Foundation for the Accreditation of Study Programmes in Germany

Accreditation Council ▮▯

**Activity Report
2016**

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Activity Report 2016

Reporting period: January – December 2016

Contents

For reasons of easier legibility, gender-neutral differentiation will not be repeatedly made. Corresponding terms always and without exeption apply to women and men pursuant to non-discrimination.

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Accreditation Council ▪

Foreword

In February 2016, the German Federal Constitutional Court issued a decision on accreditation as a cross-Länder and inter-institutional process for the review of bachelor's and master's study programmes and expressly emphasised the legitimacy of external quality assurance. Almost one year later, the Länder agreed on an interstate treaty on the organization of a joint accreditation system, thus implementing the requirements of the Federal Constitutional Court in a constructive and expeditious manner.

The Accreditation Council welcomes the outcome of the Länder-specific efforts to place external quality assurance in teaching and learning on a legally secure foundation by guaranteeing the fundamental freedom of research and teaching.

That the Federal Constitutional Court wants to see proper involvement of the scientific and academic community without placing into question the participation of students and practitioners in the evaluation process can be seen as confirmation of one of the underlying principles of the accreditation system. Right from the outset, accreditation has been seen as a science-led quality assurance and quality development process which primarily places responsibility for quality upon the higher education institutions (HEIs) and at the same time aims to ensure that the legitimate interests of the various stakeholders are taken into account in quality assessment.

For this reason, the Accreditation Council developed a set of recommendations for the design of the future rules for accreditation in the past year with the involvement of representatives from the scientific and academic community, practitioners, students and accreditation agencies and made them available to the Länder.

I should thus like to thank everyone involved in this development process. My thanks go also to the numerous evaluators who over the past 15 years have provided their expertise in the service of accreditation and have thus contributed to the success of the external quality assurance process in Germany's higher education system. I hereby express my appreciation for their tremendous engagement and commitment.

The Länder and the Accreditation Council have also provided new impetus at international level. Firstly, the Accreditation Council will no longer evaluate agencies itself. When granting the authorization, the Council will instead draw on the respective agency's entry in the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR). Secondly, the European Standards and Guidelines in the current version from 2015 have been incorporated into the rules adopted by the Accreditation Council in 2016 for the authorization of agencies which intend to operate in Germany and are not EQAR-listed. As a result, the established Standards and Guidelines observed in higher education within the EU have become the benchmark for agency accreditation in Germany.

On behalf of the members of the Accreditation Council, I should like to thank our national and international partners in the accreditation system, and look forward to our continued cooperation.

Bonn, June 2017

Professor Dr. Reinhold R. Grimm

Overview

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Accreditation Council Resolution: Report on the analysis of the franchise sample

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Consultation: Handling with the external evaluation of the Foundation in the context of the new legal framework for the German accreditation system.

Consultation: Workplan 2017

1. Current developments

1.1 The Federal Constitutional Court decision

In February 2016, the Federal Constitutional Court issued the long-awaited Decision on Accreditation as a cross-Länder und cross-institutional process for the review of Bachelor's and Master's study programmes and therein expressly confirmed the legitimacy of external quality assurance. The Court also laid down requirements which must be provided for by law in the future. Responsibility for implementing this lies with the Länder.

Following publication of the Decision, the Accreditation Council met for an extraordinary meeting to discuss the direct impact in respect of accreditation. The Council informed the HEIs and agencies that all rules and provisions on accreditation will remain in effect until a new legal framework is in place, and all ongoing and planned accreditations are to be processed as planned.

The Länder have begun in a constructive and expeditious manner to implement the requirements of the Federal Constitutional Court to ensure the future legal basis for external quality assurance in teaching and learning. In December 2016, on the basis of groundwork performed by a working group within the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the Länder in the Federal Republic of Germany (KMK), the Länder agreed a draft interstate treaty on the organization of a joint accreditation system for quality assurance in teaching and learning at German HEIs. As one of the main changes, the draft treaty provides that in future, all accreditation decisions must be made by the Accreditation Council as part of the programme and system accreditation process, thus ensuring that the scientific and academic community has the majority vote. The interstate treaty is to be ratified in 2017 and will enter into force in 2018.

1.2 Further development of the accreditation rules

In 2015, the Accreditation Council began a fundamental review of its rules and established a working group to develop a set of recommendations for revision of the rules for the accreditation of agencies, study programmes and HEI quality management systems.

The revised rules for the accreditation of agencies were completed in the reporting period (see Section 1.1).

With reference to the Federal Constitutional Court decision and the draft interstate treaty presented by the Länder (see Section 1.1) in December 2016, the Accreditation Council changed its original plans to revise the rules for programme and system accreditation, aligning them to the altered conditions. The members of the Accreditation Council thus agreed at its extraordinary meeting concerning the Federal Constitutional Court decision to continue its consultations regarding the revision of its rules, but not to issue new rules until such time as the new statutory regulations had been finalised.

Following the presentation of the draft interstate treaty and its provisions concerning the altered division of responsibilities within the accreditation system, the Accreditation Council modified its goal of revising its rules and agreed to provide the Länder with recommendations for use in defining the criteria and procedural rules they would eventually be required to produce.

The Working Group on Revising the Rules for Accreditation, which comprised representatives from the scientific and academic community, the Länder, practitioners, students, the accreditation agencies and a member of the German

Council of Science and Humanities (Wissenschaftsrat), met three times in the reporting period. Taking account of the changes foreseen in the interstate treaty, the Working Group presented its preliminary recommendations for the new rules to the Accreditation Council at the end of 2016. The recommendations included the following nine topics:

1. Criteria for study programme quality

2. Criteria for system accreditation

3. Key elements of procedural rules for programme and system accreditation

4. External review reports' requirements for programme and system accreditation

5. Structural guidelines (formal criteria)

6. Dual study programmes

7. Academisation

8. Subject-related reference systems

9. Publication practices

The Working Group's recommendations drew on the vast experience gained in recent years by the HEIs, the Accreditation Council and all other stakeholders involved in quality assurance and quality development.

Consultations held by the Working Group on Revising the Rules for Accreditation and the Accreditation Council are to be completed in the first half of 2017.

As a further component of the review procedure, at the start of 2016 the Accreditation Council together with the German Rectors' Conference launched an online forum on Study Programme Quality in Accreditation (Studienqualität in der Akkreditierung). The forum gave the interested public the opportunity over a 10-week period to join in an open debate on the pending review of the accreditation rules

and to express criticism, pose questions, share experience and submit concrete suggestions.

The Head Office summarised the key questions and outcomes from the forum in an internal report which was forwarded to the Working Group on Revising the Accreditation Rules for further discussion.

2. Accreditation Council Activities in 2016: Responsibilities and Outcomes

2.1 Accreditation of agencies

The processes for accreditation of Bachelor's and Master's study programmes (programme accreditation) and of HEI quality assurance systems (system accreditation) are conducted by accreditation agencies. Agencies receive their accreditation and re-accreditation from the Accreditation Council which sets out the quality requirements for agencies and monitors their compliance at regular intervals.

Performing this accreditation procedure, which if requested by an agency can also include a review based on the *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area* (ESG), is (currently) one of the core statutorily assigned responsibilities of the Accreditation Council.

At its 88th meeting in June 2016, the Accreditation Council accredited the following agencies for a further five years:

► AAQ Resolution: The Swiss Agency for Accreditation and Quality Assurance (AAQ) was reaccredited subject to two conditions for the period up to 31 March 2021.

► ACQUIN Resolution: The Accreditation, Certification and Quality Assurance Institute

(ACQUIN) was reaccredited subject to three conditions for the period up to 30 June 2021.

► ASIIN Resolution: The Accreditation Agency for Study Programmes in Engineering Science, Informatics, Natural Science and Mathematics (ASIIN) was reaccredited subject to three conditions for the period up to 31 March 2021.

► ZEvA Resolution: The Central Evaluation and Accreditation Agency (ZEvA) in Hanover was reaccredited subject to two conditions for the period up to 31 March 2021.

Also, at its 88th meeting, the Accreditation Council opened the procedure for reaccreditation of the Foundation for International Business Administration Accreditation (FIBAA) and the Agency for Quality Assurance by Accreditation of Study Programmes (AQAS).

In accordance with No. 5.2.2 of the Resolution on Rules for the Accreditation of Agencies in the version dated 23 September 2016, the Accreditation Council can in justified exceptional cases and at the request of an agency extend an existing accreditation for a maximum of two years. The Council made use of this provision at its 90th meeting in December 2016 and, at the agency's request, extended the accreditation for AQ Austria by almost a year. The request was justified on grounds of the upcoming revision of the accreditation system which makes no provision for future accreditation of an agency by the Accreditation Council. In the case of AQ Austria, completion of the reaccreditation process would have coincided with the expiration date of the previously mandatory agency accreditation.

2.2   Monitoring of the accreditation process

In addition to certifying accreditation agencies, one of the (current) core responsibilities of the Accreditation Council is the monitoring of the procedures used by agencies in programme and system accreditation.

This occurs on the one hand on ad-hoc basis when there are indications of inadequate performance of a procedure or of an incorrect accreditation decision. On the other, the Accreditation Council has developed a range of monitoring formats with differing aims. These include sample-based monitoring by means of file-based and thematic analysis, observing the procedures, and feedback talks.

► Sample-based evaluation

In using the sample-based monitoring procedure for both programme and system accreditation, it is ensured that the criteria-related, procedural and decision-making rules laid down by the Accreditation Council are correctly and adequately applied by all agencies. In this way, monitoring by the Accreditation Council serves to establish procedural standards, enhance process quality and, where appropriate, prevent damage or loss to those concerned.

► Thematic Analysis

Selection of topics for analysis of this kind is made under consideration of current issues of particular relevance for the higher education and quality assurance systems. In the thematic analysis, focus is placed on how the agencies deal with the specific problems and challenges faced, and which of the accreditation rules are seen as useful or obstructive in such efforts.

For capacity reasons, no thematic analysis were conducted in 2016.

► Observing the Procedures

Observation of the procedures for programme and system accreditation is performed by

members of the Accreditation Council or Head Office employees and has two main aims: It gives the Accreditation Council direct insight into the agencies' operative business and provides the agencies with feedback concerning the observations made and the knowledge gleaned from the external perspective of the process observer.

► Feedback talks

Feedback talks were introduced to better integrate the HEI perspective into the Accreditation Council's monitoring activities. The talks between the Accreditation Council, agencies and HEIs enable targeted exchange on completed procedures in programme and system accreditation. They also serve in providing feedback on accreditation practices – especially regarding the discernible effects of accreditation on the quality of study programmes.

The thematic analysis, observing the procedures and feedback talks are all characterised by the greater focus placed on dialogue and exchange.

The following monitoring were performed in the reporting period:

o   Accreditation procedures begun in 2016: Two system accreditation procedures were monitoring using spot checks and one using observation. All three are still ongoing.

o   Accreditation procedures begun and completed in 2016: Two programme accreditation procedures were observed, and one programme accreditation feedback talk was held.

o   Accreditation procedures completed in 2016: Two procedures for which system accreditation observation began in 2015, one begun for system accreditation in 2015, a sample-based monitoring begun in 2013 for

system accreditation and an ad-hoc monitoring procedure begun in autumn 2014.

o   Accreditation procedures continued in 2016: Three procedural observation activities for system accreditation were continued into 2016 and had not been completed by the end of that year.

In the completed sample-based monitoring procedures for system accreditation, the Accreditation Council determined that the agency concerned had fulfilled its obligation to perform a follow-up evaluation.

In the ad-hoc monitoring procedure, the Board determined compliance with an Accreditation Council resolution from December 2015 which required the agency to issue a retroactive requirement for compliance with certain conditions.

The Accreditation Council was informed of the outcome of procedural monitoring, feedback talks and evaluation procedures in the form of reports or Board decisions.

2.3   Accreditation Council resolutions

The Accreditation Council passed the following key resolutions in the reporting period:

► Accreditation for the procedure based on the trial clause

On the basis of its resolution dated 17 September 2014 concerning the trial clause, the Accreditation Council invited the HEIs to develop innovative and independent forms of external review and to propose their trial use in practice.

On the recommendation of the working group which the Accreditation Council had established to prepare the selection process, the Accreditation Council approved the following applications at its 86th meeting on 10 March 2016:

o Programme accreditation in the form of a departmental review of the University of Pforzheim

o Quality audit at the HHL Leipzig Graduate School of Management

o European Quality Audit of the universities of Bremen and Siegen

o Collegial audit at the Johannes Gutenberg University in Mainz

The four approved trials are characterised by the integration of an international perspective and their focus on a dialogue culture which brings the quality of teaching and learning more to the forefront.

In 2017, the Accreditation Council will sign agreements with the respective HEIs, evaluation institutes and, were appropriate, the respective country of domicile, and will have the trials monitored either by members of the Accreditation Council or Head Office employees.

An overview of the selected trials is available on the Accreditation Council website.

► Revision of the rules for the Accreditation of Agencies

On 23 September 2016, the Accreditation Council adopted a completely revised version of the Rules for the Accreditation of Agencies which take full account of the new version of the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG) adopted in 2015.

For accreditation by the Accreditation Council, an agency must in future fulfil Parts 2 and 3 of the ESG as well as other, additional certification criteria which apply for national accreditation. For agencies established outside Germany and who want to operate in Germany, the evaluation concerning ESG compliance can be integrated into the accreditation process. For agencies

domiciled in Germany, the evaluation by the Accreditation Council can also serve as a basis for applications for membership of the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) and for inclusion in the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR).

► Rules for joint programmes

Based on the Federal-Länder Internationalisation Strategy and in line with its strategic planning, the Accreditation Council has revised its rules for accreditation of joint programmes.

Based on the proposal submitted by the Working Group for Joint Programmes, on 23 September 2016 the Accreditation Council adopted the Rules for Joint Programmes and Other International Study Programmes as well as a handout which explained the resolution text. The resolution proposes the definition of conditions under which the European Approach to Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes can be applied.

In the event of approval by the KMK, the Accreditation Council will instruct the Working Group on Revision of the Rules for Accreditation to include the rules for joint programmes when developing proposals for the future rules.

► Introduction of an Accreditation Council quality seal

HEIs had indicated to the Accreditation Council that they would like to see accredited study programmes and quality assurance systems awarded with an Accreditation Council quality seal as a visible quality guarantee.

In response, the Accreditation Council at its 86th meeting on 10 March 2016 agreed that the seal of quality cited in the German Act on Establishing an Accreditation Foundation be designed and produced in graphic form. This would give HEIs a quality seal for study programmes and a quality seal for system

accreditation. Agencies with Accreditation Council certification could use an appropriate agency seal.

► Other Accreditation Council resolutions

Monitoring portfolio 2017: In 2017, the Accreditation Council will conduct the following monitoring processes in accordance with the resolution dated 23 September 2016:

o Two cross-section samples (file-based process evaluations) taking account of the attributes (a) Cluster Accreditation and (b) Conditions and Recommendations.

o A thematic analysis for system accreditation. The monitoring will take in (a) the application of self-accreditation rights and (b) involvement of external experts on the part of the system-accredited HEIs.

o Two feedback talks with system-accredited HEIs.

The process is to be distributed across the agencies, taking account of their profiles and market shares, and on the basis of their statutes of fees. Given the statutory revision of the system following the Federal Constitutional Court decision, the Accreditation Council agreed to use the monitoring portfolio for, initially, a further year only.

Implementation of the quality seal resolution: In summer 2015, the Accreditation Council had instructed a Council-accredited agency to verify its adherence to the quality seal resolution of 23 September 2011 by providing documented evidence of the measures taken. At its 88th meeting on 22 June 2016, the Accreditation Council had instructed the respective agency to reach committee decisions which document as of 1 August 2016 the application of the proposed separate seals concept.

Alignment of sample agreements: At its 88th meeting, the Accreditation Council had approved the alignment of the sample agreements and deleted Section 18 (Reference to Statutes of Fees). The sample agreement serves as a basis for agreements signed between the Accreditation Council and accreditation agencies in which the rights and obligations of the parties are laid down.

2.4 Internal quality assurance

The main focus of the Foundation's internal quality assurance system is the regular and systematic assessment of feedback which the Head Office receives from members of the Accreditation Council, evaluators who work for the Council and the accreditation agencies.

The following feedback measures were taken in the reporting period:

► Survey of members concerning the work methods of the Accreditation Council

► Survey of members on the four completed procedures for agency reaccreditation

► Feedback interviews with the managing directors of the reaccredited agencies

► Survey of peer-reviewers on the preparatory seminar in the lead-up to the process for agency reaccreditation

► Survey of peer-reviewers on the agency reaccreditation process

The Foundation for Accreditation of Study Programmes in Germany currently finds itself in an exceptional situation characterised by the new legal framework created for the accreditation system following the Federal Constitutional Court decision, the associated restructuring (see Section 1.1) and the intensive process of revising the accreditation rules (see Section 1.2).

With the revision of criteria and procedural rules and the development of appropriate recommendations for the KMK Working Group (see Section 1.1), the Accreditation Council complied with one of the key requirements of its internal quality assurance system.

For capacity reasons in 2016, it was decided not to hold a meeting of the Working Group on Quality Assurance or to publish a quality report in that year.

As required under Section 11 of the Articles and Statutes, external audits of the Foundation are conducted at five-year intervals. With reference to the above-mentioned exceptional situation, the Accreditation Council at its 90th meeting decided that the external audit required by the Articles and Statutes in 2018 should be conducted following implementation of the new system.

2.5 Events

► Workshops to prepare peer-reviewers

Intensive preparation of peer-reviewers is of central importance for the quality of the accreditation process. For this reason, day-long preparation workshops have long been an integral component of the accreditation process.

In preparation for site-visits, the workshops are designed to give the Peer-reviewers comprehensive knowledge of the evaluation criteria and of the procedural rules and their application. At the forefront are the joint development of a mutual understanding of the criteria and reflection on peer-reviewers' own responsibilities and roles. In addition, workshop participants are informed about the basic principles of both the German accreditation system and the European Standards and Guidelines.

In 2016, the Accreditation Council held two workshops in Berlin. The first workshop, held on

8 January 2016, served in preparation of the process for reaccreditation of the agencies AAQ, ACQUIN, ASIIN and ZEvA. The second workshop, held on 9 September 2016, prepared peer-reviewers for the process for reaccreditation of the agencies FIBAA and AQAS.

► Expert talks on franchising

On 29 January 2016, as a follow-up to its thematic analysis conducted in 2015, the Accreditation Council hosted expert talks in Bonn on the topic of franchised study programmes. Participants included representatives from accreditation agencies, system-accredited HEIs, the HRK, the KMK and the Länder, the VPH, the ZAB, other international experts, and the German Council of Science and Humanities (Wissenschaftsrat). The aim of the expert talks was to enable dialogue and exchange on the challenges and opportunities involved in accreditation of franchised study programmes. The outcome of the expert talks was integrated into the Bericht „Studiengänge im Franchisekontext: Empfehlungen für die Akkreditierung" (Report on Study Programmes in a Franchising Context: Recommendations for Accreditation).

2.6 Working Groups

► Working Group on the Trial Clause

The Working Group on the Trial Clause met for its third meeting in February 2016 and held talks with proposal applicants (see Section 2.3).

► Working Group on Revising the Accreditation Rules

The Working Group on Revising the Accreditation Rules met three times in the reporting period (see Section 1.2).

► Working Group on Joint Programmes

The Working Group on Joint Programmes met for its fourth meeting in March 2016. The

members agreed on a proposal for the revision of the rules for joint programmes and other international study programmes, and also on guidance explaining those rules (see Section 2.3).

3. International Cooperation

Quality assurance and quality development are key requirements in making the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) a reality. Thus, the promotion of international cooperation and collaboration is one of the central responsibilities assigned to the Accreditation Council by the Länder. The main aim of international cooperation must be to promote a mutual understanding of the quality assurance systems, develop comparable quality assurance criteria, methodologies and standards, and improve transparency in study programmes to aid mutual recognition of qualifications and thus foster student mobility.

The respective European and international quality assurance networks thus play an especially important role.

► **Networks, conferences and talks**

The Accreditation Council has long been an active member of the major European and international quality assurance networks, such as the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) and the International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE). Together with the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), the Council is represented in the Working Group on Implementation of the Bologna Follow-Up Group (BFUG), which gathered for its first meeting on 27 January 2016 and regularly participates in international working groups, seminars and conferences. In 2016, these included:

o The European Quality Assurance Forum (17-19 November 2016) in Ljubljana

o The ENQA Members' Forum (28-29 April 2016) in Budapest

o The ENQA General Assembly (18-21 October 2016) in Gloucester

o The Concluding Conference of the Impact Evaluation of Quality Management in Higher Education (IMPALA) project (16-17 June 2016) in Barcelona

International cooperation enables the Accreditation Council to lend its expertise at international level and to learn from the experience gained by its foreign partners. In this regard and against the backdrop of the pending revision of the legal framework for the German accreditation system, the Accreditation Council held talks with the Accreditation Organisation of the Netherlands and Flanders (NVAO) on the two-phase review and decision-making system established in the Netherlands and Flanders.

► **International Agreements**

In response to an initiative of the US Council for Higher Education Accreditation/International Quality Group (CHEA/CIQG) the Accreditation Council signed a Memorandum of Affiliation. In contrast to the closely-meshed network within the European Higher Education Area, the Accreditation Council mostly maintains its non-European contacts at a bilateral level. Cooperation agreements such as the declaration of intent signed with CHEA/CIQG provide an opportunity – especially given the importance of joint programmes – to intensify non-European cooperation activities with colleagues in developed, democratic, industrialised countries with recognised higher education systems.

4. Information and Communication

4.1 Presentation, information and consultation

The Accreditation Council regularly publishes detailed information about its resolutions and all other issues concerning the accreditation system.

In addition to using the German Science Information Service (idw) to publish press releases, the Foundation's website is a key tool used in the publication of accreditation-related information and for providing information for the Länder, the HEIs, students and agencies. It gives an overview of all Accreditation Council resolutions. The resolutions and the respective KMK and HRK documents are made available to users in the form of PDF files. The website also contains information on the German accreditation system, the members of the Foundation's bodies and committees, and the agencies accredited by the Accreditation Council.

When necessary, digital circulars are used to inform the accreditation agencies and system-accredited HEIs about changes to the rules, issue notices and provide input concerning application of the rules, criteria and organisational requirements.

In its newsletter, the Head Office also disseminates the outcome of Accreditation Council meetings, news of recent developments in the German accreditation system and notifies readers about personnel changes, important dates and events.

4.2 Publication of accreditation data

All accreditation-related information is made available to the interested public via the Accreditation Council website:

► **Agencies**: All agencies which following successful accreditation by the Accreditation Council are entitled to award the quality seal are listed on the Council's website. The website also contains the Accreditation Council resolutions, to which the conditions and time periods, the external review reports, self-evaluation reports as well as the agencies' statements are linked.

► **Study programmes**: Study programmes which bear the Accreditation Council's quality seal are listed in the database of accredited study programmes. The database, which is linked to the German Rectors' Conference Higher Education Compass, can be accessed via the Accreditation Council website and provides information on accreditation deadlines, the conditions on which accreditation is awarded, the participating peer-reviewers and their respective evaluations.

► **System-accredited HEIs**: In addition to accredited study programmes offered by a system-accredited HEI being listed in the database of accredited study programmes, an overview of all system-accredited HEIs is also published on the Foundation's website.

► **Statistical Data**: In addition to study programme-related accreditation information, the Foundation's website also provides users with statistics on the current number of accredited study programmes. The data provided can be sorted by study period, type of qualification, subject groups, type of HEI, Länder and standard period of study.

The revision of the Accreditation Council database started in 2015 was completed in 2016. This ensured adequate presentation of the

system accreditation results and gave the system-accredited HEIs the opportunity to enter data themselves (see also Section 4.4).

4.3 Communication with agencies

Constructive, partnership-based cooperation between the Accreditation Council and the accreditation agencies is one of the fundamental requirements for effective accreditation in Germany.

Agency participation in the Accreditation Council working groups and awarding cross-agency representative consulting membership of the Accreditation Council have proven effective in ensuring reliable exchange of information between the parties involved.

A circular from the Accreditation Council Chair informs the agencies of new or amended Accreditation Council resolutions and also about changes in cross-Länder or Länder-specific requirements.

In accordance with Section 3 of the German Act on Establishing an Accreditation Foundation, the Accreditation Council also consults the accreditation agencies before taking fundamental decisions. This applies in particular where the design and structure of the accreditation system, the accreditation process and the statutes of fees are involved.

On 23 September 2016, the Accreditation Council used its 89th meeting to enter into dialogue with the accreditation agencies. The talks largely focused on the status of quality

assurance in Germany, the opportunities for rule revision, inter-agency competition and monitoring-related measures, both implemented and planned.

On 13 September 2016, at the agency meeting in Bayreuth, talks were held between the agency managers and the Accreditation Council's Head Office. In particular, the talks served dialogue and exchange concerning the new legal framework, pending procedures for agency reaccreditation and specific issues concerning the agencies' operative business.

Both observing the accreditation processes by members of the Accreditation Council or employees from Head Office and the feedback talks also provide an excellent opportunity for exchange of information and experience between the Accreditation Council and the accreditation agencies (see Section 2.2).

4.4 Statistical data

At the end of December 2016, a total of 5,122 Bachelor's and 4,778 Master's study programmes offered by state or state-approved HEIs in Germany bore the Accreditation Council quality seal.[1] A total of 52 state or state-approved HEIs had also successfully completed a system accreditation process. This represents 13 percent of Germany's HEIs[2] – a 30 percent increase in system-accredited HEIs compared with the previous year. A further 18 HEIs were in the process of system accreditation at the end of 2016.

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[1] The figures cited are based on the data contained in the Accreditation Council database. The database contains a list of all accredited study programmes and study opportunities entered into the database by the accreditation agencies. These include study programmes which have received the Accreditation Council's

quality seal during system accreditation. The number of system-accredited HEIs was determined for the purposes of this report.

[2] 339 HEIs according to statistics contained in the HRK Higher Education Compass www.hochschulkompass.de

According to the HRK Higher Education Compass, the share of accredited study programmes among all Bachelor's and Master's study programmes on offer at the end of 2016 amounted to almost 60 percent and has remained more or less unchanged compared with the previous year. The actual number is, however, higher as there are considerable deficits in the accreditation information entered in the associated database. The Accreditation Council has recently intensified its efforts to obtain complete and timely entry of data by the agencies and system-accredited HEIs. However, in 2016, this issue was overshadowed by the debate on the new legal situation.

5. Resources

5.1 Finances

In accordance with Section 4 (1) of the Act on Establishing an Accreditation Foundation (ASG), funding of the Accreditation Council is a shared responsibility of the 16 German Länder. The Länder provide funding only to the extent that the administrative effort on the part of the Accreditation Council is not covered by the levying of fees.

For fiscal year 2016, the German Finance Ministers' Conference (FMK) set the annual amount of Länder-provided funding to the Accreditation Council at €415,000. This sum includes funding for collectively agreed pay increases and the cost contribution of approximately €12,000 which the HRK has received since 2016 for linking the database of accredited study programmes to the Higher Education Compass.

The Foundation's annual report for 2016 shows income in the amount of €623,235.68 (Länder allocations and revenue from fees) and total expenditure of €623,212.71. This leaves a remainder in the amount of €22.97.

5.2 Human, spatial and material resources

In line with the official staffing plan, the human resources at the Foundation's Head Office comprise a managing director (full-time), four programme managers (3.5 full-time equivalents/FTEs) and two administrative assistants (both part-time 50%). The Foundation also employs a student assistant who works 20 hours per month. With the exception of the student assistant, all employees have a university degree and their pay is based on the tariff provisions of the framework collective wage agreement for civil service employees in the Länder (Tarifvertrag für den Öffentlichen Dienst der Länder (TV-L)).

At its Head Office located at Adenauerallee 73, Bonn, Germany, the Accreditation Council has rented office space comprising five separate offices with a total of eight work spaces and total floor space measuring approximately 120 sqm.

As one employee was on parental leave and another left the Foundation's employment, two new programme managers were hired on limited-term contracts in May 2016.

In February and March 2016, a law student completed a six-week administrative placement in the Accreditation Council's Head Office.

Appendices

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Appendix 1   Members of the Foundation's Bodies and Committees

Appendix 2   Dates of Meetings

Foundation for the Accreditation of Study Programmes in Germany
Accreditation Council ❚❙

Members of the Foundation's Bodies and Committees

► Members of the Accreditation Council

Chair

Professor Dr. Reinhold R. **Grimm**

Deputy Chair

Ministerial Director Dr. Simone **Schwanitz**, Baden-Württemberg State Ministry for Science, Research and Art

HEI Representatives

Professor Dr. Stefan **Bartels**, University of Applied Sciences, Lübeck (Fachhochschule Lübeck)

Professor Dr. Holger **Burckhart**, University of Siegen (Universität Siegen)

Professor Dr. Reinhold R. **Grimm**

Professor Dr. Ute von **Lojewski**, University of Applied Sciences, Münster (Fachhochschule Münster)

Länder Representatives

State Secretary Rolf **Fischer**, Schleswig Holstein State Ministry for Social Affairs, Health, Science, and Equality

Dr. Susanne **Reichrath**, Saarland State Minister President Representative for HEIs, Science and Technology

Ministerial Director Dr. Simone **Schwanitz**, Baden-Württemberg State Ministry for Science, Research and Art (until 7 September 2016)

Ministerial Director Dr. Peter **Müller**, Bavarian Ministry of State for Science, Research, and Art (until 16 June 2016)

Ministerial Director Ulrich **Steinbach**, Baden-Württemberg State Ministry for Science, Research and Art (since 8 September 2016)

State Secretary Prof. Dr. Armin **Willingmann**, Saxony-Anhalt State Ministry for Industry, Science and Digitalisation (since 17 June 2016)

Practitioner Representatives

Dr. h.c. Josef **Beutelmann**, Chairman of the Management Board, Barmenia Insurance

Petra **Gerstenkorn**, Member of the Federal Board of the United Services Trade Union (ver.di Bundesvorstand)

Thomas **Sattelberger**, former Member of the Executive Board of Deutsche Telekom AG

Dr. Hans Jürgen **Urban**, IG Metal Management Board

Jörg **Wollny**, Brandenburg State Ministry of the Interior

Students

Isabella **Albert**, Aachen University of Applied Sciences (FH Aachen) (until 17 May 2016)

Jan **Bormann**, TU Kaiserslautern

Franziska **Raudonat**, TU Kaiserslautern (since 18 May 2016)

International Representatives

Dr. Sijbolt **Noorda**, former president of the Association of Universities in the Netherlands (Vereniging van Universiteiten – VSNU)

Professor Dr. Martine **Rahier**, Rector of University of Neuchâtel (Universität Neuchâtel)

Agency Representative (with an advisory vote)

Professor (emeritus) Dr. Reinhard **Zintl**, Otto-Friedrich University, Bamberg (Otto-Friedrich-Universität Bamberg)

► Members of the Foundation Council

Chair

State Secretary Dr. Eva **Gümbel**, Hamburg State Ministry for Science and Research

Deputy Chair

Dr. Jens-Peter **Gaul**, General Secretary of the German Rectors' Conference

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Länder Representatives

State Secretary Dr. Eva **Gümbel**, Hamburg State Ministry for Science and Research

State Secretary Prof. Dr. Ulrike **Gutheil**, Brandenburg State Ministry of Science, Research and Culture (since 8 September 2016)

State Secretary Markus **Hoppe**, Thuringia State Ministry for Industry, Science and Digital Society (since 26 March 2015)

State Secretary Ingmar **Jung**, Hessian State Ministry for Science and Art

Ministerial Director Dr. Peter **Müller**, Bavarian State Ministry for Science, Research and Art (since 17 June 2016)

State Secretary Sebastian **Schröder**, Mecklenburg-West Pomerania State Ministry for Education, Science, and Culture

State Secretary Marco **Tullner**, Saxony-Anhalt State Ministry for Science and Finance

HEI Representatives

Dr. Jens-Peter **Gaul**, General Secretary of the German Rectors' Conference (since 14 March 2016)

Professor Dr. Horst **Hippler**, President of the German Rectors' Conference

Professor Dr. Karim **Khakzar**, President of the University of Fulda (since 12 October 2016)

Professor Dr. Dieter **Lenzen**, President, Freie Universität Berlin (until 11 October 2016)

Professor Dr. Ulrich **Radtke**, Rector of the University of Duisburg-Essen (since 12 October 2016)

Professor Dr. Micha **Teuscher**, Rector of the University of Neubrandenburg (until 11 October 2016)

Professor Dr. Johanna Eleonore **Weber**, Rector of the Ernst-Moritz-Arndt University Greifswald

► **Members of the Management Board**

Chair

Professor Dr. Reinhold R. **Grimm**

Members

Dr. Olaf **Bartz**, Managing Director, Foundation for the Accreditation of Study Programmes in Germany

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► **Complaints Commission**

Professor Dr. Dietmar von **Hoyningen-Hüne,** formerly of the Hochschule Mannheim University of Applied Sciences (Chair)

Professor Dr. Ute von **Lojewski**, Fachhochschule Münster University of Applied Sciences

Franziska **Raudonat**, TU Kaiserslautern

► **Working Group on the Trial Clause**

Professor Dr. Reinhold R. **Grimm** (Chair)

Isabella **Albert**, Student at Aachen University of Applied Sciences (until 21 June 2016)

Dr. Olaf **Bartz**, Managing Director, Foundation for the Accreditation of Study Programmes in Germany

Jan **Bormann**, TU Kaiserslautern (from 22 June 2016)

Dr. Sijbolt **Noorda**, former President of the Association of Universities in the Netherlands (Vereiniging van Universiteiten (VSNU))

Dr. Isabel **Rohner**, Confederation of German Employers' Associations (BDA)

Ministerial Director Dr. Simone **Schwanitz**, Baden-Württemberg State Ministry for Science, Research and Art (until 7 September 2016)

Renate **Singvogel**, ver.di (United Services Trade Union)

► **Working Group on Joint Programmes**

Professor Dr.-Ing. Stefan **Bartels**, President, Lübeck University of Applied Sciences (Chair)

Jan **Bormann**, TU Kaiserslautern (from 22 June 2016)

Doris **Herrmann**, AQAS

Practitioner: Dr. Bernd **Kaßebaum**, IG Metall

Dr. Sijbolt **Noorda**, former President of the Association of Universities in the Netherlands (Vereiniging van Universiteiten (VSNU))

Dr. Nikola **Scholle-Pollmann**, German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD)

Ministerial Director Dr. Simone **Schwanitz**, Baden-Württemberg State Ministry for Science, Research and Art (until 7 September 2016)

► Working Group on Quality Assurance

Professor Dr. Reinhold R. **Grimm** (Chair)

Jan **Bormann**, Student at TU Kaiserslautern

Thomas **Sattelberger**, former Member of the Executive Board of Deutsche Telekom AG

► Working Group on Revising the Accreditation Rules

Professor Dr. Reinhold R. **Grimm** (Chair)

Jan **Bormann**, Student at TU Kaiserslautern

Isabella **Albert**, Student at Aachen University of Applied Sciences (until 21 June 2016)

Dr. Verena **Kloeters**, AQAS

Professor Dr. Ute von **Lojewski**, Münster University of Applied Sciences

Head Undersecretary Barbara **Lüddeke**, Bavarian State Ministry for Science, Research and Art

Professor Dr. Martine **Rahier**, Rector of University of Neuchâtel (Universität Neuchâtel)

Franziska **Raudonat**, Student at TU Kaiserslautern (since 22 June 2016)

Dr. Isabel **Rohner**, Confederation of German Employers' Associations (BDA)

Georg **Reschauer**, AHPGS

Renate **Singvogel**, ver.di (United Services Trade Union)

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Dates of Meetings

► Accreditation Council Meetings

86th meeting on 10 March 2016 in Berlin

87th meeting on 26 April 2016 in Berlin

88th meeting on 22 June 2016 in Berlin

89th meeting on 23 September 2016 in Bonn

90th meeting on 7 December 2016 in Berlin

► Meetings of the Foundation Council

19th meeting of 24 October 2016 in Berlin

► Meetings of the Working Group on the Trial Clause

3rd meeting on 12 February 2016 in Frankfurt/Main

► Meetings of the Working Group on Joint Programmes

4th meeting on 11 March 2016 in Berlin

► Meetings of the Working Group on Revising the Accreditation Rules

2nd meeting on 26 August 2016 in Berlin

3rd meeting on 26 October 2016 in Berlin

4th meeting on 6 December 2016 in Berlin