

Annex 05 Results of the thematic analyses

In 2017/2018, GAC conducted a retrospective thematic analysis of the conditions imposed in accreditations under the “old” accreditation system.¹ This analysis was updated and compared with new findings from the 2020 Interim Review.²

The 2017/18 survey found that 84% of accredited study programs had been accredited subject to conditions. Under the current accreditation system, this figure dropped to 31%, thereby reversing the ratio between accreditations with and without conditions. These findings can be explained, for example, by a system-wide learning effect, since most study programs have now been accredited and re-accredited several times, albeit mostly under the “old” accreditation system.

With respect to the type of condition, the raw data (i.e., the free-text descriptions of the conditions in question) was coded to identify similar subsets, each of which defines a category. The 2017/18 survey had 42 categories. Of these, the most frequent, at 14%, was “Modulbeschreibung_redaktionell” (editorial change to the module description). For the 2020 report, the categorization was adapted to the Model Decree, increasing the number of categories to 63. Under the current accreditation system, 38% of conditions related to formal criteria and 62% to academic criteria under the Model Decree. Of the formal conditions, half related to § 7 of the Model Decree (Modularization). Of the conditions relating to academic criteria, 77% concerned § 12 (Coherent study program concept and adequate implementation).

Based on these findings, the GAC has drawn a number of conclusions: First, the frequency of certain types of conditions is related to the transition phase to the new system (e.g., the federal states have tightened criteria for “dual” study programs, thereby increasing the number of conditions concerning § 12 for study programs still operating under unchanged systems). Secondly, while various parties expected an overall decrease in conditions related to formal criteria, this has happened only in part: Some implementations of formal criteria are dynamic, e.g., module descriptions (§ 7), which are subject to frequent changes. Thus, these still constitute a significant portion of the applied conditions.

¹https://www.akkreditierungsrat.de/sites/default/files/downloads/2019/Bericht_Auflagenstichprobe_final.pdf

²https://www.akkreditierungsrat.de/sites/default/files/downloads/2021/interim_review_2020.pdf