

TOURISM AND GASTRONOMY MANAGEMENT PROGRAMS

The Department of Tourism and Gastronomy Management Programs was established in 2025-2026 academic year across nine pilot Tourism Faculties, including Afyon Kocatepe University. This initiative was realized through a cooperation protocol signed between the Republic of Türkiye Ministry of Culture and Tourism and the Council of Higher Education (YÖK), with the department admitting its first cohort of students in the same year. Comprising two main disciplines—Tourism Management and Gastronomy and Culinary Arts—the department's medium of instruction is 100% English for all courses, while Russian is provided as a second foreign language. Excluding the English preparatory class, the undergraduate program spans four years (8 semesters).

Upon enrollment, students must first complete a one-year compulsory English preparatory program at the Afyon Kocatepe University School of Foreign Languages. Successfully passing this preparatory year is a prerequisite for advancing to the departmental courses. Furthermore, during their preparatory year, students enhance both their overall digital literacy and field-specific computing skills by taking "Basic Use of Information Technologies" in the fall semester and "Information Technology Applications in Tourism and Gastronomy" in the spring semester.

The primary objective of the department is to cultivate versatile graduates who seamlessly integrate theoretical knowledge with practical skills in the fields of tourism management and gastronomy, fully equipped to compete on a global scale. Beyond a strong foreign language foundation, students graduate with internationally recognized professional expertise, a contemporary management vision, and sector-oriented practical experience. The department's prominent goals include educating:

- Mid- and senior-level managers capable of working in national and international organizations,
- Entrepreneurs who can establish domestic or global enterprises,
- Professionals qualified to serve in the tourism and gastronomy departments of public institutions,
- Academics and researchers equipped to conduct pioneering scientific research at national and international levels in these or related disciplines.

Furthermore, armed with foreign language proficiency, comprehensive theoretical and applied education, and high entrepreneurial potential, our graduates possess the competencies needed to launch their own businesses and introduce innovative services to the sector.

The departmental curriculum, spanning 8 semesters (four years), is structured around two main disciplines: Tourism Management and Gastronomy and Culinary Arts. However, the curriculum for the first three semesters consists of shared courses relevant to both areas. Accordingly, these initial three semesters provide fundamental core courses common to both fields, offering the essential theoretical and professional knowledge, as well as the core skills necessary for students to comprehend all dimensions of the sector.

During the fourth semester, students undertake practical, on-the-job training at contracted tourism enterprises (such as hotels, food and beverage establishments, and gastronomy venues) under the framework of "**Vocational Training in Business.**" This sector-based training is strictly rotation-based. The training schedules are meticulously designed to ensure students gain comprehensive knowledge and hands-on experience across all departments of an enterprise. In this context, the duration students spend in each department and the specific subjects they will

learn are predetermined. Upon returning from this training, and guided by the practical experience gained throughout the semester, students take a departmental career aptitude test at the beginning of the 5th semester. Based on these results and their practical insights, they select the specific discipline—either **Tourism Management** or **Gastronomy and Culinary Arts**—that they will pursue for their remaining studies. Subsequently, starting from the 5th semester, students continue their education at the faculty by taking courses specifically tailored to their chosen field.

During their 6th semester, students spend another full term working at contracted tourism or gastronomy enterprises under the framework of "Vocational Training in Business." However, the enterprises and departments where they conduct this vocational practice are now strictly aligned with the specific discipline (tourism management or gastronomy) they selected at the beginning of the fifth semester. As with previous training, the duration students will spend in the relevant departments and the specific subjects they will master are predetermined.

In the 7th semester, students return to the faculty to continue taking theoretical courses directly related to their chosen major (either tourism management or gastronomy and culinary arts).

For their 8th semester, students undertake a final full-term practical placement at contracted tourism or gastronomy establishments, this time under the framework of "**Management Training in Business.**" Once again, these placements are tailored to the field chosen at the start of their fifth semester. During this phase, students carry out their management training in an assistant manager capacity under the supervision of department managers. Accordingly, the time allocated to each operational department and the specific managerial competencies to be acquired are meticulously predetermined.

In summary, over the course of their 4-year undergraduate education, students in the tourism and gastronomy management programs spend a total of 3 semesters (the 4th, 6th, and 8th semesters) gaining extensive hands-on experience in the tourism sector through on-the-job training. In accordance with the protocol signed between the Ministry of Culture and Tourism and the Council of Higher Education (YÖK), students complete these practical applications at specific enterprises perfectly matched with the selected pilot faculties. Furthermore, as mandated by this agreement, the participating enterprises are legally obligated to pay students a monthly wage equivalent to at least two-thirds of the minimum wage for the duration of their active training periods.

To qualify for graduation, students must successfully complete 240 ECTS credits. The specific degree awarded is determined by the major the student selects and pursues starting from their 5th semester. Accordingly, if a student chooses the tourism management discipline in the 5th semester and fulfills all related coursework and practical training, they are awarded a bachelor's degree in "Tourism Management." Conversely, if they select and complete the requirements for the gastronomy and culinary arts discipline, their diploma will certify their qualifications in "Gastronomy and Culinary Arts."

The faculty houses 18 classrooms—including one computer laboratory—as well as four meeting rooms and a 100-seat conference hall. The computer laboratory, equipped with 60 workstations, is specifically designed for students to learn and practice industry-standard automation software (such as *Fidelio Suite 8*, *Opera*, *Elektra*, and *Amadeus*) utilized in hotel front offices, travel agencies, and food and beverage enterprises. Upon the completion of these automation courses, the software licensors conduct certification exams for the students. Those who pass are entitled to receive nationally and internationally recognized certificates.

Although the applied vocational courses in the curriculum are heavily focused on real-world, on-the-job training within the sector, practical education is also rigorously conducted at the

Tourism Faculty Education and Application Building during the academic terms. The Application Building features dedicated units for specific courses, providing a robust infrastructure for hands-on learning. These facilities include a main kitchen, a food and beverage service hall, a front office/reception area, three distinct mock hotel rooms, a laundry and ironing room, and a meeting/conference hall. Across both the main Faculty building and the Education and Application Building, the department boasts an impressive array of specialized facilities: one application kitchen, one gastrotorium, one service hall, one pastry and bakery kitchen, one sensory analysis laboratory, and one chocolate production workshop. All of our application kitchens are fully equipped with professional-grade culinary machinery and host various practical courses for students from their freshman through senior years. Complementary training on the preparation, plating, and presentation of culinary products is provided in the service workshop. Furthermore, the sensory analysis laboratory is utilized both for conducting academic research and for providing students with specialized sensory training. Alongside these physical application areas, the aforementioned 60-workstation computer laboratory—featuring high-speed internet access and comprehensive industry automation software—remains a vital resource for our students' technological development.

Within the framework of national and international agreements, our university and faculty offer various exchange programs available to our departmental students. Under the Erasmus+ program, students have the opportunity to study abroad at partner institutions through bilateral protocols established with universities in European countries, including Poland, Hungary, Bulgaria, Czechia, Estonia, Spain, and Portugal. Additionally, students may benefit from the national Mevlana and Farabi exchange programs, provided these programs remain in effect.

Educational activities within the Department of Tourism and Gastronomy Management Programs are conducted at the Faculty of Tourism, located on the Ahmet Necdet Sezer Campus, the main campus of Afyon Kocatepe University. This prime location offers students the distinct advantage of accessing a wide array of campus amenities, including social, cultural, and sporting events, as well as the congress center, cafeterias, and dining halls. Thanks to the extensive sports facilities available, students can engage in numerous athletic disciplines—such as football, basketball, volleyball, tennis, table tennis, badminton, athletics, rhythmic gymnastics, step aerobics, mountaineering, boxing, wrestling, taekwondo, and karate—and can join university teams to compete in tournaments. The university campus also hosts numerous student clubs designed to foster continuous personal and professional development. Students in our department are highly encouraged to participate in these organizations, which include the gastronomy society, tourism guiding club, technology club, travelers' club, folklore club, photography club, literature club, book club, aviation club, young entrepreneurs club, cycling club, and scouting club. In addition to university-wide facilities and events, the faculty regularly organizes seminars, conferences, panel discussions, interviews, and workshops focused on scientific and professional themes. Guided by academic staff, field trips are organized to significant historical, cultural, and natural attractions across the country, with a particular focus on Afyonkarahisar. Through the "Volunteer Work" course, students develop a strong awareness of social and environmental responsibility, gaining valuable opportunities to enhance their interpersonal skills. Furthermore, our faculty hosts numerous events featuring renowned expert chefs and distinguished academics. These gatherings provide our students with the invaluable opportunity to observe and learn about industry practices first-hand from leading professionals. Upon graduation, students can maintain their ties with the department and faculty by joining the Afyon Kocatepe University Tourism Alumni and Members Association (AKÜTURMED). Established in 2022, the association's mission is to cultivate synergy among graduates—particularly in the professional sphere—and to foster enduring material and moral collaboration for the future.

Key Distinguishing Features of the Department Compared to other Tourism-Related Programs

- **100% English Instruction:** A compulsory English preparatory program followed by a 4-year (8 semesters) curriculum taught entirely in English.
- **Flexible Specialization:** The unique opportunity to study two major disciplines (Tourism Management and Gastronomy and Culinary Arts) structured under a single department. Following a shared curriculum during the first three semesters, students have the flexibility to select and pursue their preferred major starting from the 5th semester, allowing them to shape their academic path while already at the university.
- **Globally Standardized Curriculum:** An up-to-date curriculum designed to international standards, thoroughly reviewed by all pilot university commissions, and officially approved by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism and the Council of Higher Education (YÖK).
- **Extensive Applied Education Model:** A sector-integrated applied education model implemented through the "Vocational Training in Business" framework, featuring three full semesters (4th, 6th, and 8th) of on-the-job training at contracted tourism enterprises.
- **Managerial Preparation:** The "Management Training in Business" program, specifically designed to prepare students for executive roles in their professional careers, conducted at tourism enterprises during their 8th semester.
- **Global Prospects:** Exceptional national and international career opportunities.

MISSION

To cultivate mid- and senior-level managers equipped with foreign language proficiency, leadership capabilities, and practical skills to serve in national and international organizations within the fields of tourism management and gastronomy; to foster qualified human resources and entrepreneurs capable of driving sectoral development in a globally competitive environment; and to educate researchers and academics qualified to work in relevant university departments and the tourism and gastronomy branches of public institutions.

VISION

To be a nationally and internationally recognized department that creates high added value by seamlessly integrating theoretical knowledge with practical skills in tourism management and gastronomy; to cultivate qualified human resources dedicated to ethical principles who actively contribute to and guide the sector's development; and to embrace continuous advancement in alignment with contemporary global trends as our fundamental duty.

PROGRAM EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES (PEOs)

The educational objectives of the Tourism and Gastronomy Management Program (English) are as follows:

PEO 1: To cultivate mid- and senior-level managers capable of working in national and international organizations in the fields of tourism and gastronomy.

PEO 2: To cultivate entrepreneurs capable of establishing national or international enterprises in the fields of tourism and gastronomy.

PEO 3: To educate individuals qualified to serve in the tourism and gastronomy-related departments of public institutions and organizations.

PEO 4: To educate researchers and academics in the fields of tourism and gastronomy.

DEGREE AWARDED

Graduates who successfully complete the program are awarded a Bachelor's degree in their field of specialization (Tourism Management / Gastronomy and Culinary Arts).

ADMISSION AND REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS

General admission requirements for both Turkish and international students are valid for enrollment in the program. In order to enroll in the department, students must successfully pass the examinations conducted within the scope of the Student Selection and Placement System (ÖSYS) by the Measurement, Selection and Placement Center (ÖSYM). The admission of international students to the department is carried out in accordance with the conditions determined by the university for international applicants.

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

To be eligible for graduation, the students must successfully complete all courses in the program and are required to have no grades of FF, DZ, or YZ. In addition, students are required to complete the minimum ECTS credits determined by the department and achieve a cumulative grade point average of at least 2.00 out of 4.00.

EMPLOYMENT PROFILE OF GRADUATES

Graduates of the Tourism and Gastronomy Management Program can access a wide range of employment opportunities at both national and international levels thanks to the theoretical knowledge, practical experience, and multilingual communication skills they acquire in the fields of tourism management and gastronomy. Graduates may work in mid- and senior-level managerial positions across various sectors such as hospitality management, food and beverage services, travel agencies, gastronomy enterprises, and event management. Through three semesters of vocational training and management training in enterprises, students graduate with strong sectoral integration, enabling them to transition directly into professional careers.

Graduates with strong foreign language skills and managerial competencies also have the advantage of being employed abroad, pursuing careers within international food and beverages entrepreneurs. In addition, through the entrepreneurial competencies they improve, they may set up their own tourism or gastronomy businesses and introduce innovative services to the sector. Graduates who prefer careers in the public sector may work in relevant departments of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism or local government institutions, those who aim for an academic career may pursue postgraduate education and work as academic staff members at universities. In this respect, graduates of the department are trained as versatile and well-equipped professionals capable of meeting sectoral needs.

Examinations, Measurement and Evaluation

While the assessment and evaluation methods applied for each course are defined in detail in the Course Teaching Plan, examinations, assessment procedures, and graduation requirements are carried out in accordance with the principles and regulations stated in the Afyon Kocatepe University Education, Training, and Examination Regulations. Accordingly, the examinations that students may take within the program include midterm examinations, quizzes, semester/final examinations, internship completion examinations, make-up examinations, single-course examinations, and excuse examinations. The grading system is applied in

accordance with the provisions stated in the Afyon Kocatepe University Education, Teaching and Examination Regulation.

Rules Regarding the Recognition of Prior Learning

Requests for exemption regarding the recognition of achievements (courses, internships, laboratory work, etc.) from other higher education programs previously attended in Türkiye or abroad are evaluated and decided upon by the academic unit's management board at the beginning of the semesters following the semester in which the students' final enrollment in the department, within the timeframes determined according to the relevant legislation.

Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs)

PLO 1: Possesses fundamental theoretical knowledge specific to the fields of tourism and gastronomy.

PLO 2: Effectively analyzes and implements management, organization, and marketing practices related to the field.

PLO 3: Knows the principles of hygiene, sanitation, and food safety in food and beverage production, and strictly observes them in practice.

PLO 4: Recognizes local and global gastronomy cultures and evaluates gastronomic heritage from a sustainable perspective.

PLO 5: Exhibits responsible and professional behavior in accordance with ethical principles within the tourism and gastronomy sector.

PLO 6: Approaches field-related problems with analytical thinking and a critical perspective, developing effective solutions.

PLO 7: Possesses strong oral and written communication skills and effectively utilizes the sector's professional terminology.

PLO 8: Can communicate in foreign languages relevant to the field (English and/or Arabic/Russian).

PLO 9: Utilizes digital tools, information technologies, and data literacy in the fields of tourism and gastronomy.

PLO 10: Takes an active role in sectoral practices by continuously developing teamwork, leadership, and entrepreneurial competencies.

PLO 11: Has comprehensive knowledge of national and international legislation, occupational health and safety regulations, and professional standards in tourism and gastronomy, strictly adhering to them in practice.

PLO 12: Manages processes related to customer relations, service quality, and guest satisfaction, and develops innovative solutions to improve service delivery.

PLO 13: Analyzes the role of tourism and gastronomy within the context of local development, cultural heritage preservation, and societal contribution.

PLO 14: Develops robust skills in crisis management, stress management, and rapid adaptation to changing sector conditions.

PLO 15: Makes and implements decisions that strictly adhere to ethical principles, environmental sensitivity, and sustainability within sectoral practices.