

**Study Program Accreditation Regulation (StakV)\***

Dated July 22, 2019

Pursuant to Section 2 of the Act on the State Treaty on Study Program Accreditation dated December 18, 2017 (GVBl. p. 482) in conjunction with Art. 4(1) through (4) of the June 1, 2017, to June 20, 2017, the Minister for Science and the Arts hereby enacts:

PART 1 GENERAL  
PROVISIONS

§ 1

Scope

(1) This Regulation sets forth the details regarding the formal criteria under Art. 2(2), the subject-matter criteria under Art. 2(3), and the procedure under Art. 3 of the State Treaty on Study Program Accreditation.

(2) Unless otherwise specified in this regulation, the following provisions on program accreditation also apply to degree programs at state and state-recognized vocational academies leading to the degree of Bachelor. A Bachelor's degree accredited under this regulation is equivalent under higher education law to a Bachelor's degree from a university.

§ 2

Forms of Accreditation

Forms of accreditation are the

1. the procedure pursuant to Art. 3(1)(1) of the State Treaty on Study Program Accreditation (system accreditation),
2. procedures pursuant to Art. 3(1)(2) of the State Treaty on Study Accreditation (program accreditation), or
3. alternative accreditation procedures pursuant to Article 3(1)(3) of the State Treaty on Study Accreditation.

PART 2

FORMAL CRITERIA  
FOR DEGREE  
PROGRAMS

§ 3

Program Structure and Duration

(1) In the tiered degree system, the bachelor's degree is the first standard degree leading to professional qualification in higher education; the master's degree represents a

further degree conferring professional qualifications. Undergraduate programs leading directly to a master's degree are excluded, with the exception of the programs mentioned in paragraph 3.

(2) The standard duration of study for full-time study is six, seven, or eight semesters for bachelor's programs and four, three, or two semesters for master's programs. For bachelor's programs, the standard duration of full-time study is at least three years. For consecutive degree programs, the total standard period of study for full-time study is five years (ten semesters). Shorter or longer standard periods of study are possible in exceptional cases, provided the program is structured accordingly, to enable students to pursue an individualized learning path, particularly through part-time, distance, work-integrated, or dual study programs, as well as semesters of professional practice. Notwithstanding the third sentence, consecutive bachelor's and master's degree programs in core artistic subjects at art and music colleges may also be established with a standard duration of study of six years.

(3) Theological degree programs that qualify students for the office of pastor, the priesthood, or the profession of pastoral assistant (full-time theological studies) need not be structured in stages and may have a standard period of study of ten semesters.

§ 4

Program Profiles

(1) Master's degree programs may be distinguished as "application-oriented" and "research-oriented." Master's degree programs at colleges of art and music may have a special artistic profile. Master's degree programs that provide the educational prerequisites for a teaching position have a special teaching-related profile. The respective profile must be specified in the accreditation.

(2) When establishing a master's program, it must be determined whether it is consecutive or continuing education. Continuing education master's programs correspond to consecutive master's programs in terms of the standard period of study and the thesis, and lead to the same level of qualification and the same entitlements.

(3) Bachelor's and Master's degree programs each require a thesis that demonstrates the ability to independently address a problem within the respective field using scientific or artistic methods within a specified timeframe.

\*) FFN 70-293

## § 5

## Admission Requirements

(1) The admission requirement for a master's program is a first professional university degree. Admission to continuing education and artistic master's programs via an aptitude test in accordance with the Hessian Higher Education Act remains unaffected by this. Continuing education master's programs generally require at least one year of relevant professional experience.

(2) As an admission requirement for artistic master's programs, applicants must demonstrate the specific artistic aptitude required for such programs.

(3) In all other respects, the Hessian Higher Education Act applies to admission to master's degree programs.

## § 6

## Degrees and Degree Titles

(1) Upon successful completion of a Bachelor's or Master's program, only one degree—the Bachelor's or Master's degree—is awarded, unless it is a multiple-degree program. In this context, degrees are not differentiated based on the standard duration of study.

(2) The following titles are to be used for Bachelor's and consecutive Master's degrees:

1. Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) and Master of Arts (M.A.) in the subject groups of Language and Cultural Studies, Sports, Sports Science, Social Sciences, Art History, Performing Arts, and, where the content is appropriate, in the subject group of Economics as well as in applied arts programs,
2. Bachelor of Science (B.Sc.) and Master of Science (M.Sc.) in the subject groups of Mathematics, Natural Sciences, Medicine, Agricultural, Forestry, and Nutritional Sciences, and in the subject groups of Engineering and Economic Sciences where the program content is appropriate,
3. Bachelor of Engineering (B. Eng.) and Master of Engineering (M. Eng.) in the engineering sciences subject group with an appropriate focus,
4. Bachelor of Laws (LL.B.) and Master of Laws (LL.M.) in the subject area of Law,
5. Bachelor of Fine Arts (B.F.A.) and Master of Fine Arts (M.F.A.) in the Fine Arts subject group,
6. Bachelor of Music (B. Mus.) and Master of Music (M. Mus.) in the Music subject group,
7. Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) and Master of Education (M.Ed.) for degree programs that prepare students

for a teaching career; for a multidisciplinary program, a designation in accordance with Nos. 1 through 7 may be provided depending on the program's content focus.

Subject-specific additions to degree titles and bilingual degree titles are excluded. Bachelor's degrees with the addition "honors" ("B.A. hon.") are excluded. For interdisciplinary and combined degree programs, the degree title is based on the subject area that predominates in the program. For continuing education programs, master's degrees that differ from the aforementioned titles may also be used. For the full theological degree program, different titles may also be used.

(3) The degree documents may clarify, in an appropriate place, that the qualification level of the Bachelor's degree corresponds to a Diplom degree from universities of applied sciences, or that the qualification level of a Master's degree corresponds to a Diplom degree from universities or equivalent institutions of higher education.

(4) Detailed information regarding the specific program underlying the degree is provided in the Diploma Supplement, which is an integral part of every degree certificate.

## § 7

## Modularization

(1) The degree programs are to be structured into study units (modules) that are thematically and temporally delimited by the grouping of course content. The content of a module is to be designed such that it can generally be taught within a maximum of two consecutive semesters; in particularly justified exceptional cases, a module may also extend over more than two semesters. For the core artistic subject in the bachelor's program, at least two modules are required, which may account for approximately two-thirds of the total study time.

(2) The description of a module must include at least:

1. the module's content and learning objectives,
2. Teaching and learning methods,
3. prerequisites for participation,
4. Applicability of the module,
5. Requirements for the awarding of credit points under the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS credits),
6. ECTS credits and grading,
7. Frequency of the module's offering,
8. Workload and
9. Duration of the module.

(3) The requirements for participation include knowledge and skills

and skills required for successful participation, as well as guidance on appropriate preparation by students. In the context of the module's applicability, the connection to other modules in the same degree program must be described, as well as the extent to which it is suitable for use in other degree programs. Regarding the requirements for the awarding of ECTS credits, it must be specified how a module can be successfully completed (types, scope, or duration of examinations).

## § 8

### Credit Point System

(1) Each module must be assigned a specific number of ECTS credits based on the workload for students. As a rule, 30 credits per semester shall be used as a basis. One credit corresponds to a total student workload of 25 to a maximum of 30 hours of in-class and self-study. ECTS credits are awarded for a module if the requirements specified in the examination regulations are met. The awarding of ECTS credits does not necessarily require an examination, but rather the successful completion of the respective module.

(2) For the Bachelor's degree, no fewer than 180 ECTS credits must be demonstrated. For the Master's degree, 300 ECTS credits are required, taking into account the prior studies up to the first professionally qualifying degree. In individual cases, deviations from this requirement may be permitted if the student possesses the appropriate qualifications, even if 300 ECTS credits are not attained upon completion of a Master's program. In consecutive Bachelor's and Master's programs in the core artistic disciplines at art and music colleges with a standard duration of six years, the Master's level is attained with 360 ECTS credits.

(3) The scope of work for the bachelor's thesis is 6 to 12 ECTS credits and for the master's thesis 15 to 30 ECTS credits. In fine arts programs, the scope of work for the bachelor's thesis may, in justified exceptional cases, amount to up to 20 ECTS credits, and for the master's thesis up to 40 ECTS credits.

(4) In justified exceptional cases, for degree programs with special academic organizational measures to , 75 ECTS credits per academic year. In this context, the workload for one ECTS credit is estimated at 30 hours. Special academic organizational measures may pertain in particular to the learning environment and supervision, the structure of the program, academic planning, and measures to ensure the student's livelihood.

(5) For teacher education programs for elementary or primary school teaching positions, for

cross-disciplinary teaching positions at the primary level and for all or individual types of secondary schools, for teaching qualifications for all or specific types of lower secondary schools, as well as for special education teaching qualifications I, a master's degree may be awarded if a total of 300 ECTS credits have been earned, including at least 240 ECTS credits acquired at the university and taking into account the preparatory service.

(6) At vocational academies, a three-year program leading to a bachelor's degree generally requires the completion of 180 ECTS credits. The theoretical component of the program must not be less than 120 ECTS credits, and the practical component must not be less than 30 ECTS credits.

## § 9

### Special Criteria for Cooperation with Non-Higher Education Institutions

(1) The scope and nature of existing collaborations with companies and other institutions, including non-higher-education learning venues and course components as well as the language or languages of instruction, are contractually regulated and described on the university's website. When applying credit transfer models within the framework of program-related collaborations, the substantive equivalence of non-higher-education qualifications to be transferred and their equivalence to the intended qualification level must be clearly demonstrated.

(2) In the case of program-specific collaborations with non-higher-education institutions, the added value for future students and the degree-granting institution must be clearly demonstrated.

## § 10

### Special Provisions for Joint Degree Programs

(1) A joint degree program is a multi-level degree program coordinated and offered by a domestic institution of higher education in collaboration with one or more institutions of higher education from foreign countries within the European Higher Education Area, leading to a joint degree and exhibiting the following additional characteristics:

1. an integrated curriculum,
2. a study component at one or more foreign universities of generally at least 25 percent,
3. contractually regulated cooperation,
4. coordinated admission and examination procedures, and
5. joint quality assurance.

(2) Qualifications and periods of study are recognized in accordance with the Act of May 16, 2007, implementing the Convention of April 11, 1997, on the Recognition of Qualifications in Higher Education in the European Region (Federal Law Gazette II, p. 712)

recognized. The ECTS is applied in accordance with Sections 7 and 8(1), and the distribution of credit points is regulated. For a bachelor's degree, 180 to 240 credit points must be earned, and for a master's degree, no fewer than 60 credit points. Essential program information is published and accessible to students at all times.

(3) If a joint degree program is coordinated and offered by a domestic institution of higher education in collaboration with one or more institutions of higher education from non-European countries (non-European cooperation partners), paragraphs 1 and 2 shall apply mutatis mutandis upon request by the domestic institution of higher education if the non-European cooperation partners commit in the cooperation agreement with the domestic institution to accreditation in accordance with the criteria and procedural rules set forth in paragraphs 1 and 2 as well as in § 16(1) and § 33(1).

PART 3  
SUBSTANTIVE  
CRITERIA FOR DEGREE PROGRAMS  
AND  
QUALIFICATION MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

§ 11

Qualification Objectives and Degree Level

(1) The qualification objectives and the intended learning outcomes are clearly formulated and transparently reflect the objectives of higher education set forth in Art. 2, para. 3, no. 1 of the State Treaty on Study Program Accreditation. Personal development also encompasses the future civic, political, and cultural roles of graduates. Upon graduation, students should be able to play a decisive role in shaping social processes in a critical and reflective manner, with a sense of responsibility and in the spirit of democratic civic engagement.

(2) The academic and scientific/artistic requirements encompass the aspects of knowledge and understanding (broadening, deepening, and comprehending knowledge), the use, application, and creation of knowledge or art (utilization and transfer, scientific innovation), communication and cooperation, as well as scientific/artistic self-awareness and professionalism, and are consistent with the level of the degree awarded.

(3) Bachelor's programs serve to impart scientific foundations, methodological competence, and profession-specific qualifications, ensuring a broad scientific grounding. Consecutive Master's programs are designed as programs that deepen, broaden, or are interdisciplinary or in other fields. Continuing education master's programs require qualified professional experience of generally no less than one year. The program design for

takes professional experience into account and builds upon it to achieve the qualification objectives. In designing the program, the institution outlines the relationship between professional qualifications and the program offerings, as well as the equivalence of requirements compared to consecutive master's programs. Artistic programs foster and further develop the ability for artistic creation.

§ 12

Coherent Program Concept and  
Adequate Implementation

(1) The curriculum is appropriately structured, taking into account the specified entry qualifications and with a view to achieving the qualification objectives. The qualification objectives, the program title, the degree and its designation, and the module concept are coherently aligned with one another. The program concept encompasses diverse teaching and learning methods adapted to the respective academic culture and program format, as well as practical components where applicable. It creates suitable conditions for promoting student mobility, enabling students to spend time at other universities without losing academic progress. It actively involves students in the design of teaching and learning processes (student-centered teaching and learning) and provides opportunities for self-directed study.

(2) The curriculum is implemented by teaching staff with sufficient subject-specific and methodological-didactic qualifications. The integration of research and teaching is ensured in accordance with the institution's profile, particularly through full-time professors in both undergraduate and graduate programs. The institution takes appropriate measures for staff selection and qualification.

(3) In addition, the program is adequately resourced (particularly in terms of non-academic staff, facilities, and equipment, including IT infrastructure and teaching and learning materials).

(4) Exams and assessment methods enable a meaningful evaluation of the learning outcomes achieved. They are module-based and competency-oriented.

(5) The feasibility of completing the program within the standard period of study is ensured. This includes, in particular

1. a predictable and reliable academic schedule,
2. minimal overlap between courses and exams,
3. a reasonable average workload commensurate with the examination load, whereby the learning outcomes of a module must be designed so that they can generally be achieved within a semester or a year

, which is validated through regular surveys, and

4. an adequate and workload-appropriate frequency and organization of examinations, whereby, as a rule, only one examination is scheduled per module and modules should have a minimum scope of five ECTS credits.

(6) Degree programs with a specific profile requirement must demonstrate a coherent program concept that appropriately reflects the specific characteristics of the profile.

### § 13

#### Academic Content Design of Degree Programs

(1) The timeliness and adequacy of the subject-specific and academic requirements are ensured. The subject-specific content and the methodological and didactic approaches of the curriculum are continuously reviewed and adapted to subject-specific and didactic developments. To this end, systematic consideration is given to the academic discourse at the national and, where applicable, international level.

(2) In degree programs that provide the educational prerequisites for a teaching career, the basis for accreditation is both the evaluation of educational sciences and subject-specific disciplines, as well as their didactics, in accordance with common and state-specific subject-related requirements, and the common and state-specific structural guidelines for teacher education.

(3) In the context of the accreditation of teacher education programs, it must be examined in particular whether

1. an integrated program at universities or equivalent institutions of higher education comprising at least two subject disciplines and educational sciences is offered during both the bachelor's and master's phases (exceptions are permitted for the subjects of art and music),
2. practical school training already during the bachelor's program, and
3. the program and degrees are differentiated by teaching specialty

have been implemented. Exceptions are permitted for teaching at vocational schools.

### § 14

#### Academic Success

The program is subject to ongoing monitoring with the participation of students and graduates. Based on this, measures are developed to ensure academic success. These measures are continuously reviewed, and the results are used to further develop the program. Those involved are informed of the results and the measures taken, in compliance with data protection regulations.

### § 15

#### Gender Equality and Compensating for Disadvantages

The university has policies in place regarding gender equality and the promotion of equal opportunities for students in special circumstances, which are implemented at the program level.

### § 16

#### Special Provisions for Joint Degree Programs

- (1) For joint degree programs, the following apply:

§ 11 (1) and (2), § 12 (1) sentences 1 through 3, para. 2, sentence 1, para. 3 and 4, and § 14 apply accordingly. In addition, the following applies:

1. the admission requirements and selection procedures must be appropriate to the level and the academic discipline in which the program is situated,
2. it can be demonstrated that the program achieves the intended learning outcomes,
3. where applicable, the requirements of Directive 2005/36/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of September 7, 2005, on the recognition of professional qualifications (OJ EU No. L 255, p. 22, No. L 271, p. 18, No. L 93 p. 28, No. L 33 p. 49, No. L 305 p. 115, No. L 177, p. 60, No. L 268, p. 35, No. L 95 p. 20), as last amended by Commission Delegated Decision (EU) 2017/2113 of September 11, 2017 (OJ EU No. L 317, p. 119),
4. in the supervision, the design of the degree program, and the teaching and learning methods used, the diversity of the students and their needs are respected and the specific requirements of mobile students are taken into account,
5. the university's quality management system ensures the implementation of the above provisions and those specified in § 17.

(2) If a joint degree program is coordinated and offered by a domestic institution of higher education together with one or more non-European cooperation partners, paragraph 1 shall apply mutatis mutandis upon application by the domestic institution of higher education if the non-European cooperation partners commit in the cooperation agreement with the domestic higher education institution to accreditation in accordance with the criteria and procedural rules set forth in paragraph 1, § 10(1) and (2), and § 33(1).

### § 17

#### Concept of the Quality Management System (Objectives, Processes, Instruments)

- (1) The institution has a mission statement for teaching that is reflected in the curricula

reflects in its degree programs. The quality management system adheres to the values and standards of the mission statement for teaching and aims to continuously improve the quality of education. It ensures the systematic implementation of the requirements outlined in Parts 2 and 3. The university has established and published university-wide decision-making processes, authorities, and responsibilities for the establishment, review, further development, and discontinuation of degree programs, as well as the university's own procedures for the accreditation of degree programs within the framework of its quality management system.

(2) The quality management system was developed with the participation of the university's constituent groups and with the involvement of external experts. It ensures the independence of quality assessments and includes procedures for handling internal conflicts as well as an internal grievance system. It is based on closed-loop control systems, covers all areas of the university's operations that are directly relevant to study and teaching, and is equipped with adequate and sustainable resources. Its functionality and effectiveness with regard to the quality of study programs are regularly reviewed by the university and continuously improved.

#### § 18

##### Measures for Implementing the Quality Management Concept

(1) The quality management system includes regular evaluations of degree programs and the areas of activity relevant to teaching and studies by internal and external students, academic experts from outside the university, representatives from the professional field, and graduates. If a need for action arises, the necessary measures are taken and implemented.

(2) Insofar as the university's quality management system also includes evaluations of teacher education programs, teacher training programs with the combined subject of Protestant or Catholic Theology or Religion, Protestant theological programs qualifying for the ministry, and other bachelor's and master's programs with the combined subject of Protestant or Catholic Theology, the requirements for participation and approval under Section 25(1), sentences 3 through 5, shall apply accordingly.

(3) The data required for the implementation of the quality management system is collected university-wide and on a regular basis.

(4) The institution documents the evaluation of its degree programs within its internal quality management system, including feedback from external stakeholders, and regularly informs the institution's members, the public, its sponsoring body, and the state in which it is located about the measures taken. It

informs the public about the accreditation decisions made on the basis of the university's internal procedure and provides the Accreditation Council with the information required for publication pursuant to § 29.

#### § 19

##### Cooperation with Non-Higher Education Institutions

If a university offers a degree program in cooperation with a non-university institution, the university is responsible for compliance with the requirements set forth in Parts 2 and 3. The degree-granting institution may not delegate decisions regarding the content and organization of the curriculum, admission, recognition, and credit transfer, the assignment and evaluation of examination performance, the administration of examination and student data, quality assurance procedures, or the criteria and procedures for selecting teaching staff.

#### § 20

##### University Cooperation

(1) If a higher education institution enters into a program-specific cooperation with another higher education institution, the degree-granting institution or institutions shall ensure the implementation and quality of the program concept. The nature and scope of the cooperation shall be described, and the agreements underlying the cooperation shall be documented.

(2) If a system-accredited institution of higher education enters into a program-specific cooperation with another institution of higher education, the system-accredited institution may award the program the seal of the Accreditation Council pursuant to § 22 (4) sentence 2, provided that it is itself a degree-granting institution and ensures the implementation and quality of the program concept. Paragraph 1, sentence 2 applies *mutatis mutandis*.

(3) In the case of cooperation among higher education institutions at the level of their quality management systems, system accreditation of each participating institution is required. At the request of the cooperating institutions, a joint system accreditation process is permitted.

#### § 21

##### Special Criteria for Bachelor's Degree Programs at vocational academies

(1) Full-time faculty members at vocational academies must meet the hiring requirements set forth in § 5 of the Act on the State Recognition of Vocational Academies of September 15, 2016 (GVBl. p. 162). The proportion of instruction provided by full-time faculty members shall not be less than 40 percent. In exceptional cases, this may also include professors at universities of

applied sciences or universities who teach at a vocational academy on a part-time basis, provided that they ensure continuity in the curriculum and consistency in the overall education, as well as the mandatory supervision and advising of students; the fulfillment of these requirements must be separately verified as part of the accreditation of the individual degree program.

(2) Paragraph 1, sentence 1 applies *mutatis mutandis* to part-time faculty members who offer theory-based courses leading to ECTS credits or who participate as examiners in the assignment and evaluation of the bachelor's thesis. Courses as described in the first sentence may, in exceptional cases, also be offered by part-time faculty members who hold a relevant university degree or an equivalent qualification, as well as subject-specific and pedagogical competence and several years of relevant professional experience in accordance with the requirements of the course.

(3) As part of the accreditation process, the following must also be reviewed:

1. the interaction between the different learning environments (study academy and company),
2. the assurance of quality and continuity in the course offerings and in the supervision and advising of students against the backdrop of the unique personnel structure at vocational academies, and
3. the existence of a sustainable quality management system that encompasses the various learning locations.

#### PART 4 PROCEDURAL RULES FOR PROGRAM AND SYSTEM ACCREDITATION

##### § 22

##### Decision of the Accreditation Council, Awarding of the Seal

(1) The Accreditation Council decides on accreditation at the request of the institution by determining compliance with the formal criteria and the academic and content-related criteria pursuant to Article 3(5), sentence 1, of the State Treaty on Study Program Accreditation in conjunction with Parts 2 and 3. The basis for the decision regarding the formal criteria is an audit report pursuant to Article 4(3), sentence 1, no. 2, letter b of the State Treaty on Study Program Accreditation. The basis for the decision regarding the academic and content-related criteria is an expert opinion pursuant to Article 3(2), sentence 1, no. 4 of the State Treaty on Study Program Accreditation.

(2) The decision is issued in writing. It must be substantiated.

(3) The institution shall be given the opportunity to comment prior to the Accreditation Council's decision

the opportunity to comment if it intends to deviate significantly from the experts' recommendation. The deadline for submitting comments is one month.

(4) Upon accreditation, the Accreditation Council awards its seal to the degree program or the quality management system. In the case of system accreditation, the institution is granted the right to award the Accreditation Council's seal itself for the degree programs it has reviewed.

(5) The accreditation of a full-time Catholic theological degree program takes place exclusively in the form of program accreditation. In the case of full-time and part-time theological degree programs, the decision of the Accreditation Council requires the approval of the competent ecclesiastical authorities.

##### § 23

##### Documents to be Submitted

(1) The following documents must be attached to the application:

1. a self-evaluation report from the institution,
2. an accreditation report from an agency accredited by the Accreditation Council, consisting of an audit report and an expert opinion; in the case of system accreditation, the audit report refers to the evidence specified in Nos. 3 and 4,
3. When applying for system accreditation, proof that at least one degree program has gone through the quality management system,
4. In the case of an application for system reaccreditation, proof that, in principle, all bachelor's and master's degree programs have undergone the quality management system at least once.

(2) If the documents referred to in paragraph 1, no. 2 are not written in German, translations into German must be submitted.

(3) As soon as the Accreditation Council makes an electronic data processing system available, it must be used.

##### § 24

##### Commissioning of an agency, Accreditation Report, Site Visit

(1) The institution shall commission an agency accredited by the Accreditation Council pursuant to Art. 5, para. 3, no. 5 of the State Treaty on Study Program Accreditation to evaluate the formal and subject-specific criteria and to prepare an accreditation report. For a full-time Catholic theology program, the evaluation is conducted by the Agency for Quality Assurance and Accreditation of Canonical Degree Programs in Germany, which is accredited by the Accreditation Council.

(2) The institution provides the agency with a self-evaluation report that contains, at a minimum, information on the institution's quality objectives and on the formal and subject-specific

content-related criteria in Parts 2 and 3. The institution's self-evaluation report, in the preparation of which the student council must be involved, shall not exceed 20 pages for program accreditation and 50 pages for system and bundle accreditation.

(3) The review report is prepared by the Agency; for degree programs under Section 25(1), sentences 3 and 4, the review report requires the approval of the persons named therein. The relevant standards for the review report are the formal criteria set forth in Part 2. It shall include a recommendation regarding compliance with the formal criteria. The review report shall be drafted using the template to be provided by the Accreditation Council. The institution must be informed immediately of any failure to meet a formal criterion.

(4) The expert opinion is issued by the expert panel pursuant to § 25. The expert panel receives the audit report pursuant to paragraph 3. The relevant standards for the expert opinion are the subject-matter criteria set forth in Part 3. It contains a recommendation regarding compliance with the subject-matter criteria. The report must be drafted using the template provided by the Accreditation Council and shall not exceed 20 pages for program accreditation and 100 pages for system and cluster accreditation.

(5) As part of the evaluation of the academic and content-related criteria, the review panel conducts an on-site visit. In the case of the accreditation of a degree program that is not yet offered at the time the agency is commissioned (concept accreditation), the review panel may, by mutual agreement, waive the on-site visit. The same applies to the reaccreditation of a degree program.

#### § 25

##### Composition of the Review Panel, Requirements for Reviewers

(1) The review panel of the agencies shall consist of at least four persons for program accreditation. It shall be composed as follows:

1. at least two university faculty members with expertise in the relevant field,
2. one representative from professional practice with expertise in the relevant field,
3. one student with relevant expertise.

In the accreditation of degree programs that qualify students for admission to teacher training, a representative of the ministry responsible for education shall take the place of the person referred to in sentence 2, no. 2; for teacher training programs with the combined subject of Protestant or Catholic theology or religion,

a representative of the locally competent diocese or regional church. In the accreditation of full-time theological degree programs and in all other bachelor's and master's degree programs that include Protestant or Catholic theology or religion as a combined subject, a representative of the competent church authority shall take the place of the person referred to in sentence 2, no. 2. For the degree programs mentioned in sentences 3 and 4, the submission of the expert opinion pursuant to § 24 (4) sentence 1; without this consent, the report shall not be submitted to the Accreditation Council.

(2) In the case of a system accreditation, the agencies' expert panel shall consist of at least five persons. It shall be composed as follows:

1. at least three university faculty members with relevant experience in teaching quality assurance,
2. a representative from the professional field,
3. one student.

(3) The university faculty members hold the majority of votes. In the respective review panel, the majority of reviewers must have experience with accreditations. In the case of a system accreditation, the majority of reviewers must have experience with system accreditations.

(4) The evaluators are appointed by the agency commissioned to prepare the accreditation report. In making these appointments, the agency is bound by the procedure to be developed by the German Rectors' Conference pursuant to Art. 3, para. 3, sentence 3 of the State Treaty on Study Accreditation.

(5) The following persons are excluded from serving as assessors:

1. is employed by or enrolled at the institution submitting the application for accreditation,
2. are employed by or enrolled at one of the institutions participating in cooperative degree programs or joint degree programs, or
3. is considered biased according to the customary rules of academia.

(6) The Agency shall inform the institution of higher education of the composition of the review panel prior to the appointment of the reviewers. The institution of higher education has the right to comment within a period of two weeks.

#### § 26

##### Validity Period of Accreditation, Extension

(1) Initial accreditation is valid for a period of eight years from the start of the semester or trimester in

the accreditation decision is announced. If, in the case of program accreditation, the degree program has not yet been launched, the accreditation takes effect from the start of the semester or trimester in which the degree program is first offered, but no later than the start of the second semester or trimester following the announcement of the accreditation decision.

(2) Before the expiration of the accreditation period, a subsequent accreditation (reaccreditation) must be initiated. Reaccreditations are valid for a period of eight years.

(3) If an accredited degree program is discontinued, the accreditation may be extended for students who are still enrolled when the accreditation period expires. The accreditation of a degree program may be extended for a period of up to two years if the institution is preparing an application for cluster or system accreditation that includes the degree program in question. When applying for a bundle or system accreditation, the accreditation of degree programs whose accreditation expires during the process may be provisionally extended for the duration of the process plus one year.

#### § 27

##### Conditions

(1) A deadline of generally twelve months shall be set for the fulfillment of a condition.

(2) In justified exceptional cases, the deadline may be extended upon application by the institution.

(3) Proof of compliance with the condition must be provided to the Accreditation Council.

#### § 28

##### Obligation to Report Changes

(1) The institution is obligated to immediately notify the Accreditation Council of any significant change to the subject of accreditation during the period of validity of the accreditation.

(2) The Accreditation Council shall decide whether the significant change is covered by the existing accreditation.

#### § 29

##### Publication

The Accreditation Council's decision and the accreditation report shall be published by the Accreditation Council on its website. Personal data may not be disclosed in the publication unless the data subject has consented or obtaining the data subject's consent is not possible or would require disproportionate effort, and it is evident that the disclosure is in the data subject's

. Sentences 1 and 2 apply mutatis mutandis to internal accreditation decisions of system-accredited universities.

#### § 30

##### Bundle Accreditation, Partial System Accreditation

(1) The report of the review panel pursuant to § 24(4) may cover multiple degree programs if these share a high degree of disciplinary affinity that goes beyond mere affiliation with a disciplinary field (humanities and cultural studies, social sciences, or natural sciences) (bundled accreditation). The subject-specific criteria set forth in Part 3 must be assessed separately for each degree program. A bundle shall consist of no more than ten degree programs.

(2) At the request of the institution, the Accreditation Council may approve the specific composition of the bundle prior to the submission of the application pursuant to § 23.

(3) In exceptional cases, a subunit of the institution responsible for organizing studies may be the subject of system accreditation. This may be the case in particular if

1. accreditation of the quality management system for the entire institution is not yet appropriate or practicable,
2. the subunit's quality management system is integrated into the institution, and
3. at least one degree program of the subunit has already undergone this system.

#### § 31

##### Random Sampling

(1) In the case of system accreditation and partial system accreditation, the assessment panel shall conduct a sampling in accordance with § 25(2). The sampling shall verify whether the intended effects of the quality management system under review are achieved at the program level.

(2) The subject of the random sample is

1. the consideration of all criteria in Parts 2 and 3 within a degree program that has undergone the institution's quality management system, and
2. the consideration of formal and subject-specific criteria in accordance with Parts 2 and 3, as determined by the review panel.

When selecting the sample, the review panel takes into account the university's range of disciplines in its teaching.

(3) If the institution offers degree programs that also prepare students for a regulated profession, one such program must additionally be included in the sample, taking into account the criteria in Parts 2 and 3 that pertain to degree programs; the same applies to teacher education programs

for one program of study for each type of teaching qualification offered, as well as for programs of study in Protestant or Catholic theology or religion. The sample shall include one representative appointed by the body responsible for the respective regulated profession, or a representative appointed by the body responsible for the respective regulated profession, or a representative of the ministry responsible for the school system, or the respective church body.

PART 5  
PROCEDURAL RULES  
FOR SPECIAL  
TYPES OF STUDY PROGRAMS

§ 32

Combined degree programs

(1) If students select individual courses from a larger number of eligible courses for their program of study, each of these courses constitutes a sub-program as part of a combined degree program.

(2) The subject of accreditation is the combined degree program. The institutions ensure through their respective quality management systems that the program is feasible in all possible subject combinations.

(3) The accreditation of a combined degree program may be supplemented by the inclusion of additional elective sub-programs or subjects. This does not alter the accreditation period for the combined degree program.

(4) The accreditation certificate shall list all sub-programs or subjects included in the accreditation. In the event of an addition to the accreditation pursuant to paragraph 3, a new accreditation certificate shall be issued.

(5) In all other respects, Part 4 remains unaffected.

§ 33

Joint Degree Programs

(1) For joint degree programs in which a domestic institution of higher education and other institutions of higher education from the European Higher Education Area participate, the accreditation decision may, in deviation from § 22(1), be made by recognizing the evaluation conducted by an agency listed in the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR). The Accreditation Council recognizes this evaluation upon application by the institution and grants its seal if compliance with the formal and substantive criteria for joint degree programs under Parts 2 and 3 of this Regulation has been demonstrated and the evaluation procedure has met the following requirements:

1. the conduct of the procedure was notified to the Accreditation Council prior to the start of the procedure,
2. the accreditation decision is based on a self-report from the cooperating

institutions, which in particular contains information on the respective national framework conditions and highlights the specific characteristics of the joint degree program,

3. an on-site visit has taken place at at least one location of the program with the participation of representatives from all cooperating institutions of higher education as well as other stakeholders,
4. The evaluation is based on an expert report that complies with the requirements for joint degree programs in Parts 2 and 3,
5. the evaluation was conducted by an evaluation panel consisting of at least four members, composed as follows:
  - a) Members from at least two of the countries participating in the joint degree program,
  - b) at least one student representative,
  - c) The panel of experts possesses expertise in the relevant fields and disciplines, including the labor market and the professional world in the respective areas, as well as expertise in the field of quality assurance in higher education; it is familiar with the higher education systems of the participating institutions and the languages of instruction used; and
  - d) the requirements under Section 25(3), first sentence, and Sections 5 and 6 have been met,
6. The evaluation identifies the following characteristics: justification, finality, and, where applicable, demonstrated fulfillment of conditions, and
7. the Agency has published the expert report and the evaluation on its website in German and English.

Section 22(2), (3), and (4), first sentence; Section 26(2)

sentence 1, as well as §§ 28 and 29, apply . Section 26(1), first sentence, and (2), second sentence, shall apply mutatis mutandis, provided that the accreditation period and the reaccreditation period shall each be six years. Upon publication, the decision shall be identified as an accreditation decision based on the separate procedure for joint-degree programs. The institution must clearly indicate this in the degree certificates.

(2) If a joint-degree program is coordinated and offered by a domestic institution of higher education together with one or more non-European cooperation partners, paragraph 1 shall apply mutatis mutandis upon application by the domestic institution of higher education if the non-European cooperation partner commits in the cooperation agreement with the domestic institution to accreditation in accordance with the criteria set forth in paragraph 1 and § 10(1) and (2)

as well as § 16(1).

PART 6  
ALTERNATIVE  
ACCREDITATION PROCEDURE  
PURSUANT TO ART. 3, SECTION 1, NO. 3  
OF THE STATE AGREEMENT ON STUDY  
PROGRAM ACCREDITATION

§ 34

Alternative Accreditation Procedures

(1) In addition to the two procedures regulated in Part 4, alternative procedures for ensuring and developing quality in studies and teaching may also be implemented pursuant to Art. 3, para. 1, no. 3 of the State Treaty on Study Accreditation.

(2) In alternative procedures, the criteria set forth in Parts 2 and 3 must be observed. The principles for the appropriate involvement of the academic community set forth in Article 3(2), sentence 1 of the State Treaty on Study Accreditation, as well as those established in the State Treaty on Study Accreditation and in this ordinance, apply *mutatis mutandis*; likewise, the requirements for participation and consent under § 18(2) apply *mutatis mutandis*.

(3) The implementation of alternative procedures requires the prior approval of the Accreditation Council and the ministry responsible for higher education; the Accreditation Council may arrange for an external review. The application must be submitted to the Accreditation Council via the ministry responsible for higher education. The Accreditation Council may, in consultation with the state, refuse its approval only if the alternative procedure does not comply with the provisions of Art. 2 and Art. 3(2), sentence 1 of the State Treaty on Study Program Accreditation, as well as the principles for appropriate academic involvement set forth in the State Treaty on Study Program Accreditation and in this regulation. The alternative procedure shall be suitable for gaining fundamental insights into alternative approaches to external quality assurance beyond the procedures specified in Article 3(1)(1) and (2) of the State Treaty on Study Program Accreditation.

(4) The Accreditation Council shall develop rules of procedure that regulate, in particular, the application requirements.

(5) The alternative procedure shall be limited to a maximum of eight years. Section 22(4), sentence 2, and Section 26(3), sentence 3, shall apply *mutatis mutandis*. It shall be monitored by the Accreditation Council and, as a rule, evaluated by an independent, research-oriented institution two years prior to the expiration of the project period.

PART 7  
MISCELLAN  
EOUS

§ 35

Eligibility under Professional Licensing  
Law

(1) Accreditation procedures pursuant to Art. 3

(1) Nos. 1 and 2 of the State Treaty on Study Program Accreditation may, upon application by the institution of higher education, be organizationally linked to procedures that determine the eligibility of a study program under professional licensing law.

(2) The participation of external experts to be appointed in addition to the other representatives or representatives of professional practice in an advisory capacity on the review committees pursuant to § 25 (1) and (2) shall be effected through nomination by the state authority responsible for the respective regulated profession.

§ 36

Evaluation

(1) Three years after this regulation enters into force, its implementation and effects shall be reviewed.

(2) The results shall be reported to the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the Länder in the Federal Republic of Germany.

§ 37

Entry into Force

This regulation shall enter into force on  
January 1, 2018.

Wiesbaden, July 22, 2019 The

Hessian Minister  
of Science and the Arts  
Dorn-Rancke