



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

ERASMUS+ project n° 586109-EPP-1-2017-1-RO-EPPKA2-CBHE-SP EDUQAS

Implementation of Education Quality Assurance System via Cooperation of University - Business - Government in HEIs EDUQAS

WP3 Capacity building: Implementation of internal QA systems

Part 2. Report on the SWOT analysis and recommendation of the ***Donetsk State University of Management*** curricula: **Tourism (Bachelor program)**



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Donetsk State University of Management

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May, 202

Strengths

1. The program is unique for the region. It is very relevant and appropriate for both the region and the country. Its mission is clear and unique.
2. Close cooperation between the teachers who set up the “Tourism” curriculum with the employers and the graduates, both at the stage of development of the educational curriculum and at the stage of operation and updating.
3. The teaching team providing the training is highly motivated and very well prepared (80% have doctoral degrees). The academic staff is young and has demonstrated skills in working in difficult conditions (Donetsk crisis).
4. International experience is used in the preparation of the curriculum (experience of the University of Genoa, international experience and experience gained during foreign internships of teachers, ERASMUS + projects, etc.).
5. Various approaches and methods are used in the educational process. High level of practical training for students, which is achieved through internships in travel agencies and through close collaboration between teachers and practitioners.
6. The practical training of students is often carried out in places with potential employment, which promotes employment and a successful start to a career, as well as quick adaptation to the first workplace.
7. There is close collaboration of teachers with students, students and graduates (alumni).
8. A high percentage of graduates work in the major received in the bachelor's program.
9. Training students to work with computer travel programs allows graduates to adapt quite easily to their work and join the teams of the respective travel companies.
10. Students have access to the information they need during their studies through the University's current website, which is in Ukrainian. According low numbers of students, the relationship with the teachers is tight and rhythmic throughout the training period.
11. The interview with the alumni/graduates showed their satisfaction with the curriculum

Weaknesses

1. English language training is not sufficient. It must be improved to match the demands of the tourism industry.
2. According to the interview with alumnus the Tourism programme has less hours for practical psychology than students need in future to help them to communicate calmly and successfully while they work.
3. Interactive methods of training, teamwork and especially project-based methods are not used enough.

4. Students do not actively participate in the procedures for optimizing the educational curriculum but lecturers optimize the program with stakeholders and just illustrate to students benefits
5. Donetsk State University of Management has well developed procedures for conflict resolution, academic integrity procedures and the mechanisms for unfair grading and prejudice. But the problem is that students are not fully familiar with them and with the procedures for choosing elective subjects
6. Procedures for recognizing the outcomes of non-formal education have not been fully developed.
7. The lack of a unified system for collecting data for alumni/graduates (currently this information is collected through personal contacts of teachers and alumni/graduates)
8. Insufficient technical and material resources of the University due to the relocation of the University to Mariupol
9. Distance education technologies are in the early stages of development
10. Exams are partly oral in the presence of only one member of the evaluation committee, which affects the objectivity of the evaluation

Opportunities

1. The completion of the university's technical equipment will increase the competitiveness of the Bachelor program at educational market in the region.
2. Increasing student learning in English and practically oriented psychology will increase competitiveness in the labour market.
3. Introducing the discipline "Tourist Attractions of Ukraine" by studying the methodology of seeking attractions will allow graduates of the educational program to develop domestic tourism.
4. The introduction of educational components on industrial tourism in the educational curriculum will lead to the fact that this programme will have a high degree of uniqueness and will be of importance in the regional context. It will also increase the number of prospective students.
5. One of the ways for increasing the number of students is to attract active and demobilized military personnel to this curriculum.
6. Opportunity for support to the development of tourism in both the region and in Ukraine through high quality training
7. Young and initiative teachers are an opportunity to increase the attractiveness of the program among high school seniors, as well as an opportunity for its dynamic

development .

8. The participation of the University in international projects (such as ERASMUS + and others) is an opportunity to establish contacts with foreign universities and conclude bilateral agreements for the mobility of teachers and students
9. Regular (not occasional) participation of guest speakers (including practitioners) is an opportunity to improve the quality of education as well as to make the program more attractive to the participants

Threats

The status of Donetsk State University of Management related to the relocation from the occupied territories poses some difficulties:

1. Much attention should be paid to the restoration of the material and technical base, which significantly diverts attention from solving other problems.
2. There are certain problems with living conditions, additional housing costs, which leads to a difficult financial situation for teachers.
3. The popularity of the curriculum is still low, which is why there are not many students. This is because the university has to compete with other universities in the country offering such an educational program and which have been operating for a long time and therefore have a high level of popularity.
4. A relatively small teaching team, which leads: to work overload, inefficient allocation various responsibilities and possible moral exhaustion.
5. The large pay gap between the tourism and education sectors can lead to an outflow of the most experienced and creative educators.
6. Reduction in the level of business activity in the tourism industry (as a result of a pandemic, escalation of military conflicts, other political or economic causes), and as a consequence, reducing the demand for tourism professionals and reducing the attractiveness of tourism education .

Recommendations

1. Enhance students' learning of English (preferably in other languages of the European Union). This can also be done through non-formal education.
2. Introduce into the program an educational component dedicated to the rules and methods for creating a tourism product.
3. Strengthening students' psychological and communicative learning through the applied psychological subjects, training, non-formal education) will contribute to greater stress resistance of graduates in the tourism sector.
4. Promoting students' awareness of the opportunities offered by non-formal education, especially in English language. Improve the system for recognizing the results of non-formal education and develop the necessary regulatory documents to received credits (ECST).
5. It is advisable to give students more flexibility to choose their own educational path. More attention should be given to students' awareness of the procedures for choosing courses. To this aim, to create a common academic base of elective disciplines, expanding the list of such subjects.
6. Continue developing the distance learning system.

7. Introduce a student information system, including: an electronic student cabinet to provide students with ongoing access to the results of their current performance (eg through the Moodle platform); distance learning system (to provide access to all study materials for all courses); electronic timetable; e-students office, etc.
8. It is advisable to systematize the process of feedback from alumni and employers (for example in the form of an online platform).
9. According to employers, "there is not enough local geography" for tourism development. Therefore, it would be advisable to introduce the subject Tourist Attractions of Ukraine. In this subject, it is advisable to draw students' attention to the methodology of finding attractions. Considering the high level of industrialization of Mariupol, the Donetsk region as a whole and the neighbouring Zaporozhye region, consider the possibility to introduce in the educational program educational components dedicated to industrial tourism. Some businesses in the industry are interested in such tourism (public attitudes towards such businesses are improving). JSC Interpipe and Zaporizhzhya Nuclear Power Plant are examples of such enterprises. Applying paragraph 9-11 will lead to the fact that this educational program will have a high level of uniqueness and relevance to the regional context, and will increase the number of students who want to study (not everyone agrees to leave for other cities - Lviv, Kiev, Kharkiv, etc.).
10. Pay more attention to the non-academic life of students, give them more opportunities to develop their additional skills, help them organize an active student life