Assessment Report

on the Assessment for provisional authorization of

the Study Program
"Information Technology"
(Bachelor of Information Technology)

at "Dimitrie Cantemir" University,
Targu Mures, Romania

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1 Introduction

Study programs in Romania require authorization for provisional functioning, as established by Law no. 87 of 2006, which approved the Emergency Decree no. 75 of 2005. The Romanian Ministry of National Education is responsible for authorizing provisional functioning of study programs. According to the Law of National Education no.1 of 2011 (hereinafter "Law of National Education") Art. 150, Par. 1, the decision of whether to grant authorization is contingent upon the evaluation and subsequent recommendation of the study program by an external quality assurance agency registered in the European Quality Assurance Register (EQAR).

After authorization for provisional functioning has been granted by the Romanian Ministry, the applicant higher education institution may enroll students in the respective study program. Following the successful graduation of three subsequent cohorts (taking approximately five years for three year study programs), the higher education institution must submit its application for provisional authorization. The authorization procedure is similar to that for accreditation: an external evaluation by an EQAR-listed quality assurance agency takes place on the basis of which the Government decides whether to provisionally authorize the study program.

The AHPGS Accreditation Agency was tasked with conducting an assessment and provisional authorization procedure for Bachelor and Master study programs offered by the "Dimitrie Cantemir" University, Targu Mures, Romania (hereupon: the University) in April 2018.

In October 2018, to the experts were forwarded the relevant documents for the evaluation of the program and to review the available information, determine particular strengths and weaknesses, and identify any open questions regarding the study programs in writing.

The on-site visit of the University took place on March 13-15, 2019. In the course of the on-site visit, experts conducted discussions with the University management, representatives of the faculties, the teaching staff of the programs as well as with students currently studying in the programs. Furthermore, they inspected the learning premises, such as lecture halls, seminar rooms, classrooms, library, and computer rooms. Moreover, experts had the opportunity to see the equipment and the capacity of the laboratories.

The following four study programs were subjects of the periodical evaluation procedure:

Faculty of Administrative Sciences:

- "Local Police" (Bachelor)

Faculty of Engineering:

- "Engineering and Management in Public Alimentation and Agrotourism" (Bachelor),

- "Information Technology" (Bachelor)

Faculty of Law:

- "Medical Law" (Master)

The Accreditation Commission of the AHPGS nominated the following experts to conduct the on-site visit:

As representatives of academic institutions:

Prof. Dr. Wolfgang Arnold
Witten/Herdecke University, Germany

Alexander Bordan
Albert-Ludwigs University Freiburg, Germany

Mathias Maximilian Dilger
Albert-Ludwigs University Freiburg, Germany

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Berlin School of Economics and Law, Germany

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Cologne University of Technology, Arts, Sciences, Germany

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[1] The experts shown in italics did not participate in the on-site visit of the University.

Prof. Dr. Franz Hessel

SRH University of Applied Sciences, Berlin, Germany

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Prof. Dr. Gerd Mikus

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Prof. Dr. Gerd Morgenthaler

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Dr. Michael Patyna

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Prof. Dr. Julia Peters

Kempten University of Applied Sciences, Germany

Prof. Dr. Britta Rademacher,

Hannover University of Applied Sciences and Art, Germany

Prof. Dr. Gabriele Roth-Dietrich

Mannheim University of Applied Sciences, Germany

Prof. Dr. Peter Schäfer

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German Police University, Münster, Germany

Prof. Dr. Walter Swoboda

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The proceedings of the Process of provisional authorization conform to the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG) as well as to the Art. 150 of Romania's Law no.

1 of National Education 2011; the Quality Evaluation Activities Guide for University Study Programs and for Higher Education Institutions: Part 1 Study Programs provisional authorization External Evaluation Guide, and the Methodology for External Evaluation, Standards, Standards of Reference, and List of Performance Indicators of the Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education ("Methodology").

The expert group surveyed the proper implementation of the criteria, standards and performance indicators, as specified in the above mentioned legal texts as well as the compliance of the program with the normative criteria, as stated in the "Methodology".

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 serve as the basis for the statements made in the Expert Report. Since the Expert Report investigates the fulfilment of the standards and criteria specified in the "Methodology", the structure of the Expert Report follows the logical succession of these criteria, as they are formulated in the document.

The following Fields of Activity pertaining to the program and the University were assessed by the expert group with respect to the corresponding criteria and standards: (A) Institutional capacity, (B) Educational effectiveness, and (C) Quality management, each with the corresponding Criteria and Standards.

2 The study program to be provisionally authorized

The study program "Information Technology" is offered by "Dimitrie Cantemir" University, Targu Mures, Romania, Faculty of Engineering. The period of education is eight semesters (four years).

The study program "Information Technology" will be launched in the winter semester 2020/2021. It will be affiliated with the then newly founded Faculty of Engineering. The study program "Information Technology" will, thus, be one of the first study program within that Faculty. It will be solely taught in Romanian. The general mission of the study program will be to train specialists in the field of technology and computing who are trained to work in multi-disciplinary teams. 240 credit points (CP), i.e. 30 CP per semester, according to the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) are required in order to graduate from each program. One CP is equivalent to 25 workload hours. The total workload of the program constitutes 6,000 hours, of which 3,138 are contact hours, 2,862 are independent study hours, and 240 practical training hours which are incorporated into the contact hours. The 4 CP received for the Bachelor thesis are added to the total amount of 240 CP (*see B.1 in detail*).

The study program "Information Technology" consists of 49 subjects/modules. All modules are obligatory.

All modules are program-specific modules and have to be completed within one semester. Modules are divided into compulsory and elective modules. Facultative modules are not required in order to graduate but are offered to enrich the curriculum. Credit points allocated to the facultative modules are added on top of the required total of 240 CP and are mentioned separately in the transcript of records.

Admission requirements are centralized within the University. They include a Baccalaureate degree or equivalent diploma. Admissions are organized in two sessions during July and September. Foreign students have to provide a Romanian language certificate (level C1) issued by institutions authorized by the Ministry of National Education. Students receive information about the amount of the tuition fees in advance.

Upon graduation, students are awarded a Bachelor graduation diploma (Diploma de Licenta, cf. Law of National Education no. 1 from 2011), as well as a Diploma Supplement, comprised in both Romanian and English. Graduates of

the Bachelor study program "Information Technology" are awarded with the academic degree "Bachelor of Engineering".

The experts take note that the formal requirements of the study program are in accordance with the national Romanian requirements.

The study program "Information Technology" has not been provisionally authorized yet. Therefore, no students are currently enrolled.

The University with its Administration Board confirms in a formal declaration that it is prepared and able to provide the financial support necessary for the effective functioning of the program in conditions that correspond to the standards of the study program in Romania.

3 Expert Report

At the beginning of October 2018, the application documents of the University were made available to the expert group for written evaluation. The expert group assessed the study program "Information Technology" based on the Romanian standards and regulations specified under Section 1. They have also examined the factual and other program-related aspects described in the documents. The results of this review were forwarded to the AHPGS in December 2018.

Based on the written evaluation of each expert and the on-site visit, the expert group jointly agreed upon an Expert Report.

A. Institutional Capacity

A.1. Institutional, administrative and management structures

The "Dimitrie Cantemir" University of Targu Mures was accredited in 2005 by Law no. 136/2005 published in the Official Gazette no. 434/23.05.2005 part I. The University was founded in Targu Mures in 1991 and is a private accredited university. It is funded by the Dimitrie Cantemir Ecological Foundation. The Foundation was established in 1991 as a non-profit, non-governmental organization promoting sustainable environment protection and humanitarian issues.

Currently, the University has six faculties: the Faculty of Law, the Faculty of Economic Sciences, the Faculty of Geography, the Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences, the Faculty of Dental Medicine, and the Faculty of Balneophysiokinetotherapy and medical recovery. Moreover, there is the Department of Continous Training, the Department of International Relations and the Department of Practice to ensure the complementarity and proper working of different activities within the University and the community

In the winter semester 2018/2019, a total of 1,054 students were enrolled in the University, 761 in Bachelor and 293 in Master degree programs. 184 students also pursue the "Teacher Training Program" in parallel to their Bachelor or Master studies.

The University offers eight accredited bachelor programs: "Finances and Banks", "Economy of Trade, Tourism and Services" (in Romanian and English), "Law", "Psychology", "Tourism Geography", "Balneofiziokinetotherapy and Recovery", and "Dental Medicine".

Moreover, seven accredited master programs are offered: "Banks and Capital Markets within European Context", "Financial Administration of Business", "Judicial Proceedings and Liberal Professions", "Touristic Resources and Environment Protection", "Quality Insurance in Education", "Clinical Psychology and Intervention Techniques through Counseling and Psychotherapy" and "Management of Human Resources".

The expert group assessed the compatibility of the written documentation and the University's missions and objectives. Based on the information provided in the written documentation, the experts have determined that the main objec-

tive of the University is to offer a variety of higher education study programs. The programs aim to meet the needs of the Romanian and European labor market as well as to comply with national and international standards of education. The institution supports the programs and staff in line with the aims and objectives of the program and common standards of integrity (e.g. University Code of Ethics).

Missions and objectives of the programs are stated by the University. With a glance at the study programs currently offered at the University, it becomes clear that these formulated missions and objectives are coherent. From the perspective of the experts, it is sensible to expand the existing fields of the University in order to strengthen the local labor market and qualify students in a field with positive perspectives.

Another aspect of the University's mission is to intensify research activity among students with the goal of enabling them to contribute to the general advancement of knowledge in their respective fields.

With regard to the administrative structure concerning the collaboration between the department, faculty and University units, the experts encourage the University to look for common interests and to combine forces and resources. This will also help to facilitate the coordination of research activities.

The expert group has been convinced of the University's commitment – as an institution – to offer high quality education opportunities. It was asserted that the University and its study programs function within the Romanian legal framework and that the institution promotes academic integrity and freedom among its students. Besides, the University regularly monitors its own activities, and students take an active part in management. Moreover, the needs of students with disabilities are taken into consideration (e.g. admission and exam requirements).

Internal assessment and audit processes take place in order to monitor the achievement of the objectives of the University. The experts have observed an active collaboration between the administrative and teaching structures. The University has developed an ethical code of which its members are aware.

Regarding internationality, the experts took notice of the measures put in place by the University in order to pursue its international orientation. The University achieves mobility of its students by means of the European Credit

Transfer System (ECTS) and the Erasmus exchange program. It became a clear that the University aims to cater to the job market in Targu Mures and its surroundings in order to strengthen the region economically.

Still, from the experts' point of view, the University, apart from maintaining its role in Targu Mures and its surroundings, should present its internationalization measures in a more open and distinct manner (e.g. extending its partnerships with foreign universities). This way it could further promote its attractiveness and character by standing out from other higher education institutions. In addition, setting up international summer schools could help to establish connections between international students and students of the University.

The experts recognize the possibilities for further development in the strategic alignment of the University in general.

Taking these facts into account, the expert group regards criterion A.1 as fulfilled.

A.2. Material resources and infrastructure

Overall, the experts recognize that the University has sufficient material and financial resources with regard to the study programs currently offered. All facilities are in possession of the University. According to a formal declaration by the Administration Board of the University, the institution is prepared and able to ensure the financial support necessary for the program "Information Technology" to function in conditions that correspond to the Romanian standards.

Looking at the premises and resources available for the desired number of students in the study program (80 per year), the experts conclude that the University is able to offer this number of study places. The study program "Information Technology" is planned to start in the winter semester 2020/2021. The experts also point out that scholarships are foreseen in the internal regulations for "Student Merit and Social Welfare Scholarships" of the University. With regards to the scholarship system, the experts notice that merely students with above-average grades as well as students involved in honorary work, e.g. as student-representative in the senate, are awarded with scholarships from the University. However, apart from state funded programs, there are no support mechanisms foreseen for students with a disadvanta-

geous socio-economical background. From the experts' point of view, supporting these groups would accord with the University's general motif to strengthen the regional civilian population.

Furthermore, with regard to the library and lecture halls, the experts assess that the lecture halls and seminar rooms are sufficiently equipped for providing adequate teaching and learning processes (e.g. computers). Nevertheless, it became clear that the program-specific literature is currently not sufficient. Therefore, the experts urge the University to extend the library significantly regarding both printed and electronic books as well as databases (e.g. IEEE or ACM Journals). In this regard, the expert group encourages the University to establish more partnerships with similar national and international institutions (libraries, publishing houses) in order to provide students and teachers' access to an even wider range of databases and learning and scientific material. The experts recommend that the University take advantage of publicly accessible resources that are free of charge, such as the Institute for Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) or links to Massive Open Online Courses (MOOC). Furthermore, through the publishing house W3L, instructive videos are available that provide large amounts of information.

Taking into account the University's need to improve the provision of program-specific literature, the expert group considers criterion A.2 to be partly fulfilled.

The University has to provide students with a wider range of databases as well as learning and scientific material.

B. Educational Effectiveness

B.1. Content of the study program

The study program "Information Technology" will be affiliated with the Faculty of Engineering. The study program's mission, general and specific learning objectives, curriculum and outcome competencies were presented in the written documentation. The curriculum description specifies the qualification objectives, competencies (knowledge and understanding, explanation and interpretation etc.) and learning outcomes for each module. The experts point out that the structure of the study program includes a set of relevant topics.

The general mission of the study program will be to train specialists in the field of technology and computing who are able to work in multidisciplinary teams. According to the University, graduates of the study program "Information Technology" will be able to access the labor market as Teachers, Analysts, Research Assistants in Computer Science, Programmers, Computer system designers, IT consultants, Computer Network Administrators, Database Administrators, Software system engineers, Specialists in computer security procedures and tools, Engineers of systems and computer engineers, Security system engineers, and System Engineers in Computer Sciences. Furthermore, the University also mentions a possible career as a teacher after the completion of the "Teacher Training Program" (60 CP).

The experts agree with the above mentioned qualification objectives and are of the opinion that the curriculum covers all necessary competencies in the field. Moreover, the study program also focuses on qualifying students for social responsibility and personal development. The experts reach the conclusion that the study program focus on qualifying students for social responsibility and personal development. The experts discern that graduates have good employment opportunities on the Romanian and European job market.

The curriculum of the study program "Information Technology" comprises of compulsory and elective subjects. Both are an obligatory part of the curriculum. Regarding the elective modules, students have a choice between two modules. Credit points allocated to facultative subjects will be added on top of the 240 credit points obtained by the students upon graduation and will be mentioned separately in the transcript of records.

The experts appreciate the optional modules which complete the offered courses. The "Information Technology" program is well structured; modules are described in detail (e.g. with objectives, aimed competences, content and literature) and the program is relevant as the intended career is clear. The experts take note of the fact that around 80 % of the curriculum is laid down as a rule on a national level, this includes also the module titles and in addition the title of the study program. From the experts' point of view, this appears to be quite restrictive and, thus, limiting the academic freedom. The experts encourage the University to use the academic freedom wherever possible, especially within the preset modules, to sharpen its profile and strategy as

well as to adhere to European standards, striving to become more relevant in an international context by defining its unique selling point.

Alongside the theoretical curriculum, practical training (240 hours / 8 CP) is part of the curriculum. It is conducted at the end of the 4th and 6th semester in IT companies. During the practical training, students are conjugated a coordinator from the University as well as a tutor from the practice institution. The experts take note of the cooperation agreements and come to the conclusion that the University carefully selects its cooperative partners and ensures the qualification of the students' supervisors. It became sufficiently clear that the University strives to offer the same quality of practical training for all students at various cooperation partners. The experts highly recommend that the University reach out to corporations in the IT-industry in order to allow students to do internships at these firms or to invite professionals from the IT-sector to give talks at the University.

In addition, the experts take note of the internationality of contents, e.g. language courses are offered.

Research within the study program "Information Technology" will aim to include and involve students. The results of the research activities will be published in the "Annals of 'Dimitrie Cantemir' University, 'Engineering and Management' series" and will be presented at the "Students and Masters Scientific Session" organized each year by the University. Nevertheless, the experts strongly recommend using synergies by increasing interdisciplinarity among study programs wherever possible, e.g. when communicating research methods.

The expert group points out that research competencies are part of some modules. The integration of the research conducted by the teaching staff could be more transparent in the curriculum.

The experts strongly recommend using synergies by increasing interdisciplinarity among the study programs wherever possible, e.g. when communicating research methods. Furthermore, research methods could be used to assist other faculties, e.g. by way of an evaluation of data or the development/implementation of software.

The credit system applied in the "Information Technology" study program and at the University in general complies with the *Order of the Romanian Ministry*

of National Education no.3617/2005 on the generalized application of the European Credit Transfer System.

The subjects in the curriculum can be evaluated during the semester through verifications and at the end of the semester through written and oral exams and tests during the semester. The evaluation is based on the specific procedures stipulated by the "Quality Manual". A course can include one or more forms of assessment. The experts highlight that all exams should be competence-oriented, thus multiple-choice tests should be limited if not discarded in general. Furthermore, the experts recommend offering written exams in the first year and oral exams as well as project works in the higher semesters.

The University offers three exam sessions, i.e. winter, summer, and re-examination sessions I and II in the fall. They extend over a period of three to four weeks after the period of teaching activities. Re-examination periods take place after each academic year. If a student fails during the re-examination period, he or she has to repeat the failed modules and can re-sit the exam in the next year. Should a student not pass an exam during these sessions, he or she may retake that exam four times according to "The Procedure of Examining Students".

For the evaluation of the students' performance in exams, the University applies a 10-point grading system (10 being the highest grade). The minimum passing grade is 5 points. Verifications may also be graded with the qualifications 'passed' or 'failed'.

The study programs are completed by composing a Bachelor thesis (4 CP). The license exam consists of a written exam and the defending of the license project. Graduates who did not write a license can obtain the license in the following years. Until then, they receive a certificate attesting that they attended the faculty courses, but are not yet licensed.

The Bachelor degree examination takes place in accordance with the Ministry Decree regarding the general framework for organizing final examinations in higher education and based on the institution's own procedure approved annually by the University Senate. According to the regulations in force, the Bachelor degree examination can consist of two tests:

a) test 1: assessing fundamental and specialized knowledge

b) test 2: presenting and defending the Bachelor's thesis

According to the "Specific Standards regarding external academic quality assessment for associated bachelor and master level studies" the number of credits allotted to the promotion of the license thesis (4 CP) is added to the 240 ECTS credit points for the entire program. From the experts' point of view, the thesis is an obligatory part of the curriculum. Thus, the final thesis should be part of the official workload of the study program. Nevertheless, the experts acknowledge that the addition is a singularity in Romania due to the National Law.

To conclude, graduates of the study program "Information Technology" appear to have good employment opportunities.

However, regarding the structure of the study program, the European perspective could be more emphasized in the curriculum. Hence, the University should try to close some gaps (e.g. workload, examination) in order to guarantee international applicability of the Romanian degree in other European countries. In this regard, the experts also want to draw attention to the process of recognizing externally achieved credit points. The University recognizes credits obtained at other universities if they comply with the regulations on students' professional activity; the equivalence of credits is evaluated by an internal credit recognition committee inside each faculty. From the experts' point of view, the recognition of credits transferred from other universities (national and international) should be regulated according to the requirements of the Lisbon Recognition Convention, i.e. the burden of proof to demonstrate that an application does not fulfill the relevant requirements lies with the body undertaking the assessment[2].

The study program "Information Technology" contains 240 + 4 credits. The curriculum comprises a total of 49 modules. The study program will be offered on a full-time basis (eight semesters/four years). The total workload of the program is 6,000 hours, which is divided into 3,138 contact hours, 2,862

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[2] (Art 3.3 (5)); Each Party shall recognize periods of study completed within the framework of a higher education program in another Party. This recognition shall comprise such periods of study towards the completion of a higher education program in the Party in which recognition is sought, unless substantial differences can be shown between the periods of study completed in another Party and the part of the higher education program which they would replace in the Party in which recognition is sought (Art.5.1 (1))

individual work hours and 240 hours of practical training, which are included in the contact hours.

From the experts' point of view, the student workload should be evaluated on a regular basis in order to make sure that students are not overloaded or underchallenged. Additionally, the implementation of evaluation results to improve the study programs should be clearly documented. The experts also suggest combining smaller modules into larger units of modules to emphasize competence.

According to the University, the admission of students to the study program "Information Technology" is solely based on the baccalaureate or an equivalent diploma. General admission procedures are stated in the documents "Admission to the Study Programs" and "Admission in the University Cycles". The University assures to give priority to academic equality and ethics policies contained in the "University Code of Ethics". Thus, students may apply for academic or social welfare scholarships in order to assure equality throughout the University.

Annual admissions are organized in two sessions during July and September. Foreign students must submit a Romanian language certificate (level C1), issued by institutions authorized by the Ministry of National Education.

From the experts' point of view, the admission procedure of the program complies with the requirements of the University as well as with the national standards. The general recruitment and admission policies for students of the University are clearly stated. The University makes it also clear that all discrimination is prohibited.

Based on the described conclusions, the expert group considers criterion B.1 to be partly fulfilled.

The recognition of credits transferred from other Universities (national and international) has to be regulated according to the requirements of the Lisbon Recognition Convention.

B.2. Learning outcomes

From the experts' point of view, the "Information Technology" study program can be sufficiently classified within the Romanian higher education system. The final qualification gained by its graduates corresponds to the demands of

the Romanian labor market. The knowledge, competencies and abilities gained throughout the study program correspond to the final academic certificate to be awarded. The practical activity, which has been described under criterion B.1, enables students to adapt to real life circumstances and to apply their theoretical knowledge.

The teaching and didactic methods are student-centered, focusing on two main methods during contact hours: learning based on demonstration and critical thinking strategies. The main goal of this approach is to propel students' logical and critical thinking. Concerning practical skills, instructors can employ computer-assisted instruction (CAI), experiments, case studies and role plays. A Moodle E-Learning platform has been implemented by the University to increase the ability to provide students with information and access to courses.

From the experts' point of view, a mix between methods including interactive learning methods is applied. According to the University, the main responsibility of each course instructor is to increase student training according to their needs, expectations and goals. Furthermore, course instructors are responsible for the development of students' degree-specific as well as general competences, which are specified in the course descriptions provided by the University.

The expert group thinks that employability is given for graduates of this program. The experts conclude that this positive outcome and development stems on the one hand from the dedicated academic staff and on the other hand from the open atmosphere and communication ethics at the University.

Regarding student support measures, tutors serve as mentors for the students throughout the course of the study program.

The expert group considers criterion B.2 to be fulfilled.

B.3. Scientific research activity

On site, the University presented the expert group a cross-faculty research project conducted via the Erasmus+ Program and in cooperation with other international Universities. The project focuses gender equality in science, technology, equality, arts and mathematics.

According to the "Strategic Scientific Research Plan" the Faculty of Engineering does not have a distinct research agenda yet.

The experts are conscious of the fact that the University's profile is rather practice-oriented. Nevertheless, as a research facility, research could be more dominant at the University. The experts highlight that the University could, for example, invest in educational research which seems to be especially apt considering the University's high frequented "Teacher Training Program".

In terms of further development opportunities, the experts recommend to expand the already developed research plan on the prospective Faculties. Moreover, the evaluation of research should be clearly documented. The expert group also recommends involving students in research activities, assuming that this will very likely have a positive effect on structuring students' independent study hours and motivate students to continue their studies after graduating from Bachelor programs.

Criterion B.3. is regarded as fulfilled.

B.4. Financial activity

Currently, the financial resources of the University are composed of tuition fees. Nevertheless, for a sustainable financing it could also be helpful to look for other financial options besides tuition fees (e.g. sponsoring, research, further education; *see also A.2*).

The University has confirmed in a formal declaration that it is "prepared and able to progressively ensure, the financial support necessary for the program to function in conditions that correspond to the standards of the Romanian program of studies for approximately 80 students, from 2020-2021 academic year."

Criterion B.4 is regarded as fulfilled.

C. Quality Management

C.1. Quality assurance strategies and procedures

The University has developed an elaborate quality assurance system implemented by means of corresponding evaluation procedures. The University presented its quality assurance system in the written documents.

The quality assurance system of the University consists of the following units: the Senate of the Dimitrie Cantemir University, the Quality Management Commission (QMC) and the Quality Management Representative (QMR). The members of the QMC and of the Quality Assurance Department are approved by the University Senate. Department managers are in charge of monitoring the quality assurance at the faculty/department. The University has developed a Quality Manual (annex E) which defines the objectives and the organizational structure of quality assurance procedures as well as the units involved in it. With regard to the transparency of the quality assurance policies and developments, the University annually issues an "Internal Evaluation Report". After approval by the University Senate, the report is published on the official website of the University at the end of each academic year.

The process of quality assurance can be described as follows: The Faculty's Quality Assurance Committee submits its conclusions regarding the internal audit report, along with the results of peer reviews, to the Faculty Council. At the end of each year, the data for the given period, including evaluations of teaching performance, is gathered and further directed to the Senate to take corrective actions and to issue the quality improvement plan.

The University has an internal quality management system in which students take part; they are required to fill out course evaluations and provide feedback on the teaching performance. The results are processed by the Quality Assurance Committee, which then integrates the final recommendation into its report. The results of the teaching staff assessments are presented annually in the Senate where student representatives take part.

With regard to the students' development of social responsibility and personal development in the course of studies, the University points out that it has its own "University Code of Ethics". The code lays down rules of conduct, ethics and deontology for all members of the academic community of the University.

Considering the thorough implementation of the quality assurance system and the active participation of all University members in quality assurance procedures, the expert group concludes that criterion C.1 is fulfilled.

C.2. Procedures on the periodical initiation, monitoring and revision of the programs and activities carried out

The experts highlight that the quality management system is ensured by central and decentral commissions and a quality management department. The commissions act in accordance with the quality assurance strategy of the University. Moreover, a "Quality Manual" is approved by the Senate for each study year. Students assess all teaching staff regularly.

The University implements procedures of periodical revision and evaluation of the study programs offered. Hence, the teaching staff is required to conduct annual self-evaluations and peer-assessments; students evaluate the teaching process every six months.

The experts conclude that the study programs are evaluated by different stakeholders on a regular basis by means of rational and effective methods.

The assessment of the teaching personnel is discussed in detail below, under criterion C.4.

The experts underline that the quality assurance system of the University enables productive application of the obtained teaching and learning evaluation results. This refers to the introduction of necessary corrective measures and better organization of the programs, as well as the improvement of teaching methods, envisaged in upcoming academic years. Nevertheless, the experts point out that the use of ISO standards bear the danger of over-bureaucratization. Therefore, the experts recommend re-considering this quality assurance approach.

Considering these facts, the experts conclude that criterion C.2 is fulfilled.

C.3. Objective and transparent procedures of learning results evaluation

Based on students' evaluations, the teaching process and the learning outcomes undergo a constant optimization process. Additionally, the University has established clear examination rules and a structured process for dealing with exceptional cases ("Operational Procedures for Student Examination", "Credit Allocation", "Student Evaluation Methods", "Students with Locomotor Disabilities and Chronic Diseases"). Furthermore, the form of examination and the learning outcomes are clearly specified for each module.

In order to qualify for the final examination of a module, students must have met all subject requirements: attendance, passing the ongoing assessments and practical works. These are presented to the students by the lecture coordinator in the first course lesson.

The final assessment in each course can be conducted in the form of a colloquium or an examination. Colloquiums are forms of oral examinations taken, for example, in optional courses.

Students' actions in case of appeal and re-examinations are well-defined and described in the regulations of the University. Hence, there are clear procedures established for the above-mentioned examinations and students are informed of these procedures in advance. The main function of examinations conducted in the program is to objectively evaluate students' achievement of the specific learning outcomes.

The experts sum up that criteria and regulations about grading are present (*see B.1 for details*). The forms of examinations generally fit the competence aimed for by the study program and the modules. Thus, the evaluation of learning outcomes is appropriate.

Taking the above described facts into account, the expert group concludes that criterion C.3 is fulfilled.

C.4. Periodical evaluation procedures of teaching staff quality

The University has provided an overview about the teaching staff of the study program.

17 teachers are involved in the program: one professor (5.88 %), seven associate professors (41.18 %), five lecturers (29.41 %), three specialists (17.65 %) and one assistant (5.88 %). Except for the three specialists all teachers are full-time teachers. Among the teachers will also be the Dean of the Faculty who will also be the coordinator of the program.

Overall, the teaching and academic staff of the University shows a high level of commitment and potential for the execution and further development of the study program they are responsible for. The expert group came to the conclusion that there is a strong corporate identity and positive group dynamics among the university and faculty administrations

With the curriculum of the Bachelor study program "Information Technology" in mind, the ratio between professors and lecturers appears to be balanced. Overall, the teaching and academic staff of the University shows a high level of commitment for the execution and further development of the study program. Still, from the experts' point of view, it is desirable to increase the percentage of professors in the program.

The experts take note that all teaching positions are established in compliance with the requirements of legal norms and completed with tenured teaching staff in higher education in accordance with the Romanian law.

Mutual respect is conduced and confidentiality is guaranteed between the rector, dean and the evaluated teacher. Results of these annual evaluations serve as the basis for promotion proposals. The selection and employment of teaching staff are based on the principle of public contest; these procedures are regulated by the University's "Methodology of Contest for Occupying the Open Didactic and Research Positions" as well as by the Romanian legal requirements (Law of National Education no.1/2011, Government Decision no.457/2011, Government Decision no.36/2013, Order no.6560/2012, Order no. 4204/2013). According to these regulations, teaching and other positions are publicly announced and the University chooses candidates for these positions based on an open and independent procedure. These procedures are transparent and available for potential candidates from the academic as well as from the work field. By means of such transparent contest regulations, the University seeks to strengthen its competitiveness together with its national and international visibility.

The teaching staff is periodically evaluated by means of both peer and anonymous student reviews. Student evaluations are performed at the end of each semester. They are anonymous, which encourages an objective assessment. The results of the reviews are processed by the Quality Assurance Committee. Students are informed about the results of the evaluations through their student representatives in the Senate. Should a member of the teaching staff receive an unsatisfactory evaluation result, a course of actions will be implemented in order to eliminate the existing problems. Hence, the results are carefully monitored and the improvements are continuously observed.

Based on these facts, the expert group considers criterion C.4 to be fulfilled.

C.5. Learning resources accessibility

Overall, the experts conclude that the University offers appropriate facilities of sufficient number for the execution of its currently running study programs. The students have access to the main University Library from 08:00 to 20:00 Monday through Friday during the regular semester. There are additional opening hours on Saturdays from 09:00 to 16:00 during the exam sessions.

After visiting the library, the experts discerned that the program-specific literature for the "Information Technology" program is not sufficient. The experts urge the University to significantly expand the library in terms of printed and electronic books, journals, and databases (*see also A.2*).

The University encourages students' learning processes by offering resources and opportunities for extra-curricular activities. Moreover, the University offers various forms of academic support and counseling to students: e.g. consultations and tutorials. However, regarding infrastructure, accessibility for people with a disability should be improved.

The expert group considers criterion C.5. as partly fulfilled.

Program-specific literature should be expanded.

C.6. Systematically updated data base, with regard to the internal quality assurance

The University has designed an internal quality assurance system and established structures for monitoring and developing the quality assurance concept. Parts of the internal quality assurance system are regular student reviews, as well as the feedback meetings organized for this purpose. A more detailed description can be found under criteria C.3. and C.4. A regular track of the evaluation and review results is maintained by the University. Strategies for improvement are designed therefrom. A corresponding electronic system and database are also implemented. The experts conclude that the data and information policy seem to be adequate at the University.

The expert group considers criterion C.6. as fulfilled.

C.7. Transparency of public interest information concerning study programs

The results of quality assurance activities will be summarized in a report, in order to improve the programs' quality.

Through its website, the University supplies relevant information concerning its programs and its structures to the public. Thus, the University promotes its study programs online, through local printed media, and by running open days and workshops in high-schools and other institutions.

The experts conclude that the faculty provides information on qualifications, study programs, diplomas, teaching and research staff, student facilities and other aspects. The website should be revised though in order to offer the latest and relevant information.

All in all, the expert group considers criterion C.7 to be fulfilled.

C.8. Functionality of education quality assurance structures, according to the law

The expert group was provided with an overview of the quality evaluation mechanisms and institutional structures. The Quality Management Commission regularly elaborates and reviews all corresponding policies and strategies as well as operational procedures. The expert group is convinced of the validity of the information provided in the application documentation, and its accordance with the legal framework, as stated in the "Quality Manual". Quality assurance and evaluation for the currently running programs is well developed at the University.

Structured processes and an evaluated organization underline the importance of the quality management at the University; the organization strives for continuous improvement. Central and decentral staff are involved in the quality assurance process. The experts conclude that the institutional structure for quality education seems to be adequate. Thus, criterion C.8 is considered to be fulfilled.

For more details on the structure, functioning and members involved in the Quality assurance procedures at the University see also criteria A.1, A.2 and C.1.

4 Evaluation Summary

The main task of the expert group during the peer review was to assess the planned "Information Technology" study program and to verify its compliance with European and Romanian regulations (*see part 1 Introduction*).

In the view of the expert group, the "Information Technology" study program complies with Romanian regulations as specified in the "Methodology" and the "Law of National Education". Hence, the study program complies with the pertinent Romanian conventions as well as with all legal normative requirements.

The expert group acknowledges the high motivation and engagement of all persons involved in the program. In addition, the current students are satisfied with the University and the commitment of their teachers. Nevertheless, it became apparent to the experts that the University has to close some gaps in order to guarantee international applicability of the Romanian degree in other European countries. Hence, the experts encourage the University to use the academic freedom wherever possible, to sharpen its profile and strategy as well as adhere to European standards, striving to become relevant in an international context by defining its unique selling point.

The on-site visit in addition to the documentation provided by the University, enable the expert group to recommend the provisional authorization of the "Information Technology" study program offered by Dimitrie Cantemir University of Targu Mures, to the Accreditation Commission of the AHPGS.

Given the fact that the programs meet all national normative requirements, the expert group recommends the provisional authorization of the "Information Technology" study program also by the Romanian Ministry of National Education.

The experts outline the following conditions:

- The University has to provide students with a wider range of databases as well as learning and scientific material. (A.2)

- The recognition of credits transferred from other universities (domestic and abroad) has to be regulated according to the requirements of the Lisbon Recognition Convention. (B.1)

At the same time, the experts attempt to provide constructive feedback and recommendations for further improvement regarding the concept, structure and content of the program.

The following recommendations are thus proposed for the University's consideration:

A) Institutional Capacity:

- The University should look for common interests between the faculties and, thus, combine forces and resources. (A.1)

- Internationalization measures should be presented in a more open and distinct manner so that, apart from maintaining its significant role in Bucharest and its surroundings, it promotes its attractiveness (e.g. setting up partnerships with foreign universities or summer schools). (A.1, A.2)

- Support mechanisms for students with a disadvantageous socio-economical background should be implemented. (A.2)

- The University library could establish partnerships with similar institutions (libraries, publishing houses) within the country and abroad, in order to provide students and teachers with access to a wider range of IT resources, databases as well as learning and scientific material, especially for the new programs. (A.2)

B) Educational Effectiveness:

- Academic freedom should be used wherever possible, especially within the preset modules, to sharpen its profile and strategy as well as to adhere to European standards, striving to become relevant in an international context by defining its unique selling point. (B.1)

- The experts recommend that the University reach out to corporations in the IT-industry in order to allow students to do internships at these firms or to invite professionals from the IT-sector to give talks at the University. (B.1)

- Interdisciplinarity among the study programs should be increased wherever possible to use synergies, e.g. when communicating research methods. (B.1)

- Research methods could be used to assist other faculties, e.g. by way of an evaluation of data or the development/implementation of software. (B.1)

- Obligatory credits to be awarded for the final exam should be part of the workload of the study program. (B.1)

- Focusing on competence, modules should be combined into larger module units and the student workload should be evaluated on a regular basis. (B.1)

- The staff should strive for more public, international, ideally peer-reviewed methods of publishing scientific articles to achieve a wider distribution of their results. (B.3)

- In terms of further development opportunities, the Faculty of Engineering should develop a research strategy. Evaluation of research should also be clearly documented. (B.3)

- Students should be involved in research activities which will likely have a positive effect on structuring student's independent study hours and motivate students to continue their studies after graduating from Bachelor programs. (B.3)

C) Quality Management:

- The use of ISO standards bear the danger of over-bureaucratization and could, therefore, be reviewed. (C.2)

- The percentage of professors teaching in the program should be increased. (C.4)

- Regarding infrastructure, the accessibility for people with a disability should be improved. (C.5)

- The website should be revised in order to offer the latest and relevant information. (C.7)

5   Decision

Decision of the accreditation commission of the 25 June 2019

The proposed 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 described in the Expert Report.

The on-site visit of the University took place on March 13-15, 2019 according to the previously agreed schedule.

The accreditation decision is based on the Expert Report. The Expert Report, i.e. the proceedings of the Provisional Authorization Process conform to the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG) as well as to the Law no. 1 of National Education of Romania, 2011, Art.150, and Art.193; the Quality Evaluation Activities Guide for University Study Programs and for Higher Education Institutions: Part 1 Study Programs Accreditation External Evaluation Guide, and the Methodology for External Evaluation, Standards, Standards of Reference, and List of Performance Indicators of the Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education.

The Accreditation Commission of the AHPGS discussed the procedural documents and the recommendation of the expert group.

The standard study period in the full-time program "Information Technology" is four years/eight semesters. The study program encompasses 240 CP and comprises 56 mandatory modules of which 41 are obligatory, eight are facultative and seven are optional, i.e. there is a choice between these modules. The bachelor program "Information Technology" is completed with the conferral of the academic degree "Bachelor of Information Technology". The study program "Information Technology" will be launched in the winter semester 2019/2020. It is solely offered in Targu Mures. The language of instruction is Romanian. The University offers 80 study places for the study program per year.

The Accreditation Commission of the AHPGS considers that most Criteria (according to the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG) as well as to the Law no. 1 of National Education of Romania, 2011, Art.150, and Art.193; the Quality

Evaluation Activities Guide for University Study Programs and for Higher Education Institutions: Part 1 Study Programs Accreditation External Evaluation Guide, and the Methodology for External Evaluation, Standards, Standards of Reference, and List of Performance Indicators of the Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education) are fulfilled and therefore adopts the following decision:

The study program "Information Technology" is recommended to obtain provisional authorization.

Based on the Expert Report, the Accreditation Commission outlines the following condition:

- The University has to provide students with a wider range of databases as well as learning and scientific material. (A.2)
- The recognition of credits transferred from other universities (domestic and abroad) has to be regulated according to the requirements of the Lisbon Recognition Convention. (B.1)

For the further development and enhancement of the study program and the University as a whole, the Accreditation Commission of the AHPGS supports the recommendations articulated in the Expert Report.