

Stiftung zur Akkreditierung von Studiengängen in Deutschland

Akkreditierungsrat ■■

**Activity Report
2015**

Stiftung zur Akkreditierung von Studiengängen in Deutschland

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Activity Report 2015

Report Period: January to December 2015

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

Preface

In February 2016 the Federal Constitutional Court drafted the long awaited resolution for accreditation as a procedure of assessment of Bachelor's and Master's study programmes across federal states and types of higher education institutions and in that resolution have explicitly confirmed the legitimacy of external quality assurance.

At the same time the court has stated guidelines which in future will have to be regulated at a legal level. It is the responsibility of the states to implement this. The overwhelming majority of these guidelines are already common accreditation practice, especially as the accreditation system has since further developed in many regards. This ability to reform was also emphasised by the German Council in its recommendations agreed in 2012 for accreditation as an instrument of quality assurance.

In this regard the Accreditation Council will use the review of its accreditation rules, which it has already begun, to focus its work on the development of quality in teaching and learning and to showcase accreditation even more strongly as a scientifically driven procedure of quality development.

In this the experiences with the implementation of the experimentation clause will also play an important role.

It is particularly encouraging that system accreditation, which takes account of the autonomy of the higher education institutions in a particular way, has reached the centre of the German higher education landscape. Roughly fifty higher education institutions of all types and sizes have since received system accreditation, amounting to more than ten per cent of all German higher education institutions, and the number is constantly rising.

In the previous year of 2015, the Accreditation Council fulfilled the core tasks

transferred to it as usual and initiated a total of four procedures for certification of accreditation agencies.

Along with monitoring procedures, so-called feedback talks, which for the first time incorporate the higher education institutions into the assessment of individual procedures and therefore offer additional impulses for the further development of accreditation, have been established as development-focused instruments of review. The thematic random samples that deal with especially important subjects of higher education and quality assurance systems have also prompted positive feedback.

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

Bonn, June 2016



Professor Dr. Reinhold R. Grimm

Overview

1st Quarter of 2015

82nd Accreditation Council Meeting on 5th February 2015 in Berlin

AR Decision: Establishment of the Joint Programmes working group

AR Decision: Process for reviewing the rules of procedure for the accreditation of agencies

AR Decision: Immediate acceptance of the Master's study

17th Foundation Council Meeting on 2nd February 2015 in Berlin

2nd Quarter of 2015

83rd Accreditation Council Meeting on 18th June 2015 in Berlin

AR Decision: Concluding report of the WG "Knowledge of Subject Matter and Professionalism"

AR Decision: Rules review 2015/16 – Procedure and establishment of a working group

AR Decision: Complaints from ASIIN against the resolution of the Accreditation Council dated 5th February 2015 on the implementation of the seal resolution

AR Decision: Fulfilment of the conditions in the accreditation procedure of AHPGS

AR Decision: Fulfilment of the conditions in the evalag reaccreditation procedure

AR Decision: Fulfilment of the conditions in the accreditation procedure of AKAST

AR Decision: Memorandum of Understanding with the Japanese Quality Assurance Institution NIAD-UE

3rd Quarter of 2015

84th Accreditation Council Meeting on 30th September 2015 in Berlin

AR Decision: ASIIN seal practice

AR Decision: Initiation of the reaccreditation procedure of the agencies AAQ, ACQUIN, ASIIN and ZEvA

AR Decision: Analysis of the subject-related Joint Programmes programme random sample

AR Decision: Publication of negative decisions

AR Decision: Application of the "European Approach" in the German system for Joint Degrees

AR Decision: Agreement with system-accredited higher education institutions to assume costs for entries of internally accredited study programmes

4th Quarter of 2015

85th Accreditation Council Meeting on 10th December 2015 in Berlin

AR Decision: Questions of interpretation on Lisbon Recognition Convention

AR Decision: Planning of the regular monitoring activities 2015/16

18th Foundation Council Meeting on 4th November 2016 in Berlin

1. Current developments

1.1 Review of the rules of the Accreditation Council

The Accreditation Council is focused on its strategic planning for the term of office 2013-2017 in the review of its rules. The focus of its work is thus intended to be the academic feasibility of the study programmes, the national and international mobility of the students, the special research basis of Master's study programmes and the significance of knowledge of the subject matter and professionalism as important aspects of observable academic quality.

The existing accreditation rules are proving to be fundamentally suitable on a day-to-day basis. The requirements put forward by the German Council (2012), the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the Länder (2013) and HRK (2012) have largely been implemented with the reviews undertaken previously, to the extent that this is possible in the existing regulatory framework.

With the scheduled review of its accreditation rules, the Accreditation Council would like to focus its work to an even greater degree on the development of quality in teaching and learning. The criteria of the Accreditation Council should above all also be perceived by the higher education institutions as a generally recognised benchmark of quality and as a catalogue of the essential quality features in teaching and learning.

In addition, the changes to the "Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area" (ESG) resolved at the Bologna Conference of Ministers in Yerevan in May 2015 should be taken into account in the review of the accreditation rules,

including the rules for the accreditation of agencies.

The procedure for reviewing the rules combines the results and findings of different activities, events and work processes. The following should be factored in:

- ▶ The results of the different thematic working groups established by the Accreditation Council (WG Knowledge of Subject Matter and Professionalism, WG Joint Programmes),
- ▶ The extensive experiences of the agencies from their operative business,
- ▶ The findings gained in the system accreditation forum (see 2.5),
- ▶ The analysis of the past random subject samples, monitoring procedures and feedback talks,
- ▶ The analysis of an online discussion forum organised by the Accreditation Council,
- ▶ The suggestions from the procedures certified for the experimentation clause.

In preparation for making the decision, the Accreditation Council established a working group at its 83rd meeting and instructed it to submit recommendations for reviewing the accreditation rules by September 2016. The working group commenced its work at its first meeting on 4th November 2015.

The further development of the rules is not aimed at compressing or expanding the existing guidelines, but at increasing their effectiveness.

As a result of the resolution of the Federal Constitutional Court dated 17th February 2016 regarding accreditation (1 BvL 8/10), the timetable for reviewing the rules is delayed, since no decision is scheduled to be made until after

the legal reorganisation that has become necessary.

1.2 Experimentation clause

With programme and system accreditation, the higher education institutions have two instruments for quality development and reporting available to them, which have also been assessed positively by the German Council and by international experts.

The experimentation clause offers the higher education institutions the option of trying other models of external quality assurance and of exploring new avenues on that side of the established procedure forms. The Accreditation Council invited the higher education institutions with [the resolution dated 17th September 2014](#) to apply with an independently developed procedure of external quality assurance within the framework of the experimentation clause.

According to the selection criteria the higher education institution must state, among other things, that an external establishment within the terms of Part 3 of the "Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area" (ESG) has assessed and evaluated the submitted project within the terms of Part 2 of the ESG. The assessment must be completed within a period of three years after the application was submitted.

After the procedure is completed, the Accreditation Council decides on the results of the procedure; in the event of a positive decision the Accreditation Council establishes equivalence with programme and system accreditation.

For the evaluation of the applications the Accreditation Council has established a working group, which is expected to propose to the Accreditation Council the initial implementation of

up to five experiments. Based on the recommendations of the working group the Accreditation Council made its decision on what to adopt in early 2016 and will subsequently supervise the licensed procedures.

The Accreditation Council expects the experimentation clause to be an important stimulus for the entire sector of quality development at higher education institutions and along with it for reviewing its rules, as well as for further developing the academic quality at German higher education institutions overall.

2. Activity of the Accreditation Council in 2015: Tasks and Results

2.1 Accreditation of agencies

The procedures for accreditation of Bachelor's and Master's study programmes (in programme accreditation) as well as of internal quality assurance systems of higher education institutions (in system accreditation) are carried out by accreditation agencies certified to do this. The agencies receive their certification (accreditation and/or reaccreditation) from the Accreditation Council, which sets the quality requirements for agencies and assesses whether they have been met at regular intervals.

The implementation of these admittance procedures, which, on the request of an agency, also contain an assessment based on the *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area* (ESG), is part of the legal core duties of the Accreditation Council.

At its 84th meeting in September 2015, the Accreditation Council initiated four accreditation procedures for the agencies AAQ, ACQUIN, ASIIN and ZEvA and scheduled for the new

version of the ESG adopted on 14/15th May 2015 to be available to take into consideration.

For the purposes of quality improvement the accreditation of an agency can be combined with recommendations and conditions. As a follow-up measure for accreditation, the assessment of whether conditions have been fulfilled is counted as one of the elementary duties of the Accreditation Council. An agency generally has nine months to fulfil all conditions. In the report period the Accreditation Council reached the following resolutions for the fulfilment of conditions:

AHPGS: The Accreditation Council determined that both conditions associated with certification were fulfilled.

evalag: The Accreditation Council determined that both conditions associated with certification were fulfilled.

AKAST: The Accreditation Council determined that both conditions still outstanding were fulfilled.

More detailed information about the individual certification decisions is published on the Accreditation Council's website.

If an agency breaches the Accreditation Council's rules or violates the obligations specified in the [☞ agreement between the Accreditation Council and agencies](#), the Accreditation Council can withdraw an agency's accreditation.

During the report period one agency was given notice of the revocation of its accreditation due to violations of the [☞ seal resolution](#) of the Accreditation Council. After the agency in question had demonstrated a change to its procedural practice, it became possible to abandon to revocation procedure.

In another case the Accreditation Council withdrew the accreditation of an agency as a result

of a repeated and persistent breach of its publication obligations.

As the agency in question published the outstanding procedural information within the set term and remodelled its internal processes so that a regular publication practice can be assumed in future, the Accreditation Council desisted from the withdrawal of the accreditation.

2.2 Assessment of the accreditation procedures

Along with the certification of accreditation agencies, the legal core duties of the Accreditation Council include the assessment of the programme and system accreditation procedures performed by the agencies.

On the one hand this is done for a specific purpose, if there are any indications of a procedure having been performed deficiently or of an incorrect accreditation decision. On the other hand the Accreditation Council has developed a series of assessment formats with different objectives. These include random sample assessments based on files, monitoring procedures, random subject samples and feedback talks.

► Random sample assessment

The random sample assessment procedures are to be used both in programme and in system accreditation to ensure that the criteria, procedural rules and decision rules defined by the Accreditation Council are applied correctly and sufficiently consistently across all agencies. In this way the assessment by the Accreditation Council contributes towards establishing procedural standards and to increasing the procedural quality perspective, but also towards preventing damage to those affected if necessary.

► Random subject samples

The subjects for this form of sample are selected whilst taking into account current issues that are of particular relevance for the higher education system and quality assurance system. In the last two years the Accreditation Council has been concerned with the accreditation of joint programmes and franchise study programmes as well as with the special requirements of reaccreditation procedures.

With the random subject samples the focus is on the question of how the agencies handle the specific issues and challenges and which accreditation rules are perceived in this context as effective or instead as obstructive.

► Monitoring procedures

Programme and system accreditation procedures are monitored by members of the Accreditation Council or employees of the head office. It has two objectives: On the one hand the Accreditation Council obtains a direct insight into the operative business of the agencies, on the other the agencies obtain feedback on the observations and findings from the outside perspective of those monitoring the procedures.

► Feedback talks

The instrument of the feedback talks was introduced in order to factor the perspectives of the higher education institutions more strongly into the monitoring of the Accreditation Council. The talks between the Accreditation Council, agencies and higher education institutions allow for a targeted exchange over completed programme accreditation procedures and are used to obtain feedback on the accreditation practice and above all on the perceptible effects of the accreditation on academic quality.

The random subject samples, monitoring procedures and feedback talks are characterised

by a stronger focus on dialogue as a result of their development-focused alignment.

In the report period a total of one random subject sample for the accreditation of franchise study programmes (taking seven accreditation procedures into account), eight monitoring procedures in programme accreditation, two monitoring procedures in system accreditation and five feedback talks were carried out. The individual reports are submitted to the Accreditation Council for their information.

Two procedures for the monitoring of system accreditation procedures were started, three more procedures have not yet been completed.

A purpose-specific assessment from 2014 was completed without complaint, a procedure initiated in 2015 is still pending.

Individual defects were identified in the procedures within the random subject sample. In one case the Accreditation Council obliged an agency to a subsequent assessment of an unresolved issue, in a second case it obliged an agency to investigate a breach of obligation relating to a procedure and to submit a concluding report to the Accreditation Council.

The findings from the random subject sample 2015 were summarised in the [report "Study programmes in the franchise context: Recommendations for accreditation"](#) and discussed as part of a meeting of experts on 29th January 2016.

The results of the random subject sample 2014 were submitted to the Accreditation Council in the form of the [Report "Joint programmes and study programmes with a transnational character"](#) in the autumn of 2015. The report was used by the WG Joint Programmes (see chapter 2.6) as a starting point in their consul-

tations for reviewing the accreditation rules for internationally oriented study programmes.

One agency lodged a complaint regarding one of the decisions of the Accreditation Council made in 2015 in the context of a review. The Accreditation Council followed the recommendation of the complaints commission and rejected the complaint.

2.3 Resolutions of the Accreditation Council

The Accreditation Council adopted the following fundamental resolutions in the report period:

► Application of the “European Approach” in the German system for Joint Degrees (resolution dated 30 September 2015)

In May 2015 the conference of ministers in Yerevan adopted the “European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes”. It provides that each agency listed in the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR) can perform procedures for accreditation of Joint Programmes and when doing so applies only ESG-based quality assurance measures without taking into account national guidelines.

With its resolution to apply the European Approach, the Accreditation Council has opened up the option to higher education institutions of having joint programmes assessed based on the ESG and, in the event of a positive result of the procedure, receiving the seal of the Accreditation Council. However, this only applies to begin with for those joint programmes that lead to a joint degree.

In reaction to the resolution of the 369th meeting of the Standing Conference’s committee for higher education dated 17/18th September

2015, the Accreditation Council also commissioned the WG “Joint Programmes” with developing proposals, on the conditions of which the European Approach could also be made applicable to study programmes with integrated curricula, which lead to double or multiple degrees.

► Publication of negative decisions (resolution dated 30th September 2015)

In programme and system accreditation procedures that were initiated after 1st January 2016, the accreditation decision and the complete report must from now on be published independently of the outcome of the procedure. Previously, the rules of the Accreditation Council only provided for a report to the Accreditation Council in the event of a negative decision.

With its resolution to change its publication practice, the Accreditation Council followed the requirements of ESG standard 2.6, which provides for an unrestricted obligation to publish results of procedures in order to increase the significance of transparency and consumer protection in quality assurance.

► Agreements between the Accreditation Council and system-accredited higher education institutions (resolution of the 30th September 2015)

From 2016 system-accredited higher education institutions can make their entries into the database of accredited study programmes themselves, if they have signed an agreement with the Accreditation Council in advance. By arranging this, the Accreditation Council has reacted to the higher education institutions’ wish, as expressed many times in the system accreditation forum, also to account for the system-accredited higher education institutions’ right to self-accreditation in the form of ade-

quate organisation of the database of accredited study programmes.

The points regulated in the agreement between the Accreditation Council and higher education institutions are above all term limits, fees incurred and access rights.

► Other resolutions of the Accreditation Council

At its 82nd meeting the Accreditation Council gave advice on whether higher education institutions with consecutive available programmes must always guarantee that the consecutive Master's study programme can be commenced after completion of the Bachelor's study programme in the standard period of study at the same higher education institution without delay. As regulations of the Common Structural Guidelines of the Länder are primarily affected, it was resolved to submit the issue to the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the Länder in the Federal Republic of Germany.

At its 85th meeting the Accreditation Council gave advice to what extent a percentage restriction of the scope of academic achievements to be recognised is permitted pursuant to the Lisbon Recognition Convention. It was resolved to also submit this issue to the Standing Conference.

Until this is clarified, corresponding conditions for the implementation of the Lisbon Recognition Convention are to be suspended; it is not permissible for the recognition of periods of study to be restricted to 50 per cent or less.

2.4 Internal quality assurance

The internal quality assurance of the foundation is focused on the systematic and critical evaluation of its own work by an independent

working group, which undertakes an analysis of the relevant interest groups' regular feedback.

At a distance of two years the project group "Quality Assurance" shall submit a quality report which gives information on the implementation of the measures defined in the quality policy and, if necessary, includes suggestions for improvement.

The following feedback measures were taken in the report period:

- Analysis of the feedback on the system accreditation forum
- Analysis of the survey of the members on the Accreditation Council's working method
- Analysis of the feedback on the accreditation procedure of evalag. The people surveyed regarding this were the experts, the agency and the members of the Accreditation Council.

The results of the analysis were discussed by the project group "Quality Assurance" at their meeting on 21st April 2015.

The  **quality report 2013/2014** was adopted by the Accreditation Council at the 83rd meeting on 18th June 2015.

2.5 Events

► System Accreditation Forum

The System Accreditation Forum took place on 19/20th January, 2015 on the initiative of the Accreditation Council and the German Rectors' Conference. The most important goal of this forum that was organised for the first time was to promote dialogue and collaboration between system-accredited higher education institutions, agencies and the Accreditation Council and to exchange thoughts on the intentions, effects and potentials of system accreditation.

The results of the internal exchange on 19th January 2015 have been summarised in a report which will be used by the Accreditation Council as a basis for its consultations regarding reviewing its rules. The  presentations of the public conference were subsequently released to the attendees of the event.

2.6 Working groups

► WG Knowledge of Subject Matter and Professionalism

Back in 2012 the Accreditation Council established upon the request of students and professional practice the *Knowledge of Subject Matter and Professionalism* working group, which was made up of representatives of the individual member groups of the Accreditation Council.

The working group was charged with investigating in what way knowledge of subject matter and professionalism are taken into account in accreditation procedures.

The working group submitted a  concluding report to the Accreditation Council in February 2015 that includes proposals and recommendations for the further development of the accreditation procedure.

► WG Experimentation Clause

The WG Experimentation Clause convened at two meetings in the report period (see chapter 1.2).

► WG Rules Review

The WG Rules Review convened at one meeting in the report period (see chap. 1.1).

► WG Joint Programmes

In its strategic planning for the 2013 to 2017 term of office the Accreditation Council argued in favour of opening up the quality assurance

at German higher education institutions more for internationalisation. In reference to the internationalisation strategy of the federation and Länder and the recommendations from the international evaluation, the Accreditation Council established the *WG Joint Programmes* at its 82nd meeting on 5th February 2015 and charged it with developing proposals for simplifying the accreditation of joint programmes.

Based on the analysis of the joint programmes random subject sample, the working group in particular addressed the implications of the Lisbon Recognition Convention and the European Approach with regard to the accreditation of joint, double and multi-degree programmes (for information on the European Approach see chapter 2.3).

The *WG Joint Programmes* convened at three meetings in the report period. In 2016 the working group will submit a proposal for the review of the rules for joint programmes and other international study programmes, which, following consultation in the Accreditation Council, are to be incorporated into the continued process of the rules review.

► Project group “Quality Assurance”

The project group “*Quality Assurance*” convened at one meeting in the report period on 21st April 2015 (see chapter 2.4).

3. International Collaboration

Quality assurance and quality development are important requirements for implementing the European Higher Education Area. This is why the promotion of international collaboration is among the central tasks that have been transferred to the Accreditation Council from the Länder. Ultimately, the international collaboration must aim to promote mutual understanding of the quality assurance systems, develop comparable criteria, methods and standards of quality assurance and improve the transparency of the available programmes so as to simplify mutual recognition of qualifications and student mobility as a result.

In this context the relevant European and international quality assurance networks play a prominent role.

► **International networks:** The Accreditation Council is an established active member of the leading European and international quality assurance networks, such as the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA), and the International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE). It regularly participates in international working groups, conventions and conferences and is represented by the employees of the head office in the European Quality Assurance Forum, in the European Quality Audit Network and in the “Quality Assurance of Cross-border Higher Education” (QACHE) project.

The managing director of the foundation will be involved in the “Implementation” working group of the Bologna Follow-Up Group (BFUG) from 2016 and he has also been active as a member of the National Erasmus Mundus Joint Master’s Degree Advisory Board.

International cooperation allows the Accreditation Council to apply its expertise internationally and at the same time to learn from the experiences of the partners abroad:

► Memorandum of Understanding with the Japanese Quality Assurance Institution NIAD-UE

On the initiative of the Japanese Quality Assurance Institution NIAD-UE, the chairperson has signed on behalf of the Accreditation Council a memorandum of understanding with the Japanese Quality Assurance Institution NIAD-UE.

In contrast to the close interconnectedness of the Accreditation Council within the European Higher Education Area, the Accreditation Council prefers to maintain contacts outside of Europe on a country-by-country basis. Agreements such as the memorandum signed with NIAD-UE offer the opportunity to intensify cooperation with colleagues in developed democratic industrialised nations outside of Europe with a recognised system of higher educational institutions, in particular also with regard to the importance of joint programmes.

► Meeting with the Chair of the Dutch-Flemish Accreditation Organisation NVAO

On 11th November 2015 a meeting with the chair of the NVAO was held at the head office. Representatives of HRK, the agencies, the state of North Rhine-Westphalia and the German Council also took part in the meeting. In particular, the subjects of the meeting were similarities and differences of system accreditation and institutional accreditation procedures in the Netherlands and Flanders.

► The importance of the ESG in the national context

The accreditation procedures started in 2015 of the agencies AAQ, ACQUIN, ASIIN and

ZEVA were performed for the first time as a matter of priority based on the ESG (in the version adopted in May 2015). The criteria of the Accreditation Council were brought to bear here, where they extended beyond the ESG as additional quality assurance measures.

4. Information and Communication

4.1 Presentation, information and consultation

The Accreditation Council regularly provides comprehensive information regarding its resolutions and all other subjects relating to the accreditation system.

Alongside using the Scientific Information Service (idw) for publishing press releases, the foundation's website is an important instrument for publishing accreditation data and for processing information for the federal states, higher education institutions, students and agencies. It contains an overview of all the resolutions of the Accreditation Council. The resolutions and the relevant documents from KMK and HRK are available to users of the website as PDF files. Furthermore information on the German accreditation system, the members of the foundation's bodies and committees and the agencies accredited by the Accreditation Council can be found there.

The agencies and system-accredited higher education institutions are provided with information specific to its purpose in the form of bulletins sent electronically about changes to rules, design references or the application of rules, criteria and structural guidelines.

In its newsletter, the head office also provides information about the results of the Accreditation Council meetings, recent developments in the German accreditation system and about staff, meetings and events.

4.2 Publication of accreditation data

All accreditation data is made available to the interested public on the Accreditation Council's website:

► **Agencies:** All agencies that have been successfully certified and are authorised to grant the quality seal are listed on the Accreditation Council's website. The resolutions of the Accreditation Council, the conditions and terms associated with the certification, the reports, the explanatory statements for the application and the agency's statements can also be found there.

► **Study programmes:** Study programmes bearing the seal of the Accreditation Council are published in the database of accredited study programmes. This database linked to the Higher Education Compass of the German Rectors' Conference can be called up on the Accreditation Council's website and offers information about the accreditation terms, the conditions associated with the accreditation, the experts involved and evaluation which they performed.

► **System-accredited higher education institutions:** While the accredited study programmes of a system-accredited higher education institution are recorded in the database of accredited study programmes, an overview of all the system-accredited higher education institutions can also be found on the website.

► **Statistical data:** Along with the study programme-related data, the user also has access on the foundation's website to statistics that provide information on the quantity of the currently accredited study programmes. The data displayed can be sorted by study duration, qualification designation, subject groups, higher education institution types, federal states or standard periods of study.

In 2015 a substantial review of the Accreditation Council's database was begun in order to be able to better depict the results of the system accreditation and to give the system-accredited higher education institutions the option of being able to make entries themselves (for more on this see chapter 2.3). The work is expected to be completed in the first half of 2016.

4.3 Communication with the agencies

A constructive collaboration based on partnership between the Accreditation Council and agencies is one of the basic requirements of an effective accreditation system in Germany.

The agencies' participation in the working groups of the Accreditation Council and the advisory membership of a representative of the agencies in the Accreditation Council have proven to be tried and tested instruments for reliably and reciprocally informing the people involved.

The agencies are promptly informed of new or amended resolutions of the Accreditation Council as well as amendments to the guidelines common to all and specific to each state in the form of the chair's bulletins.

On 9th June 2015 a meeting between the agencies' managing directors and the members of the head office of the Accreditation Council was held in Berlin as part of the agency meeting. The meeting was primarily held to exchange thoughts on the planned review of the rules, the pending procedures for the reaccreditation of agencies and other concrete issues from the agencies' operative business.

The monitoring of accreditation procedures by members of the Accreditation Council or employees of the head office and the feedback talks performed for the first time in 2015 are al-

so good opportunities for an exchange of information and experiences between the Accreditation Council and agencies (for more on this see chapter 2.2).

4.4 Statistical data

At the end of December 2015, the Council's quality seal was born by 5,129 Bachelor's and 4,634 Master's study programmes offered by state higher education institutions or institutions recognised by the state in Germany.¹ A total of 40 state higher education institutions or institutions recognised by the state had at the same point in time successfully completed a system accreditation procedure; this corresponds to a percentage of about 10 % of all higher education institutions.² This means that the number of system-accredited higher education institutions has risen by 60 % compared to the previous year. Another 24 higher education institutions were in the middle of a system accreditation procedure at the end of the year.

The proportion of accredited study programmes measured against the number of all Bachelor's and Master's study programmes offered was about 60 % at the end of 2015 and has increased by approx. 8 percentage points compared to the previous year.

¹ The numbers stated here are based on the pool of data from the Accreditation Council's database. All accredited study programmes and/or study options are listed in the database, unless they have not been entered into the database by the accreditation agencies. This also includes study programmes that have received the seal of the Accreditation Council in the course of the system accreditation. The number of system-accredited higher education institutions was determined for a specific purpose.

² At 399 higher education institutions according to the information in the Higher Education Compass of HRK www.hochschlkompass.de

5. Resources

5.1 Finances

The Accreditation Council is financed jointly by the 16 states pursuant to § 4 para. 1 of the Accreditation Foundation Law (ASG). The states only grant financial resources if the Accreditation Council's administrative costs are not covered by the charging of fees.

For the fiscal year of 2015 the Standing Conference of Finance Ministers (FMK) set the annual contributions of the states to the Accreditation Council at EUR 397,000.

The foundation's annual financial statements show revenues of EUR 529,712.18 (allocations of the states and fee receipts) and expenses totalling EUR 529,687.53 for 2014. This leaves a final balance of EUR 24.65.

5.2 Personnel, spatial and material setup

Pursuant to list of positions, the personnel setup of the foundation's head office includes a managing director (100%), four consultants / project officers (equivalent to 3.5 full time employees) and two case workers (50% each). In addition, the foundation employs casual student workers for 20 hours per month. All the employees – with the exception of the casual workers – have a higher education degree; remuneration is paid pursuant to the standard regulations of the tariff contract for the German federal states' civil service (TV-L).

With the head office at Adenauerallee 73 in Bonn, the Accreditation Council has five rented office rooms with a total of eight work spaces and a total area of approx. 120 m².

Annexes

Annex 1 Members of the bodies and committees

Annex 2 Times and dates of meetings

Members of the bodies and committees

► Members of the Accreditation Council

Chair

Professor Dr. Reinhold R. **Grimm**

Deputy Chair

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

Higher Education Representatives

Professor Dr. Stefan **Bartels**, Fachhochschule Lübeck

Professor Dr. Holger **Burckhart**, Universität Siegen

Professor Dr. Reinhold R. **Grimm**

Professor Dr. Ute von **Lojewski**, Fachhochschule Münster

State Representatives

State Secretary Rolf **Fischer**, Ministry for Social Affairs, Health, Science and Equality in the state of Schleswig-Holstein

Dr. Susanne **Reichrath**, representative of the Minister-President for Higher Education, Science and Technology, Saarland

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

Ministerial Director Dr. Peter **Müller**, Bavarian State Ministry for Science, Research and the Arts (since 23rd April 2015)

Ministerial Director Dr. Adalbert **Weiß**, Bavarian State Ministry for Science, Research and the Arts (since 22nd April 2015)

Representatives of professional practice

Dr. h.c. Josef **Beutelmann**, chair of the supervisory board of Barmenia Versicherungen

Petra **Gerstenkorn**, member of the Federal Board of Vereinte Dienstleistungsgewerkschaft (United Services Trade Union - ver.di)

Thomas **Sattelberger**, former board member of Deutsche Telekom AG

Dr. Hans Jürgen **Urban**, IG Metall board

Jörg **Wollny**, Ministry of the Interior in the state of Brandenburg

Student

Isabella **Albert**, FH Aachen

Jan **Bormann**, TU Kaiserslautern (since 26th February 2015)

Alexander **Buchheister**, RWTH Aachen (until 25th February 2015)

International representatives

Dr. Sijbolt **Noorda**, former President of the Association of Universities in the Netherlands (vereniging van universiteiten - VSNU)

Professor Dr. Martine **Rahier**, Rector of the University of Neuchâtel

Representatives of the agencies (with advisory vote)

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

► Members of the Foundation Council***Chair***

State Secretary Martin **Gorholt**, Ministry for Science, Research and Culture in the state of Brandenburg

Deputy Chair

Dr. **Kathöfer**, General Secretary of HRK (until 30th September 2015)

State Representatives

State Secretary Martin **Gorholt**, Ministry for Science, Research and Culture in the state of Brandenburg

State councillor Dr. Eva Gumbel, Office for Science and Research, Hamburg (since 8th June 2015)

State Secretary Dr. Henry **Hasenpflug**, State Ministry for Science and the Arts in the state of Saxony (until 25th March 2015)

State Secretary Markus **Hoppe**, Thuringian Ministry for the Economy, Science and Digital Society (since 26th March 2015)

State Secretary Ingmar **Jung**, Hessian Ministry for Science and the Arts

State councillor Dr. Horst-Michael **Pelikahn**, Office for Science and Research, Hamburg (from 26th March to 7th June 2015)

State Secretary Dr. Knut **Nevermann**, Senate administration for Education, Science and Research, Berlin (until 25th March 2015)

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

State Secretary Marco **Tullner**, Ministry for Science and Economy of the state of Saxony-Anhalt

Higher Education Representatives

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

Dr. **Kathöfer**, General Secretary of HRK (until 30th September 2015)

Professor Dr. Dieter **Lenzen**, President of Freie Universität Berlin

Professor Dr. Micha **Teuscher**, Rector of Hochschule Neubrandenburg

Prof. Dr. Johanna Eleonore **Weber**, Rector of Ernst-Moritz-Arndt-Universität Greifswald

► Members of the Board

Chair

Professor Dr. Reinhold R. **Grimm**

Members

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

Professor Dr. Reinhold R. **Grimm**

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

► Complaints commission

Professor Dr. Dietmar von **Hoyningen-Hüne**, formerly Hochschule Mannheim (Chair)

Professor Dr. Ute von **Lojewski**, Fachhochschule Münster

Alexander **Buchheister**, student at RWTH Aachen (until 25th February 2015)

Isabella **Albert**, student at Fachhochschule Aachen (from 11th May 2015)

► WG Experimentation Clause

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

Isabella **Albert**, student at FH Aachen

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

Jan **Bormann**, TU Kaiserslautern

Dr. Sijbolt **Noorda**, former President of the Association of Universities in the Netherlands (vereniging van universiteiten - VSNU)

Dr. Isabel **Rohner**, BDA

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

Renate **Singvogel**, ver.di

► WG Knowledge of Subject Matter and Professionalism

Dr. Regina **Görner**, formerly IG Metall board (Chair)

Isabella **Albert**, student at FH Aachen

State Secretary Helmut **Dockter**, Ministry for Innovation, Science and Research in the state of North Rhine-Westphalia

Prof. Dr. Ulrich **Heiß**, Vice president of Technische Universität Berlin

Thomas **Sattelberger**, formerly Deutsche Telekom AG management board

Professor Dr. Tassilo **Schmitt**, Universität Bremen, Institute for History

► WG Joint Programmes

Professor Dr.-Ing Stefan **Bartels**, President of Fachhochschule Lübeck

Jan **Bormann**, student at TU Kaiserslautern

Doris **Herrmann**, AQAS

Professional practice: Dr. Bernd **Kaßbaum**, IG Metall

Dr. Sijbolt **Noorda**, former President of the Association of Universities in the Netherlands (vereniging van universiteiten - VSNU)

Dr. Nikola **Scholle-Pollmann**, DAAD

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

► Project group "Quality Assurance"

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

Alexander **Buchheister**, student at RWTH Aachen (until 25th February 2015)

Jan **Bormann**, student at TU Kaiserslautern (since 26th February 2015)

Thomas **Sattelberger**, former board member of Deutsche Telekom AG

► **WG Rules Review**

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

Isabella **Albert**, student at FH Aachen

Jan **Bormann**, student at TU Kaiserslautern

Dr. **Kloeters**, AQAS

Professor Dr. Ute von **Lojewski**, Fachhochschule Münster

Ms **Lüddeke**, Bavarian State Ministry for Science, Research and the Arts

Prof. Dr. Martine **Rahier**, Rector of the University of Neuchâtel

Dr. **Rohner**, BDA

Mr. **Reschauer**, AHPGS

Ms. **Singvogel**, ver.di

Times and dates of meetings

► Meetings of the Accreditation Council

82nd Meeting on 5th February 2015 in Bonn

83rd Meeting on 18th June 2015 in Berlin

84th Meeting on 30th September 2015 in Berlin

85th Meeting on 10th December 2015 in Bonn

► Meetings of the Foundation Council

17th Meeting on 2nd February 2015 in Berlin

18th Meeting on 4th November 2015 in Berlin

► Meetings of the WG Experimentation Clause

1st Meeting on 18th June 2015 in Berlin

2nd Meeting on 10th December 2015 in Bonn

► Meetings of the WG Knowledge of Subject Matter and Professionalism

9th Meeting on 6th February 2015 in Hanover

► Meetings of the WG Joint Programmes

1st Meeting on 19th June 2015 in Berlin

2nd Meeting on 30th September 2015 in Berlin

3rd Meeting on 10th December 2015 in Bonn

► Meetings of the project group "Quality Assurance"

8th Meeting on 21st April 2015 in Berlin

► Meetings of the WG Rules Review

1st Meeting on 4th November 2015 in Berlin