

Article 6

Repeal of the Regulation on School Associations
with the Community School

The Regulation of the Ministry of Education and Cultural Affairs on School Networks with the Community School dated April 15, 2013 (State Gazette, p. 85) is repealed.

Article 7 Entry into

Force

This Regulation shall enter into force on the day following its promulgation.

STUTT GART, April 9, 2018

DR. EISENMANN

**Regulation of the Ministry of Science on
Program Accreditation (Program
Accreditation Regulation – StAkkVVO)**

April 18, 2018

Pursuant to Article 1, Section 2, Sentence 1 of the Act on the State Treaty between the State of Baden-Württemberg, the Free State of Bavaria, the State of Berlin, the State of Brandenburg, the Free Hanseatic City of Bremen, the Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg, the State of Hesse, the State of Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania, the State of Lower Saxony, the State of North Rhine-Westphalia, the State of Rhineland-Palatinate, the Saarland, the Free State of Saxony, the State of Saxony-Anhalt, the State of Schleswig-Holstein, and the Free State of Thuringia on the organization of a joint accreditation system for quality assurance in studies and teaching at German universities (State Treaty on Study Accreditation) and amending the State Higher Education Act of November 7, 2017 (GBl.

p. 584) in conjunction with Article 4, paragraphs 1 through 4, of the

State Treaty on Study Accreditation (GBl. 2017 p. 585, State Gazette 2018, p. 3) provides as follows:

SECTION 1

General Provisions

§ 1

Scope

(1) This regulation sets forth the details regarding the formal criteria under Article 2, paragraph 2 of the State Treaty on Study Program Accreditation, the subject-specific and content-related criteria under Article 2, paragraph 3 of the State Treaty on Study Program Accreditation, and the procedure under Article 3 of the State Treaty on Study Program Accreditation.

(2) A bachelor's degree from a state or state-recognized vocational academy accredited on the basis of the State Treaty on Study Accreditation is equivalent under higher education law to a bachelor's degree from a university.

§ 2

Forms of Accreditation

Forms of accreditation include the procedures under Article 3(1)(1) of the State Treaty on Study Program Accreditation (system accreditation), under Article 3(1)(2) of the State Treaty on Study Program Accreditation (program accreditation), or alternative accreditation procedures under Article 3(1)(3) of the State Treaty on Study Program Accreditation.

SECTION 2

Formal Criteria for Degree Programs

§ 3

Structure and Duration of Study

(1) In a tiered degree program system, the bachelor's degree is the first standard degree conferring professional qualifications in a higher education program; the master's degree constitutes a further higher education degree conferring professional qualifications. Undergraduate degree programs that lead directly to a master's degree are excluded, with the exception of the degree programs mentioned in paragraph 3.

(2) The standard duration of study for full-time programs 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 study for full-time study is at least three years. For consecutive degree programs, the total standard duration of study for full-time study is five years (ten semesters). Longer standard durations 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, or work-study programs. Notwithstanding the third sentence, in degree programs for teaching at the Gymnasium (upper secondary school) with the subject of visual arts or music at art colleges, and in the core artistic subjects at art colleges, consecutive bachelor's and master's degree programs may also be established with a total standard period 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 into application-oriented and research-oriented programs. Master's degree programs at art colleges 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 a consecutive or a continuing education program. Continuing education master's programs correspond to consecutive master's programs in terms of the standard duration of study and the thesis requirements, and lead to the same level of qualification and the same entitlements.

(3) Bachelor's and Master's degree programs 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.

§ 5

Admission Requirements and Transfers Between Programs

(1) The admission requirement for a master's program is a first professional university degree. Professional master's programs generally require at least one year of qualified professional experience.

(2) As an admission requirement for artistic Master's programs, applicants must demonstrate the specific artistic aptitude required for such programs. In programs for teaching at the Gymnasium (upper secondary school) in the subjects of visual arts or music, no further aptitude examination is required upon completion of a Bachelor's program with teacher training components and subsequent study toward a Master of Education. Pursuant to Section 59(2), sentence 2 of the State Higher Education Act (LHG), the requirement for professional practical experience does not apply at art colleges for programs designed to deepen free artistic skills.

(3) For admission to master's programs, universities may, pursuant to § 59(1), sentence 2, and § 59(2), sentence 1, second clause, of the LHG, stipulate additional requirements in their statutes.

§ 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. In such cases, there is no differentiation of degrees based on the standard period of study.

(2) The following titles shall 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, and Performing Arts, and—where the program's content aligns—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 Economics where the program content is appropriately aligned,
3. "Bachelor of Engineering" ("B.Eng.") and "Master of Engineering" ("M.Eng.") in the engineering discipline group, provided the program content is appropriately aligned,
4. "Bachelor of Laws" ("LL.B.") and "Master of Laws" ("LL.M.") in the field 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, and
7. "Bachelor of Education" ("B.Ed.") and "Master of Education" ("M.Ed.") for degree programs that provide the educational requirements for a teaching position. For a multidisciplinary degree program, a designation in accordance with numbers 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. A different title may also be used for a full theological degree program.

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

(4) Detailed information regarding the program of study 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 credits 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 prerequisites for participation must specify the knowledge, skills, and abilities required for successful participation, as well as guidance for appropriate preparation by students. The applicability of the module must describe its relationship to other modules in the same degree program and the extent to which it is suitable for use in other degree programs. The requirements for the awarding of ECTS credits must specify how a module can be successfully completed (type, scope, and duration of the examination).

§ 8

Credit Point System

(1) Each module shall be assigned a specific number of ECTS credits depending on the workload for the students. As a rule, 30 ECTS credits shall be allocated per semester. One ECTS credit corresponds to the total work performed by the students in class and self-

A study load of 25 to a maximum of 30 hours. ECTS credits are awarded for a module if the achievements specified in the examination regulations are demonstrated. 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. For consecutive Bachelor's and Master's programs in the core artistic disciplines at art colleges and in teacher training programs for high school (Gymnasium) with a major in visual arts or music at art colleges with a standard duration of study of six years, the Master's level is achieved 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, in justified exceptional cases, the scope of work for the bachelor's thesis may be up to 20 ECTS credits and for the master's thesis up to 40 ECTS credits.

(4) In justified exceptional cases, up to 75 ECTS credits per academic year may be applied for degree programs with special academic organizational measures. In this context, the workload for one ECTS credit is estimated at 30 hours. Special organizational measures may relate 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 degree programs leading to a teaching position in elementary schools, 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.

§ 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 languages of instruction, are contractually regulated and described on the university's website. When applying credit transfer models within

the context of program-related collaborations, the substantive equivalence of non-higher-education qualifications to be credited 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 university is 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. integrated curriculum,
2. a study component at one or more foreign universities, generally comprising 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 on the Convention of April 11, 1997, on the Recognition of Qualifications in Higher Education in the European Region of May 16, 2007 (Federal Law Gazette II, p. 712). The European Credit Transfer System is applied in accordance with Sections 7 and 8(1), and the distribution of credit points is regulated. For the bachelor's degree, 180 to 240 credit points must be earned, and for the 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 conjunction with one or more institutions of higher education in foreign countries that do not belong to the European Higher Education Area (non-European cooperation partners), paragraphs 1 and 2 shall apply *mutatis mutandis* upon application by the domestic institution, provided that 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 § 16(1) and § 33(1).

SECTION 3

Academic and Content-Related Criteria for Degree Programs and Quality Management Systems

§ 11

Qualification Objectives and Degree Level

(1) The qualification objectives and intended learning outcomes are clearly formulated and transparently reflect the goals of higher education set forth in Article 2, Paragraph 3, Item 1 of the State Treaty on Study Accreditation. The dimension of 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 democratic civic spirit.

(2) The professional and scientific or artistic requirements encompass the aspects of knowledge and understanding (broadening, deepening, and comprehending knowledge), the application, use, and creation of knowledge or art (utilization and transfer, scientific innovation), communication and cooperation, as well as scientific or 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 in-depth, broadening, interdisciplinary, or specialized programs. Professional Master's programs typically require at least one year of qualified professional experience. The curriculum design of professional master's programs takes professional experience into account and builds upon it to achieve the program's learning objectives. In designing the program, the university outlines the relationship between professional qualifications and the academic offerings, as well as the equivalence of requirements compared to consecutive master's programs. Artistic programs foster and 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's

, degree title, and the module concept are coherently interrelated. 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 to promote 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) The program also has adequate resources, particularly non-academic staff, facilities, and equipment, including IT infrastructure, teaching, and learning materials.

(4) Exams and types of exams enable a meaningful assessment of the learning outcomes achieved. They are module-specific and competency-based.

(5) The ability to complete the program within the standard period of study is guaranteed. 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 are to be designed so that they can generally be achieved within one semester or one year, as validated by 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 self-contained program concept that appropriately reflects the specific characteristics of the profile.

§ 13

Academic and Content-Related Design of Degree Programs

(1) The timeliness and adequacy of the academic and scientific requirements are ensured. The academic content and the methodological

didactic approaches of the curriculum are continuously reviewed and adapted to further developments in the subject area and pedagogy. 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, accreditation is based both on the evaluation of educational sciences and subject-specific disciplines, as well as their didactics, in accordance with state-wide and state-specific subject requirements, and on the state-wide and state-specific structural requirements 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-specific disciplines and educational sciences during both the bachelor's and master's phases,
2. practical school training already during the bachelor's program, and
3. the program and degrees are differentiated by teaching certification

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

Section 14

Academic Success

The degree program is subject to continuous monitoring with the participation of students and graduates. Based on this, measures to ensure academic success are derived. These are continuously reviewed, and the results are used for the further development of the degree 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 provisions of § 11, paragraphs 1 and 2, and § 12, paragraph 1, sentences 1 through

3, paragraph 2, sentence 1, paragraphs 3 and 4, and § 14 apply *mutatis mutandis*. In addition, the following applies:

1. The admission requirements and selection procedures shall be appropriate to the level and the academic discipline in which the degree program is situated.
 2. It can be demonstrated that the program achieves the intended learning outcomes.
 3. To the extent applicable, the provisions of Directive 2005/36/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of September 7, 2005, on the recognition of professional qualifications (OJ L 255, September 30, 2005, p. 22), as last amended by Directive 2013/55/EU (OJ L 354, 28.12.2013, p. 132, as last amended by OJ L 95, April 9, 2016, p. 20).
 4. In providing academic support, designing the degree program, and implementing teaching and learning methods, the diversity of students and their needs is 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 in collaboration with non-European cooperation partners, paragraph 1 shall apply mutatis mutandis upon application by the domestic university if the non-European cooperation partners commit in the cooperation agreement with the domestic university to accreditation in accordance with the criteria and procedural rules set forth in paragraph 1 as well as § 10, paragraphs 1 and 2, and § 33, paragraph 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 of 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 set forth in Sections 2 and 3. The university has established and published university-wide the decision-making processes, competencies, 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. The university regularly reviews and continuously improves the system's functionality and effectiveness with regard to the quality of study programs.

§ 18

*Measures for Implementing the Quality
Management Concept*

- (1) The quality management system includes regular evaluations of degree programs and areas relevant to teaching and student learning by internal and external students, academic experts from outside the university, representatives from the professional field, and graduates. If a need for action is identified, the necessary measures are taken and implemented.
- (2) If, on the basis of the university's quality management system, evaluations are conducted of teacher education programs, teacher education programs with the combined subject of Protestant or Catholic Theology/ Religion, Protestant theological degree programs qualifying for the ministry, and other bachelor's and master's degree programs with the combined subject of Protestant or Catholic Theology, the participation and approval requirements pursuant to § 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 university documents the evaluation of degree programs by the internal quality management system, including the opinions of external stakeholders, and regularly informs university members, the public, the sponsoring body, and the state where the university 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 higher education institution offers a degree program in cooperation with a non-higher-education institution, the higher education institution is responsible for ensuring compliance with the requirements set forth in Sections 2 and 3. The degree-granting institution may make decisions regarding the content and organization of the curriculum, admission,

recognition and transfer of credits, the setting and evaluation of examination requirements, the management of examination and student data, quality assurance procedures, and 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 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. Sentence 2 of paragraph 1 applies accordingly.

(3) In the case of cooperation between higher education institutions at the level of their quality management systems, system accreditation of each of the participating institutions is required. Upon application by the cooperating institutions, a joint system accreditation procedure is permissible.

§ 21

(not applicable)

SECTION 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 in accordance with Article 3(5), sentence 1, of the State Treaty on Study Program Accreditation, in conjunction with Sections 2 and 3 of this Regulation. The basis for the decision regarding the formal criteria is an audit report pursuant to Article 4(3), sentence 1, item 2(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), first sentence, item 4 of the State Treaty on Study Program Accreditation.

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

(3) The institution shall be given the opportunity to comment prior to the Accreditation Council's decision if the Council 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 Catholic theological degree programs that qualify students for the priesthood or for the profession of pastoral assistant is granted exclusively through program accreditation. For full-time and part-time theological degree programs, the decision of the Accreditation Council requires the approval of the competent church 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 paragraphs 3 and 4,
3. in the case of an application for system accreditation, additional evidence that at least one degree program has undergone the quality management system,
4. in the case of an application for system reaccreditation, evidence that, in principle, all bachelor's and master's degree programs have undergone the quality management system at least once.

(2) For the documents referred to in paragraph 1, item 2, translations into German must be submitted if they are not written in German.

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

§ 24

*Appointment of an agency;
Accreditation Report; Site Visit*

(1) The institution shall commission an agency approved by the Accreditation Council pursuant to Article 5, paragraph 3, item 5 of the State Treaty on Study Program Accreditation to

the evaluation of formal and academic criteria and the preparation of an accreditation report. For Catholic theology programs that qualify students for the priesthood or the profession of pastoral assistant, the evaluation is conducted by the Agency for Quality Assurance and Accreditation of Canonical Study 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 academic-content criteria as outlined in Sections 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 cluster accreditation.

(3) The review report is prepared by the Agency; for degree programs pursuant to Section 25(1), sentences 3 and 4, the review report requires the approval of the persons named therein. The formal criteria set forth in Section 2 serve as the relevant standards for the review report. It contains a recommendation regarding compliance with the formal criteria. The review report must be drafted using the template to be specified 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 in accordance with

§ 25. The review panel shall receive the review report referred to in paragraph 3. The relevant standards for the review report are the academic and content-related criteria set forth in Section 3. It shall include a recommendation regarding compliance with the academic and content-related criteria. The report shall be drafted using the template to be 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 assessment of the subject-specific and content-related criteria, an on-site visit is conducted by the review panel. 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 agencies' review panel for program accreditation shall consist of at least four members. 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, and

3. one student with expertise in the relevant field.

In the accreditation of degree programs that qualify students for admission to the preparatory service for a teaching career, a representative of the Ministry of Education and Cultural Affairs shall take the place of the person referred to in sentence 1, item 2; for teacher training programs with the combined subject of Protestant or Catholic Theology/Religion, a representative of the locally responsible diocese or regional church shall also be included. In the accreditation of theological degree programs that qualify students for the office of pastor, the priesthood, and the profession of pastoral assistant, and all other bachelor's and master's degree programs with the combined subject of Protestant or Catholic Theology/Religion, a representative of the competent ecclesiastical authority shall replace the person referred to in sentence 1, number 2. For the degree programs referred to in sentences 3 and 4, the submission of the expert opinion pursuant to § 24, paragraph 4, sentence 1, requires the consent of the persons named in each case; without this consent, the expert opinion shall not be submitted to the Accreditation Council.

(2) In the case of 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 quality assurance in the area of teaching,

2. one representative from professional practice, and

3. a student.

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

(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 developed by the German Rectors' Conference in accordance with Article 3, Paragraph 3, Sentence 3 of the State Treaty on Study Accreditation.

(5) Any person who

1. is employed by or enrolled at the institution submitting the application for accreditation,

2. are employed by or enrolled at one of the universities participating in cooperative degree programs or joint degree programs, or

3. are considered to have a conflict of interest 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) The initial accreditation is valid for a period of eight years from the start of the semester or trimester in which 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 a cluster or system accreditation that includes the respective degree program. When applying for a cluster 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 involve disproportionate effort, and it is evident that the disclosure is in the data subject's interest. Sentences 1 and 2 apply mutatis mutandis to internal accreditation decisions of system-accredited universities.

§ 30

Bundle Accreditation; Subsystem Accreditation

(1) The expert opinion pursuant to Section 24(4) may cover multiple degree programs if they share a high degree of academic affinity that goes beyond mere affiliation with a disciplinary field (humanities and cultural studies, social sciences, or natural sciences) (bundled accreditation). The academic and content-related criteria set forth in Section 3 must be assessed separately for each degree program. A bundle shall consist of no more than ten degree programs.

(2) Upon application by 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 (subsystem 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 quality management system of the subunit is integrated into the institution, and
3. at least one degree program of the subunit has already gone through this system.

§ 31

Random Sampling

(1) In the case of system accreditation and subsystem accreditation, the review panel shall conduct a random sample. The random sample 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 the consideration

1. all criteria of Sections 2 and 3 within a degree program that has gone through the institution's quality management system and
2. formal and subject-specific criteria from Sections 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 teaching.

(3) If the institution offers degree programs that prepare students for a regulated profession, one such program must also be included in the sample, taking into account the criteria in Sections 2 and 3 that apply to degree programs; The same applies to teacher training programs, with one program selected for each type of teaching qualification offered, as well as to programs in Protestant or Catholic theology/religion. The sample shall include one representative appointed by the authority responsible for the respective regulated profession, or a representative of the Ministry of Education and Cultural Affairs or the respective church authority.

SECTION 5

Procedural Rules for Special Types of Degree Programs

§ 32

Combined degree programs

(1) If students select individual subjects from a larger number of permissible subjects for their studies, each of these subjects 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 validity period of the accreditation for the combined degree program.

(4) The accreditation certificate shall list all degree programs or fields of study covered by the accreditation. If the accreditation is expanded in accordance with paragraph 3, a new accreditation certificate shall be issued.

(5) The provisions of Section 4 remain unaffected in all other respects.

§ 33

Joint Degree Programs

(1) For joint degree programs involving a domestic institution of higher education and other institutions from the European Higher Education Area, 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 pursuant to Sections 2 and 3 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 by 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 and other stakeholders,
4. the evaluation is based on an expert report that complies with the requirements for joint degree programs set forth in Sections 2 and 3,
5. the evaluation was conducted by a panel of at least four experts, 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 review panel represents expertise in the relevant subjects and disciplines, including the labor market/working world in the relevant fields, and expertise in the area of quality assurance in higher education, and possesses knowledge of the higher education systems of the participating institutions as well as the languages of instruction used, and
 - d) the requirements pursuant to § 25(3), sentence 1, and sentences 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, paragraphs 2, 3, and 4, sentence 1; Section 26, paragraph 1, sentence 1; and

The first sentence of paragraph 2, as well as Sections 28 and 29, apply *mutatis mutandis*. Notwithstanding § 26, paragraph 1, sentence 1, and paragraph 2, sentence 2, the period of validity of the accreditation is 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 jointly with 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 institution of higher education to accreditation in accordance with the criteria set forth in paragraph 1 as well as § 10, paragraphs 1 and 2, and § 16, paragraph 1.

SECTION 6

Alternative Accreditation Procedures

§ 34

Alternative Accreditation Procedures

(1) In addition to the two procedures regulated in Section 4, alternative procedures for ensuring and developing quality in studies and teaching may be implemented in accordance with Article 3(1)(3) of the State Treaty on Study Accreditation.

(2) In alternative procedures, the criteria set forth in Sections 2 and 3 must be observed. The provisions of Article 3(2), first sentence, of the State Treaty on Study Accreditation, as well as the principles governing the appropriate involvement of the academic community set forth in the State Treaty on Study Accreditation and in this Regulation, shall apply *mutatis mutandis*; likewise, the requirements for participation and consent pursuant to § 18(2) shall apply *mutatis mutandis*.

(3) The implementation of alternative procedures requires the prior approval of the Accreditation Council and the Ministry of Science; the Accreditation Council may commission an external review. The application must be submitted to the Accreditation Council via the Ministry of Science. The Accreditation Council may, in consultation with the state, refuse its approval only if the alternative procedure does not comply with the provisions of Article 2 and Article 3(2), first sentence, of the State Treaty on Study Program Accreditation, as well as the principles for the appropriate involvement of the academic community 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, academic institution two years prior to the expiration of the project period.

SECTION 7

Final Provisions

§ 35

Connection with procedures concerning the suitability of a degree program under professional licensing law

(1) Accreditation procedures pursuant to Article 3(1)(1) and Article 3(1)(2) of the State Treaty on Study Program Accreditation may, upon application by the institution of higher education, be organizationally linked to proceedings that determine the suitability of a study program under professional licensing law.

(2) The participation of external experts with an advisory role in the expert committees pursuant to § 25, paragraphs 1 and 2—in addition to the other representatives of the professional community—shall be arranged through appointment by the state authority responsible for the respective regulated profession.

§ 36

Evaluation

(1) Three years after this regulation enters into force, its application 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.

STUTT GART, April 18, 2018

BAUER