

OBJECTIVE OF THE BACHELOR'S DEGREE PROGRAM IN THE SPECIALTY 050407 – "MARKETING"

The Bachelor's degree program in the specialty 050407 – "Marketing" (hereinafter referred to as the "Educational Program for the specialty") has been developed in accordance with the Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan "On Education", relevant decisions of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the "Classification of Specialties (Programs) for the Bachelor's Level of Higher Education (basic higher medical education)", and the Education Program for the specialty 050407 – "Marketing" approved by the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Azerbaijan by decision No. F-343 dated 09.07.2020.

The objectives of the Education Program are as follows: To define the competencies of graduates, the scope of the specialty, teaching and learning methods for each subject, assessment methods, learning outcomes, and the requirements for infrastructure and personnel needed to implement the program, as well as opportunities for students to undertake internships, gain employment, and continue their education; To inform students and employers about the knowledge, skills, and learning outcomes graduates acquire through the program; To provide information to experts involved in evaluating the compliance of staff training with the program; To instill the ability to organize and manage business entities; To teach the organizational structure of business and economic entities and the processes of their formation; To convey the legal framework for managing enterprises and organizations according to their legal status, and to teach the legal and organizational basis of management; To teach decision-making in management and the methods of implementing these decisions; To teach how to form and implement sub-systems within management.

Professional Field of Activity Graduates of the "Marketing" specialty can work in various sectors, including: Business structures in fields such as production, finance, taxation, marketing, logistics, etc.; Banks, stock exchanges, financial and insurance companies; Industrial enterprises engaged in product manufacturing; Consulting and other service-providing companies; Enterprises, organizations, and business entities engaged in entrepreneurship; Transnational companies operating in the global markets in fields such as international business, finance, tourism, and other services; Departments of economics, business, and entrepreneurship in various educational institutions, and other structures related to the specialty, in accordance with the applicable rules.

The Education Program for the specialty 050407 – "Marketing" is mandatory for the implementation of bachelor's degree training in this field. Under a five-day work schedule, a student's total weekly workload, including both classroom and extracurricular activities, is 45 hours. The number of weekly classroom hours must not exceed 50% of the total workload. Depending on the nature of the specialty, the weekly workload may vary.

Labor Market Position

Graduates of the 050407 – “Marketing” Education Program can work as specialists in both the private and public sectors in areas such as management, human resources management, production management, finance, accounting, marketing, research and development, and public relations. They may also work in professional roles such as manager, strategic management specialist, production specialist, project management specialist, CEO, CFO, and business analyst.

The University is responsible for conducting regular employment surveys of graduates from this program and publishing information about job vacancies on its official website.

Graduates of the 050407 – “Marketing” Education Program may continue their education in any Master's programs within the "Economics and Management" field of study.

The knowledge, skills, and approaches acquired during the course of study enable graduates to act independently and carry out tasks effectively.

Strategic Plan

The short-term Strategic Development Plan of Western Caspian University for the years 2018–2020 was approved by the decision of the University’s Academic Council dated December 27, 2017 (Protocol No. 3). This plan was prepared based on the comments and recommendations included in the final report by the accreditation commission established under Order No. 10 dated April 12, 2017, of the Accreditation and Nostrification Department under the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Azerbaijan. The plan aims to address the issues and recommendations highlighted in the report.

The medium-term Strategic Development Plan of Western Caspian University for 2021–2025 was approved by the decision of the Academic Council dated December 25, 2020 (Protocol No. 05). This document outlines the development strategy of the University for the period 2021–2025. While preparing this Strategic Plan, international best practices in higher education governance were considered, as well as the “State Program on Increasing the International Competitiveness of the Higher Education System in the Republic of Azerbaijan for 2019–2023.” In addition, the results of surveys conducted among students and faculty in both public and private institutions were taken into account.

Compliance of the Mission Defined in the Strategic Development Plan (SDP) with the Main Objectives and Goals of the Higher Education Institution (HEI)

In the Strategic Development Plan of Western Caspian University for 2021–2025, the mission of the university is defined as preparing highly qualified specialists through a modern and innovative educational and instructional infrastructure that is responsive to global challenges. This mission aligns with the main objectives and goals of the university’s operations, which include:

- Enhancing graduates’ employment opportunities;
- Improving foreign language proficiency;
- Developing entrepreneurial skills;
- Preparing fully equipped professionals capable of achieving high standards in both personal and professional spheres;
- Strengthening analytical thinking skills;
- Encouraging and promoting scientific research;
- Fostering critical and solution-oriented thinking;
- Striving for progress by staying aligned with global trends;
- Enhancing academic writing skills;
- Supporting Azerbaijan’s economic, social, and political development by training specialists who can serve the country’s interests in the modern era;
- Ensuring sufficient professional knowledge;
- Developing empirical analysis skills;
- Establishing teacher-mentor and student-mentor systems throughout the university;
- Enhancing ICT skills;
- Building leadership and teamwork capabilities;

- Improving the effectiveness of "Orientation Days" and introducing a short-term course to support the adaptation of students admitted to sub-bachelor and bachelor levels.

Alignment of the Strategic Vision Defined in the SDP with the Development Directions of the Country's Labor Market, Society, and Economy

The strategic vision defined during the preparation of the 2021–2025 Strategic Development Plan is for the university to become a leading institution in the region offering the most modern and high-quality education and research that meet the demands of the labor market.

To align the SDP with the development directions of Azerbaijan's labor market, society, and economy, various surveys were conducted, including: "Labor Market Research" (with organizations such as the Digital Development and Transport Agency, Embawood LLC, ATF Group LLC, ABB, Sumgait Technologies Park LLC, and Performance Center CO); Surveys on "Teaching and Scientific Research"; "Student Satisfaction Surveys"; "Distance Education" surveys.

The results of these surveys were taken into consideration in the development of the SDP.

Compliance of the Priority Areas Identified in the SDP with the Objectives and Goals of the HEI

The Strategic Development Plan of Western Caspian University for 2021–2025 outlines the university's priorities and ensures their alignment with its institutional goals and objectives. The SDP emphasizes priorities such as: Graduate employability; Language proficiency; Entrepreneurial skills; Professional training in both personal and professional dimensions; Analytical and empirical thinking skills; Promoting and supporting scientific research; Critical and solution-oriented thinking; Commitment to progress and global trends; Academic competence; Contribution to Azerbaijan's development by preparing experts capable of addressing national interests; Establishment of teacher-mentor and student-mentor institutions; ICT proficiency; Leadership and teamwork skills; Digitalization and implementation of innovative solutions; Enhancing international competitiveness.

Accordingly, the Strategic Development Plan outlines goals such as: Improving the quality of education; Student-centered development; Creating an environment for creative, initiative-driven, and internationally competitive research; Increasing international competitiveness; Advancing digitalization and innovation; Improving the working environment and labor conditions; Strengthening infrastructure and ensuring sustainability; Enhancing social responsibility and public image.

In total, the SDP encompasses 8 strategic goals, 26 strategic targets, and corresponding strategic activities. Furthermore, the formulation of these priority directions considered the objectives and goals defined in the university's Charter.

Employer Participation in the Formation of Student Admission Quotas

The relevant departments of Western Caspian University (WCU) constantly conduct research to ensure that the graduates are employable in the labor market. To enhance the efficiency of these efforts, the “Student and Alumni Practice and Development Center” has been established at WCU. Additionally, there is a strong emphasis on involving professionals with pedagogical experience who are currently working in the labor market in the teaching process. Opinions from these professionals regarding the most in-demand specializations in the labor market are collected and taken into account during the preparation of future student admission quotas. For instance, discussions have been held with representatives from the Central Bank of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the Training Center of the State Tax Service under the Ministry of Economy, and the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection of the Population. The outcomes of these discussions have been reflected in the university's admission plans. Furthermore, during job fairs regularly organized by the university, the recommendations of employers invited to the institution are also considered important.

Compliance of the Educational Program with the Approved Learning Outcomes and Content Standards the undergraduate program in the specialty 050402 – “Business Administration” at WCU is conducted in accordance with the expected learning outcomes of the educational programs and subjects approved by Decision No. 343 of the Ministry of Science and Education of the Republic of Azerbaijan, dated 2020.

Compliance of Course Hour Allocation with the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS)

Bachelor's level study plans consist of 240 ECTS credits (4 years). According to the requirements of the educational program, subjects at the bachelor's level are divided into three blocks: General Subjects, Specialty Subjects, and Subjects Defined by the Higher Education Institution (elective courses). The General Subjects block is further divided into two categories: compulsory subjects – 24 ECTS and elective subjects – 6 ECTS, totaling 30 ECTS. Specialty subjects comprise 120 ECTS, institution-defined subjects account for 60 ECTS, and practice-related subjects carry 30 ECTS.

The allocation of course hours and their compliance with ECTS principles at WCU is carried out in accordance with the “Rules on the Organization of Education in Credit System at Bachelor's and Master's Levels in Higher Education Institutions and Basic (Higher) Medical Education in the Republic of Azerbaijan,” approved by Decision No. 348 of the Cabinet of Ministers dated December 24, 2013, and the “Teaching Load Norms for Pedagogical Staff of Educational Institutions,” approved by Decision No. 215 dated November 24, 2010. Accordingly, at WCU, the annual teaching load for academic staff must not be less than 500 hours, with at least 60% of that load consisting of lectures, seminars, laboratory, and practical sessions. Depending on the duration of the program, students are assigned between 240–300 ECTS credits in bachelor's studies.

Compliance of Study Subjects with the Requirements of the Educational Program

To ensure the proper training of professionals, the subjects included in the educational program are grouped into three blocks: General Subjects, Specialty Subjects, and Subjects Defined by the Higher Education Institution. While preparing the educational programs and determining the subjects for each specialty, consultations were conducted with labor market participants and the experiences of prestigious foreign universities were considered. The requirements of the educational programs were taken into account during the subject selection process. For each subject, the competencies and skills to be acquired by graduates were evaluated. The learning outcomes of the subjects were developed in accordance with Section 6 – “Learning Outcomes of the Program and Each Subject” of the Educational Program.

Balance Between General and Specialty Subjects in the Curriculum

When developing the curricula at WCU, the number of subjects and credit distribution between General and Specialty Subjects blocks are aligned with the requirements outlined in Decisions F-343 (dated 09.07.2020), F-363 (dated 07.08.2020), F-354 (dated 30.07.2020), and F-383 (dated 24.08.2020) of the Ministry of Science and Education of the Republic of Azerbaijan on “Educational Programs by Specialization at the Bachelor's Level (basic higher medical education).” The same approach has been followed in the specialty 050402 – “Business Administration.” This contributes to the effective training of qualified professionals.

Provision of Career Counseling Services for Students and Graduates:

The Self-Assessment Report states that the Student and Graduate Practice and Development Center at QKU plans to implement training in the subjects of "Career Planning," "Soft Skills," and "Hard Skills." A review of the presented curricula shows that in some specialties, these subjects have been incorporated into the internship programs. In October 2023, QKU also hosted a training on "Emotional Intelligence – Soft Skills," conducted by Tabriz Hajinski, the founder of CIBS Europe Psychology and Training Center. Additionally, during discussions with the administration, it was reported that the institution of higher education has active cooperation agreements with 60 companies, and the memoranda of understanding signed with these organizations were also presented. One such collaboration includes the agreement on signing a Memorandum of Understanding between QKU and the Sumgayit Technologies Park.

Mechanisms for Tracking Graduate Participation in the Labor Market:

During the field visit, it was stated that career fairs are organized at the institution annually or once every two years, with participation from at least 40 companies.