

Akkreditierungsagentur
im Bereich Gesundheit und Soziales
Accreditation Agency in Health and Social Sciences



Assessment Report

**for the Application of "Dimitrie Cantemir" University of Targu Mures,
Romania
for the Reaccreditation of the Study Program "Tourism Georgraphy",
Bachelor of Geography**

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Decision

May 14, 2024

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1 Introduction

The Accreditation Agency in Health and Social Sciences (AHPGS) is an interdisciplinary and multi-professional organization. Its mission is to evaluate Bachelor and Master' programs in the fields of health and social sciences, as well as in related domains such as medicine or psychology. By conducting 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 implementing the quality assurance recommendations made by the AHPGS. 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). Furthermore, the AHPGS has been listed in the European Quality Assurance Register (EQAR) since 2009. On top of that, since 2023, the World Federation of Medical Education (WFME) has recognized the AHPGS as an agency with recognition status for 10 years.

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 criteria¹:

1. Program aims and their implementation
2. Structure of the study program
3. Admission and Feasibility
4. Examination System and Transparency
5. Teaching Staff and Material Equipment
6. Quality Assurance
7. Gender equality and equal opportunities

¹ Approved by the AHPGS Accreditation Commission

The AHPGS Accreditation Commission's decision regarding the accreditation of the study program is also based on the Romanian Specific Standards applicable to the evaluated study programs.

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 fulfil the assessment spheres as well as the AHPGS and Romanian specific standards. With this information, the AHPGS produces a summary, 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 Romania. Consequently, the experts comprise a short summary regarding the study programs.

III. Site visit (peer-review)

The experts carry out a 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. These discussions provide the expert group with details about the study program beyond the written documents. The task of the experts during the 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, methods of assessment (selection of students, assessment of achievements, students' support), as well as the program management (program administration, external assurance of study quality).

Following the site visit, the expert group evaluates the fulfilment of the criteria based on the results of the visit and the documents submitted by the HEI. This

Assessment 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 Assessment Report is made available to the University for the opportunity to issue a response opinion.

The Assessment 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 Assessment Report, as well as the University's response opinion. These documents lay basis for the decision of the Accreditation Commission of the AHPGS regarding the accreditation of the study program.

2 Information about the University

Dimitrie Cantemir University of Targu Mures, was founded in 1991 as the first private University in Transylvania. It functions as a private University accredited by Law No. 136/2005 published in the Official Gazette No. 434 / 23.05.2005 part I.

The number of students in each faculty is reported in the following table:

| Faculty | Number of students |
|---|--------------------|
| 1. Law | 229 |
| 2. Economic Sciences | |
| Finances and Banks | 43 |
| Economy of Trade, Tourism, and Services | 65 |
| 3. Psychology | 240 |
| 4. Geography | 60 |

Dimitrie Cantemir University of Targu Mures conducts scientific research through its Faculties and Research Centre, addressing fundamental and applied research topics based on demand. The institution emphasizes a balance between fundamental and applied research and encourages a multi-, inter-, and transdisciplinary approach. The details of the University's research activities are outlined in the Regulation on the organization, operation, and financing of the Scientific Research Centre. Over the past three years, their research efforts have yielded publications such as books, courses, articles, PhD theses, and graduation theses. The University also actively involves Bachelor and Master students in organizing annual national and international scientific events (SER 3.1.1).

Basic data of the faculty

The Faculty of Geography and History, initially founded in 1992 within the Târgu Mures Branch of the "Dimitrie Cantemir" Ecological University of Iași, obtained provisional authorization in 1996 for double specializations in geography and history. In response to growth in students and faculty, a new specialization in Tourism Geography was introduced in 2004. The faculty, initially part of the

Faculty of History and Geography, transitioned to the Faculty of Geography in 2009 within Dimitrie Cantemir University of Târgu Mures. The Tourism Geography program received accreditation in June 2011.

3 Overview

3.1 Procedure-related documents

The Self-Evaluation Report for accreditation (without the awarding of the official seal of the Accreditation Council of the Foundation for the Accreditation of Study Programs in Germany) of the above-mentioned study program (hereinafter the SER) of the Dimitrie Cantemir University of Targu Mures (hereinafter the University) was submitted to the Accreditation Agency in Health and Social Science (AHPGS) in electronic format on September 27, 2023. The contract between the University and the AHPGS was signed on October 15, 2022.

The application documentation submitted by the University follows the outline recommended by the AHPGS. Along with the application request towards accreditation of the Bachelor's study program "Tourism Geography", 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 study program "Tourism Geography":

| | |
|----------|--------------------|
| Annex 01 | Curriculum |
| Annex 02 | Modules |
| Annex 03 | CVs |
| Annex 04 | Diploma Supplement |
| Annex 05 | Declaration |
| Annex 06 | Executive Summary |

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

| | |
|---------|----------------------|
| Annex A | Practice Regulations |
| Annex B | Student Rights |

| | |
|----------|---|
| Annex C | International Relations Regulations |
| Annex D | Erasmus Recognition |
| Annex E | Student Activity Regulations |
| Annex F | Didactic Workload Regulations |
| Annex G | Teachers Selection and Promotion |
| Annex H | Tutoring and Mentoring Regulations |
| Annex I | Regulation for students with disabilities and chronic diseases |
| Annex J | Students Evaluation Regulations |
| Annex K | Credit Allocation Regulations |
| Annex L | Organization and Functioning Continuous Professional Training and Operational Programs Department |
| Annex M | Undergraduate and Dissertation Exam Organization |
| Annex N | Teaching Staff Evaluation |
| Annex O | Admission Procedures |
| Annex P | Organization and Functioning of Teaching Staff Training Department |
| Annex Q | Functioning of Quality Management Commission |
| Annex R | Code of Ethics |
| Annex S | University Charter |
| Annex T | Organisation and Functioning of Duicu Serafim Library |
| Annex U | Teaching Personnel Selection and Promotion Standards |
| Annex V | Organization and Functioning of Counselling, Psychotherapy and Professional Guidance Center |
| Annex W | Quality Manual |
| Annex X | Student Activities Regulations 2 |
| Annex Y | Admission to University Cycles Regulations |
| Annex Z | Organigram |
| Annex AA | Overview Romanian Higher Education System |

| | |
|----------|----------------------|
| Annex BB | Strategic Plan 22-27 |
|----------|----------------------|

The application as well as the additional documents build the basis for the present Assessment Report. The layout bears no significance, as it solely reflects the agreed standard between the AHPGS and the University.

3.2 Structural data of the study program

| | |
|--|---|
| University | Dimitrie Cantemir University of Târgu Mures |
| Faculty/Department | Faculty of Geography |
| Cooperation partner | |
| Title of the study program | Tourism Geography |
| Degree awarded | Bachelor Degree |
| Form of studies | Full-time, 3 years |
| Organizational structure | 6 Semesters of 14 weeks each Classes take place Monday through Friday, 10–18. |
| Language of Studies | Romanian |
| Period of education | 3 years, 6 semesters of 14 weeks each |
| Credit Points (CP) according to the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) | 180 + 10 (thesis) + 3 (physical education) ECTS |
| Hours/CP | 25 Hours/CP |
| Workload | Total: 4,500 Hours Lecture Hours: 2,002 hours Individual Work: 2,498 hours |
| CP for the final paper | 10 ECTS for the final thesis |
| Launch date of the study program | Fall semester 2004 |
| First accreditation | 2011 |
| Time of admission | Fall |
| Number of available places on the program | 100 available places |

| | |
|------------------------------------|----------------|
| Number of enrolled students by now | 155 since 2017 |
| Tuition fees | 3900 Lei |

Chart 1: Structural data of the study program

4 Expert Report

The site visit was carried out on January 30-31, 2024, according to the previously agreed schedule. Representatives from the head office of AHPGS accompanied the expert group.

The expert group met on January 29, 2024, for preliminary talks prior to the site visit. They discussed the submitted application documents and the results of the written evaluation as well as questions that had been raised prior. Furthermore, they prepared the plan of the site visit at the University.

During the site visit, experts conducted discussions with the University management, representatives of the Faculty of Economic Sciences, the chair, vice chair and the teaching staff of the program "Tourism Geography" as well as with students currently studying in the program. Furthermore, they inspected the learning premises, such as lecture halls, seminar classrooms, the library, and computer classrooms. Moreover, the experts had the opportunity to examine the equipment and the capacity of the laboratories.

In the course of the site visit, the University submitted the following additional documents at the request of the experts:

- Erasmus mobilities for students 2017-2023

The Assessment Report is structured in compliance with 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 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 site visit, the results of discussions with the representatives of the University and Faculty of Geography serve as the foundation for the statements made in the expert report.

4.1 Program aims and their implementation

The study program focuses on specific qualification objectives. These objectives cover professional and interdisciplinary aspects and particularly refer to the domain of academic or artistic competences, competences necessary for a qualified employment, skills of social commitment and personal development.

Summary

The faculty emphasizes an advanced grasp of geographical coverage and regional development concepts, fostering the ability to apply this understanding effectively. Students are expected to demonstrate advanced analytical, synthetic, and organizational skills, empowering them to navigate practical challenges and make well-informed decisions. Proficiency in utilizing information technology for mapping and analyzing geographic spaces is a key focus, ensuring graduates possess the necessary technological knowledge. Additionally, the program places importance on cultivating a proficient ability to work collaboratively in teams and engage with specialists from diverse fields. The curriculum aims to equip students with advanced knowledge suitable for pursuing further education through master's and doctoral studies. Furthermore, students are encouraged to actively participate in the development of territorial projects, contributing to both analytical components, such as hydrography and land use, and broader integrated surfaces, including counties, inter-counties, and development regions. This engagement extends to decision-making procedures, particularly within regions facing various challenges, ensuring a well-rounded skill set that goes beyond academic knowledge (SER 1.3.3).

Labor Market

| Graduation year | No of graduating students | No of graduates | Employed (%) | | |
|-----------------|---------------------------|-----------------|-------------------------|-----------------|-------|
| | | | In the field of tourism | In other fields | Total |
| 2021 | 11 | 11 | 27,27 | 27,27 | 54,54 |
| 2022 | 15 | 12 | 66,66 | 16,7 | 83,33 |

Employees in the field of tourism/geography occupy the following positions: travel agent, manager, online booking, tourist board administrator, receptionist, interventions operator.

Judgement

From the experts' point of view, the Bachelor study program "Tourism Geography" focuses on specific qualification objectives. These objectives cover professional and interdisciplinary aspects and particularly refer to the domain of academic competences, competences necessary for a qualified employment, skills of social commitment and personal development.

The experts further inquire about the possibility to continue studying after the Bachelor's degree. The University assures a good connectivity to the University's Master study programs. Many students continue their studies at the Faculty of Economic Sciences, according to the students and the University.

The number of employed graduates in the field of tourism increased from 27 % in 2021 to 66 % in 2022. The low number in 2021 is mainly due to the restrictions in tourism during the pandemic.

Decision

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

4.2 Structure of the study program

The study program aims to provide students with specialized and interdisciplinary knowledge as well as professional, methodological and general competences. The study program has a modular structure that is closely linked to the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS)² and a course-related examination system. Descriptions of the modules contain all necessary information, as required in the ECTS User's Guide (particularly with regard to the details about learning content and outcomes, methods of learning, prerequisites for the allocation of ECTS credits, workload).

The current state of research in the field is reflected in the curriculum of the study program.

The combination and succession of the modules of the study program are consistent with the specified qualification objectives (described earlier).

² http://ec.europa.eu/education/tools/docs/ects-guide_en.pdf

It is assured that students receive the support and guidance they need for the organization and accomplishment of assignments and the learning process in general.

The arrangement of internships in the study program allows acquisition of ECTS credits. Provided that the program offers exchange mobility gaps, they will be integrated into students' curriculum.

Study programs with special profile requirements (e.g. dual, part-time, occupational or distance learning study programs) comply with particular aspects that are considered as appropriate and proportionate. These particular aspects are continuously observed in the study program.

Summary

The program comprises a total of 61 modules, out of which six are elective modules and 18 are optional modules. There are between eight to twelve modules in total provided for each semester. All modules have to be completed within six semesters. Practice weeks are allocated in semester two and four. The list of modules offered:

| Nr. | Title | Sem. | CP |
|-------------------|--------------------------------------|------|----|
| Semester 1 | | | |
| 01. | Cartography, topography | 1 | 4 |
| 02. | Geography of non-european continents | 1 | 5 |
| 03. | Economic geography | 1 | 4 |
| 04. | General physical geography | 1 | 5 |
| 05. | Meteorology and climatology | 1 | 5 |
| 06. | Economy and management in tourism | 1 | 4 |
| 07. | English for tourism | 1 | 3 |
| 08. | General Geology | 1 | 2 |
| | Total | | 30 |
| Semester 2 | | | |
| 09. | Geography of Europe | 2 | 3 |

| | | | |
|-----|--|---|----|
| 10. | Geomorphology | 2 | 3 |
| 11. | Field applications * | 2 | 2 |
| 12. | Tourism geography | 2 | 4 |
| 13. | Historical and political geography | 2 | 3 |
| 14. | Policies and development strategies in tourism | 2 | 3 |
| 15. | English for tourism - correspondence and promotion | 2 | 3 |
| 16. | Geographic Information Systems | 2 | 3 |
| 17. | Specialized practice ** | 2 | 3 |
| 18. | Romanian culture and civilization | 2 | 3 |
| 19. | Geography of resources | 2 | 3 |
| 20. | Geotourism | 2 | 2 |
| | Total | | 30 |
| | Semester 3 | | |
| 21. | Romanian physical geography | 3 | 5 |
| 22. | Geography of population and settlements | 3 | 6 |
| 23. | Ecotourism | 3 | 6 |
| 24. | English I | 3 | 4 |
| 25. | Guide techniques | 3 | 4 |
| 26. | Rural and urban tourism | 3 | 4 |
| 27. | Social geography | 3 | 5 |
| 28. | Geographic toponymy and ethnography | 3 | 5 |
| 29. | Biogeography | 3 | 2 |
| | Total | | 30 |
| | Semester 4 | | |
| 30. | Regional geography of Romania | 4 | 5 |
| 31. | Hydrology | 4 | 5 |
| 32. | Field applications * | 4 | 2 |
| 33. | Balneoclimatology | 4 | 5 |
| 34. | Specialized practice ** | 4 | 3 |
| 35. | English II | 4 | 4 |

| | | | |
|-----|---|---|------|
| 36 | Geography of natural and anthropic hazards and risks | 4 | 4 |
| 37 | Statistics | 4 | 4 |
| 38 | Tourism marketing | 4 | 3 |
| 39 | Organization and management of tourism enterprises | 4 | 3 |
| 40 | Scientific and professional writing and communication | 4 | 2 |
| | Total | | 30 |
| | Semester 5 | | |
| 41. | Environmental geography | 5 | 6 |
| 42. | Methods and techniques of analysis in tourism | 5 | 6 |
| 43. | Tourism in the European Union | 5 | 6 |
| 44. | Physical education | 5 | 3 |
| 45. | History of art and religions | 5 | 4 |
| 46. | Foreign language II - 1 (English) | 5 | 4 |
| 47. | Foreign language II - 1 (French) | 5 | 4 |
| 48. | Tourism planning | 5 | 3 |
| 49. | Promotion in tourism | 5 | 3 |
| 50. | Professional ethic and intellectual property | 5 | 2 |
| | Total | | 33 |
| | Semester 6 | | |
| 51. | Mountain studies and tourism mountain | 6 | 4 |
| 52. | Geographical planning of space | 6 | 4 |
| 53. | The touristic heritage of Romania | 6 | 5 |
| 54. | The preparation of the bachelor's thesis* | 6 | 5 |
| 55. | Tourist attractions evaluation | 6 | 4 |
| 56. | Promotion of the bachelor thesis | 6 | 10** |
| 57. | Foreign language II – 2 (English) | 6 | 4 |
| 58. | Foreign language II – 2 (French) | 6 | 4 |
| 59. | Tourism accountancy | 6 | 3 |

| | | | |
|-----|-------------------|----------|-----------------|
| 60. | Medical geography | 6 | 3 |
| 61. | Demography | 6 | 2 |
| | Total | | 30 + 10 |
| | Total | 6 | 183 + 10 |

Table 2: Module Oversight

The module description/catalog covers the following aspects: The syllabi contain the goals of the module, the skills each module aims to provide, the basic topics, time allotment of lecture, seminar and applicative activities, student assessment system and minimal bibliography (SER 1.3.4).

The following table breaks down the typology of module and the number of credits:

| No. | Category | Code | No of credits |
|-----|----------------------|------|---------------------|
| 1 | Compulsory subjects | CS | 150 |
| 2 | Optional subject | OS | 33 |
| 3 | License project | LP | 10 |
| | Total credits | | 180 + 3 + 10 |

The composition of the educational framework aligns with established standards in the realm of "Exact Sciences and Natural Sciences," as delineated at the national level. Furthermore, it guarantees harmonization with the curricula of analogous studies in European Union nations.

According to the guidelines provided by the SSESNS the curriculum allocates a specific percentage to fundamental disciplines (FD) at 41%, specialized disciplines in the field (SD) at 41%, and complementary disciplines (CD) at 19%. This distribution reflects adherence to the stipulated standards.

Each module included in the curriculum follows syllabi that are tailored to the profile and mission of the specialization. These modules cover themes in accordance with the program's requirements. The alignment between curriculum and program objectives is achieved through a vertically structured preparation, progressing from foundational modules to those applicable in the specialized field. The content of curriculum, encompassing fundamental notions, concrete

presentations of subject-specific elements, and applicative works, fosters integration, synergy, and the encouragement of personal initiative in the field of geography (SER 1.2.2).

In the case of the “Tourism Geography” specialization, the curriculum aligns with the existing plans at universities, both domestically and internationally, that offer similar specializations. Annex 4 provides the module descriptions specific to the “Tourism Geography” specialization. The curriculum was crafted to leverage the expertise of the teaching staff, acquired through their involvement in preparing students within the geography field (SER 1.3.4).

Didactic concepts and multimedia

The didactic methodology is a combination of lectures, interactive group discussions, and creative critical analysis, utilizing current didactic technologies based on IT. Courses, case studies, and work notebooks for practical tasks and applications are developed for the subjects in the curriculum. The workload for each module, including contact/practical/self-study hours, and the corresponding Credit Points (CP) are detailed in the module descriptions. These descriptions include qualification objectives, competences, learning outcomes, content, teaching and learning activities, requirements for credit awards, module examination details, usability of the module, and recommended bibliography (SER 1.2.4).

The teaching staff, in collaboration with the Faculty Council, reviews syllabi and contents of each course, application, and practical class. Both students and teaching staff evaluate curricula and syllabi through questionnaires at the end of the semester, facilitating continuous improvement in the teaching process and enhancing students' access to useful information and learning methods (SER 1.2.4).

The Faculty of Geography encourages interdisciplinary didactic activities and aims to engage students and teachers from other faculties whenever possible. Didactic concepts and methods within the faculty prioritize independent and critical thinking, fostering students' ability to formulate their reasoning and arguments.

Faculty students receive counseling from professors, especially the dean, with direct contact opportunities through consultation programs held at least 1-2 hours per week for each teacher (SER 1.2.4).

Students and teachers have access to the Teams platform. The platform allows professors to create courses, share materials, conduct assessments, and engage students through various features. Microsoft Teams offers a range of collaborative tools, including audio/video interaction, chat, team creation, calendar scheduling, forms for quizzes, file-sharing, screen sharing, and more. Corresponding to ARACIS regulations, the Faculty of Geography limits online teaching to a maximum of 35% for courses and 25% for practical activities (SER 1.2.5).

Practical relevance

Practical activities, such as the field application in the 2nd and 4th semester and specialized practice in tourism-related units during the same periods, are conducted in alignment with the approved module description and under faculty coordination. The latter involves a practice convention, establishing a partnership between the University, the practicing unit, and the student. The research practice for the license project, occurring in semester five, is overseen by the license project coordinator (SER 1.2.6).

In terms of support and supervision, the specialized practice is executed under the guidance of a supervisor, which is responsible for planning, organizing, and overseeing the practical training. The practical activities aim to reinforce the course content by providing students with hands-on experiences that apply the presented concepts and tools, facilitating the practical application of theoretical knowledge (SER 1.2.6).

Quality assurance measures are in place to ensure the effectiveness of work placements. The coordinators of practical activities possess higher education degrees in the field of tourism and hold certified pedagogical training. The equipped facilities for teaching and research activities adhere to the current level of scientific knowledge development, aligning with European Universities and international best practices in technical rules, safety, and sanitary regulations. Furthermore, the qualification of practical instructors and the organization of practical instructor meetings are detailed in Annex 1 and work placement regulations are submitted if applicable (SER 1.2.6).

International aspects of the curriculum

The program at the Faculty of Geography aligns with European standards, incorporating international perspectives and staying updated through references to other Universities. While focusing on Romanian touristic activity, general disciplines are enriched with international bibliography, emphasizing principles of international tourism, state relations, and the organization of touristic systems globally. Special attention is given to the study of European Union tourism (SER 1.2.8).

The curriculum includes English and French for tourism, fostering proficiency through activities such as summarizing articles, discussing current events, and practicing written legal analysis. Opportunities for studying abroad include Universities in Turkey, France, Spain, Italy, Germany, and mobility placements in any EU country. The program encourages international exposure, and past student placements have included countries like the UK, Ireland, Greece, and Norway (SER 1.2.8).

The recognition of University transferable credits for students applying under the Erasmus program is governed by regulations approved by the University Senate. Further details and the list of Erasmus partner universities are available on the University's website (SER 1.2.9).

Integration of the research into the course of study

The integration of research into the course of study at the Faculty of Geography is a prominent aspect of academic life. The teaching staff is actively and continuously engaged in research activities, with nationally and internationally recognized achievements. Their involvement spans various international research, development and innovation projects, often securing roles as project directors, experts, or team members. The faculty organizes regular scientific events such as symposiums, conferences, and round tables, where communications are published in dedicated magazines or books with ISBN or ISSN listings. Key research activities include:

- Annual Scientific Symposium:

Hosted by the University, this symposium features a dedicated section for tourism geography and interdisciplinary research. Scientific communications presented in the "Geography" section were published in the *Academica Science Journal* (2012-

2016) and since 2017 in a scientific research volume at Risoprint Cluj-Napoca Publishing House with ISBN.

- Scientific Communication Session of Students and Master Students:

Organized annually since 2008, this session provides students and master students with an opportunity to engage in scientific research activities. The most valuable research works were awarded and published in the *Academica Science Journal* (2012-2016) and since 2017 in a scientific research volume at Risoprint Cluj-Napoca Publishing House with ISBN.

- Workshops:

Conducted once or twice annually, these workshops address topical subjects with guests from the business or academic environment. Starting 2022, the results of scientific research from workshops are published in the volume of the "Dimitrie Cantemir" University's Symposium by Filodiritto Proceedings Publishing House in Italy (SER 1.2.7).

Judgement

The study program "Tourism Geography" is affiliated with the Faculty of Geography. The study program's mission, general and specific learning objectives, curriculum and outcome competences were presented in the written documentation. The curriculum description specifies the qualification objectives, competences (knowledge and understanding, explanation and interpretation etc.) and learning outcomes for each module.

The experts inquire about the impact of the previous accreditation of the study program "Tourism Geograpgy" in 2018 and the changes that had been made since then. The University explains that both the faculty and the University as a whole have focused on expanding research in recent years. Every four years the University prepares overarching topics and the faculty creates a research plan on faculty-level. New research projects were started and students were involved in a number of these projects. The experts conclude that the expansion of research is clearly visible and validation criteria for research activities are provided. Nevertheless, the research plan is rather based on individual research goals of the teaching staff and less on a common goal or strategy of the faculty as a whole.

In terms of further development opportunities, the experts recommend developing an overall research strategy with goals and means of the faculty or institution and strategic considerations about a coherent research policy and research topics based on long-term considerations.

The study program's goal is to train specialists for the field of tourism who are able to work in multidisciplinary teams in the field of evaluation and territorial planning on the local, regional, and national level. Graduates should, therefore, be prepared to enter into the Romanian job market. Employees in the field of tourism/geography occupy the following positions: travel agent, manager, online booking, tourist board administrator, receptionist, interventions operator.

Students are supposed to amass general competences connected to the field of Tourism Geography, e.g. understanding and using the underlying concepts of geographical coverage and regional development as well as acquiring documentation skills and learning an international language.

The experts agree with the above-mentioned qualification objectives. Moreover, the study program "Tourism Geography" also focuses on qualifying students for social responsibility and personal development throughout all modules. The experts conclude that graduates have good employment opportunities on the Romanian job market.

The curriculum of the study program "Tourism Geography" comprises of compulsory, optional and elective subjects. Compulsory and optional subjects are an obligatory part of the curriculum. Regarding the optional modules, students have a choice between two (or more) modules. Elective modules are not necessary in order to graduate but they are offered to enrich the curriculum.

The experts especially appreciate the optional modules which complete the offered courses very well. The program is also 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. Further-more, the experts take note that the study program covers a range of relevant topics. They highlight that

modules with touristic contexts are provided in all semester, at least through optional modules.

On site, the experts discuss the modules and content of the study program. The experts are in support of acquiring language skills and also the skills in "Business communication and public relations". Nevertheless, the experts recommend integrating a module on intercultural communication into the study program.

The experts further inquire about blended learning and online teaching. According to the University, online teaching is limited to 25 % of total teaching. The online teaching mainly takes place in the winter months. Students and teaching staff welcome this limitation and appreciate face-to-face teaching.

The arrangement of internships in the study program allows the acquisition of credits. Alongside the theoretical curriculum, practical training is part of the curriculum. The field application practices are conducted in the second and fourth semester (2x2 CP). Specialized practice in tourism-related units is also conducted in the second and fourth semester (2x3 CP). The experts take note of the cooperation agreements and come to the conclusion that the University carefully selects its cooperative partners. It became sufficiently clear that the University strives to offer the same quality of practical training for all students at various cooperation partners. Nevertheless and especially in the field of tourism, the University should try to collaborate with international employers to offer the students perspective and various possibilities for practical training.

The expert group points out that also research elements are integrated in some modules. Hence, students develop a basic understanding research. They also develop the ability to plan and conduct a fundamental or applied research in their area of expertise. The experts recommend using synergies between the study programs wherever possible, e.g. when communicating research methods.

Regarding the internationality, the experts took notice of the measures put in place by the University in order to pursue its international orientation. The students and staff of the Faculty of Economic Sciences for example completed an excursion in Prague. According to the University, the number of outgoing students increased

during the last years. The University achieves mobility of its students by means of the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) as well as taking part in Erasmus exchange programs.

The experts highly recommend expanding the possibilities of going abroad through short-term stays. Shorter periods abroad, for example within the scope of an internship or summer school, could be more attractive and easier to finance for students. Furthermore, the experts recommend finding creative ways of internationalization, for example internationalization from home or online conferences, to include their students in the international scientific community.

The experts acknowledge the very detailed course files with its contents and aims, which allows a high level of transparency. In the experts' opinion, the structure of the curriculum seems to make the workload manageable.

Decision

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

4.3 Admission and Feasibility

The admission requirements and, if applied, student selection procedures are specified. They correspond to the standards of the study program.

Feasibility of the study program is guaranteed. The amount of student workload is appropriate.

Student support services, as well as specialized and general consultations, are provided by the University in a sufficient and appropriate manner.

As a whole, the organization of the education process ensures the successful implementation of the study program.

Summary

Enrollment in undergraduate studies for the July/September sessions follows a specific admission procedure that explicitly requires candidates to hold a baccalaureate diploma. Eligible candidates for Bachelor study programs include high school graduates with a Baccalaureate degree. Selection criteria do not consider factors such as age, sex, ethnicity, religion, race, affiliation to political or legal organizations (provided activities comply with Romanian laws), or non-

threatening chronic diseases. The required admission documents are annually published on the University's website (SER 1.5.1).

For enrolled students, the Counseling, Psychotherapy, and Professional Guidance Center within Dimitrie Cantemir University of Tîrgu Mureş is available for assistance. Additionally, the tutoring activities, encompassing student information, counseling, and guidance throughout their academic journey, can be accessed. Each faculty member creates a consultation schedule, allowing interested students to participate. Students can also seek guidance from the IT staff to manage activities conducted on Microsoft Teams.

Judgement

The admission policies and procedures along with the requirements are properly documented and made publicly available. Admission requirements are centralized within the University. The experts determine the admission procedures and requirements to be appropriate, as they correspond to the standards of the study program.

The experts determine a relatively high number of exams to be passed during the study program. The University credibly conveys that the workload of the students is monitored. Asking the students on site about their workload, they consider the workload, the amount, and the examination cycle as appropriate. The type as well as the time of the different examinations is defined and communicated to the students transparently and at the beginning of the course.

The experts confirm that the University takes good measures to guarantee the feasibility of the study programs despite the high workload. The organization of the education process ensures the successful implementation of the study program.

The experts appreciate the fact that students with disabilities or chronic illness are offered compensatory measures when writing exams, such as extra time or writing the exam in another room.

On site, it became obvious that the teaching staff follows an "open-door-policy". The availability and support by the teaching staff is very good, according to the

students. Additionally, every batch of students has their own tutor and a representative in the Senate for overarching topics.

Furthermore, there is a financial aid system for students. Scholarships are offered for financially disadvantaged students.

Decision

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

4.4 Examination system and transparency

Examinations serve to determine whether the envisaged qualification objectives have been achieved. These examinations are focused on students' knowledge and competences. The requirements to students' performance in examinations are regulated and published. The frequency of examinations, as well as their organization, is appropriate.

The University guarantees that students with disabilities or chronic illnesses receive compensation with regard to time limits and formal requirements of the study process, as well as all final and course-related performance records.

Information concerning the study program, process of education, admission requirements and the compensation regulations for students with disabilities are documented and published.

Summary

| | Evaluation type | | Total |
|---------------------|-----------------|-----------|-----------|
| | Exam | Colloquy | |
| 1st Semester | 6 | 1 | 7 |
| 2nd Semester | 7 | 3 | 10 |
| 3rd Semester | 5 | 1 | 6 |
| 4th Semester | 5 | 3 | 8 |
| 5th Semester | 5 | 2 | 7 |
| 6th Semester | 6 | 2 | 8 |
| TOTAL | 34 | 12 | 46 |

The examination system at the University is designed to assess students' achievement of qualification objectives, emphasizing knowledge and competencies. Examinations are appropriately organized, allowing a balance between study and rest time. Evaluation requirements are regulated and published,

following rigorous application by the Faculty of Geography. Various forms of evaluation include oral and written exams, colloquiums, and verification tests. The curriculum includes 34 exams and twelve colloquiums, covering oral and written formats, grid tests, and practical problem-solving (SER 1.2.3).

The examination sessions occur in fall, winter and summer. Re-examination sessions occur only in fall. Students can repeat the examination twice if they do not pass it the first time in the same academic year. The study program complies with national and European legislation, assigning 180 ECTS credits for geography faculties, with an additional 10 ECTS for the bachelor's thesis. Credit allocation considers workload and involves faculty participation, aligning with internal and external quality assurance standards (SER 1.2.3).

The University prioritizes equal opportunities for students, ensuring access to spaces and activities. Non-discrimination measures are firmly adopted, prohibiting discrimination, exploitation, and promoting fair sharing of rights and duties. Admission criteria do not consider age, sex, ethnicity, religion, race, affiliation to political or legal organizations, or chronic diseases (SER 1.2.3).

Students' complete University studies by publicly supporting the Bachelor's thesis, which is proposed six months before the exam. The thesis includes a theoretical and applicative part, adhering to international academic standards and reflecting specific competencies covered by the University's mission. Evaluation of the bachelor's thesis is conducted on a scale of 1 to 10 by a specialized commission, and a minimum grade of 6 is required for promotion. Successfully passing the bachelor's examination earns students 10 additional credit points in addition to the mandatory 180 CP (SER 1.2.3).

The recognition of credits transferred from other Universities (domestic and abroad) is regulated according to the requirements of the Lisbon Recognition Convention in Annex C (International Relation Regulation). Regulations, in terms of timeline and formal guidelines for studies, concerning the compensations for students with disabilities and chronic illnesses you will find in Annex I.

Judgement

The University uses a continuous assessment process to ensure the quality of education for its students. The study program has a course-related examination system. Its implementation, including the grading system, course load regulations, repetition of courses and exams is regulated and transparent for the students.

From the experts' point of view, the examination serves to determine whether the envisaged qualification objectives have been achieved. These examinations are focused on students' knowledge and competences. Nevertheless, in the experts' opinion, the study program includes a very high number of exams which causes a high workload not only for students but also for the teaching staff. The transparent information of examination methods and of the examination schedule at the beginning of each term makes the high number of assessments during and at the end of each semester manageable. The frequency of examinations, as well as their organizations, is appropriate.

Thus, the experts conclude that the examinations, although numerous, serve to determine whether the envisaged qualification objectives have been achieved or not and are focused on students' knowledge.

The University guarantees that students with disabilities or chronic illnesses receive compensation regarding time limits, attendance and formal requirements of the study process as well as all final and course-related performance records.

The University ensures that information about its activities, particularly the programs it offers, is easily accessible to prospective and current students, graduates, other stakeholders and the public. The published information includes detailed insights into the selection criteria for programs, intended learning outcomes, qualifications awarded, and the procedures employed for teaching, learning, and assessment. Furthermore, pass rates and available learning opportunities to students as well as graduate employment information are shared.

Upon graduation, students are awarded a Bachelor graduation diploma, as well as a Diploma Supplement, composed in both Romanian and English.

Decision

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

4.5 Teaching staff and material equipment

Professionalism and a sufficient number of human resources assure the successful implementation of the study program. Qualifications of the teaching personnel include teaching and research abilities correspond to the requirements of the study program. Recruitment and appointment of teaching positions are appropriate. Interdisciplinary links to other study programs are taken into consideration.

Measures for the professional and personal development of the teaching personnel are provided.

Qualitative and quantitative sufficiency of the equipment and space resources assures the successful implementation of the study program.

Summary

The Geography Faculty`s teaching staff is composed of eight persons, all full time employed: one university professor, three associate professors, four university lecturers and three associate teaching staff. All of them are holders of PhD in the field of the occupied position.

The teachers to students ration in the program is 1:11.

The system and criteria for selecting teaching staff encompass various factors, including academic publications and research engagement. Candidates are evaluated based on articles published in ISI-rated magazines, with attention to their relative influence score and databases. Additionally, books, book chapters, and works in conference volumes contribute to the assessment. The candidate's involvement as an editor in both foreign and domestic magazines, especially ISI-rated ones, is considered. Research coordination, participation in academic roles abroad, keynote speaking at conferences, and receiving grants or scholarships are key elements. Furthermore, initiating academic study programs and holding memberships in national committees and councils are integral to the selection

process, reflecting a comprehensive approach to academic excellence. Detailed information can be found in Annex U.

Premises and Library

All faculties, including the Faculty of Geography, utilize the shared resources provided by the University. There are a total of twelve classrooms, each accommodating 60 to 120 students, and 17 seminar rooms with 30 seats, each equipped with projectors and computers for teaching activities. Additionally, there are four smaller computer rooms, capable of hosting 12-13 students each, and a larger computer room with a capacity for 23 students (SER 2.3.1).

Specifically for the Tourism Geography specialization within the Faculty of Geography, five laboratories and rooms are allocated with equipment tailored to this field:

- Laboratory of Physical Geography (covering Climatology, Hydrology, Geomorphology)
- Cartography and GIS Laboratory
- Room of Human Geography
- Room of Tourism Geography
- Audio-visual laboratory featuring works, films, CDs, and projectors

The University's library, accessible to students and staff, operates daily, including Saturdays during examination sessions. It houses traditional and electronic media, including CDs, DVDs, and access to databases like JSTOR and EBSCO. The reading room has 200 seats, and the total library fund for all faculties is approximately 34,000 volumes. The Faculty of Geography contributes 9,866 volumes to the library.

Judgement

New teaching staff is thoroughly briefed about the program and their teaching responsibilities before they start teaching. Overall, the teaching and academic staff at the Dimitrie Cantemir University of Targu Mures shows a very high level of commitment and potential for the execution as well as further development of the study program they are responsible for. The experts conclude that there is a strong corporate identity and positive group dynamics among the University and the

faculty administration. A high number of teachers already studied at the University, before starting to teach, and are therefore closely connected to the institution.

The experts find the number of human resources allocated to the program to be sufficient to carry out its functions. The teaching staff is well qualified and in possession of academic and technical credentials and experience adequate to their tasks.

The University informs its employees about opportunities for personal and professional development transparently and actively encourages their participation in workshops, training courses and conferences intended to improve their abilities, which is confirmed during the talks with the staff on site. On site, the teaching staff and the experts discuss the lack of time for research due to teaching responsibilities. According to the University, the teaching hours are not reduced to participate in research. The experts recommend finding a regulation for this issue.

In discussions with students and teaching staff, it became clear that an elevator is necessary to support students with disabilities and chronic illnesses and to guarantee the accessibility for students and staff. The experts highly recommend equipping the building with an elevator.

Decision

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

4.6 Quality assurance

The University has developed and documented a 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.

Summary

The University has established a documented Quality Assurance System to ensure that educational and related services are provided in compliance with established quality assurance objectives. The Quality Manual contains policies, strategies, and elements of the Quality Assurance System that satisfy the requirements established through specific objectives. The Procedures Manual, associated with the Quality Manual, describes in detail the processes and responsibilities assigned to the members of the organization. The University's quality assurance measures are integrated into the overarching quality assurance measures of the entire University, and the University is committed to maintaining and continuously improving academic, research, and related standards.

The Quality Manual outlines the University's quality policy, which includes setting and achieving academic standards, ensuring qualified and competent academic staff, ensuring a high degree of filling in of teaching positions, and defining the orientation, scope, and quality of scientific research. The faculty's quality assurance concept is supported by various organizational and decision-making structures, including the Quality Assurance Committee, and the Internal Quality Assurance System (SER 1.6.1).

Furthermore, the University places a strong emphasis on measuring and monitoring educational and related processes to ensure compliance with specified requirements, their Quality Management System (QMS), planned goals, and outcomes. The Quality Management Representative (QMR) continually assesses client satisfaction, which includes students and other key stakeholders, to obtain direct feedback on how well the organization meets their needs. This feedback is gathered through various means such as student surveys, academic staff performance evaluations, and assessments of educational processes. The process of measuring client satisfaction is documented in internal procedures like "Student Satisfaction Assessment" and "Effective Resolution of Students' Suggestions and Requirements". Any necessary corrective or preventive actions are taken as per

the requirements. The data from this measurement process are analyzed during QMS analysis meetings. The results of monitoring and verification confirm the QMS's ability to meet quality objectives and defined requirements. If results fall short of requirements, corrective or preventive actions are taken. Additionally, the University follows specific procedures for student assessment, staff performance appraisal, graduation assessments, and testing in line with curriculum requirements. Re-examination sessions and procedures are provided for students who do not meet module completion deadlines, and students can suspend programs and resume them as per ECTS guidelines and specific study documents (SER 1.6.2).

The University constantly analyzes students' satisfaction, supported by student surveys, staff appraisals, and assessments of educational and related processes, implementing corrective and preventive measures as needed. Responses from former graduates can be found in SER 1.6 (quality assurance section).

The University monitors and measures the characteristics of the teaching process to ensure educational services meet internal procedures' requirements. Any nonconformities are recorded, and corrective actions are taken. "Dimitrie Cantemir" University of Targu Mures is also dedicated to continuous improvement, considering both internal and external proposals. Corrective actions are implemented to prevent the recurrence of nonconformities. The Quality Management Commission registers and monitors these actions, which may lead to procedure modifications when necessary. All staff members, based on their qualifications and competencies, participate in these corrective actions. The Quality Management Commission oversees the registration and monitoring of corrective actions and their outcomes.

In summary, the University maintains a thorough quality management system to ensure client satisfaction, adherence to standards, and continuous improvement in educational processes and services. Corrective actions and regular data analysis are essential elements of this system.

In 2023, the Council of the Faculty of Geography at "Dimitrie Cantemir" University in Tîrgu Mures conducted a study on geographic professions and tourism training's

relevance. After consulting professional associations, experts, and students in their final years from high schools in Mures county, the need for a Bachelor's program in geography emerged. The University offers this program, anticipating a rising demand for Tourism Geography specialists in the next 5-10 years. Current trends, like domestic tourism, local travel, outdoor activities, nature-based products, and rural tourism, are shaping the industry. The growing importance of ecotourism, driven by social and environmental challenges, is boosting demand for Geography and tourism professionals.

The average number of hours per week is 22-28. The ratio between course hours and applied didactic activities must be 1/1, with a maximum allowed deviation of +50% for applied activities. The hours allocated to the specialized practice and the development of the bachelor's thesis will not be taken into account.

According to the regulation, the QMC is responsible for several key tasks, including the development of a Quality Manual and Procedures Manual, monitoring their implementation, preparing an annual quality report for the University, evaluating the quality of educational services, conducting surveys among students and other stakeholders, and maintaining a database related to management and quality assurance. The QMC also identifies areas for improvement based on identified nonconformities and quality standards.

The structure of the QMC includes a Quality Management Representative (QMR), a secretary, and commission members representing teaching staff and students from different faculties. The QMR is nominated by the Chairman of the Board of Directors, and the secretary of the Commission is the University's lawyer.

The regulation specifies that the QMC meets quarterly to discuss and make decisions related to quality management. Decisions are recorded in meeting minutes, and the Commission ensures the execution of these decisions. The QMR represents the Commission in interactions with the Board of Directors and other academic governing bodies.

The regulation emphasizes the QMC's subordination to the Board of Directors and its role in implementing the University's policies, mission, and strategy. The QMR

is required to present an annual report of the Commission's activities to the Board of Directors, including the Annual Report of Audit and Evaluation of Institutional Quality (Annex Q).

The Career Counseling and Orientation Center (CCOC) plays a vital role in offering new opportunities to students within the University's educational system through career counseling and orientation activities. Its main objective is to guide students in planning and managing their educational paths optimally, thereby reducing University dropouts caused by career-related issues, personal reasons, or difficulty adapting to the University environment. Additionally, the center facilitates the connection between students and the job market, helping them understand the real needs and challenges of the labor market and enhancing their employability in their respective fields of study (SER 1.14).

The Center for Career Counseling and Orientation has specific goals, including informing candidates, students, and graduates about the educational opportunities available at the University. It also offers counseling on individual profiles, professional aspirations, interests, motivation, and more. Specialized services related to career choices are provided, fostering responsible and informed decision-making regarding academic and career paths. The center promotes effective communication between instructors and students and supports students through mentoring programs and tutoring, among other initiatives (SER 1.14).

The documents required for admission are annually published on the University's website. Examination criteria related to student performance are established and made available online. Additionally, themes for Bachelor's theses are proposed at least 6 months before the exam.

Various information such as schedules, announcements, etc., are also posted on the website for students to consult. The University is committed to establishing a distinctive identity within the higher education and Romanian scientific research framework. This involves promoting receptivity to students' concerns and needs while ensuring equal opportunities for all members of the University community.

Enrolled students have access to support services from the Counseling, Psychotherapy, and Professional Guidance Center at Dimitrie Cantemir University of Tîrgu Mureş. Furthermore, tutoring services, which cover student information, counseling, and guidance throughout their academic experience, are available. Each faculty member establishes a consultation schedule, providing an opportunity for interested students to participate. Students also have the option to seek guidance from the IT staff for the management of activities conducted on Microsoft Teams.

Judgement

From the experts' point of view, the University has a well-structured system of quality assurance spread across all of its units. The University has developed and documented a concept of quality assurance in the education process, teaching and research, which serves as the basis for the quality-oriented development and implementation of the study program "Tourism Geography".

On site, the University explains the relevance of the quality assurance system at the University. Feedback from students is highly appreciated and taken into consideration, according to students and the University.

The University consistently monitors and periodically reviews its programs to ensure alignment with established objectives, responsiveness to the evolving needs of students and society, and the facilitation of continuous program improvement. These systematic reviews are integral to the University's commitment to maintaining the relevance of study programs and fostering a supportive and effective learning environment for students. The evaluation process encompasses various aspects, including the regular examination of program content in light of the latest research in the discipline, consideration of changing societal needs, assessment of student workload, progression, and completion rates, evaluation of the effectiveness of procedures for student assessment, collection of feedback on student expectations, needs, and satisfaction regarding the program, and examination of the suitability of the learning environment and support services for the program's objectives.

The University possess a robust data collection system and gathers comprehensive data on its study programs and other activities. The information gathered depends, to some extent, on the type and mission of the institution. Various Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are captured by the institution. A range of information regarding study programs and activities is consistently captured by the institution. Student progression, success rates, and dropout rates are inherent considerations in the institution's analytical processes. With an established feedback mechanism, the University regularly measures student satisfaction with their programs, the learning resources and the available student support. The University also actively tracks and analyzes the career paths of its graduates. The institution seamlessly integrates the collected information into its existing internal quality assurance system. Mechanisms are in place to ensure that the perspectives of students and staff are considered in decision-making processes.

Regular program reviews and revisions are conducted, actively involving students and other stakeholders in the process. The information collected from these reviews undergoes analysis, and program adaptations are made to ensure the program is up-to-date. Any actions planned or taken as a result of these reviews are communicated to all relevant stakeholders. Furthermore, the University ensures the publication of revised program specifications, fostering transparency and keeping stakeholders informed of changes resulting from the systematic review process.

Decision

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

4.7 Gender equality and equal opportunities

The University's actions on the provision of gender equality and promotion of equal opportunities for students with particular living circumstances are implemented in a transparent manner.

Summary

The University aspires to establish a unique identity within the higher education and Romanian scientific research landscape by prioritizing student well-being, offering equal opportunities to all members of the University community, and evaluating student performance based on educational engagement, final exam results, and active involvement in University life. Furthermore, the institution is committed to ensuring accessibility and tailored support for students with physical disabilities in line with relevant legal provisions. Any adjustments to the regulations are subject to approval by the University Senate, primarily in response to legislative changes or proposals from Faculty Councils (Annex I).

Judgement

During the visit, it became clear that the University has a well-established concept for gender equality. Both, the students and the University report that the concept is being put into practice.

The University demonstrates its commitment to the provision of equal opportunities for all students and shows openness for diversity and social development. Overall, the experts conclude that the University's actions on the provision of gender equality and promotion of equal opportunities for students with particular living circumstances are implemented transparently.

Decision

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

5 Conclusion

The experts appreciate the positive development of the University over the last five years since the last accreditation of the study program "Tourism Geography".

The examination system is well-regulated and fair, with various tools available to assess student progress. The staff is qualified and there is a good balance between research and teaching. The quality assurance system in place is robust. Evaluation results are used to make changes and shared with students. The institution has non-discriminatory practices in place for admission and promotes gender equality.

Based on the information from written documents and the results of the site visit, the experts concluded that the Bachelor study program "Tourism Geography" offered at "Dimitrie Cantemir" University of Targu Mures fulfil the above-described criteria. Hence, the experts recommended that the Accreditation Commission of AHPGS make a positive decision regarding the accreditation of the study program.

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

- an overall research strategy including faculty goals and long-term strategic considerations about a coherent research policy and research topics should be developed
- Synergies between the study programs should be used wherever possible, e.g. when communicating research methods.
- A module on intercultural communication should be integrated into the study program
- Collaborations with international employers should be offered.
- the possibilities of going abroad through short-term stays should be expanded. Shorter periods abroad, for example within the scope of an internship or summer school, could be more attractive and easier to finance for students.
- Creative ways of internationalization, for example internationalization from home or online conferences, to include students in the international scientific community should be sought.

- The buildings should be barrier-free. It became clear that an elevator is necessary to support students with disabilities and chronic illnesses, and to guarantee the accessibility for students and staff.
- Teaching hours should be reduced to participate in research projects

6 Decision of the accreditation commission

Decision of the accreditation commission May 14, 2024

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

The site visit of the University took place on January 30-31, 2024, according to the previously agreed-upon schedule.

The accreditation procedure is structured according to 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) as well as 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 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 ("Methodology").

The Accreditation Commission of the AHPGS discussed the procedural documents and the vote of the expert group regarding the Assessment Report.

The Bachelor study program requires the obtainment of 180 credit points according to the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS). The regulated study period in the program "Tourism Geography" is three years (six semesters). The study program comprises a total of 61 modules, out of which six are elective modules and 18 are optional modules. The language of instruction is Romanian. The Bachelor study program "Tourism Geography" is completed with awarding of the academic degree "Bachelor of Geography". Admission takes place every fall

semester. The first cohort of students was admitted to the study program in the academic year 2004/2005.

The Accreditation Commission of the AHPGS considers that all Accreditation Criteria are fulfilled and adopts the following decision:

The Bachelor study program "Tourism Geography" is recommended for accreditation for the duration of five years until September 30, 2029.

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 Assessment Report.