

## TOURISM AND GASTRONOMY MANAGEMENT PROGRAMS

The Tourism and Gastronomy Management Programs is an innovative undergraduate degree set to welcome its first students in the 2025-2026 academic year. Launched as part of a cooperation protocol between the Republic of Türkiye Ministry of Culture and Tourism and the Council of Higher Education (YÖK), the program has started admitting students at nine pilot faculties, including the Faculty of Tourism at Afyon Kocatepe University. The medium of instruction is 100% English, with Russian offered as a second foreign language.

The program's core mission is to develop visionary and versatile graduates who are prepared to compete on a global scale. This is achieved by integrating deep theoretical knowledge with extensive practical skills in tourism management and gastronomy. Beyond a strong command of foreign languages, graduates will possess internationally recognized professional knowledge, a modern approach to management, and direct industry experience. In this context, the objectives of the department can be listed as follows:

- Training mid- and senior-level managers for national and international roles in tourism and gastronomy.
- Training entrepreneurs capable of launching successful businesses in the sector.
- Training graduates for specialized roles within the tourism and gastronomy units of public institutions.
- Training future academics to conduct pioneering scientific research in the field and related disciplines.

The program also strongly emphasizes entrepreneurship, equipping graduates with the competencies to launch their own businesses and introduce innovative services to the sector.

### Program Structure and Curriculum

Enrollment begins with a **one-year mandatory English Preparatory Program** at the Afyon Kocatepe University School of Foreign Languages. This program is designed to provide students with a strong language foundation, enabling them to excel in their English-taught undergraduate courses and develop international communication skills.

Upon successful completion of the preparatory program, students advance to the four-year (eight-semester) undergraduate curriculum, which is structured as follows:

- **Semesters 1-3: Core Foundation** The first three semesters are dedicated to a common core curriculum covering the fundamentals of both tourism management and gastronomy. This ensures all students build a comprehensive understanding of the entire industry.
- **Semester 4: Rotational Industry Training** The fourth semester consists of the first practical training period, titled "**Vocational Training in Business.**" Students participate in a rotational internship at partner tourism enterprises (such as hotels and food & beverage establishments), gaining exposure to all major departments. Learning objectives and durations for each rotation are predetermined.

- **Semester 5: Specialization** Based on their practical experience and a career assessment test, students choose a specialization at the start of the fifth semester: **"Tourism Management"** or **"Gastronomy and Culinary Arts."** They then proceed with advanced courses in their chosen field.
- **Semester 6: Specialized Industry Training** The sixth semester features a second **"Vocational Training in Business"** internship, this time focused specifically on the student's area of specialization.
- **Semester 7: Advanced Studies** Students return to the faculty for a semester of advanced coursework within their chosen specialization.
- **Semester 8: Managerial Training** The final semester culminates in the **"Managerial Training in Business"** program. Students undertake a high-level internship as an assistant manager in their field, working under the guidance of department heads to apply their knowledge in a leadership context.

In total, the program integrates three full semesters of on-the-job training. Under the protocol with the Ministry of Culture and Tourism and YÖK, partner enterprises are required to pay students a monthly wage equivalent to at least two-thirds of the national minimum wage during their training periods.

### **Distinctive Features of the Program**

- ⇒ **Comprehensive English-Language Immersion:** Includes a mandatory preparatory year followed by a curriculum taught entirely in English.
- ⇒ **Globally Aligned Curriculum:** Modern, industry-relevant coursework designed to meet international standards.
- ⇒ **Deep Industry Integration:** Three full semesters of practical, on-the-job training are embedded directly into the curriculum.
- ⇒ **Executive-Level Preparation:** A final-semester managerial internship designed to fast-track graduates into leadership roles.
- ⇒ **Expansive Career Pathways:** Graduates are prepared for a wide range of national and international career opportunities.