information to inform individuals and institutions; to convey ideas and evidence-based solutions to improve social policies and welfare; to organize and implement social projects; to act in accordance with social, scientific, cultural and ethical values; to collect, interpret and report data collection; and to be role model citizens and exemplary members in Turkish society.

As a consequence, the experts conclude that the study program does qualify students to become social workers. But due to literal translation from Turkish to English, the University chose “Social Service” as title for the study program. The University states its aim at becoming a higher education institution of international renown; with regard to international recognition and avoiding misunderstandings, the University should consider adjusting the English title of the study program to the international terminology “Social Work” in order to be internationally visible and recognized.

The experts find that these objectives cover professional, interdisciplinary and personal aspects and refer to the domain of academic competences, necessary employment qualifications, skills of social commitment and personality development. The learning outcomes of the study program correspond to the offered degree. As the curricula in Turkey are designed in close accordance with the national requirements set by the Turkish Higher Education Council (YÖK), the University defined qualification objectives comprising scientific qualification as well as the qualification to engage in a qualified occupation, to take over social responsibility and to bring forward their personal development.

Moreover, the experts acknowledge the openness of the Department towards pluralism of theories and the incorporation of international perspectives that was outlined in the discussions on site. The curriculum has clear references to international standards as well as adaptations to specific needs in the Turkish society, such as connecting social work strongly to the health sector. The decision to offer the study program at the University's School of Health Sciences instead of at the Faculty of Economics, Administrative and Social Sciences was also made by the Turkish Higher Education Council (YÖK). As a whole, the experts recognize and appreciate the efforts for the establishment and furthering of social work in the society and for the development of a social worker's identity in Turkey.

However, the experts determine room for improvement regarding the profile and the sharpening of the qualification objectives. Despite the connection to the health sector, the experts encourage and invite the Department of Social Service to elaborate a stronger distinction to the neighbor disciplines in social sciences and health sciences and, thus, work on a particular identity of social work.

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

### **3.3.2 Structure of the study program**

The Bachelor study program "Social Service" is a full-time study program with a regular duration of four years (eight semesters). The program curriculum consists of 46 courses (English track: 47), each of them one semester in length, with six to eight courses to be attended each semester. To the experts this appears as a very detailed curriculum, consisting of a large number of

more or less isolated courses. A modular structure is not yet implemented but should be aspired. However, the combination and sequence of the courses of the study program are consistent with the earlier described specified qualification objectives. In the experts' opinion, a more comprehensive curriculum design with a modular structure would help outlining the program's profile and the particular social work identity.

The study program requires the obtainment of 240 credit points (CP) according to the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS). One CP is equal to 25.5 workload hours. This is determined in Article 11 (7) of the University's "Directive on Training and Examination of Associate and Undergraduate Students". The total workload of the program constitutes 6,120 hours of which 1,722 are contact hours, 3,614 are hours of independent study and 784 are practical training hours. It is a full-time study program with a regular duration of four years/eight semesters.

The program consists of compulsory courses (determined centrally by YÖK, such as "Turkish Language I+II" and "Ataturk's Principles and Revolution History I+II"), compulsory departmental courses (determined by the Turkish National Core Curriculum) as well as of departmental and non-departmental elective courses (determined and designed by Istanbul Gelisim University). The experts ascertain a very broad and interdisciplinary approach, including introductions to philosophy, psychology, social anthropology and sociology up to basic law and economics and public administration. Moreover, students receive introductions to academic reading and writing, to presentation skills and statistics within the first three semesters as well as the possibility for deeper examinations in "Social Service Research I+II". With a few exceptions, the courses follow a consistent and plausible structure, beginning with introductory courses and basic sciences, accumulating more specialized knowledge and applied competences through successive courses in the upper semesters. After having acquired basic knowledge in the first four semesters, students may design a more and more individual qualification. By choosing ten electives from a large variety of elective courses (6 ECTS each) in semesters V to VIII, students may gain general management, legal and administrative skills or specialize in field-related issues, such as "Social Service with Refugees", "Conflict Resolution and Mediation", "Medical and Psychiatric Social Service" or "Social Policy and Planning" in a total scope of 60 ECTS credits. Thus, the

study program provides students with specialized and interdisciplinary knowledge as well as professional, methodological and general competences.

Solely, a timely different arrangement of some courses should be considered in order to guarantee a successful accumulation of skills and knowledge. In the experts' opinion, the courses "Theories in Social Service I+II" should be placed earlier in the curriculum to build a base for the courses in "Social Service Research I+II". Likewise, the experts consider "Human Rights and Social Service" to be fundamental to the program and believe that it thus needs to be taught within the first two semesters instead of in the sixth semester. Conversely, "Introduction to Economics" may be changed to a higher semester after the foundations have been laid properly.

On site, the experts learned that besides non-program specific compulsory courses such as "Turkish Language" and "Atatürk's Principles and Revolution History", YÖK defines also up to 75 % of the program-specific contents through a National Core Curriculum. The remaining 25-30 % of the new curriculum should be aimed at implementing the institution's own specific aims for each program, individual development goals, expectations and requirements of the students and should include elective courses offered by other programs.

Professional practical skills are gained through field trainings in the last two semesters. According to the "Directive for Field Study of Social Service", students are supposed to practice social service with individuals, groups and communities and document their observations, interventions and social surveys. The field trainings are carried out in institutions approved by the Department of Social Service. Each student has an educational advisor assigned among the instructors of the Department, and an institutional advisor at the work place. In order to increase the quality of the field trainings, the experts recommend refining the internship directive by specifying the amount of hours to be spent in each of the fields and rotations and the requirements that an institution has to fulfill in order to be approved by the University.

Standard methods of didacticism and assessment (lectures, group work, laboratory work, midterm exams, and practical as well as written finals) constitute the general framework of the study program, though the University states that the Department of Social Service emphasizes interactive, exploratory teaching techniques. Nevertheless, the experts would like to strengthen the

idea of a student-centered study program, encouraging students to take an even more active role in creating their own education process and developing a scholarly attitude.

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

### **3.3.3 Admission and Feasibility**

The admission to higher education institutions in Turkey is centrally regulated and executed by the Turkish Measuring, Selection and Placement Center (OSYM) carrying out an aptitude test prepared in accordance with provisions specified by the Turkish Council of Higher Education (YÖK) and applying a calculation system determined in the Turkish Law on Higher Education No. 2547. All applicants for the study program must hold a secondary school certificate. Additionally, the University requires an English language aptitude test for those who want to study in the English track of the study program. Students with insufficient English language skills must pass a one-year preparatory class in English offered by the University's School of Foreign Languages.

From the experts' point of view the admission requirements for the "Social Service" study program are appropriate to the level and the requirements of the study program. They are properly documented and made publicly available.

At the beginning of their studies, every student is assigned an academic advisor by the Head of Department who is in charge of supporting the educational and training proceeding of the student.

The experts determine a high amount of exams to be passed during the "Social Service" study program as each of the 46 courses require passing a mid-term and a final exam. To compensate, the University observes the students' performance by collecting and generating the cumulative and semester Grade Point Average (GPA). Students with a GPA less than 1.80 out of 4.00 at the end of the fourth semester are put under academic probation. A student whose status is probation cannot attend to the courses of upper semesters until changing his/her status by improving his/her GPA. He/she must repeat some of the previous courses with the approval of his/her academic advisor to be able to change the status.

To facilitate the amount of exams, the type as well as the time of the different examinations is defined and communicated to the students transparently through the module description and at the beginning of the course.

The experts confirm that the University takes measures to guarantee the feasibility of the study program. As a whole, the organization of the education process ensures the successful implementation of the study program.

Solely, the experts determined room for enhancement regarding the students' English language skills. During the talks with students on site, it was hardly possible to hold discussions in English, although students of the English tracks were present. The experts acknowledge that a professional discussion might be challenging, especially for students at the beginning of their studies. They also acknowledge that the first year of studies in the English track might be implemented as a transition period, extending slowly the instruction in English language. However, the experts point out that studying successfully a whole program in English will not be feasible if the University does not foster and enforce the students' English skills. In order to make the offer and the graduation of an English language study program plausible, the experts strongly recommend verifying thoroughly the students' English skills before admitting them to the English track of the study program and asserting that teaching is actually carried out in English.

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

#### **3.3.4 Examination system and transparency**

The University uses a continuous assessment process to ensure the quality of education for its students. This is achieved by evaluating the performance of the student through a series of exams and tests that are scheduled during the academic semester.

At present, the "Social Service" program does not contain any thesis or graduation project. In order to equalize with international standards, the experts recommend implementing a Bachelor thesis that conclusively proves academic competences and fosters international competitiveness and compatibility.

In the experts' opinion, the study program requires a high amount of exams relative to the number of modules, which causes a high workload not only for students but also for the teaching staff (see also Criterion 3). Discussing the



issue on site, staff as well as students are apparently satisfied with the exam procedures and see clear benefits in the current practice. The transparent information of examination methods and of the examination schedule at the beginning of each term makes the great number of assessments during and at the end of each semester manageable.

Thus, the experts conclude that the examinations, although numerous, serve to determine whether the envisaged qualification objectives have been achieved or not. These examinations are focused on students' knowledge. To compensate the high workload through the great amount of exams, the experts recommend implementing a greater variety and flexibility in examination methods and developing them towards a more competence-oriented examination design.

The study program has a system of assessment, conversion and recognition of students' competences and credits acquired and completed at IGU or other higher education institutions documented in the University's "Directive on Lateral Transfers". Turkey has signed the European Lisbon Recognition Convention.

Compensation measures for students with disabilities are given in the "IGU Directive On Disabled People Counseling And Coordination Unit" (Annex O). The stated aim of the Directive is to "ease" and "facilitate the life of disabled students" when necessary.

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

### **3.3.5 Teaching staff and material equipment**

The University appointed 15 staff members for teaching at the Department of Social Service. Whereas two of them are appointed to the Turkish track of the study program, and none to the English track yet, the rest of the teaching load is covered through staff members who are assigned to another department/study program at the School of Health Sciences. The Head of Department of the Turkish track holds a PhD in Social Work and extensive experience in the Health Sector. The Head of Department of the English track holds a PhD in Molecular Medicine and extensive experience in Higher Education. To the experts, it became obvious that the "Social Service" study program lacks a sustainable teaching staff strategy as well as specialized staff in the discipline. This is the case for most of the study programs at the School of Health

Sciences and a problem that has already been identified by the University administration. Turkey as a nation already lacks academically qualified staff in social work and other relatively newly developed academic disciplines, such as child development. The Department of Social Service itself determined the extension of the faculty with qualified teaching staff as one of the most urgent issues for the Department in the upcoming years.

The experts conclude that the University currently has the capacity to cover the teaching load through interdepartmental exchange of teaching staff. But in the experts' opinion, this is only a temporary solution. A sustainable human resources policy was not convincingly laid out. From the experts' point of view, in the medium and long run, the further development of the study program requires at least one full professorship that can guarantee the academic development of the study program. Thus, the experts would like to underline the Department's urgent plan of appointing qualified teaching staff to the Department and request an updated plan indicating the prospective teaching staff needed to cover the teaching load in both tracks, their academic title and qualification, the date of their (prospective) employment at the University, courses to be taught and job scope.

Moreover, the experts determined room for enhancement regarding the English language skills of the teaching staff. In order to run a whole track in English language, the University should require more stringently the motivation, and offer and support possibilities to enhance language skills in teaching staff. In this regard, the experts recommend also promoting mobility of teaching staff and participation in international networks and conferences, especially since the University outlined the excellent conditions for staff promotion (covering travel expenses etc.).

On site, the University illustrated the variety of incentives and support given to faculty members in order to promote research and development. Members of the teaching staff are afforded opportunities to participate in international symposia, congresses and conferences, as well as University-held training programs and research projects. Faculty is also rewarded for academic publication and high-level participation.

But the experts also learned on site, that most of the teaching staff signs contracts with the University on a one-year basis. As the University plans to grow and extend its offer in study programs, contracts are usually renewed

regularly. However, the experts recommend offering more reliable employment prospects, especially to the young academic staff, in order to work on their academic development.

On site, the experts were shown around the University's and the School's premises.

In addition to the current main building of the School of Health Sciences, disposing 23 classrooms and lecture halls and 12 laboratories, the University purchased a new 30-floor building in order to provide space for future development, also for the School of Health Sciences. The University's central library offers room for individual studies and provides the most basic literature as printed books. On site, the experts learned that the main part of specialized literature is provided through an impressive number of electronic books, supplemented by databases and e-magazines. As a whole, it was ascertained by the experts that the Bachelor study program "Social Service" has ample available teaching facilities at its disposal. The infrastructure and the equipment are suitable to guarantee a high level of teaching and research. In general, the experts determined a very favorable learning surrounding and acknowledge the University's efforts to create an inviting atmosphere for staff and students.

From the experts' point of view, the requirements of this criterion are partially fulfilled. One full professorship with expertise in social work has to assure the academic development in the study program. An updated plan indicating the prospective teaching staff needed to cover the teaching load in both tracks, their academic title and qualification, the date of their (prospective) employment at the University, courses to be taught and job scope has to be provided.

### **3.3.6 Quality assurance**

From the experts' point of view, the University has a well-structured system of quality assurance which is overseen by a semi-independent quality board, directed by the University's rector and vice-rector. The board follows the European Higher Education System's standards for quality assurance and seeks to maintain a structure in each study program which is in line with international standards. Ensuring the participation of all internal and external stakeholders is a priority of the board. In total, 42 people within the University keep track of its quality assurance and holds weekly assessment meetings.

They carry out internal and external quality assurance procedures on a cyclical basis, among them course evaluations and student and teaching staff surveys. At the end of each semester, a course report is written and course specifications may be amended according to the evaluation results.

Students' workload is assessed and regulated through the Grade Point Average (GPA). Students with a GPA less than 1.80 out of 4.00 have to reduce their workload until they are able to improve their performance again.

The experts conclude that the University has a well-established, documented and published concept of quality assurance in education process, teaching and research, which serves as the basis for the quality-oriented development and implementation of the study program.

The results of the internal quality assurance management are applied for the continuous development of the study program. In doing so, the University takes into close consideration the quality evaluation results as well as the analyses of students' workload, their academic accomplishments and feedback from graduates.

Nevertheless, the experts determine that the quality management system is strongly concentrated on quantitative surveys. Little has been reported regarding definite measures and actions for quality enhancement derived from the evaluations. As a consequence, the experts strongly recommend implementing and strengthening also qualitative dimensions and evaluations, e.g. group discussions or so-called "Round Tables".

This would as well allow more student participation. As the experts consider students' personal development and civic commitment an essential part of academic education, the University should expand the promotion of student participation and encourage students to take more action in the developmental processes at the University.

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

### **3.3.7 Gender equality and equal opportunities**

Istanbul Gelisim University does neither follow an explicit gender equality concept nor a concept for promotion of equal opportunities for students with particular living circumstances. However, on site the experts got the impression that the University commits itself to provide an embracing environment

for academic creativity and development, while respecting diversity and multicultural understanding.

The Department of Social Service accepts students of both genders and provides equal admission opportunity, education, examinations and participation chances for students of both genders. The University states its commitment to ensuring gender equality and seeks to administer its students on a solely academic basis. Facilities at the University are not gender-divided; resources are common amongst all "Social Service" students.

The University maintains a Disabled Student Unit, which is charged with taking necessary precautions to ensure maximally equal opportunities for disabled students. Such precautions include meeting the needs of disabled students in order to help them overcome personal obstacles; to design or re-organize teaching programs in ways that does not disadvantage or disrupt disabled students; to inform instructors and counselors about the needs of disabled students and to act as a proxy or liaison in this regard; to organize conferences and similar events for the benefit of the disabled; and to conduct what the University terms "positive discrimination," or affirmative-action.

The experts find the Disabled Student Unit to be effective and an important regulator empowered by Turkish Law No. 5378 of 1/7/2005, Article 15. The situation of gender equality is sufficient within the Child Development Department.

From the experts' perspective, gender equality and promotion of equal opportunities for students with particular living circumstances are implemented as a matter of course at Istanbul Gelisim University, although not determined as part of a concept.

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

### **3.4 Summary**

The overall impression of the University is positive; it presents itself as a fresh, well-equipped institution with a variety of disciplines. The experts conclude that the University disposes the motivation, the management's willingness and the financial and spatial resources to launch and push necessary steps and processes in order to reach its aim to provide high quality and com-

prehensive education and research. Within a relatively short period of time the University has shown a fast development and has reached impressive results.

As a whole, a number of additional favorable characteristics and achievements of the study program were demonstrated by the management of the University, the representatives of the college, those of the department as well as of the student body, such as an excellent infrastructure, a comprehensive curriculum and a multi-disciplinary teaching team.

However, after a period characterized by fast growth, it seems advisable to slow down for a while, let all the new programs and achievements settle and observe the development of all the launched initiatives.

Based on the information from written documents and the results of the on-site visit, the experts came to the conclusion that the study program "Social Service" offered at the Istanbul Gelisim University fulfills, for the most part the, above described criteria. Hence, the experts decided to submit a recommendation to the Accreditation Commission of the AHPGS for a positive decision regarding the accreditation of the study program.

However, the experts recognize the fact that, from the perspective of European standards for higher education programs, the program "Social Service" leaves some room for improvement.

Based on these observations, the experts recommend the accreditation of the study program on the following condition:

- One full professor with expertise connected to the field social work has to assure the academic development in the study program.
- An updated plan indicating the prospective teaching staff needed to cover the teaching load in both tracks, their academic title and qualification, the date of their (prospective) employment at the University, courses to be taught and job scope has to be provided.

From the perspective of the experts, this condition can be fulfilled within nine (9) months after the announcement of the accreditation decision.

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

- The profile of the study program should be sharpened: A stronger distinction to neighbor disciplines as social sciences and health sciences and, thus, a particular identity of social work should be outlined.
- Adjusting the English title of the study program to the international terminology should be considered.
- A modular structure should be aspired to. Courses should be combined into larger units/modules that are completed with a single examination.
- A timely different arrangement of some courses should be considered:
  - Theories in Social Service I+II” should be placed earlier in the curriculum to build a base for the courses in “Social Service Research I+II”.
  - The fundamentals in “Human Rights and Social Service” should be taught within the first two semesters, whereas “Introduction to Economics” may be pushed back to a higher semester.
- The Directive for the Field Study of Social Services Practices should be refined by specifying the amount of hours to be spent in each of the fields and rotations and the requirements that an institution has to fulfill in order to be approved by the University.
- The idea of a student-centered study program, encouraging students to take an even more active role in creating their own education process and developing a scholarly attitude, should be developed and implemented.
- The students’ English skills should be verified thoroughly before admitting them to the English track of the study program. It should be assured that teaching in the English track is actually carried out in English.
- A greater variety and flexibility in examination methods as well as a competence-oriented examination design should be implemented.
- A Bachelor thesis should be implemented.
- With regard to the targeted internationalization and staff development:
  - The English language skills should be more stringently assessed, and continuing professional training should be more stringently offered and attended. Mobility of teaching staff and participation in international field-related networks should be promoted.

- More reliable employment prospects should be offered, especially to the young academic staff, in order to work on their academic development.
- Qualitative dimensions and evaluations should become part of the quality assurance system.



## **4 Decision of the Accreditation Commission**

### **The decision of the Accreditation Commission of April 30, 2018**

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

The on-site visit of the University took place on January 18-19, 2018, according to the previously agreed-upon schedule.

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

The Accreditation Commission of the AHPGS discussed the procedural documents and the vote of the expert group and the response opinion of the University regarding the expert report.

In the response opinion, the University points out several steps launched for the further development of the study program and its premises. The Accreditation Commission welcomes the plan of the University.

The Accreditation Commission of the AHPGS adopts the following decision:

The study program "Social Service" is a full-time bachelor study program with a regulated study period of four years (eight semesters). The study program comprises 240 ECTS credit points, distributed into 48 mandatory courses, of which 38 are compulsory and ten are electives. The Bachelor study program "Social Service" is completed with awarding of the academic degree "Bachelor of Science." The study program is offered as a Turkish and an English track. Admission takes place every winter semester. The number of annually available study places in the program is determined annually by the Turkish Higher Education Council (YÖK) according to the University's resources. The first batch of students was admitted to the Turkish track of the program in the academic year 2012/2013. The first batch of students was admitted to the

English track of the program in the academic year 2015/2016. Tuition fees are charged.

The study program "Social Service" is accredited for the duration of five years, until September 30, 2023.

Based on the expert report, the Accreditation Commission outlines the following conditions:

1. One full professor with expertise connected to the field social work has to assure the academic development in the study program.
2. An updated plan indicating the prospective teaching staff needed to cover the teaching load in both tracks, their academic title and qualification, the date of their (prospective) employment at the University, courses to be taught and job scope has to be provided.

The evidence that the formulated conditions have been fulfilled by the study program "Social Service" must be provided to AHPGS by January 30, 2019.

According to accreditation standards, in case of non-fulfillment of the conditions the accreditation of the study program will be revoked.

For further development and enhancement of the study program, as well as of the University as a whole, the Accreditation Commission of the AHPGS supports the recommendation articulated in the expert report.