ASPU SWOT ANALYSIS

Strengths	Weaknesses
• **1.3 Student-centered learning, teaching and assessment.** The strategic development plan for 2018-2020 has been approved. It is planned to establish a new system aiming at enhancement of the professional skills of the academic staff including the training of "New teaching methods". The use of this system would result in improvement of the quality of learning, teaching and assessment. • **1.5 Teaching staff.** Teaching and Learning Center has been established aiming at the support in students' learning assessment, getting the research skills, and enhancement of teachers' expertise. • **1.6 Learning resources and student support**. The university has student support facilities such as libraries, dormitory, laboratories, cafeteria, language centers etc. • **1.7 Information management.** E-university has been installed for the information management. Trainings have been conducted on the E-university use. • **1.8 Public Information.** The university publishes information on its activities and structure that is useful for all stakeholders including prospective and current local and international students. The university Web page and Facebook page contain clear information on all developments and this information is easily accessible**.**	• **1.1 Policy for quality assurance.** The mechanisms and guidelines for carrying out the activities aiming at enhancement of the quality assurance have been developed at the university. The academic staff ranking evaluation is part of these activities and its results are used as a stimulus for staff's better performance and reward. However, a comprehensive quality assurance policy is to be developed yet. **1.2 Design and approval of programs.** The current mechanism of the programs design and approval does not take into account the recent learning approaches and has to be improved with regard to the ESG standards. • **1.4 Student admission, progression, recognition and certification.** The processes are traditional and paper based. It needs being electronic and systematic. • **1.9 On-going monitoring and periodic review of programs.** The study programs as well as the academic staff's teaching and management abilities are reviewed by the monitoring teams, but it is not done on a regular basis and there is a lack of a proper system for the review results' communication and the follow-up actions. • **1.10 Cyclical external quality assurance.** The Ministry of Education is the only agency carrying out the external quality assurance.
ADPU's general strengths • Historical positive image; • The top management commitment in education reforms implementation; • Competitive advantage in some teacher-related specialties; • Numerous graduates who enjoy a successful pedagogical career; • Geographical location (in the capital's downtown); • Increased popularity of the university ; • Adoption of the university's strategic work plan aligned with the requirements of the Bologna process; • Establishment of the Quality Assurance Department and adoption of its Statutes and Work Plan. • Increased mobility of students and staff through international programs • Saving of financial resources as a result of staff optimization	**ADPU's general weaknesses** • Poor position in local and global market (low local and global ratings); • Lack of fully functioning quality management system; • Lack of studies of internal and external problems in quality assurance system; • Insufficient support to graduates' entry to the labor market; • Poor relationships with the university students, poor student - alumni network; • Lack of modern communication system among the university structures; University structures with overlapping of duties/lack of clear-cut responsibilities; • Limited decision-making ability of intermediate management structures; • Limited follow-up control over the taken decisions; • Lack of necessary skills (mostly, English language and IT) among a part of staff; • Reluctance & resistance of the elderly staff to innovations and necessary changes; • Lack of financial resources.

Opportunities

- **1.1 Policy for quality assurance.** The university quality assurance policy is to be developed and adopted with participation of internal and external stakeholders. This would make it possible the involvement of the appropriate university structures in the systematic implementation of the quality-related activities and enhancement of the management oversight.
- **1.2 Design and approval of programs.** The ESG standard-based approach for the program design and approval will enable to achieve the intended learning outcomes and alignment with the national and European qualification framework. This, in turn, would contribute to the university internationalization (dual degree programs, student and staff mobility, etc.)
- **1.3 Student-centered learning, teaching and assessment.** Introduction of the student-centered approaches, processes and procedures among other things will widen the learning opportunities for the students and will contribute to the student selfesteem and develop better student-teacher relationships.
- **1.4 Student admission, progression, recognition and certification.** The consistency and transparency of these processes would enable to get clear information on the students' progression and qualification and would contribute to their satisfaction.
- **1.5 Teaching staff.** A fair and transparent process of the teachers' recruitment will contribute to the level of teaching and learning as well as to the prestige of the university. The teachers' development program based on the student-centered learning will the new program will equip teachers with new teaching methods and use of new technologies and raise their competences. The teachers' regular evaluation would increase the competitiveness among them, and the reward mechanism will stimulate the teachers for better performance.
- **1.6 Learning resources and student support.** There is a need for a detailed analysis of the current level of the university learning resources. This will reveal the funding needs not only for enhancement of the physical resources such as facilities, libraries, laboratories, etc. (and their regular review and improvement) based on the ESG standards' requirement, but also for developing the competences of the support and administrative staff who deliver the support services.

Threats

- **1.1 Policy for quality assurance.** The process of stakeholders' (especially external ones) engagement and their involvement in the development of the quality assurance policy may take time. Also the resistance of some part of the staff to innovations and necessary changes has to be taken into account.
- **1.2 Design and approval of programs.** A few staff is aware of the ESG standards and their requirements, so it may take quite a time to train them to be able to design programs the ESG-based programs.
- **1.3 Student-centered learning, teaching and assessment.** Such transformation requires the staff commitment and mobilization of resources to monitor whether everyone follows the principles of student-centered learning. This process can be painful for the part of the staff that is used to the traditional teaching methods.
- **1.4 Student admission, progression, recognition and certification.** These processes may take time since there is a need for the change of the focus from on quantity indicators (number of graduates) to the quality ones (employability, etc). Poor student involvement into the university processes can also be an obstacle.
- **1.5 Teaching staff.** A considerable part of academic (elderly) staff may not be able/ prepared/willing to gain new knowledge/skills and teaching methods.
- **1.6 Learning resources and student support**. If not properly planned and used the resources' acquaintance and support staff development may be inefficient.

- 1.7 **Information management.** Introduction of the ESG standards would make it possible the creation of the comprehensive data collection and analysis system as a part of the quality assurance system. It will contain basic information on student population (from admission to the career paths of the graduates), on programs and other activities. Creation of such a system will facilitate the most of the university management processes (including financial management) and make it possible to analyze the teaching/leaming processes and to plan for the next developments.
- 1.8 **Public Information.** The variety of the university publications (Web page and Facebook page) may be increased in the future by development of both periodic publications (magazines, the conferences proceedings, etc.) and ad-hoc publications (reports, promotional materials, student forum, etc.)
- **1.9 On-going monitoring and periodic review of programs.** Creation of the proper system for the regular review of the programs will enable to timely identification of possible shortcomings or inconsistencies with the ESG standards and to adequately react to these issues and therefore to maintain their high quality.
- 1.10 **Cyclical external quality assurance.** Involvement of alternative (than the Ministry of Education) players in the future in the process of external quality assurance will improve the effectiveness of this process and will inevitably increase the personal accountability of those who are responsible for the university structures, procedures and processes.

ADPU's general opportunities

- Clear vision of the direction of change of the new leadership of the University and its openness to the staff and students;
- Public investment for ASPU development (campus construction, etc.);
- Existence of a student dormitory for more than 300 students (for students from low-income families and foreign students);
- Professional development plan for academic and administration staff;
- Annual monitoring of the staff performance on a regular basis;
- Ranking evaluation among academic and administration employees as a stimulus for their more efficient perfonuance;
- Possibility to increase education fees (low cunent level as compared with other
  HEIs);
- Possibility to attract additional funds to the university as a result of the development of

•1.7 **Information management.** The information system establishment, maintenance and update require the acquisition of appropriate equipment, staff commitment and expertise. If all these components are not in place there is a risk of waste of time and finances.

1.8 Public Information. The proper development and design of new publications and materials require additional staff efforts and time.

•**1.9 On-going monitoring and periodic review of programs.** Lack of qualified staff able to deliver the properprogram monitoring and review may be a challenge.

•**1.10 Cyclical external quality assurance.** Involvement of other participants in the external quality assurance process should be fixed by law and it will take an indefinite amount of time.

ADPU's general threats
•Transfer to modern teaching/learning methods and management tools takes time;
•Small number of foreign students;
•Lack of information on the alumni employability;
•Poor student involvement into the academic processes;
•Lack of teamwork skills in implementation of a new strategy (development of the documents, new implementation mechanisms);
•Lack of qualified human resources able to implement serious reforms in the short run;
•Reluctance of a substantial part of the staff (mainly elderly employees) to get new knowledge and skills (IT, English, etc.);
•Resistance of these employees to innovations and necessary changes;
•The staff is unaware of information the ESG standards and their requirements;

additional education and refresher programs;

- Educational loans from the Educational Foundation for students with low-income;
- Acceleration of the university's internationalization process (cooperation with advanced institutions in Europe, the US and Russia);
- Better involvement of the university's regional affiliations into the processes taking place in the center;
- Established Quality Commission for Ranking evaluation;
- Competitors analysis to reveal the university's market position (comparative analysis with activities of nine HEIs having pedagogical specialties);
- Encouragement measures to increase the teacher's reputation (salary increases for the teachers in rural areas, and those with high diagnostic assessment scores);
- Efforts to transfer from teacher -centered to student-centered learning process;
- Creation of the electronic teaching modules platform;
- Suspension of teacher training in some (private) universities in recent years;
- Centralized, merit-based appointments for teachers' vacancies throughout the country;
- Experience of European education;
- Moodle program have been installed for the management of information. Trainings have been conducted to teach the staff how to use Moodle.

•Mainly traditional approach to teaching/ learning processes;
•Lack of quality assurance topics in training and study programs;
•Poor communication with labor market and non-flexibility of study programs with market changes;
•Lack of external acknowledgement of research;
•Small number of undergraduates involved in research activities;
•Difficulties with recruiting professional staff (PhDs) due to low salaries;
Difficulties with the forecast for the need for pedagogical cadres;