



Master`s Degree in Tourism, Strategy & Leadership

Quality Assurance, Control & Monitoring Procedures

Introduction

The purpose of this document is to explain the quality assurance, control and monitoring procedures (QACMP) that each participating university in the EurDigi project has to implement to ensure that the quality of the student learning experience on the MA Tourism, Strategy & Leadership is of an EU/Bologna Process standard. Irrespective of the location of the participating university and its national higher education quality assurance protocols the procedures specified in this document have to be fully implemented.

The procedures specified in this document will ensure that:

- the students enrolled to the program will be able to demonstrate that they have achieved the learning outcomes of the Master`s Degree and the individual course learning outcomes;
- the students on the program have formal opportunities to evaluate the quality of their educational experiences throughout each academic year;
- there is external, impartial and independent review of the quality standards of the student outputs (assessments);
- a variety of stakeholders (students, faculty members, employers, government agencies) will be involved in reviewing and developing further the curriculum of the program and individual course syllabi;

The quality assurance principals that underpin the procedures specified in this document are that:

- the assessments that the students take are all aligned to the learning outcomes of each course which in themselves are aligned to the program learning outcomes;
- there is a process in place at each participating university for the monitoring and review of each course and the program as a whole;
- the quality standards on the program as a whole and with each course are verified by an external, impartial and independent advisor who is able to confirm that the program offered at each participating university is of a comparable standard to that offered by the other participating universities.

Implementing the Quality Assurance, Control and Monitoring Procedures

The Course Assessments

Each participating university will ensure that the assessments that are designed and implemented for each course:

- are directly aligned to the learning outcomes of the course;
- provide specific instructions to the students on what they are required to undertake in order to successfully achieve the learning outcomes of the course;
- have clearly defined marking criteria that relate to the learning outcomes of the course and are communicated to the students.

The marking process for each course assessment will involve:

- the course lecturer marking all assessments against the clearly defined marking criteria;
- a sample of assessments being `double marked` by another course lecturer at the same participating university to verify that all assessments have been marked to the same consistent standard.

The feedback that each student receives from their course lecturer about their course assessments will:

- explain why the mark for the piece of assessment has been awarded;
- be provided in a timely manner – no later than four weeks after the submission date of the assessment;
- indicate to each student how the mark awarded for the assessment could be improved;
- assist the student when undertaking future assessments either in the same course or with subsequent courses.

The Course and Program Monitoring Procedures

The following procedures will be implemented at each participating university to ensure that each course and the program as a whole is operating to the quality standards that are required of a Master`s Degree in the EU/Bologna Process.

The Annual Monitoring Process

Annual monitoring (AM) is the process that will be implemented to assure the quality of this program by each participating university. The AM process is an opportunity for each participating university to continually monitor the quality of the student learning experience and to make improvements to the quality of the program as a result of receiving and analysing feedback on the program and its courses.

The AM process is undertaken in three phases. Stage one meetings take place half way through semester one of each academic year and monitor progress on the program and its courses up-to that moment in time. Stage two meetings then take place mid-way through semester two and consider the student learning experience on the program and its courses since semester one. The stage three meeting takes place at the end of the academic year and provides an opportunity for the program team to analyse the student learning experience over the whole of the preceding academic year and to make recommendations for minor changes to the course content and course assessment, learning and teaching strategies for the subsequent academic year.

Stage one meetings will consider:

- the minutes and the action plan from the stage three meeting held in the previous academic year, evaluating what has been implemented to improve the quality of the student learning experience since the stage three meeting and what still needs to be implemented;
- program evaluation questionnaire analysis from the previous academic year;
- the initial impacts of any changes that have been made to the semester one courses as a result of last year's annual monitoring;
- feedback from the students on the quality of their learning experience in semester one;
- feedback from the course tutors on the progress of student learning in semester one;
- program and course issues that need to be referred to other university departments for their consideration and action in order to improve the quality of the students' learning experiences;
- program statistics/trends, for example the number of students recruited to the program, their profile.

Formal minutes of the meeting and an action plan will be produced that specifies what has to be undertaken, by whom and by when to improve the quality of the student learning experience as a result of the discussions held at the stage one meeting. The minutes of the meeting and the action plan will be circulated to all stakeholders of the program.

Stage two meetings will consider:

- the minutes and the action plan from the stage one meeting, evaluating what has been implemented to improve the quality of the student learning experience since the stage one meeting and what still needs to be implemented;
- the initial impacts of any changes that have been made to the semester two courses as a result of last year`s annual monitoring;
- feedback on the program and course issues that were referred to other university departments for their consideration and action after the stage one meeting in order to improve the quality of the students` learning experiences;
- course evaluation questionnaire analysis from semester one;
- outcomes and actions implemented as a result of receiving student feedback from the stage one meeting;
- feedback from the students on the quality of their learning experience in semester two;
- feedback from the course tutors on the progress of student learning in semester two;
- semester two program and course issues that need to be referred to other university departments for their consideration and action in order to improve the quality of the students` learning experiences;

Formal minutes of the meeting and an action plan will be produced that specifies what has to be undertaken, by whom and by when to improve the quality of the student learning experience as a result of the discussions held at the stage two meeting. The minutes of the meeting and the action plan will be circulated to all stakeholders of the program.

Stage three meetings take place after semester two has finished and before the start of the next academic year. The timing of the stage three meeting should be such that it enables the program team to analyse the student learning experience in the academic year that has just finished and to be in a position to make improvements to the student learning experience for the next academic year.

Stage three meetings will consider:

- the action plans from the stage one and stage two meetings evaluating the progress that has been made against the various points identified to improve the quality of the student learning experience;
- program statistics/trends – the progression and completion rates of students on the program, work experience opportunities and the first destinations of the students upon graduation;
- the achievement of the program and course learning outcomes by the students;
- external examiner reports on the program and its courses;
- course evaluation questionnaire analysis from semester two;
- feedback on the program and course issues that were referred to other university departments for their consideration and action after the stage two meeting in order to improve the quality of the students' learning experiences;
- actions that need to be implemented by the program team to improve the quality of the student learning experience on the program and its courses in the next academic year.

Formal minutes of the meeting and an action plan will be produced that specifies what has to be undertaken, by whom and by when to improve the quality of the student learning experience as a result of the discussions held at the stage three meeting. The minutes of the meeting and the action plan will be circulated to all stakeholders of the program.

Student Feedback

The students on this MA Tourism, Strategy & Leadership are seen as full partners in their learning experience and as such have a very crucial part to play in the AM process. The 'student voice' and their feedback is gained via three formal methods: student representation; the annual monitoring process; and program and course evaluation surveys. These different methods are described below.

Each cohort (batch) of students will elect at least four students to become the cohort's official student representatives. The student representatives will undertake the following responsibilities:

- each semester, before the stage one and stage two monitoring meetings the student representatives will receive feedback from all the students

from the cohort on their satisfaction with the quality of their learning experiences on the program and the courses studied;

- to attend the stage one and stage two monitoring meetings, to contribute to the discussions and to provide feedback to the meeting on the satisfaction levels of their fellow students with the quality of their learning experience in relation to the program and its courses;
- outside of the stage one and stage two monitoring meetings to be a formal link between the program team and the students, informing the program leader of any program and course quality issues that need to be immediately considered by the program team in order to improve the quality of the student learning experience.

The student representatives will be formal members of the stage one and two monitoring meetings and as such will participate fully in the annual monitoring process for the program.

Course evaluation will involve each student completing a course evaluation questionnaire at the end of each semester. The course evaluation questionnaire will include questions that will assist the course tutors to reflect on the satisfaction of the students with their learning experience on the course and what could be improved for subsequent cohorts of students. Findings from the course evaluation questionnaires will be considered at the stage two and stage three meetings.

Program evaluation will involve each student in the cohort receiving a program evaluation questionnaire towards the end of semester two. The program evaluation questionnaire will include questions that will enable the program team to evaluate the level of student satisfaction with their program of study (assessment, learning and teaching strategies) and the resources that are provided by the participating university to support the students in their learning. The analysis of the program evaluation questionnaires will be considered at the stage three meeting each year with a report of the actions arising from the survey being presented to the stage one meeting.

The External Examiner

External examining is an integral and essential part of quality assurance in EU/Bologna Process higher education. It provides one of the principal means by which the academic standards of this program will be maintained across each of the participating universities. The external examiner(s) appointed to this MA Tourism, Strategy & Leadership will provide impartial and independent advice, informative comment on the academic quality standards and on the student achievement at each participating university.

The external examiner(s) appointed to undertake the quality assurance of this MA Tourism, Strategy & Leadership will be drawn from higher education, industry, and/or the professions. They must be suitably qualified and

experienced in a relevant subject or specialism, and external to, and independent of, each participating university.

The responsibilities of the external examiner(s) will include:

- ensuring that students are assessed fairly in relation to other students on the degree and in other participating universities;
- approving assessments and examination papers;
- being consulted about any proposed changes to the assessment regulations and any course major modifications;
- reviewing examination scripts and coursework and moderating marks where necessary;
- attending examiners meetings, appropriate Examination Committees and Boards of Examiners;
- conducting viva voce examinations if appropriate;
- reporting on aspects of quality and standards in relation to the degree.

Each participating university will be responsible for the payment of the external examiner(s)'s fees and expenses for the work that the external examiner(s) undertakes at the participating university.

The Course and Program Review Process

The Course and Program Review (CPR) process is a quality assurance procedure through which the participating universities work together at agreed periodic intervals to review the courses on the program and to identify changes that should be made to the program and its courses. Reviewing the program and its courses will ensure that the learning outcomes of the program, its curriculum and syllabi remain appropriate for the needs of the tourism industries in Russia and Kyrgyzstan.

The following principles will apply to the CPR process:

- the first review of the program will take place after the first graduates have been awarded their Master`s Degree;
- one of the participating universities will be chosen to lead the CPR process;

- the review will utilise program and course data from each participating university, and other relevant information, to determine how the program and its courses should evolve in the future;
- modifications to the program and its courses will require all participating universities to agree to the changes;
- the stakeholders who will contribute to the CPR process will include current students, graduates, faculty, employers and representatives from government agencies (as appropriate).