GAZI UNIVERSITY

EUA EVALUATION REPORT

November 2007

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1.0   Introduction

1.1   Following two successful conferences on the theme of *quality and evaluation,* the Permanent Committee of the Committee of European Rectors (CRE), the European University Association (EUA) decided in 1993 to offer its 500 member universities the possibility of being reviewed so that their strengths and weaknesses in the areas of quality management might be assessed.

1.2   The EUA offers an external diagnostic service from experienced university leaders coming from different higher education systems in Europe. The aim is to analyse the key dimensions of the university's roles, systems and processes with a view to assisting university leaders in their effort to enhance institutional management and promote the university's capacity to change. The EUA does not wish to provide the university with a blueprint for its development; rather the review process is a consultative one or, in Martin Trow's terminology, an *'external supportive review'*[1].

1.3   By reviewing institutions in different countries the EUA expects to disseminate examples of good practice, validate common concepts of strategic thinking, and elaborate shared references of quality that will help member universities to reorient strategic development, while strengthening a quality culture in Europe. During the review, the university is helped to:

- Examine how it defines long and medium-term aims,
- Look at the external and internal constraints shaping its developments, and
- Discuss strategies to enhance its quality.

2.0   Process and Methodology

2.1   Following a request from the Rector of Gazi University, the steering committee of the EUA Institutional Evaluation Programme appointed, for the institutional quality review, a team comprising:

Professor Lothar Zechlin (Chair): Professor of Public Law and Rector of the University of Duisburg-Essen, Germany,

Professor Christos Nikolaou: Professor of the Department of Computer Science, University of Crete in Heraklion, Crete, Greece and former Rector,

Professor Robin Smith (Secretary): Emeritus Professor of Higher Education Development, Regional Director of the East of England Lifelong Learning Network and former Pro Vice Chancellor,

Professor Noel Whelan: Vice President External, (Emeritus) and Professor of Business and Management, University of Limerick, Ireland and President of the European University Foundation.

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[1] M.Trow: Academic Review and the Culture of Excellence, Studies in Higher Education and Research 1994/2.

2.2   This team undertook a preliminary visit to the University of Gazi in March 2007. At this point it was able to meet the Rector Prof. Dr. Kadri Yamaç and Vice Rector Prof. Dr. Tülin Oygür (who had oversight of the preparation of the documentation for the two visits) together with the Steering Committee of the University's Academic Evaluation and Quality Improvement Board (GÜADEK) and Deans, staff and students of the Faculties of Dentistry, Engineering, Industrial Arts Education, and Pharmacy as well as meeting external partners, and touring facilities. As a result of these preliminary discussions, the team, requested additional information to clarify points arising, and developed the programme for the main visit of September 2007, to include meetings with the University's: Senate, Management Board, GÜADEK, Strategic Planning Commission, Rector and Vice Rectors, General Secretary, administrative units, Student Union representatives, Deans, staff and students of the Faculties of Education, Technical Education, Economics and Administrative Sciences, Science and Arts, Representatives of Vocational High Schools, Graduate Schools, Research Centres and External stakeholders. In addition the team was grateful that it had an opportunity to talk to the Vice Chairman of the Council for Higher Education (YÖK).

3.0   Context

3.1   Higher Education in Turkey comprises State universities (including Gazi) and Foundation (private) Universities. The University of Gazi was established in 1982 and comprised a number of institutions, which merged to form a single institution, albeit on a multi campus basis. These were:

- Gazi Institute of Education
- Ankara Academy of Economy and Commerce
- Ankara College of Technical Teachers
- Ankara Girls' College of Technical Teachers
- Ankara State Academy of Engineering and Architecture.

3.2   It can however, trace its ancestry back to the 1920's with the establishment of the Teacher Training Institute in 1926, renamed the Gazi Teacher Training Institute in 1929. These origins in the teacher training tradition are still pertinent today. They continue to have a significant impact on the mission, organisational structures and capacity of the University to change.

4.0   Vision and Strategy

4.1   The University's Strategic Planning Commission had developed a draft vision and statement of goals for the University to 2010. These had been placed on the internet, to enhance debate and facilitate consultation with staff and students, from whom an impressive 3000 plus responses had been received. In discussions with faculties and other units the EUA Team confirmed that they had made their views known via Faculty Board meetings and equivalent.

4.2   The Mission, Vision and Values as subsequently approved by the University's Senate are laid out in the University's Strategic Plan for 2007-2010. The University's fundamental purpose is laid out in its Mission as;

> '*training individuals who have investigative, inquisitorial and analytical thinking, who can lead the society in a changing world and the mission of contributing to the*

society's lifelong learning and development process by accessing, producing, sharing information and transforming it to daily life' (SER p 3).

4.3   This is underpinned by the Vision

'*to be a prestigious and preferential institution, both nationally and internationally by its original researches, high quality education, creative activities and community services in a wide range of fields such as science, technology, arts and sport'* (SER p 3).

4.4   This is complemented by the University's statement of Values (SER p 3) which identifies the University as one which:

- "Believes in leadership of science, elevates creativity and genuine thinking,
- Welcomes different opinions in a peaceful, free, fair and transparent atmosphere,
- Possesses academic and ethical values,
- Believes education is the leader of social development,
- Satisfies its employees so that they feel proud to be a university member,
- Is respectful to the environment and is aware of its social (*sic*)".

4.5   Such statements of Mission, Vision and Values are in some organisations prosaic, being at a level of generality which makes understanding by stakeholders problematic, implementation unsatisfactory and monitoring difficult. The Team were pleased to note however, the manner in which the Vision had been scoped against *Vision Dimensions* which in turn had been systematically related to the Strategic Plan and strategic goals and importantly against timescales and targets (SER p157). These in turn had been described as Projects and Activities with details of progress over the period (SER p172). This report therefore reviews the progress that the University has made towards the implementation of its own Vision Dimensions and Strategic Plan.

5.0   External Constraints and Capacity for Change

5.1   Although Gazi University is confronted with a number of external constraints, in the view of the EUA Team, it nevertheless has the capacity for change and should capitalise upon the opportunities available to it.

5.2. The Higher Education Council (YÖK) was established in 1981 as a central regulatory body responsible for the planning, coordination and supervision of Higher Education within the framework laid down in the Constitution and the Higher Education Law. For example the establishment of new Faculties, is subject to parliamentary control, on the recommendation of YÖK. Creating new, or closing and merging old, departments and programmes requires YÖK permission. In addition, there are three other administrative bodies; the Inter-University Council (UAK), the Turkish University Rectors Committee (TURK) and the Higher Education Supervisory Board. All of these have functions, which impinge upon university autonomy, in addition to government Ministries. Following new regulations introduced by YÖK in 2005 for '*Academic Evaluation and Quality Improvement in Higher Education Institutions*' UAK appointed a Council (YÖDEK) which outlined the basic requirements for internal academic evaluation and self

assessment which may in future form the basis of a national accreditation system, which currently is not in place. Article 130 of the Constitution defines all Higher Education as a public service and therefore State institutions are supported through public funding *via* the mechanisms of the Ministry of Finance. In 2003 the Public Financial Management and Control Law 5018 was approved and in 2006 this began to have an impact on Universities. These are still assessing its likely influence on their autonomy, with some optimism that the allocation of budgets will free up their room to manoeuvre, which to date has been limited. Currently the number of academic and administrative post within universities is determined by the Government. Appointments to senior positions, such as Faculty Deans are only on the *recommendation* of the Rector. The number of Vice Rectors is restricted to three. The line management of all administrative units, through the Office of the General Secretary, is standard. Admissions to Universities is undertaken centrally through the ÖSYM (Student Selection and Placement Centre) based on scores from the national Student Selection Examinations (ÖSS) and Universities cannot themselves regulate the number of students entering their programmes.

5.3   This close regulatory regime is not conducive to the development of an innovative and dynamic institution with a mission to take its place alongside other Higher Education institutions in an international context. However, YÖK has published a draft report for the strategic development of Higher Education in Turkey to 2025, which acknowledges many of the problems reiterated by management and staff of the University during the course of the EUA visit. In addition, many of the change issues described in this report are susceptible to internal response, and the Rectorate and Senate should continue to harness the enthusiasm of the staff for change, despite the widespread perception of the restricting effect of the external constraints.

6.0   Issues of Change for Gazi University

6.1   Governance and Management

The Rectorate

6.1.1   The EUA Team acknowledges the strengths of the current leadership of the University as exemplified in the substantial and commendable changes that have been introduced in many significant areas of the University and described throughout this report. The wider management comprises:

- The Rector appointed by the President
- Vice Rectors appointed by the Rector
- Deans, recommended by the Rector but appointed by YÖK
- The General Secretary appointed by the Rector
- Directors of Graduate Schools appointed by the Rector
- Heads of Research Centres appointed by the Rector

6.1.2   The Rector of the University is nominated to YÖK through election. The Council considers six names and forwards three to the Turkish President for eventual determination. Gazi University's Rectorate team comprises the Rector and Vice Rectors who meet weekly, together with the General Secretary, to co-ordinate the work of the University and to maintain a focus on

strategic goals. The Rector's team is appointed by the Rector and retain their positions only during the period of the Rector's term of office. All heads of academic units formally report directly to the Rector. The number of Vice Rectors is limited by statute to three, and not by the exigencies of the University's Strategic Plan or size. This limitation has had consequences for Gazi in the way it manages its affairs and responds to the challenges in a global context. The responsibilities of each of the three Vice Rectors cover broad bands of management. There is no organized and formal mechanism for the Rector, the Vice Rectors and the Secretary General to meet as a planning and policy-formulating forum. However, they meet informally once per week on average. The functions of the Vice Rectors have been determined, understandably, around the strengths of the persons selected to undertake the roles and therefore do not appear always to present a coherent and integrated portfolio of management activities. The Rector has appointed a number of 'Advisors' (mostly academics) who underpin the functions of the management by providing supportive analysis and evaluation of innovative initiatives.

6.1.3   There is little doubt that the Rector and his team, together with the Senate and Management Board, have made achievements over the last three years, but the management of the University (as with all Turkish Universities) relies as much upon the personalities and individual qualities of the senior staff as it does upon formal and structured managerial relationships and command and control structures. The system is not conducive to the systematic confrontation of pressing issues or the management of long- term institutional change. The Vice Rectors appeared to EUA Team members to have extensive responsibilities but no direct authority to operationalise their goals and to achieve University targets. For instance, Vice Rectors have no line management responsibilities over academics working within their spheres of influence. All heads of academic units report to the Rector directly. Thus, for example, the goals for research or quality enhancement could not be furthered by the direct intervention of the responsible Vice Rector, but had to be steered by astute leadership and committee chairmanship or membership. Vice Rectors had no direct line management authority over administrative staff and units supporting their particular remits. By law, such line management is through the General Secretary.

6.1.4   The strategies adopted in light of the externally imposed constraints, are by no means conducive to an effective and efficient operation designed to identify and confront change. However, within this context, EUA Team members were impressed by the close working relationships that had developed within the Rectorate and between individual members and other managers within the university. Informal organisational processes, have allowed Vice Rectors to be influential, and enabled the University to function adequately. Given the extensive and complex structure of the organisation (see below) the Rector's span of managerial control appeared to the EUA Team to be too wide to produce optimum outcomes. The Rector should consider whether there are more efficient ways of meeting the managerial needs of the University than are currently in place, without undermining the devolved responsibilities given to Deans and others in leadership roles.

Committees

6.1.5   Two key statutory committees in the management processes are the Senate, which oversees all academic matters, and the Management Board, which oversees administrative aspects of the management process. A Board of Management, which includes the Deans, the three professors elected by Senate and is chaired by the Rector was variously described as both a Management Board and an Administrative Board. The Agenda seen by EUA members suggested it was the latter, focussing on operational matters at a micro level, some of which could easily be devolved to faculties. For example, the determination of overseas travel periods for faculty staff. The University should review the terms of reference of the Management Board and its operational practices with a view to locating decision making at the most effective level, in order to encourage a culture of innovation and dynamism across the University. In addition given its membership, the Management Board should be required to play a very much more significant role as a *corporate* change agent within the University, developing policy initiatives and supporting Senate in confronting change issues.

6.1.6   Senate was identified within the University as the key committee in the development of academic policy. The Senate is capable of fulfilling that expectation as is evidenced from; the quality of the Strategic Planning processes it has put in place, the introduction of GÜADEK and its procedures, and the quality of its SWOT and SER. However, given the structure of the University, Senate and many of the committees are very large and it will need to ensure that it retains the ability to be responsive and innovative in the face of the many challenges confronted by European Universities in a global competitive market. It should review the composition, terms of reference and number of the committees to ensure they remain fit for the purpose of strategic development and oriented towards responsive and innovative practice. Such practice is especially difficult where external constraints appear to be inhibiting innovation. However, Senate should ensure that the inhibiting factors are not also deeply rooted in the traditions, systems and culture of the University itself. It should also ensure that a dialogue with relevant external bodies is maintained with a view to proposing innovative solutions to the issues confronting it.

6.2   Strategic Planning

6.2.1   The first and foremost consideration in determining the effectiveness of an institution's capacity to identify its strategic change needs, and respond to them, is the degree to which it is prepared to examine its internal strengths and weaknesses transparently, and realistically appraise its external threats and opportunities.

6.2.2   A precursor to the work undertaken on the Gazi University self evaluation report (SER), was a requirement by YÖK for all universities to begin to enhance their quality assurance processes. In the University of Gazi this led to the development of internal satisfaction surveys (distributed to students, staff and alumni) and SWOT analyses. These became an important element in the subsequent EUA documentation. There were clear and commendable linkages between these and the Strategic Plan. The GÜADEK Steering Committee also organised meetings with the academic and administrative units to identify issues to be included in the SER. In the view of the EUA Team the development of the self evaluation was a thorough and rigorous process. The process of collecting evidence and developing the SER was itself important in developing a shared

quality enhancement culture across the University. This was an important objective irrespective of the specific outcomes. The SWOT appeared to be commendably focussed on external threats and opportunities as well as internal weaknesses and strengths. The Team was able to concur with the University's diagnosis of its current strategic position. Throughout the course of the visit it was able to suggest additional strategies that the University should focus upon in responding to its perceived position. The SER identified the current ambivalence within the University amongst a number of staff regarding the need for change to meet the developing national and global context of the University. It was expected that the process of self evaluation together with the visit by EUA would increase the awareness of, and support for, the change agenda upon which the University has embarked. Although the University has plans to undertake a SWOT and strategic self evaluation on an *annual* basis, it should limit these to periodic exercises, focussing instead upon the development, annual monitoring and updating of *action plans*. The Senate and staff of the University must be congratulated for the quality of the strategic planning processes and related SWOT and SER. They can be assured that this represents an important element in the institution's capacity to identify change needs and confront them.

6.2.3   Whilst it was gratifying to note the methodical approach to the Strategic Plan narrative, there remained three areas about which the EUA Team had concerns. The first concern relates to the identification of 40 Projects to be undertaken between 2007 and 2010 to implement the Plan. The Team had doubts about the degree to which the University is in a position to meet its Project goals within the time frame outlined, given the constraints identified in this report and the SER, relating to the limited autonomy the University has in a number of important fields of activity. The team proposes that further prioritisation is undertaken in order to ensure effective implementation and effective monitoring by the Senate, Management Board and other bodies within Gazi University. Secondly, the EUA members were unable to identify clearly the executive members of the University (at Rectorate level) with clear responsibilities for general oversight of the outcomes of the specific projects. Finally, the EUA Team felt that the strategic planning goals should be more clearly and explicitly articulated against the financial planning allocations if they are to be effective (see para 6.4.1).

6.3   Organisational Structure

6.3.1   The documentation given to EUA members describes the University in 2006 as comprising some:

- sixteen faculties of which two are constitutionally part of the Çankiri University,
- thirteen higher and vocational higher schools of which nine are functioning,
- six Graduate Schools of which five are functional,
- forty-two Research Centres.

Although not acknowledged directly in the SWOT summary (annex 4) the University is clearly aware that the current organisation represents a less than optimum structure. The SER acknowledges the role played by Senate in identifying the most favourable disposition of academic governance and administration but identified as a major inhibitor the overly bureaucratic and lengthy procedures required to open or close a faculty or programme, requiring YÖK and Cabinet approval.

6.3.2   Although some faculties and schools have been allowed to remain fallow, as a strategy towards optimising the academic, administrative, human and financial resources of the University this approach is unsatisfactory. Aspects of the current organisational structure are moribund as the SER acknowledges (p15). Paradoxically, this is especially true (but not solely restricted to) the five Faculties of teacher education. Teacher Education was a historical strength (based on student admission points). However, it was now widely identified within the University as an area of major weakness where programmes are duplicated and overlapping missions have not been confronted in the best interests of the students and the University. Some students in vocational schools have little prospect of becoming teachers and their qualification does not enable them to be competitive in seeking other careers. As a consequence staff are looking at ways of developing the curriculum to make it more relevant to these diversified practices. This strategy of diversifying faculty objectives, or simply proposing changes to the names of faculties, is not conducive to the effective use of University resources or in the longer term interests of the University and its students. The evaluation Team members criticised the strategy of identifying a weak area of the University as part of the central strategy of elevating the University's reputation nationally and internationally. It is acknowledged that in the area of Teacher Education, the Ministry of National Education has a significant role to play in determining the degree of manoeuvre that the University management has to rationalise its provision in this area. Nevertheless, the EUA Team felt that the Senate and Management Board must prepare an effective and realistic strategy for change. In other faculties, such as those relating to 'health and life sciences', there are universal values and overlapping missions. Given the University's determination to develop this area as one of its noteworthy strengths, the degree of congruence might be better reflected and developed in organisational and management terms.

6.3.3   As stated above there is evidence that the over regulated national context in which the University finds itself and which staff universally appear to see as a major inhibitor of change is beginning to be reappraised, as evidenced in YÖK's Draft Strategy report to 2025. The University must capitalise on this and be proactive with external agencies.

6.4   Resourcing

6.4.1   The University's budget comprises firstly, the Special Budget including direct government funding, research monies, student fees and secondly, the Revolving Fund revenues which are derived from external earnings. 97% of the latter is derived from the hospital in the Faculty of Medicine. The budget is determined by the Ministry of Finance, which is also responsible for agreeing transfers between budget heads. Currently there is little relationship therefore between the University's Strategic Plan and the structuring of its budget, which is a matter for concern. This might become easier in the future under Act 5018, but in the meantime greater articulation is desirable. There are also currently very limited opportunities for investment.

6.4.2   Resources for research are allocated by the government via a State Planning Organisation (DTP). This has a tendency to support larger technological projects. The largest allocation of funds for research, which is transferred into the Scientific Projects Office (BAP), comes from the revenues of a Revolving Fund but there are strict regulations governing the expenditure of these

monies. Legally, at least 5% of the revenues of the Revolving Fund have to be allocated to use for research being carried by the whole University.

6.4.3   The total number of staff both academic and administrative within the higher Education system is determined at government level and distributed to universities via YÖK. Academic staff are government employees. In addition, academic staff have strong security of tenure. However, the Rector does have the power to recommend the distribution of staff numbers internally and this is recognised in the Human Resource Strategy (Vision Dimension 2) as an important element in securing quality. Once again however, this takes the form of a recommendation to YÖK which is concerned to maintain a balanced staffing between disciplinary areas. In addition 'new blood' policies to enrich the staff base and to enable a stronger focus on changing needs are limited. The appointment of Professors and Associate Professors is almost universally from within the University rather from appointment from outside, since the former creates no additional burden on State finances. Similarly the appointment of younger assistant professors, lecturers and research assistants is governed by the government's manpower planning considerations rather than those of the University itself. State HE staffing policies clearly limit the autonomy of Gazi to steer change through its own staffing strategies towards meeting wider goals. This is by no means a situation which is conducive to an institution seeking to be responsive to a changing global context. The Vision Dimension 8 therefore focuses commendably upon facilitating effective staff development to meet new challenges.

6.4.4   The University sees its restricted financial control alongside limited power over staffing decisions to be the major inhibitors of the development of effective change management strategies. The EUA Team would concur with this.

6.5   Quality Assurance and Enhancement

6.5.1   The EUA Team members were impressed by the progress that had been made over the last two years in establishing its quality assurance processes in advance of YÖDEK requirements. The steps taken to introduce a self critical analysis of the strategic position of the University nationally and internationally through the SWOT and SER were significant. The critical self analysis of the current position of the University both internationally and nationally as adumbrated through the SWOT and SER demonstrated a considerable commitment, from the leadership of the institution, to developing a culture of quality management and enhancement. Although there was some distance to travel before such a culture was ubiquitous throughout all faculties and units, the SER had been commendably open in identifying the limitations of the processes to date relating to this variable commitment. In addition the nascent nature of the databases available to staff, it was recognised, had inhibited their engagement.

6.5.2   Details of the processes for assurance and enhancement were contained primarily in the University's *Directive for Academic Evaluation and Quality Improvement*. Article 1 of this states the aim to document 'the principles for evaluation and improvement of education and research activities and administrative services'. This was based upon the 'Regulations on Academic Evaluation and Quality Improvement at Turkish Higher Education' (7th and 65th Articles of the Law on Higher Education, No. 2547). In the view of the EUA Team, the Gazi Senate's Directive provided a substantial and useful contribution to the developing processes of evaluation and

quality enhancement at the University. On the basis of this Directive, Academic Evaluation and Quality Improvement Co-ordinators had been appointed within each academic unit to join other staff to form a committee (coordinatorship) which had responsibilities detailed in the Directive relating to internal evaluation activities. The process of internal evaluation was spelt out in detail (SER pp133-135). Articles 21-23 outlined the post evaluation processes, requiring all programmes to develop on an annual basis strategic plans and action plans for improvement. It was encouraging to note that GÜADEK identified and disseminated good practice.

6.5.3   The processes that had been established within the University, focussed upon the *annual evaluation and monitoring* of academic processes and programmes. In relation to the establishment and development of *new* programmes the University was wholly reliant upon activity at academic unit level. Decisions to develop new programmes were taken through Faculty Boards and it was at departmental level that content and standards were defined and validated. Whilst there was a gradual move towards external accreditation of some programmes (such as in Engineering) there was generally no process of external peer review of *new* programmes, or those undergoing modification as a result of annual monitoring. The University therefore had no means against which to measure itself in this respect and to demonstrate transparently its standing against national and international standards through peer involvement. The University should consider how it might oversee the standards of new programmes in a way consistent with its Vision '*to be a prestigious and preferential institution, both nationally and internationally by its original researches [and] high quality education'*.

6.5.4   With the development of a strong quality assurance and enhancement foundation in relation to academic practice, the University should consider how it might now extend its quality assurance process across the University to include its administrative and support functions thereby ensuring they remained fit for purpose.

6.6   *Research, Consultancy and Technology Transfer*

6.6.1   In relation to research and consultancy, the University's Vision Dimensions 1 and 6 outlined its aims to increase both the quantity and quality of research outputs and their impact on practice. They focussed especially on science and technology areas which were seen to be national priorities. In operational terms the University's Vision Dimensions stressed the need to increase publications in influential journals, encourage interdisciplinary co-operation and engage in international cooperation. In addition stress was placed upon practical application through the development of patents, a focus on research and development activity supported by small and medium sized industries (KOBİ) and public institutions, and the development of Technopolis, which will be launched in 2008, in cooperation with Bilkent University. A Technology Development Centre (TEKMER) had already been established in 2005. A further aim was to increase the use of external financial resources. Staff in Research Centres were enthusiastic about working closely with industry on technology transfer projects. However, it was not currently permitted by Government to undertake the commercial exploitation of research with shared profits. It was hoped that the development of the Technopolis would facilitate a change in this area.

6.6.2   The team had an opportunity to meet faculty staff, representatives of the forty-two existing Research Centres, representatives of the Graduate Schools and students and to tour resources in

certain research areas. Evidence of the impact of the University's research philosophy was variable across the faculties and academic units of Gazi University. Most faculty staff recognised the important relationship between the University's effectiveness as a teaching and learning institution and the need for continued scholarly activity. However, there were currently clear disincentives for staff to engage in activity other than teaching given that additional teaching brought financial rewards whereas research, whilst providing value added to the University brought no tangible benefits to the individual researcher. Although the University has decided to give additional points in the academic promotion and appointments criteria to teaching staff undertaking EU Framework Programme Projects and Central Projects, the Rector should consider how the University could introduce further incentives and rewards to researchers, if not financial then in terms of other benefits, such as equipment, research assistance and such other inducements as are possible and within the University's control. One opportunity for staff comes through Projects supported through the Revolving Fund and Scientific Research Projects Office (BAP). Currently 97% of Revolving Fund revenue comes via the Faculty of Medicine. By statute 45% of the income goes to the staff contributing to the income generation, 35% goes back into their Faculty, 15% to the Treasury and only 5% is available to the University to use to support further scientific research. Nevertheless there is an untapped opportunity for other faculties to engage in such activities. Research activity is overseen by the University's Commission of Scientific Research supported by the Scientific Research Projects Office (BAP). The International Relations Office supports international projects. However, the University should consider developing a more integrated mechanism to support academic staff in the identification of external research funding opportunities, on a selective basis, designed to sustain the strategic research thrust of the University. It is commonplace for such support also to provide a service in preparing bids for funding from national and international sources through the expertise it has.

6.6.3   If the University is to meet its goal as specified in its Strategic Plan to be distinguished in research both nationally and internationally then it will need to be selective in the way it applies incentives and rewards in order to encourage research excellence. As was clearly recognised by the Rector it would not be possible to develop a distinguished research profile uniformly across the institution. For this reason the EUA Team were of the view that the University should reconsider the number of Research Centres that were currently in operation. Forty-two Centres appeared to members to be excessive in the context of the University's mission. This will necessitate the development of clearer criteria for the establishment of any new Research Centre. Such criteria should reflect the strategic goals outlined in the Vision Dimension 1 including for example; the encouragement of interdisciplinary co-operation, engagement in international cooperation, practical application and support from external financial resources. Just as important, however, are the criteria for closing Research Centres. The University has a large and complex structure, much of which reflects historical development and external constraints. Such considerations are not relevant in the context of the Research Centres over which the University has more control. They could become a major driving force for strategic change if appropriately focussed.

6.6.4   In relation to both the Research Centres and more generally, the EUA Team would expect the University to draw research activity more explicitly into the quality assurance and enhancement processes of the University. This will require the use of clearer criteria and metrics than appears currently to be the case, so that objective decisions can be made by the relevant committees and managers. Peer review (especially international peer review) in addition to metrics

relating to publications, citations and other mechanisms, would enable the University to bench mark itself against good practice in Europe and elsewhere.

6.7   Teaching and Learning

6.7.1   It was recognised by the Rector and his team that a university seeking to be responsive in the context of a changing, competitive and global context needs to put the client at the centre of its programme design and delivery. The Strategic Plan of Gazi University made a number of references to the curriculum and teaching and learning within the institution. For example Vision Dimension 4 aimed '*to give student centred high quality education*' and provided detail of specific strategies in relation to undergraduate and postgraduate taught and research students. These included *inter alia*; ensuring that all educational programmes were fit for purpose and in keeping with 21st century needs, improving foreign language provision, increasing student mobility (especially internationally) and enhancing the teaching and learning environment and pedagogic processes. In addition Lifelong Learning was emphasised by the Rector as an important goal which was in part reflected in Vision Dimension 5 and elsewhere. The University had embarked upon two distance learning programmes which had recruited approximately 300 students each and a number of 'two shift' (part-time evening) programmes had been developed.

6.7.2   The EUA Team welcomes the direction that the University has laid out for itself especially in its response to the Bologna process. The EUA team had an opportunity to discuss the teaching and learning strategy with staff and students in academic units and. to hold discussions with members of the Students' Union. Generally speaking students spoke warmly of their experience of the University and spoke with pride of its history and standing. As mentioned above, it was in the context of some teacher education schools and faculties that major concern arose over the degree to which the needs of students were really being focussed upon, and the strategies being adopted by those faculties in the light of the poor teaching career prospects of the students. It was apparent from discussions with academic units that the development of student centred learning was at different stages, both within faculties and between them. In some departments, especially where there were smaller numbers, students expressed themselves satisfied with the style of teaching adopted and access to the staff and Deans. On an individual basis some staff members were more comfortable with student centred learning approaches than others. Conversely in departments with greater numbers, where staff student ratios appeared to inhibit effective student centred learning, less progress had been made. The EUA Team recognised that the implementation of a student centred learning strategy was in its early stages. However, the University should consider how in the context of its academic staff development strategy (Vision Dimension 8) it might support academic staff in developing student centred learning techniques for larger classes (where such techniques can enhance student learning and encourage and motivate them). Given that the University has little control currently on student numbers or staff recruitment, then teaching large classes effectively is an important dimension of quality enhancement. This student centred approach should also focus on postgraduate research students. Some of these students felt isolated, insufficiently mentored, poorly supported in the development of research methodologies to support their individual research activity and lacking guidance.

6.7.3   The University has introduced an on-line student questionnaire, linked to the publication of student assessment results, designed to illicit responses from students about their experience of the

curriculum. This is clearly a crucial aspect of the quality assurance and enhancement processes overseen by GÜADEK. However, in some academic units this has been approached by both staff and students in a mutually reinforcing cynical fashion. The University should refocus its efforts to ensure that the feedback it receives from students is useful and used to enhance best practice across the institution.

6.7.4   The Team welcomed the focus of the University, in the context of continuing to respond to the Bologna Process, on placing the student at the heart of the curriculum by facilitating greater co-operation between departments. The aim was to increase the number of elective programmes, reduce overlap and rationalise provision (Vision Dimension 3). There is still some way to go in this however, and the University should continue to facilitate greater student choice and develop greater flexibility within the curriculum.

6.8   Internationalisation

6.8.1   A vision of the University is to become a 'prestigious and preferential' institution internationally, and many of the Strategic Plan goals included an international dimension. It has engaged with the Bologna process (to which Turkey became a party in 2001). With the oversight of the Rectorate and various committees and administrative units it has established a number of bilateral relationships with European institutions in the context of the Erasmus Programme as well as establishing links to institutions outside Europe. It has also been active in the Leonardo Da Vinci programme.

6.8.2   The EUA Team had an opportunity to discuss this international focus with a large number of staff and students across the University and can confirm that the strategy to develop the international focus of the University is to the fore in the minds of many staff (especially those actively engaged in research) and students. As a result of these discussions the EUA Team proposes that the University enhances its processes for supporting staff in the development of applications for European grants (see section 6.6).

6.8.3   Students also had a keen interest in enhancing the international focus of the University and the EUA Team encourages the University to find more reliable means of securing financial support for postgraduate students who have had papers accepted at international conferences. Students were keen to engage in student exchange programmes with other institutions and the University should continue to encourage this since students will become important ambassadors for Gazi. This will mean however, that the University will need to consider the effectiveness of the teaching of foreign languages to students across all academic units.

6.9   The External Focus and External stakeholders

6.9.1   The University aimed to create a resource stream through cooperative relationships in all fields of endeavour including CPD, research and consultancy for national and local stakeholders (Vision Dimension 6). In addition it aimed to develop an open and responsive demand-led institution based on effective communications with external stakeholders including alumni (Vision Dimension 7).

6.9.2   The EUA team had an opportunity to meet external partners from professional bodies, and the Ministry of National Education. In general these stakeholders spoke warmly of the relationships that had been established with the University's academic units. However, it was apparent that many of these close and cooperative associations were based upon personal relationships. Whilst this is clearly important and is to be welcomed it is nevertheless the case that they are fragile, being totally person dependant. The EUA Team proposes that if the University is to develop sustainable partnerships over the long term and implement this part of the Strategic Plan effectively, the University should establish more formal mechanisms. These should be designed systematically to consolidate partnerships and enable the University to identify stakeholder needs and respond effectively. Such a mechanism could also provide more effective labour market intelligence, crucial to the development of a demand-led institution.

6.9.3   A specifically externally focussed responsibility appeared to be divided amongst the duties of the Rectorate members. The strategic goals of the University would be served better if there was a more coordinated approach to the interface between the University and all aspects of the external environment. In this way the interlinked needs of scanning the global environment for threats and opportunities, identifying opportunities for business development, research, consultancy, project funding and exploring philanthropic funding sources would be more effectively integrated into the processes and procedures of policy development in the University. A Vice Rector with this coherent set of responsibilities would secure these strategic ambitions more effectively.

6.9.4   An alumni database had been established but was in the early stages of being exploited. The University recognised the important role that this database could play in supporting the university's outward facing mission. However, the team encouraged the University to see the alumni not only as a source of sponsorship or philanthropic funding but also as a source of quality enhancement for the university offering as a whole. Providing information on new markets, effectiveness of existing programmes and where change might be necessary.

7.0   Conclusions and Recommendations

7.1   There is much to commend at Gazi University, the:

- Strategic Plan, SWOT and SER demonstrated from the outset that Gazi University was in a good position to identify the need for change and direction of that change. Many of the issues identified by the EUA review team were already well understood by the Rector and his senior colleagues and often reflected in the documentation provided,

- strategic planning processes overseen by the Strategic Planning Commission, and the engagement of stakeholders in that process which provides a good basis for cultural change across the University,

- quality assurance and enhancement processes overseen by GÜADEK which have provided a firm foundation for maintaining and enhancing quality during a continuing time of change,

- quality of research in several areas of the University which provide a basis for institutional specialisation,

- commitment of the students and their positive perceptions of the University which will enable them to provide an ambassadorial role currently and in the future as alumni,

- academic leadership provided by the senior management which has already brought about important developments within the University and which provides confidence that further positive changes can be implemented.

7.2   There are external constraints operating on Gazi University as detailed in this report and elsewhere. These external constraints are sometimes seen as formidable obstacles to change by some staff and indeed there are some pockets of resistance to necessary change. The Rector and the staff should continue to develop internal strategies to bring out the effectiveness of the institution within the context of those external and internal constraints. With this perspective, the EUA Team emphasises the following:

7.2.1   Governance and Management and Leadership

- the Rectorate and Senate must harness the enthusiasm of the staff for change despite a widespread and not always accurate perception of the restrictive effect of external constraints (para 5.3).

- given the extensive and complex structure of the organisation the span of managerial control directly through the Rector is too wide to produce optimum outcomes. The Rector should identify a more efficient way of meeting the managerial needs of the University but without undermining the devolved responsibilities given to Deans and others in leadership roles (para 6.1.4).

- the University should review the terms of reference of the Management Board and its operational practices with a view to locating decision making at the most effective level in the University, and to encourage the Board to become a corporately focussed change agent by engaging in significant policy discussion (para 6.1.5).

- Senate should review the composition, terms of reference and number of committees to ensure they remain fit for purpose and oriented towards responsive and innovative practice (para 6.1.6).

- Senate should ensure that the inhibiting factors are not also deeply rooted in the traditions, systems and culture of the University itself (para 6.1.6).

- it should also ensure that a dialogue with relevant external bodies is maintained with a view to proposing innovative solutions to the issues confronting it. YÖK has published a draft report for the strategic development of Higher Education in Turkey to 2025 which acknowledges many of the constraints. The Rectorate and Senate should seek to make

changes through YÖK without any preconceived view of the outcome of its decision (paras 5.3, 6.1.6).

7.2.2. *Strategic Planning*

- the University should limit SWOT and strategic self evaluation processes to periodic exercises, focussing instead upon the annual development, monitoring and updating of *action plans* (para 6.2.2).

- the University should prioritise its 40 strategic projects and provide a clearer identification at Rectorate level of those responsible for the oversight of the outcomes of specific projects be undertaken (para 6.2.3).

7.2.3 *Organisational Structure*

- the current organisation is underpinned by an inefficient and ineffective structure, with redundant academic units and overlapping and duplicated provision. This should be confronted as a matter of urgency and the Senate and Management Board must prepare an effective and realistic strategy for change in this area (para 6.3.2).

- clear and effective criteria for the establishment and retention of academic units should be established and implemented (para 6.3.2).

- the resolution of the issues arising from the operation of five education faculties must be acted upon as a matter of priority (para 6.3.2).

7.2.4 *Resourcing*

- the University should ensure that the strategic planning goals are more clearly and explicitly articulated against the financial planning allocations (paras 6.2.3, 6.4.1).

7.2.5 *Quality Assurance and Enhancement*

- the University should consider the more extensive use of [international] peer review in relation to the evaluation of new and revised teaching programmes (para 6.5.3).

- the University should consider how to extend its quality assurance processes to include its administrative and support functions thereby ensuring they remain fit for purpose (para 6.5.4).

7.2.6 *Research, Consultancy and Technology Transfer*

- the Rector should consider how the University could introduce further incentives and rewards to researchers (para 6.6.2).

- the University should consider developing a more effective mechanism to support academic staff in the identification of research funding opportunities and to provide a service in preparing bids for funding from national and international sources (para 6.6.2).

- clear and effective criteria for the establishment and retention of research units should be established with a view to reducing the current number considerably (para 6.6.3).

- the University should considers the more extensive use of [international] peer review in relation to the evaluation of the quality of research activity (para 6.6.4).

- the University should develop and use clearer criteria and metrics in order to draw research activity more explicitly into its quality assurance and enhancement processes (para 6.6.4).

7.2.7   *Teaching and Learning*

- the University should reinforce its strategic emphasis on being student centred by refocusing its efforts on:
    a. ensuring that student centred learning is applied to larger groups of students as well as small groups (para 6.7.2).
    b. feedback received from students so that it genuinely improves practice across the institution (para 6.7.3).
    c. enhancing student choice (para 6.7.4).

- The University should revise its current practices in relation to support, mentoring and guidance provided for all aspects of the Research students work (para 6.7.2).

7.2.8   *Internationalisation*

- the University should enhance its processes for supporting staff in the development of applications for European grants (para 6.8.2).

- the University should find more reliable means of securing financial support for postgraduate students who have had papers accepted at international conferences (para 6.8.3).

- the University should review the effectiveness of the teaching of foreign languages to students across all academic units (para 6.8.3).

7.2.9   *External Focus and External Stakeholders*

- the University should establish more formal mechanisms to consolidate external partnerships and enable it to identify stakeholder needs and respond more effectively. Such a mechanism should also provide more effective labour market intelligence (para 6.9.2).

- the strategic goals of the University will be served better if there was a more coordinated approach to the interface between the University and all aspects of the external environment through the role of a designated Vice Rector (para 6.9.3).

- the Alumni of the University should be used for enhancing the quality of provision as well as a resource of sponsorship or philanthropic funding (para 6.9.4).

8.0   Envoi

8.1   The visiting EUA Team would like to put on record its appreciation to the Rector and staff across the University for the work undertaken in preparing for the visit and in developing the documentation that enabled the evaluation to take place. The organisation of the visit was of a high standard and the hospitality much appreciated. It was of considerable benefit to the team that they were able to meet such a broad range of participants from senior managers, through to staff in various parts of this large institution. Students provided a number of supportive and insightful comments and the participation of external partners including the Ministry for National Education and YÖK was crucial to the team's understanding of the context of the University.

8.2   It should be noted that although the EUA Team engage in the evaluation of the University in order to provide a supportive and objective mechanism to aid the University in its strategic development, the individual EUA Team members also benefited greatly from the exchange of views and insights provided by the staff.