

Rules of Procedure of the Accreditation Council

(Resolution of the Accreditation Council dated February 24, 2006, amended on November 30, 2006, October 31, 2008, December 8, 2009, June 21, 2010, September 24, 2018, and September 26, 2024)

§ 1 Mandate and Composition

The mandate and composition of the Accreditation Council are derived from Art. 9 of the State Treaty on the Organization of a Joint Accreditation System for Quality Assurance in Studies and Teaching at German Universities (State Treaty on Study Accreditation) as well as § 7 of the North Rhine-Westphalian “Act on the Accreditation Council Foundation (Accreditation Council Act)” of February 15, 2005 (GV.NRW. p. 45, SGV.NRW. Classification No. 223), last amended by Art. 2 of the Act Amending the Administrative Enforcement Act of North Rhine-Westphalia and Amending Other Acts of June 23, 2021 (GV.NRW. p. 762).

Section 2 Chairmanship

(1) The Accreditation Council shall elect from among its members pursuant to Art. 9(2), sentence 1, nos. 1, 2, or

3. In accordance with the State Treaty on Study Program Accreditation or Section 7(2), sentence 1, nos. 1, 2, or 3 of the Accreditation Council Act, a chairperson and a vice-chairperson shall be appointed. Neither may belong to the same member group. Re-election is permitted multiple times. If a chairperson or a vice-chairperson resigns from office prematurely, a successor shall be elected as soon as possible to serve until the end of the current term of office. Upon expiration of the term of office, the chairperson and the vice-chairperson shall remain in office until the election of a successor.

(2) The Chairperson presides over the meetings of the Accreditation Council and represents the Accreditation Council externally in all legal and administrative matters as well as in court proceedings, and may be represented in individual cases or for a range of matters. In the event of incapacity, the Chairperson shall be represented by the Vice Chairperson.

§ 3 Meetings

- (1) The Accreditation Council meets at least twice a year.
- (2) The chairperson sends written invitations to the meetings of the Accreditation Council two weeks in advance, including a preliminary agenda. The dates of the meetings are set by the Accreditation Council.
- (3) The meetings of the Accreditation Council are confidential and not open to the public.
- (4) The Accreditation Council has a quorum if the voting members present hold at least half of the total votes.
- (5) Resolutions of the Accreditation Council require a majority of its votes in accordance with § 9(2) of the Statutes of the Accreditation Council Foundation. In the event of a tie, the Chairperson shall have the casting vote. In votes on matters of the type specified in Article 3(5), sentence 1, no. 2 of the State Treaty on Study Program Accreditation, the members shall, pursuant to Article 9(2), sentence 1, no. 1 of the State Treaty on Study Program Accreditation and § 7(2), sentence 1, no. 1 of the Accreditation Council Act, have a double vote, which may only be cast uniformly.
- (6) If a motion to amend a proposed resolution is made, the amendment shall be voted on first. If there are multiple amendments, the one with the most far-reaching effect shall be voted on first. In case of doubt, the chair of the meeting shall decide the order.
- (7) If a proposed resolution has not received the required majority, it shall be put to a vote again within the same meeting if the members so decide by a majority of votes in accordance with § 9(2) of the Bylaws. If a proposed resolution has received the required majority, sentence 1 shall apply mutatis mutandis in the event that the proposed resolution is to be put to a vote again with an amended text.
- (8) Elections pursuant to Art. 9(3) of the State Treaty on Study Program Accreditation or § 7(3) of the Accreditation Council Act shall be held by secret ballot.
- (9) If deputies have been appointed in accordance with § 9(5) of the Bylaws, they may participate in all meetings in an advisory capacity.
- (10) Members who are unable to attend generally inform the Secretariat of their absence no later than two weeks before the meeting date. If it is not clear who will act as a substitute or cast the vote in the event of absence, they shall also inform the Secretariat of who will represent them or cast the vote. Members of the Accreditation Council may also submit a general declaration to the Secretariat regarding this matter, which may be revoked at any time.

cast. A proxy vote is only permitted if the alternate is also unable to attend the meeting in full. In the event of a member's conflict of interest, a proxy or delegation of vote is not permitted for a specific item on the agenda.

(11) For the accreditation of degree programs and internal university quality assurance systems, members and alternate members of the Accreditation Council assume the role of rapporteurs. They are available to the other members, the Executive Board, and the Secretariat to answer questions regarding the respective accreditation procedures or the submitted documents.

(12) Members and guests of the Accreditation Council must immediately declare any conflict of interest or bias regarding an agenda item to be discussed to the Secretariat of the Accreditation Council. In such a case, they shall not participate in the deliberations and decision-making of the Accreditation Council on this matter and shall not serve as rapporteurs. Reference is made to the applicability of Sections 20 and 21 of the Administrative Procedure Act of North Rhine-Westphalia (VwVfG NRW). A potential conflict of interest generally exists for members, alternate members, and guests of the Accreditation Council when decisions are made regarding degree programs, internal quality assurance systems, or alternative procedures of a higher education institution if they

- a) who were involved in the review process,
- b) are members or affiliates of the applicant institution,
- c) are members of a committee at the applicant institution,
- d) advise the applicant institution on quality assurance matters,
- e) hold a teaching position at the applicant institution.

If the activity or membership occurred up to five years ago, a potential conflict of interest is generally assumed if the member was directly involved with the relevant degree program, quality assurance system, or alternative procedures. The agency representative does not participate in deliberations on applications that their own agency has handled. Representatives of the federal states may participate in deliberations on applications from higher education institutions located in the federal state for which they are responsible. However, they do not vote on the resolution.

(13) The Secretariat shall prepare minutes of the meetings of the Accreditation Council, which shall be signed by the Secretariat and the Chair and approved by the Accreditation Council at its next meeting. The approved minutes shall be made available to the Foundation Board.

§ 4 Decision-Making Outside of Meetings

(1) Upon resolution of the Accreditation Council, decisions on individual matters or matters of a specific nature may also be made by electronic circulation.

(2) The Chair may also initiate resolutions by circulation on their own initiative, unless a voting member of the Accreditation Council objects to the procedure.

(3) Resolutions adopted by written ballot require that at least half of the possible votes be cast within the set voting period. Section 3(5) applies accordingly.

(4) In urgent matters where a decision by the Accreditation Council cannot be reached in a timely manner, the chairperson shall decide after consulting with the vice-chairperson. The chairperson must immediately notify the members of the Accreditation Council of the urgent decision, the reasons for it, and the manner in which it was implemented.

§ 5 Deviations

If the Accreditation Council wishes to deviate from the rules of procedure in a specific case during a meeting, the consent of all votes present is required.

§ 6 Entry into Force

These Rules of Procedure shall enter into force on the day following the decision of the Accreditation Council and after the Articles of Association have entered into force.